



THE COLLECTED LETTERS OF

C. S. Lewis

Narnia, Cambridge, and Joy 1950-1963

VOLUME III

Edited by Walter Hooper

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 HarperCollins e-books

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PREFACE

This is the third and final volume of the *Collected Letters* of C. S. Lewis. In the same way that the third novel of Lewis's interplanetary trilogy, *That Hideous Strength*, grew to be twice the length of the first story, *Out of the Silent Planet*, so it is with Volume III of his correspondence, which is almost twice as long as Volume I. It would, I admit, have been neater to have had three equally sized books, but this is the way things have turned out, and I hope readers will welcome the many extra letters in this bulky concluding collection.

When it was agreed years ago between the publishers and the Lewis Estate that there would be only three volumes of letters, it was left unsaid how long a volume might be. I was halfway through editing Volume I when someone at HarperCollins suggested that the *Collected Letters* might consist of three paperback volumes of 325 pages each. This was not acceptable to the Estate because it would mean publishing only about a third of the letters known to exist, and leaving the others to an uncertain future. Lewis was one of the last great letter-writers and we felt it would be a pity not to publish *all* his letters. And so I persevered with Volume I, hoping that a book comprising about a third of the letters would be accepted by HarperCollins.

However, when the time came to send the publishers the typescript of the first volume, a different person at HarperCollins was in charge. This was James Catford, of whom I'd heard many good things. I nevertheless feared he would turn the book down if it were very long, and I cut out a few letters. As I explained in the Preface to Volume I, 'To prevent the book from being too long it was necessary to leave out a few letters, but the volume contains about 95 per cent of the letters from that period.' I explained that some of the letters I omitted were 'weekly "regulation" letters from Jack to his father from his various schools', while others were letters to Lewis's great friends Owen Barfield and Cecil Harwood, in which he 'was primarily arguing philosophical points or criticizing his correspondents' poetry'.¹

On 19 April 1999, a few days after sending the typescript of Volume I to HarperCollins, I went up to London to meet James Catford, who would be

guiding it through the press. I expected him to complain of it being too long, and I could not have been more surprised when he said: 'Congratulations! We're into *Big Books!*'

James gave the *Collected Letters* exactly the lift it needed, and although he left soon afterwards to become chief executive of the Bible Society, those who followed him at HarperCollins have supported the project with equal enthusiasm. More than that, they have shared my keenness to include in the *Collected Letters* all the letters that have come to light. Volume I, *Family Letters*, covered the period from Lewis's first letters in 1905 up to his conversion in September 1931. Volume II, *Books, Broadcasts and War*, covered the period from October 1931 up to 1949 when Lewis wrote *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and was finding his way into Narnia, and I tried to include all the letters that fitted into that second period.

By the time I reached Volume III, with its triple theme, *Narnia, Cambridge, Joy*, covering 1950 up to Lewis's death in 1963, David Brawn, the projects director at HarperCollins, and Chris Smith, commissioning editor, were as enthusiastic about the project as I. They liked my idea of including in Volume III a Supplement of those letters which were deliberately omitted from or, for various reasons, failed to get into Volumes I and II. Apart from the early letters to his father and those to Barfield and Harwood, for reasons of space I had also omitted Lewis's letters to various periodicals, such as the *Times Literary Supplement* and the *Church Times*; these letters too are now included in the Supplement.

Besides the Supplement, there are the 'Great War' Letters dating from 1927–8. They are the only part of Lewis's dispute with Owen Barfield about myth, imagination and anthroposophy conducted by letter. Long before the 'Great War' began in 1923, Lewis dismissed Christianity as a 'myth'. Then, in February 1923, while preparing for his examinations in Greats, he witnessed a man he liked go mad.² This was Mrs Moore's brother, Dr John Askins, who Lewis explained 'had flirted with Theosophy, Yoga, Spiritualism, Psychoanalysis, what not?'³ In the little house Lewis shared with Mrs Moore he helped to hold Dr Askins down 'while he kicked and wallowed on the floor, screaming out that devils were tearing him and that he was that moment falling down into Hell'.⁴ Largely as a result of this Lewis assumed what he called his intellectual 'New Look'. 'There were to be,' he insisted,

*no flirtations with any idea of the supernatural, no romantic delusions. In a word, like the heroine of Northanger Abbey, I formed the resolution 'of always judging and acting in future with the greatest good sense.'*⁵ *And good sense meant, for me at that moment, a retreat, almost a panic-stricken flight, from all that sort of romanticism which had hitherto been the chief concern of my life.*⁶

Lewis had just arrived at this 'New Look', with its rejection of anything supernatural, when Owen Barfield and Cecil Harwood became followers of Rudolf Steiner and the theosophical beliefs expressed in anthroposophy. 'I was hideously shocked,' said Lewis:

*Everything that I had laboured so hard to expel from my own life seemed to have flared up and met me in my best friends. Not only my best friends, but those whom I would have thought safest...As I came to learn...what Steiner thought, my horror turned into disgust and resentment. For here, apparently, were all the abominations; none more abominable than those which had once attracted me. Here were gods, spirits, after-life and pre-existence, initiates, occult knowledge, meditation...There was no danger of my being taken in. But then, the loneliness, the sense of being deserted.*⁷

The 'Great War' was to last until 1931, when Lewis converted to Christianity.

In a word, HarperCollins and I were determined that the three volumes would contain not a 'selection' of Lewis's letters but *all*. The reader can see from the frequency of the abbreviations 'BOD' and 'W' that most of the letters are from the two major collections in the Bodleian Library and the Wade Center. But for the purpose of this volume, the net was thrown very wide, and this volume contains the letters I have found in all the Lewis collections I know about. When I began work on Volume III, I guessed that, with the addition of the Supplement, it would be only a few hundred pages longer than the other two. However, as word spread that this would be the final volume, I received numerous Lewis letters preserved in private collections. And so the book grew to be the size it is.

Despite our efforts to include in these volumes *all* of Lewis's letters, there are a few that either I forgot about or which turned up too late to be fitted in. No doubt others will come to light. We should not be discouraged. This happens with the letters of nearly all eminent people. I doubt we can

say we have *all* the letters written by anyone. Letters from Dr Samuel Johnson have shown up hundreds of years after his letters were first published, and despite the efforts of the many editors of Cardinal John Henry Newman's *Letters and Diaries*, over a period of fifty years, letters from Newman still show up from time to time. While I have no doubt that most of Lewis's letters are contained in these volumes, I expect the occasional letter will be popping up for the next 100 years. If this happens, perhaps HarperCollins will publish an additional volume of letters.

The theme of this volume is *Narnia, Cambridge and Joy*, but up to the end of 1949, there was almost nothing to suggest that the last thirteen years of Lewis's life would involve any of those things, that it would be the fullest of all, and that the period would yield so many letters. In short, there was no reason for Lewis to imagine a revolution taking place in his life. He was very tired from years of looking after his aged companion, Mrs Moore, and he would have been glad of an occasional day of freedom. Thus, when Don Giovanni Calabria wrote from Verona at the beginning of 1949, urging him to write more, Lewis replied on 14 January:

*I would not wish to deceive you with vain hope. I am now in my fiftieth year. I feel my zeal for writing, and whatever talent I originally possessed, to be decreasing; nor (I believe) do I please my readers as I used to...My aged mother, worn out by long infirmity, is my daily care...Perhaps it will be the most wholesome thing for my soul that I lose both fame and skill lest I were to fall into that evil disease, vainglory.*⁸

The clearest evidence that his 'zeal for writing' was decreasing was that he had written no stories since the last Ransom novel in 1945. For Lewis story-writing was never a matter of effort, but depended entirely, as he said, on 'seeing pictures in my head'.⁹ But there were no 'pictures'. And in any event, Lewis was poised, after years of preparation, to begin writing *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (1954), the volume of the Oxford History of English Literature which he once complained 'lies like a nightmare on my chest'.¹⁰ The burden of that 'nightmare' would have been eased had he received more help from his brother, Warnie. The brothers were the greatest friends, but Warnie would periodically disappear to Ireland on drinking binges, often absenting himself at the times when Jack needed most help with Mrs Moore.

As I mentioned in the Preface to Volume II, it was shortly after Lewis thought his talents to be ‘decreasing’ that he began dreaming of lions.¹¹ ‘At first,’ he said about *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, ‘I had very little idea how the story would go. But then suddenly Aslan came bounding into it. I think I had been having a good many dreams of lions about that time... Once He was there He pulled the whole story together, and soon He pulled the six other Narnian stories in after him.’¹²

The extraordinary burst of inspiration that led to the writing of the Narnian stories was beyond anything he had experienced since his interplanetary stories. How did it happen? As he explained,

*In the Author’s mind there bubbles up every now and then the material for a story. For me it invariably begins with mental pictures. This ferment leads to nothing unless it is accompanied with the longing for a Form: verse or prose, short story, novel, play or what not. When these two things click you have the Author’s impulse complete. It is now a thing inside him pawing to get out. He longs to see this bubbling stuff pouring into that Form as the housewife longs to see the new jam pouring into the clean jam jar. This nags him all day long and gets in the way of his work and his sleep and his meals. It’s like being in love.*¹³

The first two chapters of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* were probably composed soon after he wrote to Don Giovanni on 14 January 1949, and they were ready for Roger Lancelyn Green to read when he visited Lewis in March. This first ‘Chronicle of Narnia’ was completed by the end of May, and in June Lewis made a start on what became *The Magician’s Nephew*. He dropped this story when he ran into some difficulties with it, and in September 1949 he wrote *Prince Caspian*. In August 1949 Lewis signed a contract with publisher Geoffrey Bles for *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and by Christmas Pauline Baynes had illustrated it.

Volume III opens in January 1950, when Lewis was writing a third story, *The Voyage of the ‘Dawn Treader’*. This was followed by *The Horse and His Boy*, which he was in the middle of when he found it impossible any longer to look after Mrs Moore. On 29 April 1950 she was moved to Restholme, a nursing home at 230 Woodstock Road. There Lewis visited her every day.¹⁴ ‘The old lady’s retirement to a Nursing Home,’ he wrote to

Dr Warfield Firor on 6 December 1950, ‘has made me a good deal freer in a small way. I can plan my days and count on some domestic leisure as I have not been able to do these last fifteen years.’¹⁵

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, always the most popular of the stories, was published on 16 October 1950. *The Magician’s Nephew* was not completed until the spring of 1954, but all the other five were finished by March 1953. This meant that, with the exception of *The Magician’s Nephew*, Lewis wrote six Narnian stories in about four years. It was his publisher, Geoffrey Bles, who decided they should appear one per year.

The Narnian stories were favourably reviewed from the start, but it took several years before they captured the imagination of children. What became in the end a flood of letters from children was only a trickle when Lewis said in a letter to Dr Firor of 20 December 1951: ‘I am going to be (if I live long enough) one of those men who *was* a famous writer in his forties and dies unknown.’¹⁶ A few years later he was inundated with letters from children, and he enjoyed these more than any others he received. This volume contains all those previously published in *Letters to Children* (1985) as well as others, and they provide one of our most important sources of information about Narnia. Even today, Lewis continues to receive letters of gratitude from children, and I imagine he would be amused that I have answered more letters from children *after* his death than he did before it.¹⁷ Before the creation of Narnia *The Screwtape Letters* was his most popular book, but today Lewis is, of course, best known and best loved as the author of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

Magdalen College gave Lewis a year off, from Michaelmas Term 1951 to Michaelmas Term 1952, to complete *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*. Despite the fact that Aslan was still ‘pulling in’ the remaining Narnian stories, Lewis managed to complete the book by May 1952. He celebrated by motoring around his native Ulster with Arthur Greeves. Those who have read both the Narnian stories and *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* will probably agree that the two tasks were highly complementary. Lewis’s pupil, John Wain, spoke for many when he said in his review of the Oxford History: ‘Most dons have moved a long way from any recognition that literature is something that people read for *fun*. Mr Lewis, now as always, writes as if inviting us to a feast.’¹⁸

Turning to the second theme of these letters—Cambridge—many readers wonder why Oxford did not honour Lewis with a professorship. There is

nothing to suggest that Lewis was hurt, much less angry, about this, but his friends were hurt for him. J. R. R. Tolkien felt that he and Lewis would be ideally suited for the two Chairs at Merton College, the Chair of English and the Chair of English Literature. But while Tolkien was elected Merton Professor of English in 1945, the Chair of English Literature, when it became vacant in 1947, went instead to Lewis's former tutor, F. P. Wilson. Lewis was passed over again in 1948 when the Goldsmith's Professorship of English at New College went to Lord David Cecil, who often said, 'This chair *should* have gone to Lewis.' While Lewis's reputation as a literary scholar will probably always be overshadowed by Narnia and his apologetics, he was the author of a number of works of literary criticism that have taken their place with the classics, notably *The Allegory of Love* (1936) and *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (1942).

Why was it that Lewis had to leave Oxford and go to Cambridge in order to find a professorial position? It is possible that Dame Helen Gardner supplied the answer in the obituary of Lewis she wrote for the British Academy. She suggested that a suspicion had arisen that he was 'so committed to what he himself called "hot-gospeiling"'¹⁹ that he would not have time for the demands of a Chair. 'In addition,' she said, 'a good many people thought that shoemakers should stick to their lasts and disliked the thought of a professor of English Literature winning fame as an amateur theologian.'²⁰

I met Professor Tolkien in 1964, having not long come from the United States. When he saw how perplexed I was by Oxford's attitude to Lewis he explained it to me:

*In Oxford you are forgiven for writing only two kinds of books. You may write books on your own subject whatever that is, literature or science, or history. And you may write detective stories because all dons at some time get the flu, and they have to have something to read in bed. But what you are not forgiven is writing popular works, such as Jack did on theology, and especially if they win international success as his did.*²¹

One of the most pleasant parts of the 'revolution' that occurred in the last thirteen years of Lewis's life was the offer of the Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English at Cambridge University, created with him in mind. We are fortunate in having not only Lewis's side of the correspondence

about the Chair, but that of the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, Sir Henry Willink, who offered him the position. That correspondence, which begins on Chapter 5, is as full of unexpected twists as an Agatha Christie novel, and I will say no more than that I hope the reader enjoys it.

Finally, what began as the quietest part of the ‘revolution’ in the end transformed Lewis’s entire life—Joy. Readers will not find in the many letters about Joy Davidman and her marriage to Lewis anything resembling the ‘love at first sight’ affair which some imagine befell these two people. Bearing in mind how it all turned out, readers will probably be as amused as I am about how Lewis viewed Joy’s stay at The Kilns during Christmas 1952. Writing to Laurence Harwood on 19 December 1952 he said: ‘I am completely “circumvented” by a guest, asked for one week but staying for three, who talks from morning till night.’²² The bitter-sweet story that followed that Christmas visit is treated so fully and touchingly in these letters there is no reason for me to say any more.

One of the first things I noticed when I moved into Lewis’s house in the summer of 1963 was the immensely heavy burden of ‘loathsome letter-writing’²³ he shouldered almost every morning. After breakfast we spent about two hours replying to every letter he received. He had rheumatism in his right hand, and it had become painful to write very much. At that time he was receiving as many as three letters a week from Mrs Mary Willis Shelburne. She was the anonymous recipient of the *Letters to an American Lady*, edited by Clyde S. Kilby and published in 1967. Dr Kilby was not allowed to reveal the lady’s identity, and the ‘American Lady’ also insisted that all references to her daughter, Lorraine, and son-in-law, Don Nostadt, be omitted. The letters to Mrs Shelburne are published here for the first time in their entirety.

By the time I moved into The Kilns Mrs Shelburne was writing more letters than Lewis could possibly answer, and Lewis decided to end it. He had me take out my notebook and write down the names of the two people I would be *totally* responsible for—Mary Willis Shelburne and Margaret Radcliffe, a one-legged nurse who was always threatening to move into The Kilns and ‘look after him’. Lewis felt he had written enough to them, that he had said all there was to say, and he chose to reserve a little time for the things he *wanted* to write.

Lewis missed Warnie, and he said in the letter to Mrs Shelburne of 10 June 1963: ‘My brother is away in Ireland...This throws a lot of extra work

on me, besides condemning me to—what I hate—solitude.’²⁴ I soon realised he did not always like to be alone, and as long as I was busy with my own work he asked me to remain in the room while he wrote. If he had a decent chair, a bottle of ink and an endless supply of nibs for his pen, Lewis might have been in a private world. The exception was the period between after-lunch coffee and about three o’clock. I suspected he had a sleep when I left him alone in the common room after lunch; one day, as I was leaving, I said, ‘Jack, do you ever take a nap?’ ‘Oh, no!’ he said. ‘But, mind you, sometimes a nap takes *me!*’

I once asked how he managed to write with such ease, and I think his answer tells us more about his writing than anything he said. He told me that the thing he most loved about writing was that it did two things at once. This he illustrated by saying: ‘I don’t know what I *mean* till I see what I’ve *said.*’ In other words, writing and thinking were a single process.

Lewis retired from Cambridge in the summer of 1963, and besides helping with letters, he had plans about how I would help with the books he planned to write. I never wanted anything more. What would Lewis have written had he lived longer? But that is enough speculation: Aslan has made it clear that he will ‘tell no one any story but his own’.²⁵ On the other hand, I expect the great Lion is responsible for the comfort I get from knowing that the many hours Lewis spent ‘coaxing a rheumatic wrist to drive this pen across paper’²⁶ were not wasted. We have three large volumes of his letters.

In the period covered by Volume I Lewis was writing primarily to family members and close friends, in that covered by Volume II to a greatly enlarged circle of correspondents. The letters in Volume III were written to an even larger circle of people. As in Volume II, I have included substantial biographies of close friends, such as Nan Dunbar, Peter Bide and Katharine Farrer, and shorter biographies of associates and other people whose details were too substantial to be included merely as footnotes. It was fairly easy to gather facts when I was writing about people like Nan Dunbar and others whom I knew. Sometimes I was fortunate enough to track down those to whom Lewis wrote a single letter, such as Father George Restropo SJ (p. 1387). In some instances the recipient of a letter tracked *me* down. Unfortunately, many letters in this volume were bought by libraries from dealers who could supply no information about the recipients. Despite my

efforts, many of these correspondents remain unidentified beyond their names.

Readers should note that the abbreviation 'TS' means the letter was typed by Lewis's brother Warnie; 'PC' means it was written on a postcard. As Lewis grew older, and had more letters to answer, he often restricted his replies to postcards. Readers will also notice the abbreviation 'p.p.'—*per procurationem*—meaning 'through another'. If Lewis was not present when Warnie had typed a letter for him Warnie would sometimes sign his brother's name, and I have indicated this by 'p.p.' Although most of the typed letters were composed by Lewis himself, I suspect that Warnie had a hand in the writing of a few of those marked 'p.p.'

The eight years I have spent editing the letters would not have been as fruitful nor as pleasant were it not for the help of many others. My debts are numerous, and nothing I can say can adequately reflect my gratitude.

I begin by thanking the Classical scholar, Dr A. T. Reyes, who is responsible for most of the Latin and Greek references in the three volumes of letters. I would be embarrassed if readers knew the *extent* of that obligation. Others to whom my debts are very great are Dr Francis Warner, Dr Barbara Everett, Professor Emrys Jones, Dr James Como, Dr John Walsh, Dr Tobias Reinhardt and Tyler Fisher. I could not have persevered without their encouragement. If I could say how much I owe Dr Michael Ward, Richard Jeffrey, Andrew Cuneo, Madame Eliane Tixier, Dr René Tixier, Raphaela Schmid, Patrick Nold and William Griffin, readers might wonder what part, if any, I had in editing these letters. I can never be grateful enough to Dr Joel Heck, who spent an entire term in Oxford with his wife Cheryl typing many of the letters in this volume. My grateful thanks to Lewis's pupils, Professor Derek Brewer and Professor Alastair Fowler, who gave me much help. I owe many good words to Dr Robin Darwall-Smith, Archivist of Magdalen College, Oxford, and Dr Ronald Hyam, Archivist of Magdalene College, Cambridge, who provided me with letters from their college libraries.

I could not have done without the vital help given me by various people at the Wade Center, notably Dr Christopher Mitchell, Marjorie Lamp Mead, Heidi Truty and Laura Schmidt. I gladly acknowledge a huge debt to Judy Winfree, who provided me with nearly everything I know about the history of Mary Willis Shelburne. I owe special thanks to Dr C. M. Bajetta, who

translated some of the letters to members of the Poor Servants of Divine Providence in Verona, and who wrote the biography of Fr Luigi Pedrollo. Others who gave important help include Father Jerome Bertram Cong Orat, Father David Meconi SJ, Penelope Avery, Anthony Hardie, Ronald Bresland, John Coppack, Ron Humphrey, Martin Hesketh, Helena Scott, Mark Bide, Penelope Starr, Dr Alston McCaslin V, Dr Silas McCaslin, Philip G. Ryken, K. Scott Oliphint, Dabney Hart, Richard Furze, Nancy Macky, Keith Call, Isaac Gerwitz, Christian Rendel, Robert Trexler, Anthony Bott, Richard Haney, Don W. King and George Musacchio.

There would not be many letters to include in this volume were it not for the Bodleian Library, and I am greatly indebted to Dr Judith Priestman and Colin Harris, who helped me use the resources of that wonderful institution. I thank David Brawn and Chris Smith of HarperCollins for their encouragement and for their immense labour in seeing this book through the press. Finally, while the faults of the book are entirely my own, I would have been afraid to embark on it at all without the help of my copy-editor, Steve Gove.

Walter Hooper
13 September 2006
Oxford

ABBREVIATIONS

- AMR = *All My Road Before Me: The Diary of C. S. Lewis 1922–27*, edited by Walter Hooper (1991)
- BBC = Written Archive Centre, British Broadcasting Corporation
- BERG = Berg Collection, New York Public Library
- BF = *Brothers and Friends: The Diaries of Major Warren Hamilton Lewis*, edited by Clyde S. Kilby and Marjorie Lamp Mead (1982)
- BOD = Bodleian Library, Oxford University
- CAM = Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- CG = Walter Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: A Companion and Guide* (1996)
- CL I = C.S. Lewis, *Collected Letters*, Vol. I: *Family Letters 1905–1931*, edited by Walter Hooper (2000)
- CL II = C. S. Lewis, *Collected Letters*, Vol. II: *Books, Broadcasts and War 1931–1949*, edited by Walter Hooper (2004)
- CP = C. S. Lewis, *Collected Poems*, edited by Walter Hooper (1994)
- EC = C. S. Lewis, *Essay Collection and Other Short Pieces*, edited by Lesley Walmsley (2000)
- HAR = Harvard University Library
- L = *Letters of C. S. Lewis*, edited with a Memoir by W. H. Lewis (1966); revised and enlarged edition edited by Walter Hooper (1988)
- Lambeth Palace = Lambeth Palace Library, Lambeth Palace, London
- LP = unpublished ‘Lewis Papers’ or ‘Memoirs of the Lewis Family: 1850–1930’, 11 vols.
- M = Magdalen College, Oxford
- MC = Magdalene College, Cambridge
- OUP = Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Oxford DNB* = *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 60 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). There is also an online edition of this work
- P = Private collection
- PC = postcard

p.p. = per pro (through another). In this volume the abbreviation indicates letters signed by Warnie Lewis on behalf of his brother

Poems = C. S. Lewis, *Poems*, edited by Walter Hooper (London: Bles, 1964). All the poems in this volume are included in *Collected Poems (CP)*

PRIN = Princeton University Library, Princeton, New Jersey

SBJ = C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* (1955)

SLE = C. S. Lewis, *Selected Literary Essays*, edited by Walter Hooper (1969)

T = Taylor University, Upland, Indiana

TEX = University of Texas at Austin

TS = typescript

UCL = University College London

UNC = Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

V = Congregation of the Poor Servants of Divine Providence, Verona, Italy

W = Wade Center, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois

WHL = W. H. Lewis's unpublished biography of his brother, 'C. S. Lewis: 1898–1963'. The greater part of the narrative was brought together as a 'Memoir' and it was published with most of the letters as *Letters to C. S. Lewis*, edited with a Memoir by W. H. Lewis (1966). There are two typescripts of 'C. S. Lewis: 1898–1963', one in the Bodleian Library and one in the Wade Center

1950

During the spring of 1949 Lewis began dreaming of lions and by May 1949 he had written the first of the Chronicles of Narnia—The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. This was hardly finished when he had the idea for the next story, Prince Caspian—or ‘A Horn in Narnia’ as it was first called. By the time this volume of letters opens Lewis was at work on yet another Narnian story, The Voyage of the ‘Dawn Treader’, the manuscript of which would be ready for Roger Lancelyn Green¹ to read when he visited Lewis at the end of February 1950.²

TO JONATHAN FRANCIS ‘FRANK’ GOODRIDGE (P):³

Magdalen College
Oxford

[1 January 1950]

There have been very few pupils in my 26 years’ experience as a tutor for whom I can speak so confidently as I can for Mr. Frank Goodrich.⁴ As a scholar he has quality which his actual degree did not at all represent. The year in which he sat for his Final was one of strange surprises for many tutors about many pupils: but apart from that, his failure to do himself justice can be explained by two factors.

(1.) He is really too conscientious a student, too determined to get to the bottom of every question, to make an ideal examinee: good at probing and not at all good at advertising: incapable of ‘bluff’.

(2.) He gave rather more time than he could afford to his duties as secretary of a philosophical club.⁵ I saw a good deal of him in that capacity and it was his Minutes which first convinced me that he had attributes quite out of the ordinary. He could condense, and slightly popularise, the arguments of speakers (often very erudite) with less loss than any man I have ever known.

This satisfies me that he will be a good teacher: he might very well turn out to be one of the great teachers. His personal character won my respect from the beginning and this respect steadily increased during the time he

was with me. He is one of the most disinterested—I think I could say one of the most selfless—men I have ever met: and, in spite of his good humour and patience, which are un failing, I should not like to be the boy who tried to ‘rag’ him. If I had a son of my own there is no one to whom I would entrust him so gladly as to Mr. Goodrich.

C. S. Lewis

Fellow & Tutor of Magdalen

TO GEORGE ROSTREVOR HAMILTON (BOD):⁶

Magdalen College

Oxford

Jan 3./50

Dear Hamilton

O noctes cenaque deum!,⁷ it was a glorious evening, and the underworld of that Hotel can claim as well as Pluto *sunt altera nobis sidera*.⁸ And now, to sweeten memory, firstly I find that Virgil does use *planta*⁹ and Owen¹⁰ accordingly owes me 2/6, and secondly the *Masque*.

They really were asses not to play it, for it is a lovely thing in a *genre* now infinitely difficult. For we have mostly lost the power (taken for granted by our ancestors) of fitting works of art into ceremonial occasions. In this you have succeeded and what I admire more than any particular moments, tho’ I admire many of those too, is the combination throughout of what is extremely local and English and fresh with what is classical or timeless. One loses a lot (as one should) by not seeing it actually performed, for then it would be a real *δρόμενον*,¹¹ a death & resurrection rite with a most powerful effect. It is full of niceties: the three feminine endings that give the droning effect after ‘What does he say?’ on p. 5.—the ‘small change’ in your paraphrase of Aeschylus—the rhyme scheme on p. 7—the use of the ‘Voices’. But I think you were wrong to use lines (tho’ good) from Masefield¹² where you might have made as good of your own.

I’m not liking the new year much so far, but wish you very well in it. With many thanks.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W):¹³ TS
REF. 50/23.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
7th January 1950.

Dear Professor Starr,

We both thank you for your kind card, and wish you every happiness in 1950.

On Tuesday morning we hope to drink your health at the 'Bird and Baby': pity you can't be there to join us!¹⁴

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis¹⁵

TO SARAH NEYLAN (T):¹⁶

Magdalen College,
Oxford
9/1/50

My dear Sarah

Yes, I did indeed get the mats and was only waiting to be sure of the right address before acknowledging them. They were so like lino-cuts that if I weren't such an unhandy and messy person I wd. have been tempted to ink them and try making a few prints. Thanks very much indeed.

I'm glad you like the Ballet lessons. I'm just back from a week end at Malvern and found an awful pile of letters awaiting me—so I am scribbling in haste. But I must tell you what I saw in a field—one young pig cross the field with a great big bundle of hay in its mouth and deliberately lay it down at the feet of an old pig. I could hardly believe my eyes. I'm sorry to say the old pig didn't take the slightest notice. Perhaps *it* couldn't believe *its* eyes either. Love to yourself and all, Your affectionate

Godfather

C. S. Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):¹⁷

Magdalen
9/1/50

Dear Miss Bodle,

Yes. Charles Williams often used the words 'holy luck'.¹⁸ Compare Spenser 'It chanced, Almighty God that chance did guide'.¹⁹ Bless you.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO SISTER PENELOPE CSMV (BOD):²⁰

Magdalen College
Oxford
12/1/50

Dear Sister Penelope

The name of the graduate looks like KNIONAN, but this can hardly be right! It is embarrassing that as my own hand gets worse I also get worse at reading everyone else's.

I am very sorry you have had no luck yet with the *M.G.*²¹ But many a book that afterwards succeeded has been rejected by several publishers.

I read Butterfield and gave it exactly the same mark as you; and am glad of your support, for most even of my Christian friends think it bad.²² All good wishes for *St. Bernard*.²³

My book with Professor Tolkien—any book in collaboration with that great but dilatory and unmethodical man—is dated, I fear, to appear on the Greek Kalends!²⁴

I don't quite know about those American veterans. Nearly all the books we shd. want to send are published in U.S.A. and there is a bad book famine in England.

Term begins on Sat. and there is a cruel mail to-day, so I am suffering incessant temptation to uncharitable thoughts at present: one of those black moods in which nearly all one's friends seem to be selfish or even false. And how terrible that there shd. be even a kind of *pleasure* in thinking evil. A 'mixed pleasure' as Plato wd. say, like scratching?

yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

Britain had been so weakened by the effects of the Second World War (1939–1945) that, despite American assistance, rationing was still in effect when Queen Elizabeth II came to the throne in 1952. Clothes rationing ended in 1949, but food continued to be rationed until 1954. For this reason

many of Lewis's friends in the United States, such as Edward A. Allen, were still sending him food parcels.

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W):²⁵ TS
REF. 50/19.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
24th January 1950.

My dear Mr. Allen,

This is something like a New Year's greeting! And I am most grateful to you for it. I had to look closely at the label to make sure that the gift was from you, for we are so bemused at the moment with high pressure election literature that I thought it might be from our own Mr. Strachey.²⁶ I don't know whether it has appeared in your Press, but he has opened the government campaign here by saying how grateful he is to the public for their thanks for the 'best Christmas in living memory'. The odd thing is that I can't find anyone who told him that this was how we felt about the extra ounce of bacon or whatever it was that he gave us!

I hope your mother keeps well, and you also. Thanks to the photos you sent me. I picture you both always on a sea beach. But presumably you are now travelling on snow shoes.

With all best wishes and thanks.

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W):²⁷ TS
REF. 50/81.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
30th January 1950.

Dear Miss Mathews,

I was very sorry to hear about the miserable fiasco of your New York holiday. 'Flu itself I don't mind so much, especially in its later stages when the temperature has gone down, but the getting back to normality afterwards is beastly. I hope that by this time you are over the 'wet rag' stage, and feeling yourself once more.

Need I say how much we look forward to the parcel which you so kindly promise? It sounds most exciting, and will be very welcome: because, whether it blows fair and warm politically or not, it is anything but fair and warm in the literal sense. I suspect that in California you are exempt from such a day as we are having here—frost, followed by rain, followed by frost—every side walk converted by delighted small boys into an improvised skating rink—splendid opportunities of giving the passers by a good laugh every time you venture out!

With all best wishes for your health, and many thanks, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD T. DELL (P):²⁸TS
REF. 50/79

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
30th January 1950.

Dear Mr. Dell,

I think we mean very nearly the same.²⁹ Evil is certainly not a ‘Thing’. But many states of affairs, or relations between things, are regrettable, ought not to have occurred, and ought to be removed. And ‘Evil’ is an elliptical symbol for this fact.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO SISTER MARY ROSE (L):³⁰

[January 1950]

I am sorry if I misunderstood your letter: and I think that you misunderstood mine. What I meant was that if I replied to your original question (why I am not a member of the Roman Church) I shd. have to write a v. long letter. It would of course be answerable: and your answer would be answerable by me...and so on. The resulting correspondence would certainly not, of course, be in excess of the importance of the subject: but haven’t you and I both probably more pressing duties? For a real correspondence on such a subject wd. be nearly a wholetime job. I thought we cd. both discuss the matter more usefully with people nearer at hand.

Even the two letters which we have exchanged have already revealed the pitfalls of argument by letter. With all good wishes.

TO NICOLAS ZERNOV (BOD):³¹

[Magdalen College]

3/2/50

Dear Zernov

Your news is a great shock to me. I will write to Spalding.³² It was a great pleasure to meet your wife the other night and altogether a splendid evening, as yours always are. Cd. you come & dine with me on Thurs. March 9? Do.

Yours
C.S.L.

TO MRS FRANK L. JONES (W):³³ TS
REF. 50/18.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

7th February 1950.

My dear Mrs. Jones,

Many thanks for your long and interesting letter of the 24th of January. ('And' says my secretary-brother, 'don't forget to give her my grateful thanks for being one of the few people who quotes the number on your letter when she writes').

Your husband may well be proud of his school chapel, a beautiful building, which—to pay a typically English compliment—would rank high amongst school chapels over here!

No indeed, there is no question of my not wanting you to send anything, though there are times when I am more than a little ashamed at the amount you *do* send. And I note with great pleasure what you say about the tea: also about specially marked parcels.

I stand appalled at the list of your activities. I thought myself a busy man, but...

Now for an attempt at answering *some* of your questions:—(1) *Why was Christ always talking over people's heads?*

Since all we know of his teachings is derived from the disciples and St. Paul, we are not in a position to say that they did finally misunderstand Him. With what other account of His teaching can we check theirs? That He was often *temporarily* over their heads, I agree. That is the way to get a class on, as every teacher knows.

(2) *About God being Truth and Justice, and nevertheless creating this world.*

I'm afraid I can't add to what I said about this in the *Problem of Pain*.³⁴

(3) *Why did God make most people stupid?*

Have you any evidence that He did? Some people are stupid through their own choice—laziness, and even fear of the truth—so have made themselves stupid. Others, through bad education etc., which is the fault of other humans, not of God.

(4) *Neurotic.*

My dictionary defines neurotic as one 'having disordered nerves'. This would often mean in effect that the patient, with little or no moral guilt, does as the result of his disease the same things which would imply great guilt if a person in health did them—e.g. acts of cowardice, ill temper etc. (We all make the distinction in ordinary life when we excuse someone for being peevish because he is very tired, and therefore temporarily in bad nervous health). But no doubt friends and even doctors often flatter healthy but wicked people by attributing to neurosis what is really just wickedness. There is a great temptation to excuse *oneself* on the same grounds!

(5) *What is a soul?*

I am. (This is the only possible answer: or expanded, 'A soul is that which can say I am').

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely.

C. S. Lewis

TO MR LAKE (T):

Magdalen College
Oxford
8/2/50

Dear Mr Lake

I think the process is: Planets are gods in ancient poetry—and Intelligences in Aristotle—angels are ‘gods’ in O.T.³⁵ and Milton—Cambridge Platonists (and Florentine Platonists) identify both Platonic daemons & ancient gods with Christian angels—why not accept the identification?³⁶—and incidentally try to rescue the Angels from the feminine & sentimental associations that have grown round them. See the learned note from the (non existent) Natvilcius in Cap I of *Perelandra*.³⁷

Yrs. sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO DAPHNE HARWOOD (BOD):³⁸

Magdalen College
Oxford
20/2/50

Dear Daphne

You must have been bad if you thought last Wednesday was Ash Wednesday—or else you hold some Columban and pre-Augustinian view on the date of Easter. (Your Gudeman³⁹ will at a moment’s notice point out to you the passages in Bede which clear the whole thing up.)⁴⁰ I hope you’re well now? Bronchitis is nasty enough.

Fry is shattering. I’ve seen none and only read *The Lady’s not for Burning*.⁴¹ The funny parts were funny enough to make me laugh; as for the poetry—the wealth of real genius in the imagery is beyond hope. Almost too much, and sometimes rather splashed about than used. But, by gum, it’s a good fault and one we’d almost despaired of ever seeing again. Can it be—dare we hope—that the ghastly mumbling and whining period in which you and I have lived nearly all our lives, is really coming to an end? Shall we see gold and scarlet and flutes and trumpets come back?

John is doing more this term.⁴² How is Sylvia?⁴³ Give my love to Lawrence and all, including dear Woff.⁴⁴ And take care of yourself: let the young people work!

Yours sincerely
Jack L.

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):⁴⁵

Magdalen College
Oxford
21/2/50

Dear Green

Cd. you dine with me (7 p.m. smoking room) on Wed March 8th? I have several books to return and the typed MS of the *Horn* story⁴⁶ & MS of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

Ever since June 1947 when Warnie, suffering from acute alcoholic poisoning, was hospitalized in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda, County Louth (see CL II, p. 787), his binges had become more frequent. When the brothers were younger Warnie was gregarious and Jack something of a recluse. As time went on Jack's fame as a Christian apologist drove him to mingle with all kinds of people; Warnie, on the other hand, withdrew more and more into the company of books and a few friends. Alcohol gave him back, temporarily, the old gregariousness that was draining away. He was a binge-drinker, and if Jack could get him into either the Acland Nursing Home, Banbury Road, or Restholme, a private nursing home at 230 Woodstock Road run by Dorothy Watson, the bout was fairly short-lived. If, however, he slipped past his brother and reached Ireland, he usually ended up in the hospital at Drogheda, and he might be away for as long as six months. Despite Warnie's efforts to overcome the problem, Jack was not successful in persuading him to join Alcoholics Anonymous. As time went on Warnie's binges were of longer duration, and Jack was left to cope as best he could.

TO JILL FLEWETT (T):⁴⁷

Magdalen College
Oxford
29/2/50

My dear June

W. is in a nursing home⁴⁸ at present—nothing serious, indeed he ought to be out now only the nurses have made such a domestic pet of him he can't

tear himself away—so I’ve been pretty busy letter writing. So sorry about yr. mother: please give her my duty.

Minto has at last allowed Bruce⁴⁹ to be euthanised. Don’t mention it if writing to her. She seems to miss him surprisingly little so there’s no good stirring the matter up. This has made an enormous difference to our lives—we feel like a balloon that has dropped half its ballast—the music room is *clean*! R.I.P. We’d both like to see you again. All the best.

Yours (in haste)

Jack

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

:⁵⁰

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

It cannot often happen that a scholar, writing to expose the corruption of a text, should himself at that very moment suffer inadvertently a corruption of the same sort; but it really looks as if something like this had happened to Professor Dover Wilson in his edition of *Two Gentlemen* (Cambridge, 1921).⁵¹ Here on page 103 (note on V iv 89–90) he rightly points out that *which out of my neglect was never done*⁵² is a ‘line of verse’, and adds: ‘The adapter is caught—in the act.’⁵³

But surely, on this principle, the evidence for an adapter in Professor Wilson’s own Notes is even stronger? Without turning a page we find:— (1) On Chapter 2.—‘Not free from “cuts”, is in the simple end-stopped verse which we associate with the youthful Shakespeare.’

(2) *ibid.*—‘This section is in quite another style.’ (3) *ibid.*—‘Strong medial pauses and—strange combinations!’ (The exclamation so obviously added for the metre, makes this example especially flagrant.) (4) *ibid.*—‘In one of which we find a fossil line.’ (5) *ibid.*—‘Silence of Silvia, while events so vital.’ (6) *ibid.*—‘Is virtually his own composition.’ (7) *ibid.*—‘The entry of the Duke and Thurio.’ (8) *ibid.*—‘May have been taken from a later portion.’

(9) *ibid.*—‘It may have been located in Verona.’ ‘We cannot tell. One of the minor problems.’

(10) *ibid.*—Chapter 2. ‘Clearly corrupt. Daniel proposed “discandied.”’

(11) *ibid.*—‘The repetition in l. 59.’

(12) *ibid.*—‘Through careless copying of the adapter.’

(13) *ibid.*—‘To mend the metre of these lines. The sense needs mending also.’ ‘73. short line.’ (Note here the omission of the article before short, clearly for the metre.) C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS

REF. 50/81.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
9th March 1950.

My dear Miss Mathews,

You will no doubt be wondering—not angrily I’m sure, but sympathetically—why your two excellent parcels have gone unacknowledged.

The fact is that my secretary-brother chose the most inconvenient time of the term to retire to his bed and has only just ‘come to the surface’ again. While he was away I found my self very rushed, and my correspondence suffered accordingly.

I have so often tried to tell you how grateful I am for all your kindness that I find myself reduced to a simple ‘thank you’: but if the words are stale, the sentiment which prompts them is as fresh as ever.

Here we are enjoying the dubious delights of early English spring, and I often wonder what visiting Americans make of it: for they are already arriving in surprisingly large numbers considering the time of year. I can only suppose that they all come from Northern Alaska, and find our climate a nice change! If you have any friends who think of coming over, tell them that the English summer generally falls in the third week in June.

With many thanks and all my best wishes, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO WARFIELD M. FIROR (BOD):⁵⁴

Magdalen etc.
12/3/50

Dear Firor—

Well, term is over. And the election is over too, but you don’t want to hear about that:⁵⁵ except (which is the really remarkable thing) that despite

the heavy poll I never knew an election pass with less apparent excitement. Perhaps this is because it was felt to be so important: it is not in the front line that War forms the incessant subject of conversation!

As for term, the last bit of it has been heavy for me with Scholarship Examinations. One answer is so puzzling that I wd. like to hand it on. Commenting on Hamlet's words

*Sure he that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason
To fust in us unus'd,*⁵⁶

one boy explained the first line as meaning 'He who made the creation of man seem important by talking about it.' Since this youth, needless to say, has no chance of a scholarship and therefore will not be summoned for an interview, we shall all go to our graves without knowing what he meant. What, do you think, is the Theology implied? My own vein of Irreverence (still, I fear, inexhausted) cannot help building up a picture: the Almighty feeling (and is one surprised?—) that *Homo Sapiens* could hardly be reckoned among His *chefs d'oeuvre*,⁵⁷ and wondering if a publicity campaign could mend matters.

Not, of course, that all the young men we have to examine are like this. At the other end of the scale comes the candidate for a mathematical Fellowship who said—and was understood by the other mathematician who was examining him, but by no one else in the room—'I assume that All Stars are Trivially Embedded.' Can you do that one? (*Stars* does not mean the things in the night sky, I'm told: nor even, which wd. make sense of another sort, film-stars).

But there is something about this endless examining, quite apart from the labour, which bothers me. It sets me wondering about the whole system under which you, as well as we, now live. Behind all these closely written sheets which I have to read every year, even behind the worst of them, lie hours of hard, long work. Even the bad candidates are doing their best and have been trained up to this ever since they went to school. And naturally enough: for in the Democracies now, as formerly in China under the mandarin system, success in competitive examinations is the only *moyen de parvenir*,⁵⁸ the road from elementary school to the better schools, and thence to college, and thence to the professions. (You still have a

flourishing alternative route to desirable jobs through business which is largely disappearing with us: but it is at least equally competitive).

This of course is what Democratic education means—give them all an equal start and let the winners show their form. Hence Equality of Opportunity in practice means ruthless Competition during those very years which, I can't help feeling, nature meant to be free and frolicsome. Can it be good, from the age of 10 to the age of 23, to be always preparing for an exam, and always knowing that your whole worldly future depends on it: and not only knowing it, but perpetually reminded of it by your parents and masters? Is this the way to breed a nation of people in psychological, moral, and spiritual health? (N.B. Boys are now taught to regard *Ambition* as a virtue. I think we shall find that up to the XVIIIth Century, and back into Pagan times, all moralists regarded it as a vice and dealt with it accordingly).

The old Inegalitarian societies had at least this in their favour, that at least *some* of their members (the eldest sons of gentlemen living on inherited land, *and* the agricultural labourers with no chance to rise and therefore no thought of rising) were often really outside the competitive struggle. I have an uneasy feeling that much of the manliness and toughness of the community depended on them. I'm not idealising such societies. The gentry were often bad, the peasantry often (perhaps nearly always) ill treated. I mean only that we haven't solved the problem. Or, generalising this, I find the social problem insoluble. It is 'How to extend to all the good life which unequal societies have (sometimes) produced for the few.'

For the good life as (I suppose) you and I conceive it—independence, calling one's house one's castle, saying 'Mind your own business' to impertinent people, resisting bribes and threats *as a matter of course*, culture, honour, courtesy, un-assertiveness, the ease and elbow-room of the mind—all this is no natural endowment of the animal Man, but the fine flower of a privileged class. And because it is so fine a flower it breeds, within the privileged class itself, a desire to equalise, a guilty conscience about their privileges. (At least I don't think the revolt from below has often succeeded, or even got going, without this help from above).

But then, the moment you try to spread this good life you find yourself removing the very conditions of it both from the few and from the many, in other words for all. (The simplest case of all is when you say 'Here is a beautiful solitude—let us bring charabanc-loads of the poor townsmen to

enjoy it': i.e. let it cease to be a beautiful solitude). The many, merely by being the many, annihilate the goals as soon as they reach them: as in this case of education that I started with.

Don't imagine that I am constructing a concealed argument in favour of a return to the old order. I know *that* is not the solution. But what is? Or are we assuming that there must be a solution? Perhaps in a fallen world the social problem can in fact never be solved and we must take more seriously—what all Christians admit in theory—that our home is elsewhere.

Writing to you, as I do, quite irregularly and dealing with whatever happens to be uppermost in my mind at the moment, I feel I am in great danger of repeating myself. Does the same thing always 'happen to be uppermost'? In other words, have I written this identical letter before? I hope not.

Crocus, primrose, daffodil have all appeared now: almond blossom and catkins too: but no leaves on trees yet. And there's a Firor Ham in the refrigerator—I've never spelled that word before and have my doubts. God bless you.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

4/4/50

My dear Roger

Thanks v. much for the blurb:⁵⁹ I shall send it to Bles⁶⁰ to-day. It seems excellent to me, but like you I don't really understand Blurbology.

The man running this series of Lives is Milton Waldman c/o Collins.⁶¹ I will write to him about you at once.

I look forward v. much to *Castle in L.*

I may (i.e. will if I can) look for you at the K.A.⁶² tomorrow (Wed) about 11.30.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):⁶³

Magdalen College,
Oxford

6/4/50

My dear George

What ho? Any time between now and April 21st cd. you come up for two (= 2 = II = B) nights? I'll stand myself two nights in College if you can and we can make of it two evenings and one day's walking. Week-days of course. Do. Love to Moira.

Yours

Jack L.

TO EDWARD T. DELL (P):

Magdalen College

Oxford

6/4/50

Dear Mr. Dell

I had not thought of it before but it might be, as you say, that the decay of serious male friendship has results unfavourable to male religion.⁶⁴ One can't be sure, though, because, if more women than men respond to religion, after all more women than men seem to respond to everything. Aren't they much more easily stirred up than we in *all* directions? Isn't it always easier to get female members for anything you are getting up?

I don't know enough about the Ecumenical Movement to give an opinion.

Yes.⁶⁵ If (as I hope) the new earth contains beasts they will not be a mere continuation of (the present) biological life but a resurrection, a participation (to their appropriate degree) in *Zoe*.⁶⁶ See my remarks on this in *Problem of Pain*.⁶⁷ Nature will rise again now fully *digested* & assimilated by Spirit.

Bother!—I've no copy of the trans. of Athanasius at present. The theory you suggest seems to me sensible but I can't say without the text (or perhaps with it) whether St. A. actually held it.⁶⁸

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MRS FRANK L. JONES (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
6/4/50

Dear Mrs. Jones

No, I don't agree that loyalty to an institution is *simply* loyalty to the personnel and their policy. If I join a ship because I like the captain I am not justified in deserting the moment he dies, nor because I dislike his successor. There might come a point (e.g. if the new captain were using the ship for piracy) at which it wd. be my right, and my duty, to leave: not because I simply disliked him and his polity, but because the particular duty (keep your contracts) wd. now conflict with, and yield to, the higher and more universal duty (Don't be a pirate).

I don't see how there could be institutions at all if loyalty was abrogated the moment you didn't like the *personnel*. Of course in the case of temporary and voluntary institutions (say, this College) there is no very acute problem. One is entitled to resign, and resignation of course ends all the duties (and all the privileges) I had as a fellow of it.

It is much more difficult with an institution like a nation. I am sure you don't *in fact* regard all your duties to the U.S.A. as null and void the moment a party or a President you don't like is in power. At what point the policy of one's own country becomes so manifestly wicked that all one's duties to it cease, I don't know. But surely mere disapproval is not enough? One must be able to say, 'What the State now demands of me is contrary to my plain moral duty.'

Do you know I doubt if your dog has the consciousness of 'I' (by that of course I meant, not saying the words—otherwise some parrots wd. have souls!). Even young children don't seem to have it, and speak of themselves as *he*. Not that they haven't souls, but their souls are not *fully* on the spot yet. Your dog may have a rudimentary soul for all I know—I said what I could about this in the chap. on Animal Pain in the *Problem of Pain*. And if you call learning by experience 'reasoning' then he does reason. But I doubt if he is aware of himself as something distinct from all other things. My dog if shut in a room and calling for his walk never dreams of barking to tell me where he is: which looks v. much as if all his tail wagging etc, however much it may be a language *to me*, is not language *to him* and he has no idea of using it as a sign. It is spontaneous, unreflective expression of emotion. His bark *tells me* he is excited, but he doesn't bark *in order to tell me*: just

as my sneeze may tell you I have a cold, but I didn't sneeze in order to tell you.

Thanks, and thanks, and thanks again. I don't think we have ever spoiled anything thru' not opening a parcel promptly! With our good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):⁶⁹

Easter Eve [9 April] 1950

My dear Dom Bede

Thank you v. much for yr. kind letter and for sending me yr. article.⁷⁰ Isn't Havard a beautiful creature?⁷¹ *anima candida*.⁷² I was much interested in the article with a great deal of which I agree. The bit I'm least happy about is 'we are all alike saved by Christ whether His grace comes to us by way of the Natural Law etc'.⁷³ All saved by Christ or not at all, I agree. But I wonder ought you to make clearer what you mean by His Grace coming 'by the way of the Natural Law'—or any other *Law*.

We are absolutely at one about the universality of the Nat. Law, and its objectivity, and its Divine origin.⁷⁴ But can one just leave out the whole endless Pauline reiteration of the doctrine that Law, as such, cannot be kept and serves in fact to make sin exceedingly sinful?⁷⁵

I'm not here labouring a point which I think we have retained and you have lost, because I don't think we (in the C. of E., whatever may be true of some Lutherans) have really retained it.⁷⁶ Nor do I in the least want to see it again swollen and inflamed (as it was by the original Protestants) into a hypertrophy wh. destroys all the other truths of Christianity. But it must be got in. I never meet anyone, of whatever communion or school, who shows that Pauline sense of *liberation* from the Law: but I have an idea, from things you once said, that you have some qualifications for helping us all on this point. Perhaps it is not the main need at the moment—I don't know.

As I may have said before, I don't know much about the Existentialists.⁷⁷ I have read Sartre's *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*:⁷⁸ that seemed, if pressed, to be the Berkleyan metaphysic⁷⁹ in the mind of an atheist with a bad liver!⁸⁰ I've both heard of and met Marcel.⁸¹ To see him is to love him: but it appeared to me that his thesis⁸² if taken seriously, shd.

reduce him and us to perfect silence—as the philosophy of Heraclitus did his disciples. The same holds of Buber. What they mean by calling Aquinas and Augustine Existentialists I can't understand: nor do I much like such labels. I'm sorry about my handwriting wh. seems to have completely collapsed in the last few years. God bless you, my old friend. Pray for me,
Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
11/4/50

Dear Miss Bodle

God bless you and send you many happy Easters. As for my part in it, remember that anybody (or any *thing*) may be used by the Holy Spirit as a conductor. I say this not so much from modesty as to guard against any danger of your feeling, when the shine goes out of my books (as it will) that the *real thing* is in any way involved. *It* mustn't fade when I do.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
12/4/50

Dear Miss Bodle

I will indeed pray for you.⁸³ So often after a period of exaltation and comfort (such as, I think, you were having at Easter) round the very next corner something horrid lies in wait for us, either in ourselves or outside. I suppose the preceding comfort was sent, partly, to prepare us for the other: like (to use a crude simile) the rum-issue before the battle. Courage!

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO WARFIELD M. FIROR (BOD):

Magdalen etc
14/4/50

My dear Firor

What a vision!⁸⁴ Not that my attempts to ride and fish wd. give pleasure to anyone except the spectators (I don't know, though. Perhaps the horse and the fish wd. find them mildly amusing) but I'd love walking in the sort of places where better men do ride and fish.

But it's all visionary. I've told you what chains bind me to England.⁸⁵ If I can succeed in getting just over a fortnight away this summer (as I was prevented from doing last year)⁸⁶ I shall have realised more freedom than I have had since 1929. But I do get a real and strange pleasure out of the invitation. You are a fairy-tale character: your bounty (as Cleopatra says) is an autumn that grows the more by reaping.⁸⁷ (Autumn here, rather oddly, means harvest not the fall of the leaf). And I can't understand why I should be selected for it all. However, this verges on a subject you have forbidden me.

Romanes has hitherto been to me more the name of a lecture than a man, by which I see I have done him a grave injustice.⁸⁸ (Odd that things left as the memorial of a man often in fact obliterate him like this). Have I confessed to you that an inability to read biography is one of my defects? Except Boswell, of course.

I've a pile of letters this afternoon, and this is just a note of thanks and regrets. We're all well, and frequently asking when that next visit of yours is to be looked for.

All blessings.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY MARGARET MCCASLIN (W):⁸⁹ TS

REF.50/188.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
20th April 1950.

Dear Mrs. McCaslin,

Many thanks for your most kind and encouraging letter of the 17th. It gives me great pleasure to know that my books have been of some service

to you.

With all best wishes for the success of your work, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS

REF.50/81

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

22nd April 1950.

My dear Miss Mathews,

Your delightful parcel and the English spring arrived together this morning to supply badly needed cheer on the first day of Term: always a somewhat gloomy moment. From what I know of my native climate, the contents of the parcel will last longer than the fine weather.

Our latest food news is that fish has been 'decontrolled' as official English has it: which means that one's fishmonger can select what he wants instead of having to take what our rulers think is good for his customers. The immediate result was a huge increase in the price of the better kinds of fish, but things have since settled down, and now the prices are in many cases below pre-war.

With many thanks for the huge parcel and all best wishes, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
29/4/50

Dear Roger—

I like it very much indeed: less haunting than the *Wood that Time Forgot*⁹⁰ but richer. There are about four alterations I will try to persuade you to make, three of them quite easy.

Can you come & dine Thurs. May 11th to talk of that & other things?

Yours

Jack Lewis

*Lewis's friend, Mrs Janie King Moore—'Minto'—was now 78. She had been bed-ridden for several years, and it had become impossible for Lewis to look after her. On 29 April 1950 she was moved to Restholme, the Oxford nursing home run by Dorothy Watson. Warnie wrote about Mrs Moore's first day there, 'The first news from Restholme is...[Minto's] "very strong language": and M wants to know how soon she will be able to escape from this hell on earth in which she is imprisoned. On the whole the outlook is as black as it well can be.'*⁹¹

But there Mrs Moore was to remain for the rest of her life, visited almost every day by Lewis.

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):⁹²

Magdalen College
Oxford
2/5/50

My dear Arthur

Once again the axe has fallen. Minto was removed to a Nursing Home last Saturday and her Doctor thinks this arrangement will probably have to be permanent. In one way it will be an enormous liberation for me.

The other side of the picture is the crushing expense—ten guineas a week wh. is well over £500 a year. (What on earth I shall do if poor Minto is still alive nine years hence when I have to retire, I can't imagine.) The order of the day thus becomes for me stringent economy and such things as a holiday in Ireland are fantastically out of the question. So cancel all. I hardly know how I feel—relief, pity, hope, terror, & bewilderment have me in a whirl. I have the jitters! God bless you. Pray for me.

Yours
Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

[Magdalen College]
May 6/50

My dear Arthur

Thanks for your wise and kind letter. Of course you're perfectly right and I *do* try to 'consider the lilies of the field'.⁹³ Nor do I doubt (with my

reason: my nerves do not always obey it!) that all is sent in love and will be for all our goods if we have grace to use it aright. And thanks too for your immensely generous offer. I can't accept it. She is miserable enough without being deprived of my daily visits. When you and I are meant to meet we shall.

God bless you.

Yours

Jack

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):⁹⁴

[The Kilns]

22/5/50

My dear Cecil

I had taken it for granted that you wd. hardly be able to come with Owen: and also that you wd. come if, after all, it shd. be possible. *In utrumque paratus.*⁹⁵

It is the apparent strength of my craft and the apparent lightness of yours that make me so vividly aware of the stout captain in the one⁹⁶ and the mere Bellman (see *Hunting of Snark*) in the other.⁹⁷ One of the by-products of your news⁹⁸ was to fill me with shame at the rattled condition in which I then was about troubles quite nugatory compared with yours.

My hand (such as it is and for so far as it can be) is always in yours and Daphne's. It is terrible to think (and yet how did we ever forget it) that unless in rare cases of simultaneous accident, *every* marriage ends in something like this.

God bless you all.

Yours

Jack

TO HAROLD GILES DIXEY (BOD):

Magdalen College

Oxford

23/5/50

Dear Mr. Dixey

Thanks for the trouble you took to tell me you liked the Alcaics.⁹⁹ In a like case I am afraid I shd. have *said*: 'I'll write to that fellow' and wouldn't

have *done* it!

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis (= N.W.)

Sheppard's pictures of paperchases etc. were not at all like *my* memories of joy in youth!¹⁰⁰

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):

Magdalen College

Oxford

June 5/50

My dear Cecil

You know about that Trust of mine wh. Owen calls the Agapargyrometer?¹⁰¹ If not, v.[ide] the Ramsden chapter in *This Ever Diverse Pair*.¹⁰² You must be incurring a good many unusual expenses at present: and there may be other–alleviations–wh. you wd. like to incur for Daphne. Will you please write to Owen (he signs the cheques, not I) for any sums you want? The fund is in a most flourishing condition and there is no reason to stint yourself. You understand that nothing you draw impoverishes me, for all the money in that fund is already given away *from* me, tho' the question 'To whom?' is answered at my direction from time to time.

We have so ruined the language that it wd. mean nothing if I said it 'would be a pleasure'. But reverse the positions and yr. imagination will show you how very truly you wd. say, in my place, 'it wd. be a *relief*'. God bless you both: you are not often out of my mind.

Yours

Jack

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):

Magdalen College

Oxford

9/6/50

My dear Cecil

Good. Dip and spare not.¹⁰³ I can indeed imagine the heart-rending pathos of this increasing hope: and have often wondered whether our

preference (in art) for the tragic over the pathetic is not partly due to cowardice—that the pathetic is unbearable. Still, one's past agonies of pity and tenderness don't fester and corrode in memory as their opposites would.

Still love to both: I wish it were of better quality—I am a hard, cold, black man inside and in my life have not wept enough.

Yours
Jack

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS
REF.50/19.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
10th June 1950.

My dear Mr. Allen,

The precious parcel which your mother mentioned in her last letter has come in safely, and has turned us into capitalists of the richest type. I don't suppose there is another home in Oxford which contains this fabulous quantity of sugar. *Why* there should be a shortage of sugar in England is to me a complete mystery: we grow it within the Empire, and at the moment are actually *refusing* sugar from the West Indies (or so at least the papers say). But who can understand the methods of a government?

I don't remember ever noticing before, the words *Brightwood Sta.* on your mailing stamp, and have been idly wondering what they mean. With us *Sta.* is the usual abbreviation for Railway Station, and I thought it might stand for that: but my travelled brother assures me that *Depot* is the American for railway station.

Your blue suit, looking uncommonly smart, is sauntering round Oxford on the person of the aforesaid brother, and meets with much admiration in its walks. It also visited Ireland last year, where it tramped several scores of miles and very nearly went bathing one rough day: so you may also consider yourself as having had a good look round these islands by proxy.

We are just emerging from a heat wave, and very unpleasant it was: sent us by you I think, and the first American gift for which I have not been grateful. I am not and never will be a hot weather man—having been reared in the north of Ireland, by the sea, where fifty degrees is a cold day, and seventy a very hot one. Part of the trouble is that we have no apparatus over

here for dealing with hot weather—fans, plentiful ice etc. Lecturing and tutoring with the thermometer high in the eighties is ‘not my cup of tea’.

With all best wishes to you both for a happy summer, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO STELLA ALDWINCKLE (W):[104](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
12/6/50

Dear Miss Aldwinckle

If I had *carte blanche* I should put up the following programme for next term^{[105](#)}— 1. *The Concept of Mind* by Ryle^{[106](#)} or a disciple: answered by H. H. Price.^{[107](#)}

2. *The Concept of Man* by a Sartrean:^{[108](#)} answered by Sheed^{[109](#)} or Christopher Dawson.^{[110](#)}

3. *The Mystical Approach* by someone of the Heard^{[111](#)} or Huxley type:^{[112](#)} ans. by Fr. Gleason?^{[113](#)}

4. *Why I believe in God* by Miss Anscombe (is that how you spell it?):^{[114](#)} ans. by?

5. *Pagan Christs* by an Anthropologist: ans. by C. Hardie.^{[115](#)}

6. *The Historical value of the N.T.*^{[116](#)} by Dr. Farrer:^{[117](#)} ans. by?

7. *Faith & Experience* by Mr. Mitchell:^{[118](#)} ans. by?

8. *Religious Language* by Prof. Ayer:^{[119](#)} ans. by Owen Barfield. I shd. press hard for No. 4. The lady is quite right to refute what she thinks bad theistic arguments, but does this not almost oblige her as a Christian to find good ones in their place: having obliterated me as an Apologist ought she not to *succeed* me?^{[120](#)}

I am v. sorry I can't attend the meeting. The point I shd. make if I were there is that we must not be pre-occupied with novelty. Each generation of undergraduates needs to hear a fair number of the arguments we've had already.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

P.S. Does Dorothy Emmet ever read papers?^{[121](#)}

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS
REF.50/81

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
12th June 1950.

My dear Miss Mathews,

Parcels from Beverly Hills seem to arrive with the same regularity as the demands of the Income Tax Commissioner, but differ considerably from them in the reception with which they meet. Here is yet another admirable assortment, posted on the 10th. of May, which I found waiting for me this morning, in excellent condition. I have so often had the pleasant task of thanking you for your kindness that I am 'gravelled for matter' in which to express my gratitude for its continuance. Many thanks.

We are just emerging from a heat wave, always a very trying thing in this island, where we never make any preparations for hot weather, and never learn from past experience; when the thermometer gets above 85, this is one of the most uncomfortable countries in the world. No doubt a Californian will smile at the idea of calling this hot weather, but with us, such temperatures are 'news' in the front page sense of the word. This is when one appreciates living on a river; I was bathing yesterday afternoon and the water was at seventy. But how greatly I would prefer the sea!

With many thanks and all best wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO JILL FLEWETT (T): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
15th June 1950

My dear June,

We both enjoyed your visit immensely, and such was its tonic effect on Warnie that he was able to leave Restholme the following day: with however many regrets that he had not been discharged twenty four hours earlier.

Lucky you, in spite of the railway journey which must have been an unpleasant ordeal; but, as you say, you have your reward, and I envy you,

though it is not a southern sea for which I pine. I want to see and hear Ulster waves breaking on an Ulster beach. I, alas, can't get away, but Warnie has managed to squeeze out ten days in August at Vera's bungalow in Co. Louth, by the sea: an ideal place for an economical holiday. For, as he points out, the nearest pub. is three miles away, and there is no form of transport other than his own feet!

We can't imagine you getting engaged to anyone who is not very nice indeed, and look forward eagerly to meeting Clay;¹²² the only catch about the whole thing is I suppose the 'somewhere to live'? It will have to be in or near London I take it. We wish you good hunting.

We hope you are having a really good holiday, and that you come back to fresh triumphs and increased happiness.

yours ever,
Jack

I love my diptych more every day.¹²³ It is in my bedroom, facing me as I wake. Funny they shd. make St. John Baptist grown up when Our Lord is a baby, when they were really almost the same age. But oh the blue & the gold!

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
15/6/50

My dear Arthur

Warnie is now quite restored again. My daily visits to Minto are v. grievous to me, but I don't think things are too bad for her. On her (medically) 'best' days she grouches a good deal and talks about going home, but more often she is childish and incoherent. I don't think she is any *more* discontented than she was at home. Remember that if you can get over to England the Kilns is *now* a house less horrible to stay in than I know it was before and except for an hour in the afternoon when I go to the Nursing Home we cd. have all our time to ourselves. I'd love to have you of course.

I'm fine, as I now get much more exercise. I have spent a good deal of this last fortnight *in* the river. I'm glad you still see dear old Lee. Remember

me to him. Did I tell you that a children's story by me is coming out this year?

We have (thank goodness) no dog now, so there'd be no objection to your bringing Peter¹²⁴ if you come. Do consider it. God bless you.

Yours
Jack

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):¹²⁵ TS
REF.50/243

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
16th June 1950.

Dear Mrs. Jessup,

Thank you very much for your most moving and interesting letter. Don't attribute too much to *me*: any one may be privileged to be of use in this way at any time.

With all good wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W): TS
REF.50/250.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
19th June 1950.

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen,

I rarely get such a happy letter as yours of June 10th, and the photos help us to share the joy.

God bless you all.
Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford

21/6/50

My dear George

I shall be completely alone at the Kilns (but for an *ancilla*)¹²⁶ from Aug 11 to Aug 19th and am like to fall into a whoreson melancholy. Can you come and spend all or any of this time with me?

We shall have our days to ourselves except for my calling at the Nursing Home each afternoon: and we can cut that one or two days for all day walks. We cd. read the whole *Aeneid*¹²⁷ together. Do if you can. Love to Moira.

Yours

Jack

*When Roger Lancelyn Green met Lewis and the other Inklings in the 'Bird and Baby' pub for drinks on 22 June, he found proofs of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe being passed around and discussed.*¹²⁸

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W): TS

REF.50/258.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

24th June 1950.

My dear Dom Bede,

Hurrah!¹²⁹ Come and lunch here on Monday, July 3rd, and let's talk at length afterwards.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

The Korean War began on 25 June 1950 when the army of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) opened fire on that of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) south of the 38th Parallel, the line serving as the border between the two countries. This act of aggression was caused by North Korea's concern for security. The Chinese leader, Mao Zedong, was afraid that if he did not take the initiative US forces would put pressure on China along the Yalu River, causing China's north-eastern defence force to be pinned down. At the same time Southern Manchuria's power supply

(generated from hydroelectric plants in North Korea) would be controlled by hostile forces. This same day—25 June—the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution calling for the immediate cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of North Korean forces to north of the 38th Parallel. On 26 June the city of Uijongbu fell to North Korean forces, and the South Korean government left Seoul for Taejon.

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS

REF.50/81

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
29th June 1950.

Dear Miss Mathews,

Many thanks for your note of the 24th., and the cheering news which it contains; it is kind of you to send parcels, and a refinement of kindness to keep an eye on our erratic supply markets. We look forward eagerly to the meat, but that is not to say that we shan't welcome the fruit: for fresh fruit is an absurd price this year.

For once, the all absorbing topic of food has been swept into the background by the dreadful news from the Far East. The only gleam of satisfaction is that all of us feel that your prompt action may still save us from a third war; it has at least saved us from a second Munich, and there are hints in our papers today that Russia will very likely back down—but start probing for a 'soft spot' elsewhere: Burma, Cochin-China, or even Europe. One can but pray.

The first two syllables of Taliessin¹³⁰ are pronounced like the Tally in Tally-Ho: and the last two rhyme with *guessin'* or *blessin'*. Broceliande is four syllables with the main accent on the third—Bross-elly-and.

My children's story will be out this Christmas.

With best thanks and all good wishes,

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS

REF.50/19.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
1st July 1950.

My dear Mr. Allen,

Many thanks for your amusing letter of the 19th:— And for the parcel. Westfield seems to specialize in the export of dress suits, and good quality articles too. My brother asks me to say that *yours* has been much admired, after he had had it altered to conform to English custom by having the turned up cuffs removed. Will you be good enough to thank Mr. Percival for his kindness?

No cocoa thanks; it is about the only thing we have been able to get in any amount we needed, ever since the beginning of the war. Why this should be so, with tea so short, has always been a great mystery to us, for we raise both these commodities within our own ring fence so to speak.

Pilgrim's Regress and *Silent Planet* cost 8/6 over here, which, on the devalued £, should make them very cheap books in America.

Glad to hear you defeated Wormwood about even so trivial a matter as buying a car.

You must all be even more worried than we are by the news from the Far East—which does not bear thinking about. My brother—always an optimist—guesses that the Korean war is a large scale diversion to draw all available American and British forces to that theatre as a preliminary for a southward drive through Persia to the Middle East oilfields in 1951: which in its turn is a preliminary to a Russian 'liberation' of Western Europe in 1952.

But to return to *Tea*. We are actually in the proud position at the moment of having enough to see us through for I reckon the next *three months*: a position we have never been in before. But when our stock is exhausted, I shall most unblushingly remind you of your kind offer.

With all best wishes to your Mother and yourself, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
10/7/50

My dear George

Warnie is back in the Nursing Home again, alas. I've ventured to open yr. letter: he *cd. read* it but wd. forget it, and he certainly won't be fit to go to you on Fri. I'll get him to write to you when he's cured.

A thousand thanks to you & Moira for yr. perpetual kindness. *Ora pro nobis.*¹³¹

Yours

Jack

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS

REF.50/19.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

21st July 1950.

My dear Mr. Allen,

Attaboy! (Though I believe that expression is now completely old fashioned, or 'classical' American). Twenty one pounds four ounces of solid satisfaction, posted by you on the 19th of June, arrived here in the usual perfect condition this morning. How *do* you do it? I don't refer so much to your kindness, remarkable though that is, as to the skill and labour which you put into the actual packing. Most of us I fear in your position would have been the seed on stony ground¹³²—would have packed enthusiastically for three months or so, and then said 'Oh bother it' or some less parliamentary expression! Whereas you keep on keeping on.

Does your government give you any information about the world situation? Ours steadily refuses to part with any, and consequently we live in a world of rumours and astonishing stories from the man who has a friend in the Navy or the Foreign Office or what have you. All that has become obvious is that your country is committed to what may be called a major-minor war, and you have our heartiest sympathy; what we are to do to help is not at the moment very obvious. If we move troops or ships from Singapore or Hong Kong, China would no doubt be ordered to stage a large scale attack on our depleted garrisons. I see the latest Russian move is to lay claim to Alaska, but I can hardly believe this is a serious threat: designed don't you think to panic the American staff into refusing to reinforce the Far East? But what a state the world has got into! One can but hope and pray.

With best thanks and all good wishes to yourself and your mother, yours
sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS
REF.50/81

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
21st July 1950.

My dear Miss Mathews,

Once more I have the pleasant job of thanking you for your kindness; your welcome gift, posted on the 20th. of last month, arrived here in good order this morning—and will perform its accustomed, or rather I should say the accustomed function of spreading satisfaction throughout the household. Such satisfaction looks like being about the only material one to which we have to look forward.

I see in one of the papers this morning that our government's reaction to the Korean tragedy is to look forward to 'an early return to a full austerity'. They may not be able to find money, or troops, or ships, but trust them not to neglect *that* side of the international effort!

Seriously though, we all sympathize with you in the position into which you have been forced; it's all very well to call it a UNO war, but so far as I can gather, it is a USA war. Have you noticed the *French* contribution? One gunboat!

With all best wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO WARFIELD M. FIROR (BOD):

Magdalen
26th July 1950

My dear Firor

Well, the sky darkens again. We feel rather ashamed here that you should this time be in it before us; and still more ashamed by anticipation of what our government may do and not do. You will perhaps have read already in the papers that their only move so far has been a lot of gas about

‘civil defence’ (all v. well as far as it goes, but they ought to be arming) and a resolution to seize this golden opportunity of stealing a few more of our liberties from us. Try not to judge us by our rulers. There is another side to the picture.

The other day I was listening to some working men talking in a pub. They were all of such ages as to have seen two wars and fought in one. One would have expected (and indeed excused) the attitude ‘Oh, not a *third* time! Three times in my life is too much.’ But there was not a trace of it. Merely a unanimous, and quite unemotional, view that ‘I reckon these—Russians are going the same—way as ‘Itler did’ and ‘We don’t want no bloody Appeasement *this* time’ and ‘The sooner they’re taught a lesson the better.’ Of course it is partly ignorance: they don’t know anything about the resources of the Russians. But then it was equally ignorance last time; they had no conception of Germany’s strength. But anyway, they’re obviously perfectly game.

Do you think ‘wishful thinking’ is as dangerous as people make out now-a-days? All our people (I don’t know about yours?) got through the miseries of the last war by a series of wishful delusions. They always thought it was going to be over next month or next spring or next year. Did this do harm? I am inclined to think it helped them to get through bit by bit what they couldn’t have faced at all if they had formed any true estimate of its extent. And I think I remember something like that as a boy—successfully completing a walk far too long for one and feeling ‘If I’d known it was that length I could never have done it at all.’ I suspect that modern psychology—at least, modern semi-popular psychology—plays about with the reserves of the soul very dangerously.

I am spending most of my time at present ploughing through back numbers of learned periodicals less in the hope of fresh knowledge than in the fear I’ve missed something.¹³³ In your subject, which is experimental, I suppose one doesn’t have to poke back so far, because everything before a certain date wd. be definitely superseded. With us literary blokes of course this absolutely decisive ‘supersession’ occurs only very rarely—say, as the result of a windfall like the discovery of a new MS., and views often disappear not because someone has proved them false but merely because they have gone out of fashion. In any forgotten article the really illuminating thing might lie hid: tho’ about 90 to 10 against. So that I mainly pass the hours reading rubbish. The worst rubbish being the pseudo-

scientific—the attempt to apply, or the pretence of applying, the methods of *your* disciplines to *ours*.

The old lady whom I call my mother is now permanently in a Nursing Home, and I visit her daily. It is my first experience of this stage of paralysis; and, do you know, I am rather *cheered* by it. It does look so like childhood, only working backwards: the mind gradually withdrawing from the body in the last years as it was gradually settling in during the first. She was for many years of a worrying and, to speak frankly, a jealous, exacting, and angry disposition. She now gets gentler—I dare to hope not *only* through weakness. Certainly, I think she is a little happier, or a little less unhappy, than she usually was in health. You'd know more about all this than I do. My brother also has been ill (his old trouble) but is now better.

Is there any chance of your visiting England this year? If you want to meet plenty of fellow countrymen Oxford is the place! Indeed, not only Americans at present, but all nations—Medes (or at any rate Swedes) Parthians and Elamites.¹³⁴ Also, torrential rain.

God bless you my dear friend. Have us all in your prayers.

Yours ever

C. S. Lewis

And thanks (which you forbid) for the hams (which I mustn't mention). No two are quite alike and each has its individual beauties.

TO RALPH E. HONE (W):¹³⁵TS REF.50/287.

Magdalen College,

Oxford.

29th July 1950.

Dear Mr. Hone,

I am sorry, but it so happens that you could hardly have struck a worse time. I am working at high pressure, and in the intervals have a Conference to attend, an invalid to look after, and several visitors. I'm afraid in the circumstances a meeting is hardly possible.

With thanks, good wishes, and regrets,

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):[136](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
5/8/50

My dear Walsh

Thank you for your letter of July 20th. I'm glad to hear about the 'revolution' in poetry, but I moderate my hopes. I think what really separates me from all the modern poets I try to read is not the technique, with all its difficulties, but the fact that their experience is so very unlike my own. They seem to be so constantly writing about the same sort of things that *articles* are written about: e.g. 'the present world situation'. That means, for me, that they can only write for the top level of the mind, the level on which generalities operate. But even this may be a mistake. At any rate I am sure I *never have* the sort of experiences they express: and I feel them most alien where I come nearest to understanding them.

I am just back from attending a Russian Orthodox Eucharist. The congregation walk about a lot!

My brother joins me in all best wishes to you and yours.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):[137](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
8/8/50

My dear Cecil

Thank you for your letter which is one of the most *useful* I have ever received. It brings home to me that aspect of Death which is now most neglected—Death as a Rite or Initiation Ceremony. And certainly something does come through into this world, among the survivors, at the time and for a little while after.

I am sorry about John's Class[138](#)—and also that I feel I failed him badly at our last meeting. I had been wondering for about 24 hours whether the lightness of head and extreme lassitude that I was feeling were the beginning of an illness. After a day in which I had had no leisure at all and which had ended with a visit to the Nursing Home I had got back to College

feeling 'all in'. At that moment came his knock. It was the moment of all others (midway between his mother's funeral and his own viva) at which a chap might expect some moral support from an older man even if that older man were not his tutor and a family friend. But I could make no response at all. I'm sorry.

A week end here, after your travels, can be arranged almost whenever you like. Of course you will be thrice welcome.

Yours ever

Jack

TO DON GIOVANNI CALABRIA (V):[139](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

xxv. Aug. 1950

Dilectissime Pater,

venerunt mihi nuper in manus exemplaria quaedam libri mei *De Aenigmatibus Doloris* francogallice versi. Illam linguam, puto, bene intellegis. Quocirca, si tibi placuerit, mittam ad te exemplaria tria, primum tibi, alterum Dom. Lodettio, tertium Dom. Arnaboldio. Fac me certiore si hoc tibi cordi fuerit. Isagogem satis doctam et elegantem addidit quidam Mauritius Nédoncelle.

Omnia omina nunc infausta; placeat Deo haec in melius verti, spectanti haud nostra sed Christi merita. Vale, mi Pater, et semper habe in orationibus tuis C. S. Lewis

Magdalen College,
Oxford

25th August 1950

Dearest Father,

Some copies of my book *The Problem of Pain* translated into French have lately reached me.[140](#) I think you know that language well. Therefore, if you so wish, I will send you three copies, one for you, another for Mr. Lodetti, and the third for Mr. Arnaboldi.[141](#) Just let me know if it is of interest to you. A rather learned and elegant introduction has been added to it by one Maurice Nédoncelle.[142](#)

All the omens are, at present, unfavourable;¹⁴³ may it please God to change these for the better, looking not at our, but at Christ's merits. Farewell, my father, and keep me always in your prayers.

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS

REF.50/81

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
28th August 1950.

Dear Miss Mathews,

Many thanks for your letter of the 16th. August, *and* for the parcel of 17th. July, which 'dead heated' as the racing people say: and both are very welcome. No indeed, I can't think of any item which I would like altered; I was going to say that we don't want fruit, having plenty, but of course our fruit season will soon be over, and there is the winter to consider.

Eggs are off the ration, but the egg situation leaves us unmoved, as we, thank goodness, have our own fowls. According to what I read in the papers, their being off the ration does'nt help things much; by the time the innumerable hordes of inspectors have weighed and graded and stamped and sorted and packed them, they seem to be always stale and often bad by the time they reach the consumer.

I am glad you like the memoir on Charles Williams.¹⁴⁴ Most certainly you shall have a signed copy of the book as soon as it appears.¹⁴⁵ Are there any other of my books you have'nt got, and would care to have? If so, I might be able to get them for you.

I have been away for a few days in the Welsh mountains, and my brother-lucky man-is just back from a fortnight in Ireland, or Eire as they prefer to be called. He tells me that over there they are still living in a fool's paradise; whilst the English-and no doubt American-papers were full of anxious discussion of the Korean war, the leading Irish paper carried banner headlines, WHAT IS WRONG WITH IRISH JUMPING? (It was Horse Show week). What is wrong with Irish THINKING would be more to the point.

With all best wishes,
yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

Jill Flewett and Clement Freud were married in St James Church, Spanish Place, on 4 September 1950. Jack was unable to attend the wedding, but Wannie was there.[146](#)

TO BELLE ALLEN (W): TS

REF.50/19.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
5th September 1950.

Dear Mrs. Allen,

How nice to hear from you again! No wonder you feel disinclined for letter writing, with so many more attractive occupations out of doors. Your river sounds delicious, and I would much like to see it. I wonder is your King bird what we call over here a Kingfisher? Ours is a smallish bird of a very beautiful vivid blue, which flies low over the water, and at a great speed. Our bitterns are I think extinct, but I have often read of the 'booming' of the bittern. Do yours boom, and what sort of noise is meant?

I envy you your visit to Madison beach. No, I did'nt get away to the sea this year, alas, but I did manage a few days down in the Welsh mountains, which are very lovely, and where I got some fine walking: came across an inn, miles from anywhere where the guests are fed in the kitchen, as was common practice a hundred and fifty years ago. This was not a show piece for tourists, but is still the way they live in the heart of Wales.

My brother, more lucky than I, took Edward's suit for a treat to an Irish beach for a fortnight in August; when he came back he informed me that he had had thirteen wet days, 'and on the fourteenth we had a shower'. He was astonished at the *unreality* of life in Ireland today. Current events are never referred to, and Ireland is quite happy about the future: she is to be neutral, and her defence is to be a first charge on American and English resources: and that's that, and now lets talk about horses. (On one of the most critical days in the Korean fighting, the leading Irish newspaper carried banner headlines on the front page, WHAT IS WRONG WITH IRISH JUMPING?). They are certainly an odd people.

All that you have to say about those little churches is very interesting and charming, and I am amused at your both being the same *colour* as the negro congregation; it's a great testimony to Madison Beach. Though it is possible, by devoting all your time to it, to do the same thing even in England. There has been a man at the Oxford bathing place this summer, who would have passed, if not for a negro, at least for a Malay: though how he acquired this tan in such a wet summer, I don't know. They tell me you can now buy sunburn in a *bottle*, which is perhaps the answer. By the way, yes, the Thames is bathed in, and I use it regularly in good weather; but its not the same thing as the sea, though very pleasant.

Many thanks for all the too kind things you say about my books—and the hardship of authors.

My mother died in 1908, when I was nine and my brother thirteen; we have no sisters, and are a couple of confirmed old batchelors, sharing a rather nice house with an eight acre garden in the suburbs.

And now I really must stop, with all good wishes to you and Edward,
yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):[147](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
Sept 7th 50

Dear Miss Bodle

The question 'Is it better to live in cramped quarters with sister and Aunt-step-mother and bad prospects or to be uprooted and begin a new life elsewhere?' immediately provokes the other question 'Better *for whom?*'

In other words it all turns on the actual character of, and relations between, Gertrude and Franzel. One can imagine a sort of home life wh. was worth clinging to at all costs, or one wh. was worth escaping from at all costs: and (troublesomely) the chances are that *this* home-life is between the two extremes. Now you hardly know enough to decide, and of course I know nothing. Mustn't Franzel and Gertrude make the decision? Especially Franzel.

My own immediate feeling is that the uprooting wd. on the whole be the best thing for now. After all, what with jobs and marriage and one thing and another, most boys get pretty well uprooted anyway. But I think you can

only offer, pray, and wait for their decision. Of course *I* can't 'see F's point of view'. Boys are no more like one another than anyone else! With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO DON LUIGI PEDROLLO (V):[148](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept. 12, 1950

Reverende Pater

Contristatus sum audita dilecti D. J. Calabriae valetudine. Placeat Domino nostro diutius servare nobis 'tam carum caput'. De nugis meis, mi crede, non scripsissem si putavissem virum aegritudine teneri: quo fit ut importunior esse viderer. Attamen quodcumque est libelli mitto. Saluta pro me D. J. Calabria: quem, cum tota domo vestra, benedicat benedictus Jesus Christus. Vale C. S. Lewis

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept. 12, 1950

Reverend Father,

I am very sorry to hear of dear Fr. G. Calabria's illness.[149](#) May it please our Lord to preserve 'tam carum caput'[150](#) longer. Believe me, had I known he was unwell, I would not have written about my trifles, which may have seemed rather untimely. Anyway, I am sending the book, just in case. Give my regards to Fr. G. Calabria: may the blessed Christ bless him, and all of your house. Farewell C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS

REF.50/81

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
20th September 1950.

Dear Miss Mathews,

To receive one of your kind gifts produces a perceptible lightening of the gloom which descends on an elderly tutor when he realizes that he is on the verge of beginning yet another term. Many thanks for your unwearying attentions. The parcel which has just arrived is that numbered 2999, posted at Beverly Hills on 14th. August.

This however is perhaps not the time to be gloomy, for if our domestic news has little in it to cheer us, at least the world situation is distinctly better. We are all following anxiously the despatches from Korea; they are not very informative, but it does seem as if the tide had really turned in your favour at last. (One should I suppose, to be pedantic, say in U.N.O.'s favour, but it seems rather absurd to call a ninety per cent American army the 'UNO Army'). What surprises me most about the whole war is the extraordinary fighting qualities of the Koreans; I'd never heard of them as soldiers before the outbreak of this trouble, and my brother tells me that in his time in the East, they were regarded as primitive agricultural nonentities. Even allowing for their immensely superior number, they appear to be putting up a remarkable show.

Of home politics the less said the better; you may have seen that we have chosen this period of rearmament of all possible periods to nationalize the steel industry—apparently against the wishes of the Steel masters, and of the Trades Union leaders concerned. But enough of this.

After one of the worst summers on record, we are entering upon what looks like a wet autumn, and one either carries a raincoat on hot, fine days, or goes out without it and gets soaked. Still, the country is looking lovely, and autumn is my favourite season. My brother and I took a day off last week, put sandwiches in our pockets, and tramped sixteen miles or more along the old Roman road—now a mere track—which runs from Dorchester Abbey to Oxford. Foreigners are apt to think of this island, I find, as just one huge factory site. But you would be surprised if you could see the unspoilt beauty and charm which can still be found, even in the purely industrial areas: and here, within a few miles of Morris Motors, there are plenty of villages off the main highways, where nothing seems to have happened for the last two hundred years or so.

I hope to send you the autographed children's book by Christmas, but will probably know more about its progress this afternoon, as I am going out to lunch with my publisher¹⁵¹ in the Cotswold village of Burford, where he is on holiday.

With many thanks, and all good wishes to you and your father, yours
sincerely, C. S. Lewis

TO ANNE RIDLER (BOD):[152](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
25/9/50

Dear Miss Ridler—

5 minutes after yr. departure I was kicking myself to having let you go without getting either yr. real name or yr. address. Well, I now have at any rate the address. No, no, I never confused you with R.P.[153](#) And don't you go looking down your nose at her poetry neither. The earlier vols (not the late, comic ones wh. are not to my taste) contain surely v. choice work. Do try them again in a favourable hour.

Thanks for the C.W.[154](#) sonnet which, I agree, is good & characteristic in thought. Not bad in expression either, except for *thrall*. (Tho' whether, in the long run the banishment of Poetic Diction & Archaism, wh. reduces us from the freedom of Greek, Anglo-Saxon & Skaldic verse, to the straight-waistcoat of classical French, may not shend us all, I'm not sure.) My duty remembered.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JILL FREUD (T): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
29th September 1950.

Dearest June,

Hurrah! A book I've always wanted. I shall devour it. Thank Clay enormously. (Here concludes the manuscript of C.S.L., and as he has left to week-end with Barfield at Abingdon, I can't challenge his spelling of Clay—surely Clé: to whom all greetings. How delightful of you to send this excellent book; I remember from our lunch at the Royal Oxford that Clé is an expert in this sort of thing, and no gift could have pleased us better.

As for coming to see you, it is, in the jargon of the day, a priority programme: but I fear nothing can be done about it until this term is over;

you remember what term is like for poor J.

I hope Mrs. Freud is very happy in her new life; I don't send the same wishes to Cle, for if he is'nt happy, what would make him so?).

No news here. Minto continues much the same, some days recognizing us, some days not. It sounds horribly unChristian and callous, but I can't help wishing she would die. Can you imagine anything more horrible than lingering on in this state? However, she seems fairly contented.

All love to you both.

Yours,
Warnie

P.S. Many thanks for the wedding cake. Pushkin is up to a bit of no good in the neighbour's gardens, but will be made to sleep on his portion as soon as he comes back.

TO MARTYN SKINNER (BOD):[155](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
11/10/50

Dear Skinner

Great Heavens, what must you think of me by now! I see it is almost exactly a year since you so kindly sent me a copy of *Two Colloquies*:[156](#) and all that time not even a word of acknowledgement. I reject a momentary temptation to tell you that the year has been spent in a continuous, intensive study of the text. The truth is, I didn't want to write until I had given them a sympathetic reading and somehow I never was in the mood for them till tonight. (Reading collection papers,[157](#) like marking School Cert.,[158](#) I have always found a great whetter of appetite for poetry. Fact! I don't know why). The right mood for a new poem doesn't come so often now as it used to. There is so little leisure, and when one comes to that leisure untried—well, you know, *Ink* is a deadly drug. One wants to write. I cannot shake off the addiction.

They're good. The puns may be a bit too frequent for my taste, but most of them excellent in quality. (I mean, I couldn't make them myself!)—especially '*Lies* is for me a realistic word.'[159](#) And other Wit too, and wit that involves wisdom, like '*Doesn't a cap still fit turned inside out.*'[160](#)

‘Shelley-shalley’¹⁶¹ is a verb in a thousand. But ‘me rather all that bowery etc.’¹⁶² I mean the bits (in the good, obvious, old fashioned sense of the word) more ‘poetical’. Everyone has had a try at dewy cobwebs: few better than yours on p. 7. And I liked ‘A branch’s beauty in a waggon’s curve’,¹⁶³ and all p. 14 about the honey coloured ham and the white mines of pork inside the crackling made my mouth water.¹⁶⁴ ‘Simple, sensuous, and passionate’¹⁶⁵ egad! So too the whole bit beginning ‘This scene describes the hermit.’¹⁶⁶ But what’s much the best of all, what gave me the authentic thrill (an ‘uncovenanted’ thrill for your metre and manner don’t, so to speak, contract to provide such, they are not on the *menu*) is the passage beginning at the bottom of p. 35 on the worlds in the skull. Which retrospectively enriches the close of the first ‘drink to the Utopia within’.¹⁶⁷ Congratulations.

I expect this comes like last night’s joint appearing at breakfast, for of course you’re now writing something else and don’t particularly want to learn about the *Colloquies*. Can you forgive me? I assure you there are days when I could say with honest King George ‘I *hate* Bainting and Boetry’,¹⁶⁸ and I wouldn’t like to have gulped you down in one of those. Last time you wrote to me didn’t you say you were contemplating a narrative poem? Has anything come of it?

I must go to bed. Once more thanks v. much for this very distinguished little book, and add to the kindness by forgetting my incivility.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS

REF.50/81

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
16th October 1950.

Dear Miss Mathews,

Your parcels arrive at such frequent intervals that I am quite perplexed how to acknowledge them! Here is yet another, full of good things, which has just reached me, and for which I can, as usual, do no more than offer a simple thank you: and you know it is no empty form of words.

The international sky seems a trifle better than when I wrote last, and you must all be very proud of McArthur and your army: for, though called a UNO army, I fear the rest of us played a very small part in the victory. Let us hope that the whole sad affair will cause Stalin to change his policy, even at the eleventh hour: tho' the boiling up of the trouble in French Indo-China does not look as if he was very repentant.

I am beginning the second week of a new term, and the harness still galls a little: but 'the old horse for the hard road' as we say. I expect I shall soon be trotting contentedly enough.

With many thanks and good wishes to yourself and your father, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe: A Story for Children *was published by Geoffrey Bles of London on 16 October 1950.*

TO HARRY BLAMIRES (BOD):¹⁶⁹ TS
REF.50/362.

Magdalen College
Oxford.
18th October 1950.

Dear Blamires,

I wanted nothing altered except the things I noted: certainly I did not want what I should call a 're-writing'.¹⁷⁰ But that is such a vague word, and we can only guess what it covers in Bles's mind. I should advise you (if you are going to pursue the Bles avenue instead of trying another publisher) to make exactly the corrections you think proper—no more and no less—and then re-submit it. He will probably (*entre nous*)¹⁷¹ not remember the original text well enough to know how drastic the changes are! I can't advise about other publishers: you'd know better than I. I hope it will find a home: I thought it a useful book.

In haste, with all good wishes,

yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
20/10/50

Dear Walsh

Of course they feel passion about politics but no passion enough for poetry: especially passions that have no commerce with the senses. Sexual passion, you see, has a concrete object before it, and is linked with fundamental impulses.

The real parallel to much modern political poetry is not religious poetry concerned with God or the Passion or Heaven but merely pious poetry concerned with (ugh!) 'religion'. The religion of politics is a religion without sacraments: for the human sacrifices wh. it practices are mere murder, not even ritual murder. Wordsworth compensated for the (poetically) ghost-like nature of politics by using a strict form, the sonnet. But that *matter*, with *vers libre* as the form, is to me quite unpardonable: a noisy vacuity.

My brother is now quite well, thanks. I'll note the B.P.J.¹⁷² If you get some verse from me you've brought it on yourself: *wéan ahsode*.¹⁷³ All the best.

Yours¹⁷⁴

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):¹⁷⁵

Magdalen College
Oxford
26/10/50

Dear Mrs. Shelburne—

Thank you for your most kind and encouraging letter. I should need to be either of angelic humility or diabolical pride not to be pleased at all the things you say about my books. (I think, by the way, you have all the ones that wd. matter to you). May I assure you of my deep sympathy in all the very grievous troubles that you have had. May God continue to support you: that He has done so till now, is apparent from the fact that you are not warped or embittered. I will have you in my prayers. With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W): TS
REF.50/250.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
2nd November 1950.

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen,

Many thanks for the post card. What a perfectly lovely place, and how I envy you the enjoyment of it! You may be sure that when (and if) it is ever my good fortune to visit the United States, I shall include the Smoky Mountains in my itinerary: preferably at a time when you are in residence.

With all good wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO BELLE ALLEN (WHL):

Magdalen etc.
2nd November 1950.

Dear Mrs. Allen,

...I was deeply interested in your sketch of your life, which certainly did not begin easily. Ours was very different; for there was always plenty of money, on the modest scale of provincial comfort in those far-off days; but we really hadn't anyone to raise us, and ran wild; like Topsy, we just grewed¹⁷⁶....

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS
REF.50/81

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
8th November 1950.

Dear Miss Mathews,

I think 'gracious' is the word I want. There is a graciousness about your continued kindness which quite floors me: the immediate reference being to the excellent parcel posted on 16th. October, which has just arrived, and whose contents will be stored against the literal and metaphorical rainy day which is rapidly drawing nearer. Very many thanks.

We are all a good deal depressed—and doubtless you are much more so—over the very unpleasant news from Korea. It is horrible to think of the distress of wives and mothers who had thought the fighting over, only to discover that what is virtually a new war has to be faced. And how is it going to end? Of the ultimate end there can of course be no doubt, but I fear there is very little chance now of a decision being reached before the northern winter clamps down on the country. We can but hope and pray for some speedy success.

Here, we have just recovered from the periodical nuisance of a by-election for parliament: our sitting member having been elevated to the House of Lords, much to the poor man's disgust, for he is a keen party politician. The Socialist vote is down by three thousand on a poll of some 69,000, and the Conservative was returned with a majority of nearly double that polled by his Conservative predecessor at the General Election. It does not do to take by-elections too seriously, but there is a certain significance about this one, since we are now largely an industrial constituency.

Winter is beginning with grey sky and north east winds, and I find myself envying you in comfortable California, where I suppose you are still in summer clothes? You should buy yourself an enormous fur coat, fill the pockets with brandy and aspirin, and come over here and see how the poor live, on the fringes of civilization!

Again many thanks.

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

P. S. I enclose the fairy tale, and hope you will like it.

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
13/11/50

My dear Dom Bede

Good. I think we are in entire agreement on this point. One cd. put it this way. The bad (natural) tree cannot produce good fruit. But oddly, it can produce fruits that by all *external* tests are indistinguishable from the good ones: the act done from one's own separate and unredeemed, tho' 'moral'

will, *looks* exactly like the act done by Christ in us. And oddly enough it is the tree's real duty to go on producing these imitation fruits till it recognises this futility and despairs and is made a new (spiritual) tree. The trouble in the XVIth century was that Luther—who intuited the truth—was fundamentally an uneducated man, a peasant type: and really let the whole question get immediately entangled with political and ecclesiological questions wh. were really quite irrelevant to it. But the whole question must now be raised again.

What most people who talk about Reunion don't realise is that *continental* Protestantism regards the C. of E. as still theologically 'unreformed' and the Lutheran–Anglican gap is really at present at least as wide as the Anglican–Roman. It is thus a three cornered affair.

How very much superior the *Imitation*¹⁷⁷ is to the *Scale of Perfection*¹⁷⁸—yet I'd have said just the opposite once.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS

REF.50/81

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
20th November 1950.

My dear Miss Mathews,

The nine pounds fourteen ounces of comfort and cheer, whose arrival was heralded by your last letter, has this morning arrived in good condition, and will be very welcome for what the papers still describe rather pathetically as 'the festive season'. Which, as I told you, threatens to be even leaner than usual this year; there are amongst other things, cheerful prognostications of turkey at 7/6 per pound. My board will not 'groan under coarse plenty' at any such price, especially as we shall be in a position to sacrifice a couple of chickens.

I never read the papers, and would not have known anything about it except for my brother, who kindly reads me out the more cheerful extracts at breakfast. However, I am grateful to him for one excerpt from yesterday's paper—a delicious printer's error in a description of a revivalist meeting in

the Midlands:—‘At the conclusion of the exercises, a large CROW remained in the hall, singing Abide with Me’.

With renewed thanks and all good wishes, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS

REF.50/81

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
25th November 1950.

Dear Miss Mathews,

Many thanks for your letter of the 20th, and especially for the quotation from F. Giovanni;¹⁷⁹ it is good, is’nt it?

I don’t think I should like the climate of Beverly Hills for a permanency; do you never feel the need to get away up north for a holiday and see snow on the ground? My idle brother on the other hand, with nostalgic memories of long lazy days in the tropics—at the taxpayer’s expense—feels it would suit him down to the ground: and talks still at times, generally at dinner times, of a steak and mushrooms which he once ate in San Francisco.

I note, with the usual gratitude—and embarrassment—that the usual stream of gifts is making its way steadily along the pipeline which you have laid from Alpine Drive to Magdalen College. Many, *many* thanks. Will you despise my pedestrian taste if I say I prefer envelopes to butter Scotch? I fear there is a sort of echo of Goering’s ‘guns before butter’ about this,¹⁸⁰ but stationary is for some reason, absurdly hard to get over here, and very dear when got. Probably now that I come to think of it, because we have recently broken off our paper contract with Canada; not unnaturally to the great annoyance of the Canadians.

If a magic carpet could transport you to Oxford this morning, it would work a very rapid cure on your lethargy. The floods are out, and now it is freezing, with a heavy fog; I can’t see across the quadrangle.

With all best wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO BELLE ALLEN (WHL):

Magdalen etc.
25 November 1950.

Dear Mrs Allen,

I too am an admirer of Bernard Shaw's work, and could love him for his attack on the vivisectionists. That in the preface to the Doctor's *Dilemma* is just devastating.¹⁸¹ Many before and since have attacked them for their cruelty, but Shaw was, I think, the first man to attack them for their *stupidity*; which I'm sure gets them on the raw whilst an attack on their cruelty would most likely leave their withers unwrung. No one who has ever read Shaw is able afterwards to think of vivisectionists without remembering the imbecile who spent his time cutting the tails off generations of mice to see if presently one would be born without a tail....

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):¹⁸²

REF.50/4.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
28th November 1950.

Dear Miss Pitter,

What a delightful surprise! You cheer me up no end, and provide a makeweight to letters from a headmistress which tell me the book will cause confusion and terror, and that many people are much 'distressed' at my having written it. But I get nice letters from actual children and parents.* I noted, of course, the lion image in your previous letter and rejoiced darkly.

But next time you write, don't write all about *me*: what are *you* doing, and how are *you*? Well, I hope. With very many thanks, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

* But fan mail from children is delightful. They don't gas. They want to know whether Aslan repaired Tumnus's furniture for him. They take no interest in oneself and all in the story. Lovely **TO MRS HALMBACHER (L):**

Magdalen College
Oxford

28 November 1950

I avoided the word 'Grace' because I thought it didn't carry much clear meaning to the uninstructed readers I had in view. I think the thing is dealt with in a rough and ready way in *Case for Christianity*¹⁸³ and *Beyond Personality*.¹⁸⁴ Any advanced or technical theology of Grace was quite beyond my scope. Naturally that does not mean that I thought the subject unimportant.

The other question, about the limits of faith and superstition, is also important. But my own mind is v. far from clear on it. I think you must seek counsel (if it is a practical problem for you) from a real theologian, not from an amateur like me. I am sorry to disappoint you: but it is better to refuse than to mislead.

TO WARFIELD M. FIROR (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 6/50

My dear Firor

It is always a pleasure to hear from you: doubled in this case by finding that you owed (or think you owed) me a letter when I feared the shoe was on the other foot.

The old lady's retirement to a Nursing Home has made me a good deal freer in a small way. I can plan my days and count on some domestic leisure as I have not been able to do these last fifteen years. But it has hardly made me free on such a large scale as you suppose. I visit her pretty nearly every day, and I shd. certainly like to be at hand when the end comes. Also, I naturally have to be a good deal more frugal than before, since the Nursing Home makes a pretty big hole in my income.

The patient is nearly always perfectly placid now and does not seem to suffer at all. Very interested, for the first time in her life, in food. These bedside experiences have much allayed my fear of paralysis. I had not realised that it could be such a quiet return to infancy, or even animality. I suppose one need not be surprised that the evening twilight sometimes is

exactly like the morning twilight. But, I fear, no chance of your ranches yet. 'Ever more thanks.'

I am sometimes much worried about the News, sometimes ashamed that I am not worried more. I suppose it comes from one's total powerlessness. Our emotions all have a strongly practical side and don't work much when it is obvious that one can't do anything. Hence a small noise at night in one's house, which one *can* stop, keeps one awake till one has got up and done so: the most notable exception (for me) is when one is being driven in a car by a driver one doesn't trust along a dangerous road. I do find it v. hard to surrender myself to my fate then. I suppose because one can't get rid of the idiotic illusion that one *could* do something.

My great hope is that whenever in the past people have feared a German outbreak, their fears have proved right: but when they have feared a Russian outbreak, they have often, perhaps usually, been pleasantly disappointed. The Russian is not, like the German, a *congenital* invader. But this is slender. The thought of such a war as that wd. be bad enough in itself: but the thought of entering it with such a government as England now has, is sheer nightmare. Have you any parallel to their imbecility? All rulers lie: but did you ever meet such bad liars?

While you have been reading *Letters to Young Churches* (a good book, I thought)¹⁸⁵ I have been regaling myself on *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*.¹⁸⁶ I wonder why that man never wrote anything else on the same level? The scene in which Huck decides to be 'good' by betraying Jim, and then finds he can't and concludes that he is a reprobate, is really unparalleled in humour, pathos, & tenderness. And it goes down to the very depth of all moral problems.

We still eat hams (or give 'em to the hard up) with much joy and gratitude, and your name is 'in our flowing cups freshly remembered'.¹⁸⁷ I thought you were running over to this side some time soon again? I wd. dearly like another pow-wow. With all thanks & blessings.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford

7/12/50

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen,

(1.) To the best of my knowledge the Episcopalian Church in America is exactly the same as the Anglican Church.

(2.) The only rite which we know to have been instituted by Our Lord Himself is the Holy Communion ('Do this in remembrance of me'¹⁸⁸—'If you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you'¹⁸⁹). This is an order and must be obeyed. The other services¹⁹⁰ are, I take it, traditional and might lawfully be altered. But the New Testament does not envisage solitary religion: some kind of regular assembly for worship and instruction is everywhere taken for granted in the Epistles. So we must be regular practising members of the Church.

Of course we differ in temperament. Some (like you—and me) find it more natural to approach God in solitude: but we must go to church as well. Others find it easier to approach Him thro' the services: but they must practice private prayer & reading as well. For the Church is not a human society of people united by their natural affinities but the Body of Christ in which all members however different (and He rejoices in their differences & by no means wishes to iron them out) must share the common life, complementing and helping and receiving one another precisely by their differences. (Re-read 1st Corinthians cap 12 and meditate on it. The word translated *members* wd perhaps be better translated *organs*).¹⁹¹

If people like you and me find much that we don't naturally like in the public & corporate side of Christianity all the better for us: it will teach us humility and charity towards simple low-brow people who may be better Christians than ourselves. I naturally *loathe* nearly all hymns: the face, and life, of the charwoman in the next pew who revels in them, teach me that good taste in poetry or music are *not* necessary to salvation.

(3.) I am not clear *what* question you are asking me about spiritual healing. That this gift was promised to the Church is certain from Scripture.¹⁹² Whether any instance of it is a real instance, or chance, or even (as might happen in this wicked world) fraud, is a question only to be decided by the evidence in that particular case. And unless one is a doctor one is not likely to be able to judge the evidence. V. often, I expect, one is not called upon to do so. Anything like a sudden *furore* about it in one district, especially if accompanied by a publicity campaign on modern commercial lines, wd. be to me suspect: but even then I might be wrong. On

the whole, my attitude wd. be that any claim *may* be true, and that it is not my duty to decide whether it is.

'Regular but cool' in Church attendance is no bad symptom. Obedience is the key to all doors: *feelings* come (or don't come) and go as God pleases. We can't produce them at will and mustn't try.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

Sheldon Vanauken's¹⁹³ autobiographical *A Severe Mercy* (1977) is the heartrending story of his marriage to Jean 'Davy' Davis. They first met at the outbreak of the Second World War when Vanauken was in his second year at Wabash College in Indiana. They fell in love and married a few months later. From the first they devised what they called 'The Shining Barrier' which was meant to act as a 'defence against creeping separateness'.¹⁹⁴ Vanauken joined the Navy in March 1941 and was sent as a US naval lieutenant commander to Pearl Harbor, where he was stationed when it was bombed by the Japanese on 7 December 1941.

On leaving the Navy in November 1945 he went to Yale University with Davy where he took an MA degree in History. In the Michaelmas Term 1949 they moved to Oxford where Vanauken began work on a B. Litt. degree at Jesus College. At this time Vanauken spelt his name 'Van Auken'. Neither was a believer, but it was not long before they began to see things differently. They read a number of Lewis's books and in December 1950 Vanauken wrote to Lewis:

Having felt the aesthetic and historical appeal of Christianity, having begun to study it, I have come to awareness of the strength and 'possibleness' of the Christian answer. I should like to believe it. I want to know God...But I cannot pray with any conviction that Someone hears. I can't believe.

Very simply, it seems to me that some intelligent power made this universe and that all men must know it, axiomatically, and must feel awe at the power's infiniteness. It seems to me natural that men, knowing and feeling so, should attempt to elaborate on the simplicity—the prophets, the Prince Buddha, the Lord Jesus, Mohammed, the Brahmins—and so arose the world's religions. But how can just one of them be singled out as true?¹⁹⁵

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
14/12/50

Dear Mr. Van Awten

My own position at the threshold of Xtianity was exactly the opposite of yours. You wish it were true: I strongly hoped it was *not*. At least, that was my conscious wish: you may suspect that I had unconscious wishes of quite a different sort and that it was these which finally shoved me in. True: but then I may equally suspect that under your conscious wish that it were true, there lurks a strong unconscious wish that it were not. What this works out to is that all that modern stuff about concealed wishes and wishful thinking, however useful it may be for explaining the origin of an error which you already know to be an error, is perfectly useless in deciding which of two beliefs is the error and which is the truth. For (a.) One never knows all one's wishes, and (b.) In very big questions, such as this, even one's conscious wishes are nearly always engaged on both sides.

What I think you can say with certainty is this: the notion that everyone *would like* Xtianity to be true, and that therefore all atheists are brave men who have accepted the defeat of all their deepest desires, is simply impudent nonsense. Do you think people like Stalin, Hitler, Haldane, Stapledon (a corking good writer, by the way) wd. be pleased on waking up one morning to find that they were not their own masters, that they had a Master and a Judge, that there was nothing ever in the deepest recesses of their thoughts about which they cd. say to Him 'Keep out. Private. This is *my* business'? Do you? *Rats!* Their first reaction wd. be (as mine was) rage and terror. And I v. much doubt whether even you wd. find it *simply* pleasant. Isn't the truth this: that it wd. gratify some of our desires (ones we feel in fact pretty seldom) and outrage a great many others? So let's wash out all the Wish business. It never helped anyone to solve any problem yet.

I don't agree with your picture of the history of religion—Christ, Buddha, Mohammed and others elaborating an original simplicity. I believe Buddhism to be a simplification of Hinduism and Islam to be a simplification of Xtianity. Clear, lucid, transparent, simple religion (Tao *plus* a shadowy, ethical god in the background) is a late development, usually arising among highly educated people in great cities. What you really start with is ritual, myth, and mystery, the death & return of Balder or

Osiris, the dances, the initiations, the sacrifices, the divine kings. Over against that are the Philosophers, Aristotle or Confucius, hardly religious at all.

The only two systems in which the mysteries and the philosophies come together are Hinduism & Xtianity: there you get both Metaphysics and Cult (continuous with the primeval cults). That is why my first step was to be sure that one or other of these had the answer. For the reality can't be one that appeals *either* only to savages *or* only to high brows. Real things are like that (e.g. matter is the first most obvious thing you meet—milk, chocolates, apples, and also the object of quantum physics).

There is no question of just a crowd of disconnected religions. The choice is between (a.) The materialist world picture: wh. I *can't* believe. (b.) The real archaic primitive religions: wh. are not moral enough (c.) The (claimed) fulfilment of these in Hinduism. (d.) The claimed fulfilment of these in Xtianity. But the weakness of Hinduism is that it *doesn't* really join the two strands. Unredeemably savage religion goes on in the village: the Hermit philosophises in the forest: and neither really interferes with the other. It is only Xtianity wh. compels a high brow like me to partake in a ritual blood feast, and also compels a central African convert to attempt an enlightened universal code of ethics.

Have you tried Chesterton's *The Everlasting Man*?¹⁹⁶ The best popular apologetic I know.

Meanwhile, the attempt to practice the *Tao* is certainly the right line.¹⁹⁷ Have you read the *Analects* of Confucius? He ends up by saying 'This is the Tao. I do not know if any one has ever kept it.' That's significant: one can really go direct from there to the *Epistle to the Romans*.

I don't know if any of this is the least use. Be sure to write again, or call, if you think I can be of any help.

Yours sincerely C. S. Lewis

TO R. B. GRIBBON (W):¹⁹⁸TS

REF. 50/185.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
19th December 1950.

Dear Mr. Gribbon,

It is also a far cry from December in Oxford to mid-June in Oxford! Thanks for your kind greetings, and the same to you. I too hope that we may meet again, either here or, better still, in Co. Down.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS

REF. 50/81

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
19th December 1950.

Dear Miss Mathews,

Many thanks for all the kind and encouraging things you say about the new book.¹⁹⁹ I'm glad you enjoyed it.

The cutting is a treasure; you had better invest in a stock of these collars quick. For I doubt if your President will consider their manufacture *really* essential to America's geared up emergency programme!

My brother joins me in sending you all best wishes.

yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS FRANK L. JONES (W): TS

REF.50/18.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
21st December 1950

Dear Mrs. Jones,

What, again!! Really two large and handsome food parcels in the same month is spoiling us completely. Here is a beauty from CARE just come in, in nice time for Christmas, and we are all very grateful indeed to you for it. On your bounty we shall ride comfortably into the New Year. Let us hope that it will be a better one than 1950, though I'm afraid there is not a very bright prospect before any of us.

I must also thank you and Mr. Jones for the two beautiful engagement books; I have had a preliminary look through them, and though California must be a very attractive state, I confess I prefer New England. It is more

my sort of country. My brother, who is really more concerned with my engagements than I am, asks me to send his thanks too.

The weather forecast promises us Christmas weather over the holiday, and it is a prospect which I regard with very mixed feelings; I'm getting too old for ice and snow, and now share the views of Kipling's MacAndrew:—

*Hail ice and snow which praise the Lord,
I've met you at your work,
And wished that we'd another route,
Or you another Kirk.*[200](#)

All blessings on you both.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS

REF.50/81

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
21st December 1950.

Dear Miss Mathews,

Hard on the heels of your last letter comes yet another of your excellent parcels. If you go on at this rate, the Customs people will begin to suspect that what you are really doing is to run a black market shop in Oxford, with me as your distributing agent! But seriously, you spoil us—and very many thanks for doing so.

You will understand if I cut you off with the shortest of notes: I am knee deep in the hideous task of dealing with my Christmas mail. All blessings.

yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):[201](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
23 Dec. 1950

Dear Mr. Van Auken

The contradiction 'We must have faith to believe and must believe to have faith' belongs to the same class as those by which the Eliatic

philosophers proved that all motion was impossible.²⁰² And there are many others. You can't swim unless you can support yourself in water & you can't support yourself in water unless you can swim. Or again, in any act of volition (e.g. getting up in the morning) is the very beginning of the act itself voluntary or involuntary? If voluntary then you must have willed it,... you were willing already,...it was not really the beginning. If involuntary, then the continuation of the act (being determined by the first moment) is involuntary too. But in spite of this we *do* swim, & we *do* get out of bed.

I do not think there is a *demonstrative* proof (like Euclid) of Christianity, nor of the existence of matter, nor of the good will & honesty of my best & oldest friends. I think all three are (except perhaps the second) far more probable than the alternatives. The case for Xtianity in general is well given by Chesterton: and I tried to do something in my *Broadcast Talks*.

As to *why* God doesn't make it demonstratively clear: are we sure that He is even interested in the kind of Theism which wd. be a compelled logical assent to a conclusive argument? Are we interested in it in personal matters? I demand from my friend a trust in my good faith which is *certain* without demonstrative proof. It wouldn't be confidence at all if he waited for rigorous proof. Hang it all, the very fairy-tales embody the truth. Othello believed in Desdemona's innocence when it was proved: but that was too late.²⁰³ Lear believed in Cordelia's love when it was proved: but that was too late.²⁰⁴ 'His praise is lost who stays till all commend.'²⁰⁵ The magnanimity, the generosity wh. will trust on a reasonable probability, is required of us. But supposing one believed and was wrong after all? Why, then you wd. have paid the universe a compliment it doesn't deserve. Your error wd. even so be more interesting & important than the reality. And yet how cd. that be? How cd. an idiotic universe have produced creatures whose mere dreams are so much stronger, better, subtler than itself?

Note that life after death, which still seems to you the essential thing, was itself a *late* revelation. God trained the Hebrews for centuries to believe in Him without promising them an after-life: and, blessings on Him, he trained me in the same way for about a year. It is like the disguised prince in a fairy tale who wins the heroine's love *before* she knows he is anything more than a woodcutter. What wd. be a bribe if it came first had better come last.

It is quite clear from what you say that you have *conscious* wishes on both sides. And now, another point about *wishes*. A wish may lead to false beliefs, granted. But what does the existence of the wish suggest? At one time I was much impressed by Arnold's line 'Nor does the being hungry prove that we have bread.' But, surely, tho' it doesn't prove that one particular man will *get* food, it *does* prove that there is such a thing as food? i.e. if we were a species that didn't normally eat, wasn't designed to eat, wd. one feel hungry?

You say the Materialist universe is 'ugly'. I wonder how you discovered that? If you are really a product of a materialistic universe, how is it you don't feel at home there? Do fish complain of the sea for being wet? Or if they did, would that fact itself not strongly suggest that they had not always been, or wd. not always be, purely aquatic creatures? Notice how we are perpetually *surprised* at Time. ('How time flies! Fancy John being grown-up & married? I can hardly believe it!') In heaven's name, why? Unless, indeed, there is something in us which is *not* temporal.

Total Humility is not in the Tao because the Tao (as such) says nothing about the object to which it wd. be the right response: just as there is no law about railways in the acts of Q. Elizabeth. But from the degree of respect wh. the Tao demands for ancestors, parents, elders, & teachers, it is quite clear what the Tao *wd.* prescribe towards an object such as God.

But I think you are already in the meshes of the net! The Holy Spirit is after you. I doubt if you'll get away!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO BELLE ALLEN (W): TS

REF.50/19.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
28th December 1950.

Dear Mrs. Allen,

Many thanks for your interesting letter of the 12th, which gave me much pleasure. Some words *do* tend to look queer when they are put on paper: but 'offing' is a perfectly good nautical word, dating from 1627,

defined by the Oxford Dictionary as ‘the part of the visible sea distant from the shore or beyond the anchoring ground’.

But don’t talk to me of your snow, for we are all shivering here in the hardest winter we have had since 1946, and with a fuel crisis to add to our troubles. Much recrimination too as to who is responsible for the latter, and wide publicity is being given to a piece of ineptitude which is going on in Cardiff Docks; in one berth is a Norwegian ship discharging American coal for the British Railways—in the next one to it, a Spanish ship loading Welsh coal for the Argentine Railways! There certainly seems something very wrong there.

With us too, the steady rise in retail prices is a constant nightmare to all except the weekly wage earners, who can remedy their position by striking. Only yesterday a lady told me that now the *material* to make a pair of man’s socks costs ten shillings: and everything else is up in proportion. Except the basic items of the ration, and these of course are heavily subsidized, so in the long run we pay for them too, through the taxes. But we have a most excellent housekeeper, who is a marvel at ‘making do’, and there are five of us in the house.

The people who are really hard hit are the single ones, or the childless married couples: for naturally the more of you in the house, the easier it is to get enough meat for stews and suchlike. In term time I have my meals in College, including a free dinner, which has from time immemorial been part of the stipend of a tutor. My brother takes a snack in town in the middle of the day—usually something he has bought on the way in—and has the rest of his meals out at the house; he keeps a very sharp eye on my, or perhaps I should say *your* parcels, and abstracts anything likely to be useful for his lunches, justifying his peculations by quoting that ‘the labourer is worthy of his hire’,²⁰⁶

It is very odd about the envelopes; we certainly received them, and they were all used up in due course. Why one never went back to it’s home, neither of us can understand. Of course I write to twenty English folk for one American, and therefore the odds against your getting one back would be considerable. Our very small envelopes are due, I understand, to the fact that we are very seriously short of paper—having broken our contract with Canada, for some reason I have never followed. I don’t think there is any mail restriction.

The whole question of the atomic bomb is a very difficult one: the Sunday after the news of the dropping of the first one came through, our minister asked us all to join in prayer for forgiveness for the great crime of using it. But, *if* what we have since heard is true, i.e. that the first item on the Japanese anti-invasion programme was the killing of every European in Japan, the answer did not, to me, seem so simple as all that.

I read with interest and indignation your story of the experiment on the monkeys; there seems no end to the folly and wickedness of this world. Dogs *are* jealous; perhaps the besetting sin they inherited at the Fall.*

I see that in rambling along I have nearly forgotten to thank you for the impending gifts. I hope, indeed if I may so put it, insist that you give up spoiling me in this way if prices rise still more against you.

With all good wishes from us both to you both for 1951, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

* On second thoughts, I don't think it is a *sin* in them, tho' it is in us. [207](#)

TO SISTER PENELOPE CSMV (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 30/50

Dear Sister Penelope

Yours was a cheering letter which warmed my heart (I wish it wd. have warmed my fingers too: as it is they will hardly form the letters!).

I can't offer any comments on the re-planning of the novel, not now having all the problems clearly enough in my head. I *feel* like saying it wd. be a pity to lose Adam, but then one has really no business to compare a work with its own pre-history.

I'm delighted about the Biblical plays which I remember doing me a lot of good when I read them. They may be, in a way, your most important work.

Our state is thus: my 'mother' has had to retire permanently into a Nursing Home. She is in no pain but her mind has almost completely gone. What traces of it remain seem gentler and more placid than I have known it for years. Her *appetite* is, oddly, enormous. I visit her, normally, every day,

and am divided between a (rational?) feeling that this process of gradual withdrawal is merciful and even beautiful, and a quite different feeling (it comes out in my dreams) of horror.

There is no denying—and I don't know why I should deny to you—that our domestic life is both more physically comfortable and more psychologically harmonious for her absence. The expence is of course v. severe and I have worries about that. But it wd. be v. dangerous to have no worries—or rather no *occasions* of worry. I have been feeling that v. much lately: that *cheerful insecurity* is what Our Lord asks of us. Thus one comes, late & surprised, to the simplest & earliest Christian lessons!

Rêpseudo-or deuterio Screwtapes. My own feeling is that a literary idea ought to belong to anyone who can use it and that literary property is a sort of Simony. But you might find my publisher taking a different view. I don't know, though: perhaps not, if it was published with proper acknowledgements. Let me know if it reaches the stage of a practical decision. I am glad to hear your inner news. Mine, too, is I think (but who am I to judge?) fairly good. *Oremus pro invicem*,²⁰⁸

Yours most sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 30/50

Dear Miss Pitter—

I don't know if I *can* write, my fingers are so cold. (Almost the only pleasure of which age has yet deprived me—I mean the only good one—is the power of enjoying hard frost. Otherwise youth's a stuff that's over-rated).

What helps you in Theocritus hinders me, and in the *Georgics* too: i.e. when I've looked up the vegetables in the Lexicon, I don't know the English any better than the Greek. The equation 'γλώξ',²⁰⁹ the lesser mud-wort, *fangoleum paludis*, is to me $a = b$ where both are unknown. Not that I don't enjoy the vegetables when I meet them in the cool, green flesh: but each individual is new to me each time. Heroic books—is this yours? And for a 'work in progress'? It is obviously *some* poet's prose, sweet on the tongue. I feel that about the poet being a Parthian too: but am not quite sure

whether it doesn't come from living in an un-poetical age when the poet is perilously near being 'vestigial'. Did people feel that way about Virgil or Firdausi?²¹⁰ (Here have been interrupted for an hour by an elderly lady asking moral advice!).

I hope you had a nice time with the Duchess.²¹¹ Shd. I like her poetry? I don't know it. My brother joins me in all good wishes and I must go to lunch. My humble duty, Ma'am Yours very sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 30. 50

My dear George

What dears you both are: but a ruddy fellowship exam will keep me immobilised right up till term. Thanks all the same. Can you come up for a night any time after our term begins (Jan 13)?

MS rec'd safely. Yes, *la belle Baynes*²¹² will do the lot: *Magnae virtutes nec minora vitia*.²¹³ Her Mouse is one of her best beasts, however.

No, I don't wish a cheque! You have both been much in *orationibus nostris*. Name your night & do come.

Jack

1951

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Jan 5/51

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Whether any individual Christian who attempts Faith Healing is prompted by genuine faith and charity or by spiritual pride is, I take it, a question we cannot decide. That is between God and him. Whether the cure occurs in any given case is clearly a question for the doctors. I am speaking now of healing by some *act*, such as anointing or laying on of hands. *Praying* for the sick—i.e. praying simply, without any overt act is unquestionably right and indeed we are commanded to pray for all men.¹ And *of course* your prayers can do real good.

Needless to say, they don't *do* it either as a medicine does or as magic is supposed to do: i.e. automatically. Prayer is Request—like asking your employer for a holiday or asking a girl to marry one. God is free to grant the request or not: and if He does you cannot prove scientifically that the thing wd. not have happened anyway. Just as the boss might (for all you know) have given you a holiday even if you hadn't asked. (Cynical people of my sex will tell one that if a girl has determined to marry you, married you wd. have been whether you asked her or not!). Thus one can't establish the efficacy of prayer by statistics as you might establish the connection between pure milk and fewer cases of tuberculosis. It remains a matter of faith and of God's personal action: it would become a matter of demonstration only if it were impersonal or mechanical.²

When I say 'personal' I do not mean private or individual. All our prayers are united with Christ's perpetual prayer and are part of the Church's prayer. (In praying for people one dislikes I find it v. helpful to remember that one is joining in *His* prayer for them.) With all best wishes for the New Year.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):³

Magdalen College
Oxford
Jan 5/51

Dear Mr. Van Auken

We must ask three questions about the probable effect of changing your research subject to something more theological.

(1.) Wd. it be better for your immediate enjoyment? Answer, probably but not certainly, Yes.

(2.) Wd. it be better for your academic career? Answer, probably No. You wd. have to make up in haste a lot of knowledge which cd. not be v. easily digested in the time.

(3.) Wd. it be better for your soul? I don't know. I think there is a great deal to be said for having one's deepest spiritual interest distinct from one's ordinary duty as a student or professional man.

St Paul's *job* was tent-making. When the two coincide I shd. have thought there was a danger lest the natural interest in one's job and the pleasures of gratified ambition might be mistaken for spiritual progress and spiritual consolation: and I think clergymen sometimes fall into this trap.

Contrariwise, there is the danger that what is boring or repellent in the job may alienate one from the spiritual life. And finally someone has said 'None are so unholy as those whose hands are cauterised with holy things':⁴ sacred things may become profane by becoming matters of the job. You *now* want truth for her own sake: how will it be when the same truth is also needed for an effective footnote in your thesis? In fact, the change might do good or harm. I've always been glad myself that Theology is not the thing I earn my living by. On the whole, I'd advise you to get on with your tent-making. The performance of a *duty* will probably teach you quite as much about God as academic Theology wd. do. Mind, I'm not certain: but that is the view I incline to.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD): TS
REF.23/51.

Magdalen College,
6th January 1951

Dear Miss Pitter,

No, don't! I mean don't waste a copy on me. Contemporary pictures be blowed! It sounds horrible: the Ugly Duchess with a vengeance.

Incidentally, what is the point of keeping in touch with the contemporary scene? Why should one read authors one doesn't like because they happen to be alive at the same time as oneself? One might as well read everyone who had the same job or the same coloured hair, or the same income, or the same chest measurements, as far as I can see. I whistle, and plunge into the tunnel of term.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO PAULINE BAYNES (BOD):⁵TS
REF.20/51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
8th January 1951.

Dear Miss Baynes,

My idea was that the map should be more like a medieval map than an Ordnance Survey—mountains and castles drawn—perhaps winds blowing at the corners—and a few heraldic-looking ships, whales and dolphins in the sea.⁶ Aslan gazing at the moon would make an excellent cover design (to be repeated somewhere in the book; but do as you please about that.) My brother once more joins me in all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

You didn't keep me a bit too long and I shd. have been v. glad if you'd stayed longer. I was hurried (I hope, not rudely so) only because I didn't want to be left with a long vacancy between your departure and the next train).

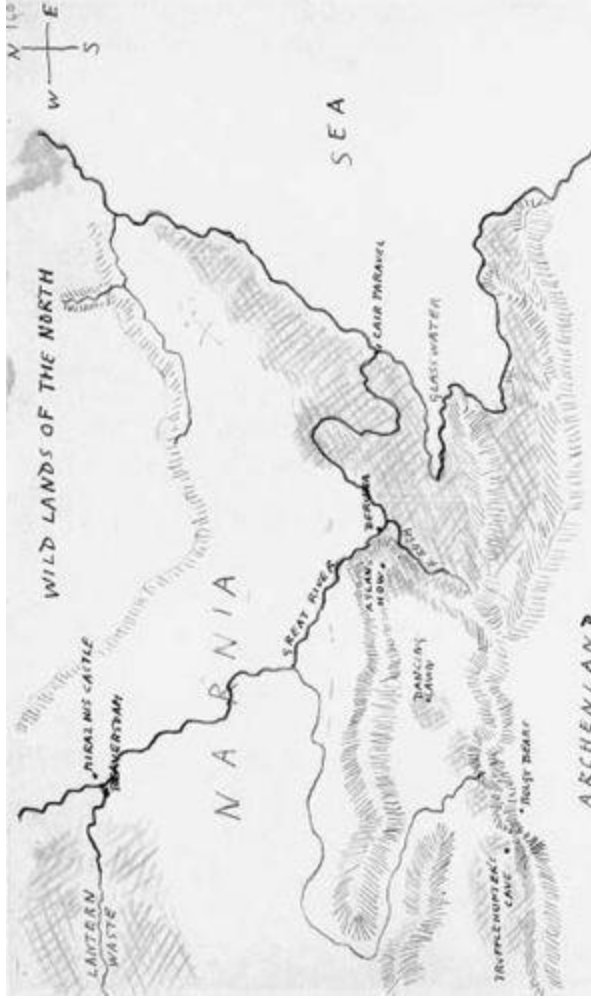
TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
8/1/51

Dear Mr. Van Auken

Look: the question is not whether we should bring God into our work or not. We certainly should and must: as MacDonald says 'All that is not God is death.'² The question is whether we should simply (a.) Bring Him in in the dedication of our work to Him, in the integrity, diligence, & humility with which we do it or also (b.) Make His professed and explicit service our job. The A vocation rests on all men whether they know it or not: the B vocation only on those who are specially called to it. Each vocation has its peculiar dangers & peculiar rewards. Naturally, I can't say which is yours.

When I spoke of danger to your academic career on a change of subject I was thinking chiefly of *time*. If you can get an extra year, it wd. be another matter. I was not at all meaning that 'intellectual history' involving Theology wd. *in itself* be academically a bad field of research. I shall at any time be glad to see, or hear from you.



The ridge between Narnia and the Wild Lands of the North is only low hills. The distance between Narnia and Archeland is not great.

Archeland is on a mountain side; but the range of hills is in the South and goes higher as it goes Westward.

There is a single sword.

A few men were seen in the hills, but it is not clear that they were not just the same as the Archeland hills.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO P. H. NEWBY (BBC):⁸
C4/HT/PHN

Magdalen College
Oxford
11/1/51

Dear Mr. Newby

I don't think I'd care to do a Work in Progress on my OHEL volume.⁹ I am hoping to drop rather a bomb by that book and don't want to give too many warnings. Thanks for asking me.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD):¹⁰

Magdalen College
Oxford
14/1/51

Dear Mr. (or Professor?) Kinter The title of my children's book (by the way, it is a single story not a collection) is *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* and the American edition is by Macmillan N. Y.

The only printed verse of mine outside the *Regress* (and a very early volume wh. I don't want remembered)¹¹ is a poem called *Dymer*, recently reprinted with a new preface by Dents.¹² It first appeared in 1926 (I think—I'm weak on dates): also in *Punch*, over the signature N.W. (= Nat. Whilk = O.E. *nát hwylc*) several short pieces wh. are chiefly experiments in internal rhyme and consonance—not to be read unless you have strong *metrical* interests.

An amusing question whether my trilogy¹³ is an epic! Clearly, in virtue of its fantastic elements, it cd. only be an epic of the Ariosto type.¹⁴ But I shd. call it a Romance myself: it lacks sufficient roots in legend and tradition to be what I'd call an epic. Isn't it more the method of Apuleius, Lucian and Rabelais, but diverted from a comic to a serious purpose?

No, I certainly didn't know about the dissertation on Bernardus. And I've lost my own copy of the text!¹⁵

With many thanks & good wishes. Be sure and look me up if you're ever rash enough to visit this conquered island.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS
REF.25/51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
18th January 1951.

My dear Mr. Allen,

If when you first began to keep us afloat I had known that your kindness was going to continue over a number of years, I would have kept a record of your parcels; the number must now run into scores, and the weight into hundredweights! How *do* you do it? As I said once before, it is not so much your generosity as your hard work which impressed me; if the case was reversed, I hope I should try to behave to you and Mrs. Allen as you have done to me. But I should draw the line at coming home from my job and settling down to *packing*! (Anyway, I could'nt do it, being one of those whose fingers are all thumbs). Both the 11th and 12th December parcels have come in, and we are both very grateful for them.

They have I'm afraid been here a few days, but it is the beginning of the term, and my brother has only just got up after an attack of 'flu, which has put us all behindhand. This is one of the worst influenza years we have had for a long time, and is in fact a battle on two fronts; one 'wave' of the disease coming over from Norway, and the other working north across France from the Mediterranean. Different types too, which is not making the doctor's work any easier. In the north it is so bad that work at the port of Liverpool is held up, and they are burying people by night, as in the plague days. This does nothing to dissipate the gloom with which we, and no doubt you too, regard the prospects for 1951.

The brightest spot so far in the year has been the tonic of Eisenhower's arrival:¹⁶ who is proving himself no mean diplomatist, and has won golden opinions wherever he has been. I see that even in Italy the hostile reception engineered for him by the Communists was a complete fiasco. He was made a freeman of the City of London at the end of the war, and there he made a big hit by talking of his 'fellow Londoners'—and by recognizing and shaking hands with the chauffeur who had driven him during the war. Little

things of course, but the little things count. I must say I don't envy him his job though; not even Eisenhower can hold the Russians unless he is provided with an army, and the army still seems to be in the committee stage.

A small letter is a mighty poor return for two large parcels: but pupils are already knocking at the door, and I must get to work.

With many thanks and all the best wishes to you and your mother for 1951, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

*Janie King Moore died at the Restholme Nursing Home, Oxford, on 12 January 1951. She was buried in the churchyard of Holy Trinity Church, Headington Quarry, in the same grave as her friend Alice Hamilton Moore.*¹⁷

TO SARAH NEYLAN (W): TS
REF.60/51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th January 1951.

My dear Sarah

I am 100% with you about Rider Haggard. You know he wrote a sequel to *She* told by Holly, and called *Ayesha*; *She and Alan*, told by A. Quartermain: and *Wisdom's Daughter* told by She herself.¹⁸ What comes out from reading all four is that She was (as Job assumed) a dreadful liar. A. Quartermain was the only man who wasn't taken in by her. *She* is the best story of the four, though not the best written. A missionary told me that he had seen a little ruined Kraal where the natives told him a white witch used to live who *was* called She-who-must-be-obeyed. Rider Haggard had no doubt heard this too, and that is the kernel of the story.

I also have just had 'flu or I'd write more. Love to all.

Your affectionate Godfather, C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen etc

31/1/51

My dear Arthur

Minto died a fortnight ago. Please pray for her soul.

Wd. it suit you if I arrived at your local inn on Sat. March 31st and left on Mon. April 16th? Can you let me know by return? And also if the inn cd. have me?¹⁹ If they're fed up with my choppings & changings you can truly tell them that my circumstances are wholly changed. God bless you.

Yours

Jack

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD): [20](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
31/1/51

My dear Roger

What two nights can you come to me? I prefer *not* a week end if you can possibly manage it. I suggest Feb 28 & 29th. (Feb 13, 20 & March 2nd no good). I miss you v. much. Love & duty to all of you.

Yours

Jack

TO MRS HALMBACHER (WHL):

Magdalen College,
January 1951

Dear Mrs Halmbacher

How very kind of you. This is absolutely the present I wanted, for the nuisance and waste of time of finding that one has'nt got an envelope at a critical moment is serious....

We are all chuckling over a certain West of England resort which is I'm told circulating the American tourist agencies to this effect--'When you come to England come straight to--. We guarantee that we are taking absolutely no part in the Festival of Britain.'²¹

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
7/2/51

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

First, I must apologise for not having acknowledged Woodbridge on Nature.²² It arrived safely: many thanks. I have not read it yet but it is on the waiting list. (You will understand that I am never in the position of looking for a book to read, but nearly always looking for time in which to read books!) If 'planning' is taken in the literal sense of thinking before one acts and acting on what one has thought out to the best of one's ability, then of course planning is simply the traditional virtue of Prudence and not only compatible with, but demanded by, Christian ethics. But if the word is used (as I think you use it) to mean some particular politico-social programme, such as that of the present British Govt., then one cd. only say after examining that programme in detail. I don't think I have studied it enough to do that. As for the 'planning' involved in your social work I am of course even less qualified.

It is certainly *not* wrong to try to remove the natural consequences of sin provided the means by which you remove them are not in themselves another sin. (E.g. it is merciful and Christian to remove the natural consequences of fornication by giving the girl a bed in a maternity ward and providing for the child's keep and education, but wrong to remove them by abortion or infanticide). Perhaps the enclosed article (I don't want it back) will make the point clearer.

Where benevolent planning, armed with political or economic power, can become wicked is when it tramples on people's rights for the sake of

their good.

Your letter gave me great pleasure: you are apparently on the right road.
With all blessings.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

On 8 February 1951 there was a vote for the Professor of Poetry by the MAs of Oxford University. C. S. Lewis was running against Cecil Day-Lewis.²³ Warnie Lewis wrote in his diary that evening: 'While we were waiting to dine at the Royal Oxford...came the bad news that [Jack] had been defeated by C. Day Lewis for the Poetry Chair, by 194 votes to 173. J took it astonishingly well, much better than his backers.'²⁴

TO SEYMOUR SPENCER (P):²⁵

Magdalen etc.
28/2/51

Dear Doctor Spencer

Thanks v. much for the bit from Fromm.²⁶

I enclose an offprint (I don't want it back) from the Australian *Twentieth Century* wh. I hope makes my point clear.²⁷ Quote directly or indirectly from this at pleasure. I look forward to seeing yr. paper in the *Month* and wd. be happy to read the typescript if you think I can be of any help.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO 'MRS LOCKLEY' (L):[28](#)

[Magdalen College]

5 March 1951

How right you are: the great thing is to stop thinking about happiness. Indeed the best thing about happiness itself is that it liberates you from thinking about happiness—as the greatest pleasure that money can give us is to make it unnecessary to think about money. And one sees why we have to be taught the ‘not thinking’ when we lack as well as when we have. And I’m sure that, as you say, you will ‘get through somehow in the end’.

Here is one of the fruits of unhappiness: that it forces us to think of life as something to go *through*. And out at the other end. If only we could steadfastly do that while we are happy, I suppose we shd. need no misfortunes. It is hard on God really. To how few of us He *dare* send happiness because He knows we will forget Him if He gave us any sort of nice things for the moment....

I *do* get that sudden feeling that the whole thing is hocus pocus and it now worries me hardly at all. Surely the mechanism is quite simple? Sceptical, incredulous, materialistic *ruts* have been deeply engraved in our thought, perhaps even in our physical brains by all our earlier lives. At the slightest jerk our thought will flow down those old ruts. And notice when the jerks come. Usually at the precise moment when we might receive Grace. And if you were a devil would you not give the jerk just at those moments? I think that all Christians have found that he is v. active near the altar or on the eve of conversion: worldly anxieties, physical discomforts, lascivious fancies, doubt, are often poured in at such junctures...But the Grace is not frustrated. One gets *more* by pressing steadily on through these interruptions than on occasions when all goes smoothly....

I am glad you all liked ‘The Lion’. A number of mothers, and still more, schoolmistresses, have decided that it is likely to frighten children, so it is not selling very well. But the real children like it, and I am astonished how some *very* young ones seem to understand it. I think it frightens some adults, but very few children....

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

6/3/51

My dear Roger

(Of course, yes: I thought I had asked you to do so). You are quite right about a wood fire.²⁹ Wood keeps on glowing red again in the places you have already extinguished—phoenix-like. Even the large webbed feet of a marsh-wiggle couldn't do it. Yet it must be a flat hearth, I think. *Does* peat go out easily by treading? As an Irishman I ought to know, but don't. I think it will have to [be] a coal fire on a flat hearth. After all, Underland might well use coal, whereas wood or charcoal wd. have to be imported.

I finished the Antigeos book.³⁰ There are two and only two, good ideas in it: the (supposed) 'fog' on the voyage and the great tidal waves on the Antigolian sea. All else is as dull as ditchwater: a flat, featureless, landscape and deadly municipal restaurants. The inhabitants are less interesting than any other-worlders I have yet met.

I enjoyed our *biduum*³¹ or pair-o'-days v. much. Love to both.

Yours

Jack

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
17/3/51

Dear Miss Pitter

I hope you haven't thought I was being such a brute beast as to obey your 'Don't write'. I was more innocently employed in having my third dose of influenza this year—or rather, now that I look at the date of your letter, it must have been my second and third, for the flash of daylight between the two tunnels was almost too short to notice.

The book is most beautiful,³² yet not with any fussy and intrusive beauty that reduces the poems to parts of a pattern. My old friends look better in their new site—for I'm no Manichean, and think the beautiful soul should have a beautiful body. But *one* reason why they look better is that they are better than I remembered. I find that my very favourite, *The Sparrow's Skull*, had in memory preserved only its poignancy and lost a great deal of its delicacy and poetic breeding. More shame to me when it was on my shelves and memory—apparently a vulgarising memory—could have been corrected. I say, *Sinking*, which I hadn't properly noticed before, is a corker. So indeed are dozens. It is a good time for re-reading: I have the precious vulnerability of the convalescent. Why do they call it 'depression'? I like it.

The engraving is perfect except for (possibly) the Muses' profile where I think the heavy, moustache-like shadow on the upper lip is a pity:³³ but probably not so in the original. Yes. I have good reason to remember your vine and 'to consider it' (as in this picture) 'is to taste it spiritually'—so Traherne says in his *Centuries of Meditations*,³⁴ which I expect you know and am sure, if you know, you love.

When next term cd. you come down and lunch? There's an extra reason: you have property to reclaim. Groping in the inn'ards of an old arm chair lately (a place which rivals the sea bed for lost treasure) I fished out a spectacle case which, being opened, revealed your golden name wrapped in your silver address. So come in May or June: preferably *not* a Tuesday. Let me know your ideas on this.

I'm off to Northern Ireland after Easter to try my native air—half frightened at the thought. Very many thanks for the book: it has given me great pleasure already.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
17/3/51

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

No. Unless it attracts you as an amusement I wouldn't advise you to start attending 'classes'. My idea is that unless one has to qualify oneself for a job (which you haven't) the only sensible reason for studying anything is that one has a strong curiosity about it. And if one has, one can't help studying it. I don't see any point in attending lectures etc with some general notion of 'self-improvement'—unless, as I say, one finds it fun.

I never see why we should do anything unless it is either a duty or a pleasure! Life's short enough without filling up hours unnecessarily. And I think one usually learns more from a book than from a lecture.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO CHRISTIAN HARDIE (P):[35](#)

Magdalen etc
22/3/51

Dear Christian

Your commands have been obeyed.³⁶ About half way through, not having yet met a single scene or character that thoroughly engaged my interest, I nearly gave up: but perseverance was rewarded, for the second half is better. One forgives Julia quite a lot for her outburst on p 255 about Charles's 'damned boulderish way'.

Waugh is a writer, certainly. Many descriptions, phrases, and long-tailed similes pleased me: but not the novel, as a novel. If one's going to tell the story through one of the characters then, surely, either *that* character ought to be a fairly sane and straightforward one (as in *Erewhon*³⁷ or *Rob Roy*),³⁸ or else, if he's a monstrosity, then the other characters ought to be normal (as in Hogg's *Justified Sinner*³⁹ or McKenna's *Well Meaning Woman*).⁴⁰

As Chesterton said, you can have a story about a knight among dragons, but not about a dragon among dragons.⁴¹ Or, to come nearer, I can manage humans seen in a distorting mirror or goblins seen in an ordinary mirror: but goblins in a distorting mirror is too much. In spite of clear distinctions, the narrator is so very much 'the same kind of thing' as Blanche & Sebastian and his own father & Ld. M, and all the others—the tiresome seen through the eyes of the tiresome. And Sebastian would be a terrible bore on any terms. The narrator's spontaneous dislike [of] all nice people (e.g. old Lady M. or Ld. Brideshead) has, I suppose, a theological significance?

But apart from all this—what, please, ought I now to know about the 'contemporary scene' after reading it? His picture of undergraduate life is, I suspect, much more characteristic of 1912 than of 1923: but for obvious reasons *cd.* not be really characteristic of any period. Not even characteristic within the circles he describes: for though I didn't know them, I *do* know that if I did they wouldn't look at all like that to me—any more than the circles I *do* know consist solely of Hoopers.⁴² Julia's excellent remark about Mottram on p. 277 ('He was a tiny bit of one') seems to me true of all the characters except Julia herself. There isn't one that is round and live like Levin⁴³ or the Rostovs,⁴⁴ or Archdeacon Grantly,⁴⁵ or Ld. Monmouth in *Coningsby*.⁴⁶ They're more like people out of an Oscar Wilde melodrama, only without the epigrams.

Am I missing the point? Haunted by that fear I asked a man so young that W. is to him an old master what *he* had got out of the book. He said 'Oh, snob-value: it delighted the housemaid in me' (i.e. he got out of it the same sort of pleasure my generation got out of Benson—I mean the Dodo

one).⁴⁷ But that can't be why *you* admire it. Nor can you think that 'the contemporary scene' is just what W. describes: because after all we have independent access (worse luck!) to that scene. I'm puzzled.

You shall prescribe me a book to read every Lent: a kind of literary hair shirt.

You gave me a charming interlude on Tuesday—a bit of 'contemporary scene' quite omitted by W.!

Yours

Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

[The Kilns]

23/3/51

My dear Arthur

Naturally, without a Co. Down Ry.⁴⁸ time-table I can't tell you what time I'd be at Helen's Bay! But we shall find better uses for your petrol, and I'll come by bus from Oxford St. I'm glad to know there's a 'regular' service and am wondering whether it runs regularly every 5 minutes, every hour, once a week, or only a century.⁴⁹ No doubt I shall find out.

Looking forward!—yes, I can't keep the feeling within bounds. I know now how a bottle of champagne feels while the wire is being taken off the cork.

Yours

Jack

Pop!!

TO DOUGLAS EDISON HARDING (P):⁵⁰

Magdalen etc
Easter Day [25 March]1951

Dear Mr. Harding

Hang it all, you've made me drunk, roaring drunk as I haven't been on a book (I mean, a book of doctrine: imaginative works are another matter) since I first read Bergson during World War I.⁵¹ Who or what are you? How have you lived 40 years without my hearing of you before? Understand at once that my delight is not, alas!, so significant as it may seem, for I was never a scientist and have long ceased to be even the very minor philosopher I once was.

A great deal of your book is completely beyond me. My opinion is of no value. But my *sensation* is that you have written a work of the highest genius. It may not be—I mean, I can't vouch that it is—philosophical genius. It may be only literary genius. The feeling I get is like a mix up of Pindar, Dante, & Patmore. (But can anything be so well written if it's not good thought as well?). You follow the rocket course wh. you ascribe to Tellus.⁵² Paragraph after paragraph starts as if we were embarked for only the sort of Pantheistic uplift one gets in Emerson, but then swoops down and comes all clean & hard. But remember always, I don't really understand: especially the crucial cap. 13 wh. is no easier than the Deduction of the Categories. (One difficulty is that my excitement makes me read it too quickly).

One criticism. Somebody is sure to answer the Missing Head gambit by saying that it wd. have no meaning for a blind man who knew the world and himself by palpation instead of vision.⁵³ My head is just as feelable (tho' not as visible) as the rest of me. In other words, they'll say, you have merely tripped over the fact that the eyes are in the Head. I'm sure this objection misses the real point: but had it not better be obviated, if only in a footnote?

England is disgraced if this book doesn't get published: yet ordinary publishers will be so likely to send it to someone like Ryle to vet, and that will be fatal. Gollancz, Sheed, Faber, are possibles.

May I pass on my copy to Owen Barfield?—I must have someone to talk to about it.

When can we meet? Can you come over sometime next May or June and dine? (I can provide bed & breakfast) I now feel that my illnesses etc are no excuse for my not having read it before. That this celestial bomb shd. have lain undetonated on my table all these months is a kind of allegory. Thanks to the Nth.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

P.S. On p. 97 (30b) Further, it was until recently often held...By whom? I thought the doctrine always was that of my eldila⁵⁴—‘He has no need at all for anything that is made⁵⁵...He has infinite use for all that is made.’

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th March 1951.

Dear Miss Pitter,

May I book May 10th: 1.15? The ferly in the engraving is not at all like a concrete mixer.⁵⁶ I did’nt know arm chairs were ever cleaned: should they be?⁵⁷

Yours ignorantly,
C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th March 1951.

My dear George,

The time has come, the Walrus said, to talk of many things⁵⁸—but chiefly of when you next propose to take a bed in College. Any time you like after the 23rd of next month, Mondays excepted, and also excepting 8th and 15th May.

Pray, Sir, how does Moira do? And Cardinal Schwanda?⁵⁹ All well here except myself, who have a bad cold; but I’m off to Ireland I hope on Friday for a fortnight, which may shift it. (Warnie in his usual way of encouragement, reads me paragraphs from the paper at breakfast about liners wind bound in the Mersey and waves 6½ feet high off the Irish coast.)

Yours

Jack

TO CHRISTIAN HARDIE (*P*):

[Magdalen]
27/3/51

Dear Christian

The difference isn't exactly that I read a novel for the characters. It's more that for me a novel, or any work of art, is primarily a *Thing*, an Object, enjoyed for its colour, proportions, atmosphere, its flavour—the Odyssey-ishness of the *Odyssey*⁶⁰ or the Learishness of *K Lear*: but never, never (here is the real difference) as a personal acquaintance with the author.

Of course it is not a question of where I like the characters in the sense of wishing to meet them in real life. In that sense I like Sebastian better than Julia (or dislike him less): but I 'like' Julia better as a character in the sense that I find her live & worth reading about, while I find him dull. What matters more than absolute liking or disliking is some degree of sympathy with the author's revealed preferences. I didn't think the mother & Brideshead 'priggish & imperious' & I didn't think Ryder 'a sane & ordinary chap!' As to liking & disliking the 'idea' of twitch-on-the-thread, I'm not absolutely certain that I often have any experience I wd. call liking or disliking *an idea*.

My trouble is quite different: a twitch-on-the-thread conversion doesn't seem to me to be capable of artistic presentation. When the old man crosses himself we are shown (and can only be shown) only the physical gesture. The difference between (a.) Grace (b.) Momentary sentiment (c.) Semi-conscious revival of a gesture learned in childhood, can't *appear*. It can *be* in real life. But in art *de non existentibus et non apparentibus eadem lex*.⁶¹ In fact, we're left to put in all the important part for ourselves. I know about the veil over Agamemnon's face.⁶² but the success must have depended on the rest of the picture As to whether 'religious people should be good' Nicholas⁶³ seemed to have sounder views than Waugh!

I await your next prescription with interest. We might even make it Advent instead of Lent!

I liked yr. friend extremely.

Yours

Jack

TO VERA MATHEWS (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
27/3/51

Dear Miss Mathews

I have just got your letter of the 22nd. containing the sad news of your father's death. But, dear lady, I hope you and your mother are not really 'trying to pretend it didn't happen'. It does happen, happens to all of us, and I have no patience with the high minded people who make out that it 'doesn't matter'. It matters a great deal, and very solemnly. And for those who are left, the pain is not the whole thing. I feel v. strongly (and I am not alone in this) that some good comes from the dead to the living in the months or weeks after the death. I think I was much helped by my own father after his death: as if our Lord welcomed the newly dead with the gift of some power to bless those they have left behind; His *birthday* present. Certainly, they often seem just at that time, to be very near us. God bless you all and give you grace to receive all the good in this, as in every other event, is intended you.

My brother joins me in great thanks for all your kindnesses, and especially on behalf of dear little comical Victor Drewe—our barber, as you know.⁶⁴ When he cut my hair last week he spoke in the most charming way of his wife who has just been ill and (he said) 'She looks so pretty, Sir, so pretty, but terribly frail.' It made one want to laugh & cry at the same time—the lover's speech, and the queer little pot-bellied, grey-headed, unfathomably *respectable* figure. You don't misunderstand my wanting to laugh, do you? We shall, I hope, all enjoy one another's funniness openly in a better world.

I have had flu' three times but am better now and am going for a holiday on Friday. As to beef—it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good: I expect the bulls enjoy roaming the Argentine plains & really like that better than being eaten in England!

Yrs. sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO WARFIELD M. FIROR (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
27/3/51

My dear Firor

Your letter came to cheer a rather grim day. I have never known a spring like this: the sun has hardly appeared since last October and this morning a thin mixture of rain & snow is falling. My own household is lucky because we have *a* wood, and therefore *wood* (what a valuable idiom) for fires: there is hardly any coal in England. The worst of a wood fire—delightful to eye and nose—is that it demands continual attention. But this is a trifle: many people have to spend most of their leisure at the cinema because it is the only warm place. (I hardly ever go myself. Do you? It seems to me an astonishingly ugly art. I don't mean 'ugly' in any high flying moral or spiritual sense, but just disagreeable to the eye—crowded, unrestful, inharmonious) There has been a great change in my life owing to the death of the old lady I called my mother. She died without apparent pain after many months of semi conscious existence, and it wd. be hypocritical to pretend that it was a grief to us.

Of your three rules I heartily agree with the first and the third. The second ('keep rested') sounds at first as if our obedience to it must v. often depend on many factors outside our control. I can think of some in whose ears it would sound like a cruel mockery. But I suspect that you have a reply. Do you mean that there is a kind of rest which 'no man taketh from us'⁶⁵ and which can be preserved even in the life of a soldier on active service or of a woman who works behind a counter all day and then goes home to work and mend and wash? And no doubt there is: but it doesn't always include rest for the legs.

'His plan for the day'—yes, that is all important. And I keep losing sight of it: in days of leisure and happiness perhaps even more than in what we call 'bad' days.

The whole difficulty with me is to keep control of the mind and I wish one's earliest education had given one more training in that. There seems to be a disproportion between the vastness of the soul in one respect (i.e. as a mass of ideas and emotions) and its smallness in another (i.e. as central, controlling ego). The whole inner weather changes so completely in less than a minute. Do you read George Herbert—

If what soul doth feel sometimes

*My soul might always feel—*⁶⁶

He's a good poet and one who helped to bring me back to the Faith.

My brother and all other ham-eating beneficiaries (shd. I call us Hamsters?) join me in good wishes. All blessings.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS HALMBACHER (L):

[Magdalen College
March 1951]

The question for me (naturally) is not 'Why should I not be a Roman Catholic?' but 'Why should I?' But I don't like discussing such matters, because it emphasises differences and endangers charity. By the time I had really explained my objection to certain doctrines which differentiate you from us (and also in my opinion from the Apostolic and even the Medieval Church), you would like me less.

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

17/4/51

Dear Van Auken

My prayers are answered. No: a glimpse is not a vision. But to a man on a mountain road by night, a glimpse of the next three feet of road may matter more than a vision of the horizon. And there must perhaps always be just enough lack of demonstrative certainty to make free choice possible: for what could we do but accept if the faith were like the multiplication table?

There will be a counter attack on you, you know, so don't be too alarmed when it comes. The enemy will not see you vanish into God's company without an effort to reclaim you. Be busy learning to pray and (if you have made up yr. mind on the denominational question) get confirmed.

Blessings on you and a hundred thousand welcomes. Make use of me in any way you please: and let us pray for each other always.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO R. W. CHAPMAN (BOD):[67](#)

Magdalen
17/4/51

Dear Chapman

Did I ever denigrate Horace? If so, I deserve to be struck blind like Stesichorus (was it?) for insulting Helen.⁶⁸ But I dare say I did: I wouldn't now. The truth is I am just returning to him after a period of idolatrous admiration for him in boyhood and a long intervening alienation. The *risus ab angulo* stanza⁶⁹ alone is proof enough.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
18/4/51

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Thanks for your letter of the 7th. I have just returned from a holiday and the time since has been spent in writing about 40 letters with my own hand: so much for Ivory Towers.

I also find your question v. difficult in my own life. What is right we usually know, or it is our own fault if we don't: but what is prudent or sensible we often do not. Is it part of the scheme that we shd. ordinarily be left to make the best we can of our own v. limited and merely probable reasonings? I don't know. Or wd. guidance even on these points be more largely given if we had early enough acquired the regular habit of seeking it?

How terrible your anxiety about your daughter must have been. She shall have her place in my prayers, such as they are.

Walsh didn't know much about my private life.⁷⁰ Strictly between ourselves, I have lived most of it (that is now over) in a house wh. was hardly ever at peace for 24 hours, amidst senseless wranglings, lyings, backbitings, follies, and *scares*. I never went home without a feeling of terror as to what appalling situation might have developed in my absence. Only now that it is over (tho' a different trouble has taken its place)⁷¹ do I begin to realise quite how bad it was.

God bless you all.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO SISTER MADELEVA CSC (W):[72](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford
18/4/51

Dear Sister Madeleva

I don't know whether I shd. thank you or your publishers for so kindly sending me a copy of your wholly delightful *Lost Language*.⁷³ At any rate I have to thank you for writing it. There has been nothing v. like it before and it emphasises a side of Chaucer too often neglected. I am glad you say a word on behalf of 'conventions' on p. 17. I always tell my pupils that a 'convention' *appears* to be such only when it has ended.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MISS BRECKENRIDGE (L):

Magdalen etc
19 April 1951

I think that if God forgives us we must forgive ourselves. Otherwise it is almost like setting up ourselves as a higher tribunal than Him.

Many religious people, I'm told, have physical symptoms like the 'prickles' in the shoulder. But the best mystics set no value on that sort of thing, and do not set much on visions either. What they seek and get is, I believe, a kind of direct experience of God, immediate as a taste or colour. There is no *reasoning* in it, but many would say that it is an experience of the intellect—the reason resting in its enjoyment of its object....

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

[The Kilns]
22/4/51

My dear Arthur

You were quite right to leave me when you did. A farewell meal is a doleful business: it was much better for me to get my luggage dumped and my berth found & for you to be back at home as soon as possible.

Thank Elizabeth for her letter.⁷⁴ She will understand, I am sure, why I don't want to continue the discussion by post: my correspondence involves a great number of theological letters already which *can't* be neglected because they are answers to people in great need of help & often in great misery.

I have hardly ever had so much happiness as during our late holiday. God bless you—and the Unbelievable.⁷⁵ *Pas de jambon encore.*⁷⁶

Yours

Jack

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
22/4/51

My dear Roger—

May 31st & June 1st will do me nicely. May I book you a room for those two nights?

I doubt if you'll find me both in and without a pupil on April 26th except between lunch & tea, when I suppose June will be in the Sheldonian. Cd. you ring me up if convenient?

Love to all three.

Yours

Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

[The Kilns]

23/4/51

My dear Arthur

(1.) A Ham has been posted to you to-day.

(2.) My plans, if they fit with yours, for the summer are as follows.

(a.) Short visit to C'fordsburn *with* W. Aug. 10 (arrive 11th)–Aug. 14

(b.) Stay with W. in S'thern Ireland Aug. 14–28.

(c.) Longer visit to C'fordsburn *alone* Aug. 28–Sept. 11th.

Can you be in residence at Silver Hill Aug. 28th–Sept. 11th?

Blessings,

Jack

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):

Magdalen etc.

23/4/51

Dear Dom Bede—

A succession of illnesses and a holiday in Ireland have so far kept me from tackling Lubac.⁷⁷ The *Prelude*⁷⁸ has accompanied me through all the stages of my pilgrimage: it and the *Aeneid* (which I never feel you value sufficiently) are the two long poems to wh. I most often return.

The tension you speak of (if it is a tension) between doing full & generous justice to the Natural while also paying unconditional & humble obedience to the Supernatural is to me an absolute key position. I have no use for mere *either-or* people (except, of course, in that last resort, when the choice, the plucking out the right eye, is upon us: as it is in some mode, every day.⁷⁹ But even then a man needn't abuse & blackguard his right eye. It was a good creature: it is my fault, not its, that I have got myself into a state wh. necessitates jettisoning it).

The reason I doubt whether it is, in principle, even a tension is that, as it seems to me, the subordination of Nature is demanded if only in the interests of Nature herself. All the beauty of nature withers when we try to make it absolute. Put first things first and we get second things thrown in: put second things first & we lose *both* first and second things.⁸⁰ We never get, say, even the sensual pleasure of food at its best when we are being greedy.

As to Man being in 'evolution', I agree, tho' I wd. rather say 'in process of being created'.

I am no nearer to your Church than I was but don't feel v. inclined to re-open a discussion. I think it only widens & sharpens differences. Also, I've had enough of it on the opposite flank lately, having fallen among—a new type to me—bigoted & proselytising Quakers! I really think that in our days it is the 'undogmatic' & 'liberal' people who call themselves Christians that are most arrogant & intolerant. I expect justice & even courtesy from many Atheists and, much more, from your people: from Modernists, I have come to take bitterness and rancour as a matter of course.

I might get down to see you some time this year. No chance of your visiting Oxford?

Yours always
C. S. Lewis

TO WARFIELD M. FIROR (BOD):

Magdalen etc.
23/4/51

Dear Firor

I guessed what response my news would elicit from your friendly heart and awaited it with mixed pleasure and pain: pleasure because your amazing good will (I am still puzzled as to how I acquired it) is always as cheering as a bright fire on a winter day, pain because I cannot respond as you wd. wish. I have seized my new freedom to get that infernal book on the XVIth Century done, or as nearly done as I can. The College is giving me a year off to do it, but the work can be done only in England, and much less ambitious holidays than a jaunt to America will serve my turn.

I am not naturally mobile. But you are. Is there no chance of seeing you in England? (Not, of course, in connection with this idiotic 'Festival'⁸¹ of which I and some others are heartily ashamed—such *untimely* nonsense!) And now to business...I feel twice the man I have been for the last ten years. God bless you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO COLIN HARDIE (P):⁸²

24/4/51

Dear Colin—

This is even more exciting than *Oedipus*.⁸³ The excessive length comes from the intrusion of matter relevant & interesting for the history of Greek religion but not, or not so much, for the Christian interpretation of reviving Gk. Myths. Unfortunately you are so concatenated & sagacious that v. few of the bits I want removed come away quite clean. Amputation, especially in another man's work, is v. dangerous, so the following lists of *delenda* must be treated as tentative, and if you accept all or any of them you must then go carefully through what is left to remove 'fossils'. They are

*Dele*⁸⁴ on p3 from *It is the presupposition to Trojans raw*
from *At this point* (5a) to *types of character* (5e)
from *who formed a guild* (9) to *and unity* (10)
from *Groups of three* (11) to *or under earth* (12)
from *Professor Rose, thinking* (12) to *human history* (15)
from *We have seen* (16) to *of sacrifice* (17)
from *To the Aegean peoples* to *where they could* (19) Then go to
'The Greeks, unlike the Aegean peoples, allowed the idea' etc.
from *The Greek idea* (2) to *always disbelieved* (21)
from *In popular theology* (24) to *from matter* (25)

Most, if not all, of these I shall be sorry to lose. But, as Ridley sagely remarks, the business of a cutter is to cut.⁸⁵ You cd. expect from me only one of three things: a refusal to cut, a recommendation to cut passages because they were bad, or a recommendation to cut passages although they were good. You've got the third wh. is presumably what you'd prefer.

I do long to see all this out in book form where you have elbow room, for I really think it is some of the most important work that is being done in our time. I think I told you before of the advice wh. old Macan⁸⁶ gave me long ago 'Don't put off writing until you know everything or you'll be too old to write decently'

It must be fun being you.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
30/4/51

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

No, the ‘different trouble’ is not an illness, or not an illness of mine. I could hardly tell you of it without a breach of confidence.

My holiday was only in a hotel, but in my old country & near the house of an old friend.

My prayer for Genia (an interesting name, by the way) cd. not naturally take the form you suggest. A little too schematic for my habits: and, to tell you the truth, a little bit like giving God a lecture on Theology!

As to MacArthur, I don’t feel in a position to have clear opinions about anyone I know only from newspapers. You see, whenever they deal with anyone (or anything) I know myself, I find they’re always a mass of lies & misunderstandings: so I conclude they’re no better in the places where I *don’t* know.

Nations being ‘friends’ is only a metaphor: they’re not people, and their co-operation depends, alas, on professional politicians & journalists whom you & I can’t control.

In fact, as you see, I’m a terrible sceptic about all public affairs. I am inclined to think that your MacA and our Montgomery are specimens of a new, dangerous, & useful type thrown up by the modern situation—but it’s only a guess.

In haste. God bless you all.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF *ESSAYS IN CRITICISM*:⁸⁷

Magdalen College,
Oxford,
May 3rd, 1951.

Dear Sir,

I have read Mr. Watt's essay on *Robinson Crusoe*⁸⁸ with great interest and almost complete agreement. But what does he mean when he says that the myths of Midas and the Rheingold are 'inspired by the prospect of never having to work again' (p. 104)? Surely the point of the first story is that Midas's golden touch brought starvation: and the point of the second that the gold carried a curse. If the gold in either story has an economic signification at all (which might be questioned) the meaning must be less banal than Mr. Watt suggests.⁸⁹

Yours truly,
C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
5/5/51

I had no notion of all this oriental background to you—barbaric pearl & gold.

Glad to hear the illness was not serious. Any chance of a night or weekend later? I needn't say how welcome you'd be.

J.

Love to both from both.

TO AN ANONYMOUS GENTLEMAN (P): TS
REF.236/51

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

12th May 1951.

Dear Sir,

If I knew a little more about the subject I should have been very glad to introduce your edition of the Psalms. But whatever I tried to say, I should come up against my ignorance. The right person to do it would be Sister Penelope, C.S.M.V., St Mary's Convent, Wantage, who understands both their religious use, and something of their history.

With all good wishes,

yours faithfully,

C. S. Lewis

TO VALERIE PITT (BOD):⁹⁰

Magdalen College
Oxford
15/5/51

Dear Miss Pitt—

It seemed to me after I'd got to bed that in my anxiety to prod a silent meeting into some semblance of debate I may have given the impression that I overlooked what Farrer⁹¹ rightly called the *richness* of yr. paper. The parts of it we wd. really like to have discussed were those least suitable for the Socratic. I hope you will continue to pursue the subject. All good wishes
C.S.L.

TO MARY MARGARET MCCASLIN (W): TS
REF.238/51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
15th May 1951.

Dear Mrs. McCaslin,

Thank you for your kind letter of the 11th.

A book of reference tells me that John Flavel came from Dartmouth and kept a private school.⁹² I have never heard of him before nor seen his books. But I have no difficulty in believing that he may be excellent. The past is full of good authors whom the general literary tradition has ignored and whom one only finds by chance. There is a great element of chance in fame. With all good wishes, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE ROSTREVOR HAMILTON (BOD):

Magdalen
17/5/51

My dear Hamilton

Of course I'll write an introduction to *Ouroboros*.⁹³ I'd deserve to be hanged if I wouldn't. Mind you, one doesn't always write best on what one most keenly and spontaneously enjoys. One writes best on the authors who are one's acquired tastes (as *happy* love produces fewer great poems than mess and fuss like Donne's or obsession like Catullus!) But I'll do my damdest. When the matter is fixed (and I leave you to go on into that) can you come down for a night and talk it over? I shall want to pick your brains: especially for *testimonies* which I can quote from other admirers, yourself, and James Stephens etc.⁹⁴ I remember the other Eddison v. well: give him my duty.⁹⁵

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
18th May 1951.

Dear Miss Pitter,

It is I who have to thank you for making my little party a success. You supplied the fire and air. I wrote down Young's⁹⁶ address, and will write: many thanks. My own MS will go to you as soon as it is typed. Don't let it be a bother: what I want is only a *Yes* or a *No* or *Doubtful*. It is very kind of you to undertake the job, for a job of course it is. Kindest regards to Miss O'Hara and yourself.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO ANDREW YOUNG (BOD):⁹⁷TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
18th May 1951

Dear Canon Young,

May a stranger take the liberty of offering his thanks for your poems? You appear to me a modern Marvell and a modern marvel: there has been nothing so choice, so delicate, and so controlled in this century. Every weir I see in this town of rivers now 'combs the river's silver hair'.⁹⁸ Thank you very much indeed.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
25/5/51

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

About yr. idea that error in upbringing might be partly responsible for Genia's trouble, does any trained psychologist agree with you? From what I hear such people say I shd. v. much doubt whether it cd. have had any 'depth' effect. Do not burden yourself with any *unnecessary* cares: I suspect you are not at all to blame. I pray for Genia every night.

About loving one's country, you raise two different questions. About one, about there seeming to be (now) no *reason* for loving it, I'm not at all bothered. As Macdonald says 'No one loves because he sees reason, but because he loves.'⁹⁹

Or say there are two kinds of love: we love wise & kind & beautiful people because we need them, but we love (or try to love) stupid & disagreeable people because they need us. This second kind is the more divine, because that is how God loves us: not because we are lovable but because He is love, not because He needs to receive but because He delights to give.

But the other question (*what* one is loving in loving a country) I do find v. difficult. What I feel sure of is that the personifications used by journalists and politicians have v. little reality. A treaty between the Govts. of two countries is not at all like a friendship between two people: more like a transaction between two people's lawyers.

I think love for one's country means chiefly love for people who have a good deal in common with oneself (language, clothes, institutions) and is in that way like love of one's family or school: or like love (in a strange place) for anyone who once lived in one's home town. The familiar is in itself a ground for affection. And it is good: because any *natural* help towards our spiritual duty of loving is good and God seems to build our higher loves round our merely natural impulses—sex, maternity, kinship, old acquaintance, etc. And in a less degree there are similar grounds for loving other nations—historical links & debts for literature etc (hence we all reverence the ancient Greeks). But I wd. distinguish this from the talk in the papers. Mind you, I'm in considerable doubt about the whole thing. My mind tends to move in a world of individuals not of societies.

I'm afraid I have not read E. Gough's book.¹⁰⁰ With all blessings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO SEYMOUR SPENCER (P):

Magdalen College.
29/5/51

Dear Dr. Spencer

Thank you v. much for letting me see the MS. of your article.¹⁰¹ My reading confirms the view I formed on hearing the earlier form of it read, that it is a most interesting and important piece of work.

On p. 3, para 4 the first sentence is a little obscure. It might mean that we shd. expect the admission of conscious mind to exclude freedom but it doesn't inevitably do so. I take it that is not what you meant. Wd. it run better 'the mere admission of a conscious mind leaves open the possibility of freedom'?

I still disagree with yr. view that bodily procreation is a consequence of the Fall, taking my stand, if you like, on Aquinas (*Summa Theol.* Pars I^a. Quaest xcvi):¹⁰² and I think it a grave, tho' not a fatal objection to your view that the same command *crescite et multiplicamini*¹⁰³ is addressed to beasts (*Gen.* I. 22)¹⁰⁴ and to Man (*ibid* I.28). But I hope your view will be published, and discussed by better authors than me.

I'm sorry that I have no record of the Number of the *XXth Century* in wh. my article appeared: and as you see, the silly asses don't put it on the off-print.

With all good wishes and many thanks.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
29th May 1951

Dear Starr

This is the sort of thing that makes my blood boil. The events at Rollins College¹⁰⁵ seem to me to concentrate into one filthy amalgam every tendency in the modern world which I most hate and despise. And, as you say, this kind of thing will put an end to American scholarship if it goes on. Why then did I not cable to an American paper as you suggested? My dear fellow, consider. What could unsolicited advice from a foreigner do except to stiffen the Wagnerian party by enlisting on its side every anti-British and every anti-God element in the state? You are asking me to damage a good cause by what would, from an unauthorised outsider like me, be simply impertinence. In a cooler moment (I don't expect you to be cool at present) you will be thankful I didn't. God help us all. It is terrible to live in a post-civilised age.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

Dear Starr

If you think there is anything to be gained by publishing my letter, you are at liberty to do so. My brother thanks you for your remembrances, and sends his lively sympathy.

But *not* the condemnatory part without the parts saying it wd. be impertinent of me to address a public on the matter.

C.S.L.

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS

REF.25/51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

4th June 1951.

My dear Mr. Allen,

That perfection of packing, parcel no. 184 has just arrived, and I have spent a pleasant ten minutes dismembering it. Normally we won't open your parcels when we get them, but reserve them for that moment of domestic crisis which so constantly arrives—'We shall have to open one of Edward Allen's parcels' we say. But I tackled this one at once on account of the clothes.

The suit is just the thing I want for the summer, if there should happen to be a summer, which at the moment looks unlikely. (My brother skilfully annexed the last one you sent, and is still wearing it: on the strength of which he has the impudence to recommend this one to *me*)! Very welcome too was the sugar, for we are reduced to saccharine at the moment. We of course have our sugar *ration*, but it is never sufficient, and has to be 'nursed'. I've no doubt that during the course of the week I shall find a grateful recipient for the dress. In fact an excellent parcel all round, for which I thank you very much.

Term is nearing its end in a whirlwind of work, and I shall be very glad to see the last of it. I always am, but this time especially, because I hope to be able to fit two holidays into the vacation—a week by the sea in the extreme west, Cornwall, a county I don't know at all well, but which is very lovely: and then three weeks in the north of Ireland, two of them also seaside. I don't think I have had so much holiday since I was a young man. I suppose you and Mrs. Allen will be thinking of going back to that bathing

beach of yours? I looked with much envy last year at the photos you sent of yourselves there. We have already had quite a considerable American invasion of Oxford, and I'm sorry that our visitors will take away such a dreadful impression of our weather—for it *can* be fine in England in the early summer though not often. Of course Americans in Oxford are no novelty, but what I notice this year is the absence of the obviously very wealthy ones—who are I suppose on the continent; we are getting the nice, homely, quiet not so rich type (between ourselves a much nicer type), attracted I suppose by the devaluation of the pound. (On second thought I believe I should'nt have used the word 'homely'. Does'nt it mean *ugly* in American? We mean by homely, just ordinary folk of our own kind of income etc.).

War and inflation are still the background of all ordinary conversation over here, to which has just been added the railway jam; our new railway organization has succeeded, so far as I can understand, in blocking every goods depot in the country. The trades people are grumbling, and the effect is just becoming apparent to the consumer.

With many good thanks, and kind remembrances to your Mother, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO SISTER PENELOPE CSMV (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
5/6/51

Dear Sister Penelope

My love for G. MacDonald has not extended to most of his poetry. I have naturally made several attempts to like it. Except for the *Diary of An Old Soul*¹⁰⁶ it won't (so far as I'm concerned) do. I have looked under likely titles for the bit you quote but I have not found it. I will make further efforts and let you know if I succeed. I suspect the lines are not by him. Do you think they might be Christina Rossetti's?

I'm very glad to hear the work is 'roaring' (a good translation, by the way, of *fervet opus!*)¹⁰⁷ and I much look forward to seeing the results. As for me I specially need your prayers because I am (like the pilgrim in Bunyan) travelling across 'a plain called Ease'.¹⁰⁸ Everything without, and many things within, are marvellously well at present. Indeed (I do not know whether to be more ashamed or joyful at confessing this) I realise that until about a month ago I never really believed (tho' I thought I did) in God's forgiveness. What an ass I have been both for not knowing and for thinking I knew. I now feel that one must never say one believes or understands anything: any morning a doctrine I thought I already possessed may blossom into this new reality. Selah! But pray for me always, as I do for you. Will there be a chance of seeing you at Springfield St. Mary's this summer?¹⁰⁹

Yours very sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTYN SKINNER (BOD):

As from Magdalen
June 11th 51

Dear Skinner—

I wouldn't like you to think that *Merlin*¹¹⁰ has been out all these months without being both bought and read by me. What happened was that I did both shortly after its appearance and then lent it to a man who returned it only the other day. Since then I have re-read it. Any poem of yours is always a refreshment and I think this is better than any you've done yet. Of course part of my pleasure consists in agreement—*idem sentire de republica*¹¹¹ (and about a good many other things too)—but I don't think it can be discounted on that score. I am sure if I had found half so much wit and invention in any of the dreary modern-orthodox poems which from time to time I try dutifully to appreciate, I should be praising it volubly.

I think you waste a little time in Canto I (though symbol and plot as wholesale and retail is good) but I am thoroughly carried away by II. 'Mute magnificent cascades of stair'¹¹² is heavenly—and the simile of that evening light in 6–8—and the entrance of Merlin.¹¹³ St.¹¹⁴ 55 is a good 'un, too. Frivolous and imperceptive reference to a great modern critic in III 4 is soon swallowed up in the perfectly obvious (once it's been done) yet stunningly effective rendering of *lasciate* etc. by *no exit*:¹¹⁵ wh. is grimmer than Dante's own words. All the Tartarology—fiends being the perfect guinea pigs etc—good: and oh *Bravissimo* at 40 ('is still called "games"').

But III 47 I don't like. He couldn't see the faces above him if he was in the front row of the dress circle, unless he turned round, could he? Well, a few at the sides. They wdn't be the first thing. It just checked the formation of my mental picture for a second. In IV the inferred meeting is good: and 'Macaulay'...of the wrong end (32) simply superb. St. 43 is real good thinking. You make a most dexterous use of the Miltonic background in V, especially of course at 14. I could have wished, not for less fun, but for more beauty about your angels. I thought we are starting it at 35 (splendid as far as it goes) but it died away too soon: and 37, like the fig-leaf in sculpture, rather emphasises than conceals the want. Or am I asking for

impossibilities in such a poem. VI has a peculiar glory of its own: the relief and beauty of the transition from hell to earth in 45, 46.

I am longing to read the rest. I shd. think you are enjoying yourself. It is sickening to think how little chance of a fair hearing you have...and poor old Desmond Macarthy¹¹⁶ dying at the wrong moment! Fire-spitting Rowse may do more harm than good: indeed I myself can hardly feel the right side to be the right (and *he* only feels it to be the Right) when it is sponsored by him. But all good luck. Finish the poem whatever they don't say. Will the tide ever turn?

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen etc
11/6/51

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Genia's letter is not yet to hand. I wish it were on any other subject. My job has always been to defend 'mere Christianity' against atheism and Pantheism: I'm no real good on 'inter-denominational' questions.

Walsh's 'not wholesome'¹¹⁷ cd. certainly be a bit hard if one took the words in the popular literary sense—in which 'unwholesome' suggests a faint smell of drains! But in the proper sense it is, surely, quite obviously true. The mind, like the body, will not thrive on an unbalanced diet. But—granted health and an adequate income, appetite itself will lead every one to a reasonably varied diet, without working it all out in vitamins, proteins, calories and what-not. In the same way I think inclination will usually guide a reasonable adult to a decently mixed literary diet. I wouldn't recommend a planned concentration on me or any other writer.

There are lots of good religious works both in prose & verse waiting to correct & supplement whatever is over—or under—explained in me: a Kempis, Bunyan, Chesterton, Alice Meynell, Otto, Wm. Law, Coventry Patmore, Dante— Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO GENIA GOELZ (P/ L):¹¹⁸

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
13/6/51

Dear Mrs. Goelz

(1) I think you are confusing the Immaculate Conception with the Virgin Birth. The former is a doctrine peculiar to the Roman Catholics and asserts that the mother of Jesus was born free of original sin. It does not concern us at all.

(2) The Virgin Birth is a doctrine plainly stated in the Apostles Creed that Jesus had no physical father, and was not conceived as a result of

sexual intercourse. It is not a doctrine on which there is any dispute between Presbyterians as such and Episcopalians as such. A few individual Modernists in both these churches have abandoned it; but Presbyterianism or Episcopalianism in general, and in actual historical instances, through the centuries both affirm it. The exact details of such a miracle—an exact point at which a supernatural force enters this world (whether by the creation of a new spermatozoon, or the fertilisation of an ovum without a spermatozoon, or the development of a foetus without an ovum) are not part of the doctrine. These are matters in which no one is obliged and everyone is free, to speculate. *Your* starting point about this doctrine will not, I think, be to collect the opinions of individual clergymen, but to read Matthew Chap. I and Luke I and II.

(3) Similarly, your question about the resurrection is answered in Luke XXIV. This makes it clear beyond any doubt that what is claimed is *physical* resurrection. (All Jews except Sadducees already believed in spiritual revival—there would have been nothing novel or exciting in that.)

(4) Thus the questions that you raise are not questions at issue between real P. and real Ep. at all for both these claim to agree with Scripture. Neither church, by the way, seems to be very intelligently represented by the people you have gone to for advice, which is bad luck. I find it very hard to advise in your choice. At any rate the programme, *until* you can make up your mind, is to read your New Testament (preferably a modern translation) intelligently. Pray for guidance, obey your conscience, in small as well as great matters, as strictly as you can.

(5) Don't bother much about your feelings. When they are humble, loving, brave, give thanks for them: when they are conceited, selfish, cowardly, ask to have them altered. In neither case are they *you*, but only a thing that happens to you. What matters is your intentions and your behaviour. (I hope all of this is not very dull and disappointing. Write freely again if I can be of any use to you.) Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

P.S. Of course God does not consider you hopeless. If He did He would not be moving you to seek Him (and He obviously is). What is going on in you at present is simply the beginning of the *treatment*. Continue seeking with cheerful seriousness. Unless He wanted you, you would not be wanting Him.

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

[The Kilns]
16/6/51

My dear Arthur

You're right. Not that I shall be tired of hotels, still less of you, by then, but that I shall be feeling like getting down to a little work. Also I think you wd. find it a waste both of Lily¹¹⁹ and of me to have us together.

Love to the Unbelievable and to yourself.

Yours

Jack

TO WARFIELD M. FIROR (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
22/6/51

Dear Firor

I sympathise with you about my handwriting. I used to have a v. good one but no efforts will now recover it. I say! nothing could be nicer than the Hams. If it is not troublesome I'd like you to cancel the new order about Beef & Eggs and revert to the Hams. (We keep poultry and are alright about Eggs).

I don't know about Deadlines. I somehow can't quite believe in myself going to Wyoming¹²⁰—perhaps this is a case for psychoanalysis. Your patient who actually wants his Red Lizard¹²¹ fattened up is of course a disgusting old brute but is he also mad? By what sort of transaction did he propose to transfer his soul? And what value did he suppose it wd. have?

My brother is away so I have all the mail to cope with by hand. Therefore in haste.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ROBERT C. WALTON (BBC):[122](#) O4/SB/RCW

Magdalen College,
Oxford
10/7/51

Dear Mr. Walton

I am afraid I couldn't. The route by which I actually became a Theist (*viâ* subjectivism and as an escape from Solipsism, almost in Berkeley's manner) could not be used for such a dialogue as you have in view. And also, like the old fangless snake in *The Jungle Book*,[123](#) I've largely lost my dialectical power. I am really very sorry. It sounds an excellent series and I wd. like to have been in it if I could.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
14/7/51

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Yes: GEORGE HERBERT, Seventeenth Century religious poet: his book is called *The Temple* and is available in many modern reprints.

Yes: by *Reason* I meant 'the faculty whereby we recognise or attain necessary truths' or 'the faculty of grasping self-evident truths or logically deducing those which are not self-evident'. I wd. not call the truths Reason any more than I wd. call colours Sight, or food Eating.

Yes: Christ is the eternal, unique 2nd Person of the Trinity: *sharing* His Sonship we can become sons of God in a real, but derived, manner.

I am v. sorry your husband is going through a bad time. You are all in my prayers. Thanks for the charming photos.

Yours very sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
17/7/51

Dear Miss Pitter

Very many thanks for reading the MS. The idea that you should also thank [me] is to me fantastic: I was 'making use of you', you were a thermometer. The thermometer reading (print the good ones because they're good and the bad ones because they're bad) is intriguing: a line more easy to take about other people's work than one's own. One sees Huck's point of view: the Widow, getting the house ready for a visitor would not have shared it.

I am lately back from Cornwall where I have been sailing for the first time. I think it is a way in which people who can't dance can get some of what dancing was made to give. There's nothing like water after all. Do you know David Lindsay's lines explaining why there was no wine before the Flood—

The wattir was sae strang and fine

Thei wald nat labour to mak wyne. [124](#)

That is why they lived so long. Well, thank you. My duty to you both.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD):
REF.310/51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
17th July 1951.

Dear Mr. Kinter,

The sardines, and the enormous tin of ham which you so very kindly sent me, have arrived in good condition, and I am most grateful to you for such a welcome gift; it could hardly have arrived more apropos, for I saw yesterday in the paper that our microscopic ration of bacon is shortly to be reduced by one ounce. Your ham will be of great service in tiding us over a lean period. It shall be consigned to the refrigerator until the time comes—though I was a little surprised to find the instruction that it needed refrigeration on the label; over here we never put canned goods into the frig., but just store them in the coolest part of a larder.

There is a larger number of American visitors in Oxford this year than usual, and I'm glad to say that they are having what—by our standards—is a very good summer. They are doing the Colleges very thoroughly, and putting us natives to shame daily by asking questions about them which we can't answer. You never realize how little you know about your home town until you meet an intelligent visitor in it.

We are all very thankful—and you are no doubt more so—to see that at last there is some prospect of an end to this ghastly Korean war. Our only fear now is that it may be replaced by a Persian one; but it will be time enough to cross that river when we come to it.

With many thanks and all good wishes, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W): TS
REF.328/51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
27th July 1951.

Dear Mrs. Jessup,

Thank you for your letter of the 21st. Someone (and someone I don't even know) had been selected by Charles Williams as his biographer some time before his death, and is in possession of all the materials. So that is that! But don't imagine you are losing anything. Biography is not in my line.

I agree most strongly with all you say about him, and wish someone really good could do him: but I would'nt, even if there were not another claimant in possession.

With all best wishes, yours sincerely, WH Lewis
Secretary.

(Dictated by Mr. Lewis)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *CHURCH TIMES* (EC):[125](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

Having read Mr. Bradbury's letter on the Holy Name,[126](#) I have a few comments to make. I do not think we are entitled to assume that all who use this Name without reverential prefixes are making a 'careless' use of it; otherwise, we should have to say that the evangelists were often careless. I do not think we are entitled to assume that the use of the word *Blessed* when we speak of the Virgin Mary is 'necessary' otherwise, we should have to condemn both the Nicene and the Apostles' Creed for omitting it.

Should we not rather recognise that the presence or absence of such prefixes constitute a difference, not in faith or morals, but simply in style? I know that their absence is irritating to others. Is not each party innocent in its temperamental preference but grossly culpable if it allows anything so subjective, contingent, and (with a little effort) conquerable as a temperamental preference to become a cause of division among brethren? If we cannot lay down our tastes, along with other carnal baggage, at the church door, surely we should at least bring them in to be humbled and, if necessary, modified, not to be indulged?

C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):[127](#)

As from Magdalen College,
Oxford
4/8/51

Dear Evans

*The Coming of a King*¹²⁸ arrived most opportunely when I was in almost solitary confinement recovering from mumps, and I read it at two sittings. I think it not only the best but incomparably the best book you have done. The others interested me but this really set wires jangling. I congratulate you. And I think it is a great thing to put *that* idea of the Stone Age—which is at least as likely to be the true one—into boys' heads instead of Well's or Naomi Mitchison's. It's all good. The marriage customs are amusing, the Ogres exciting, and the Dark Faces with their quest just add the something more. I hope it will be a great success.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS C. VULLIAMY (W):¹²⁹TS
REF.347/51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
10th August 1951.

Dear Mrs. Vulliamy,
Many thanks for your most kind and encouraging letter of the 4th. With
all best wishes, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
15/8/51

You *are* treasures. Yes, I'd love to. The 15th Sept. week end (i.e. arrive
14th) if I may. Lovely.

I've just been having Mumps. Humphrey¹³⁰ kept on quoting me bits out
of *The Problem of Pain*, which I call a bit thick. Love and deep thanks to
both.

J

TO GENIA GOELZ (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
September 12, 1951

Dear Mrs Goelz

There is no doubt that laymen, and women, can baptise. The validity would, I suppose, depend on whether you regard the church into which the child is baptised as a part of the true church. I am very *impressed* that an Episcopalian will not accept Presbyterian baptism (and at the rudeness of his method) but I dare say he knows the rule. I fear I don't. If I were you I would ask *another* (quieter and more amiable) Episcopalian parson. Personal animosities or friendships ought to have nothing to do with the question. In great haste.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen etc
Sept 12/1951

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

It is v. remarkable (or wd. be if we did not know that God arranges things) that you shd. write about our vicarious sufferings when another correspondent has recently written on the same matter.

I have not a word to say against the doctrine that Our Lord suffers in all the sufferings of His people (see Acts IX. 6)¹³¹ or that when we willingly accept what we suffer for others and offer it to God on their behalf, then it may be united with His sufferings and, in Him, may help to their redemption or even that of others whom we do not dream of. So that it is not in vain: tho' of course we must not count on seeing it work out exactly as we, in our present ignorance, might think best. The key text for this view is *Colossians* I.24.¹³² Is it not, after all, one more application of the truth that we are all 'members of one another'?¹³³ I wish I had known more when I wrote the *Problem of Pain*.

God bless you all. Be sure that Grace flows into you and out of you and through you in all sorts of ways, and no faithful submission to pain in yourself or in another will be wasted.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept 12/51

Dear Mrs. Jessup

Yes, I shd. jolly well think I *have* met that problem of the division between loving hearts when *one* comes to believe and have known something of it in my own life.¹³⁴ The poem on *Galahad at Caerleon*¹³⁵ touches it, doesn't it? Our Lord foresaw it: see Luke XII 49–53.¹³⁶ I have not the ghost of anything that cd. be called a 'solution'. Perhaps this pain cannot be avoided: is it not the tension between the Church and the World breaking out in each household. Sometimes the unconverted party, hitherto quite kind, becomes almost diabolical:* but the other often wins him (or her) over in the end. (I don't think you are conceited at all!) Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

* Yet oh! How I sympathise with him! God is *such* an Intruder! We must deal with them v. tenderly.

TO DON GIOVANNI CALABRIA (V):

Magdalen College,
Oxford,
England
Sept. 13th 1951

Dilectissime Pater—

Insolito gaudio affectus sum tuâ espistolâ et eo magis quod audivi te aegritudine laborare; interdum timui ne forte mortem obisses. Minime tamen cessavi ab orationibus pro te: neque enim debet illud Flumen Mortis dulce commercium caritatis et cogitationum abolere. Nunc gaudeo quia credo (quamquam taces de valetudine—noli contemnere corpus, *Fratrem Asinum*, ut dixit Sanctus Franciscus!) tibi iam bene aut saltem melius esse. Mitto ad te fabulam meam nuper Italice versam; in qua sane magis lusi

quam laboravi. Fantasiae meae liberas remisi habenas haud tamen (spero) sine respectu ad aedificationem et meam et proximi. Nescio utrum hujusmodi nugis dilecteris; at si non tu, fortasse quidam juvenis aut puella ex *bonis* tuis *liberis* amabit. Equidem post longam successionem modicorum morborum (quorum nomina Italica nescio) iam valeo. Quinquagesimum diem natalem sacerdotii tui gratulationibus, precibus, benedictionibus saluto. Vale. Oremus pro invicem semper in hoc mundo et in futuro.

C. S. Lewis

Magdalen College,
Oxford,
England
Sept 13th 1951

Dearest Father—

I was moved with unaccustomed joy by your letter and all the more because I had heard you were ill; sometimes I feared lest you had perhaps died.

But never in the least did I cease from my prayers for you; for not even the River of Death ought to abolish the sweet intercourse of love and meditations.

Now I rejoice because I believe (although you keep silent about your health—do not condemn the body: *Brother Ass*, as St Francis said!)¹³⁷ I believe you are well or at least better.

I am sending you my tale recently translated into Italian in which, frankly, I have rather played than worked.¹³⁸ I have given my imagination free rein yet not, I hope, without regard for edification—for building up both my neighbour and myself. I do not know whether you will like this kind of trifle. But if you do not, perhaps some boy or girl will like it from among your ‘good children’.

For myself, after a long succession of minor illnesses (I do not know their Italian names) I am now better.

I salute the fiftieth anniversary of your priesthood with congratulations, prayers and blessings. Farewell. May we always pray for one another both in this world and in the world to come.

C. S. Lewis

TO BERNARD ACWORTH (W):[139](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford
13th Sept. 1951

Dear Acworth—

I have read nearly the whole of *Evolution*[140](#) and am glad you sent it. I must confess it has shaken me: not in my belief in evolution, which was of the vaguest and most intermittent kind, but in my belief that the question was wholly unimportant. I wish I was younger. What inclines me now to think that you may be right in regarding it as *the* central and radical lie in the whole web of falsehood that now governs our lives, is not so much your arguments against it as the fanatical and twisted attitudes of its defenders. The section on Anthropology was especially good.

I am just back from Ireland where I have had the great pleasure of meeting an old friend of yours—Conway Ross. He told me you were one of the only two men who ever ‘talked him down’ and he hoped I wd. be the third. This hope was disappointed: ‘faith he gave me little chance to fulfil it. But he’s a grand chap and a man of my totem.’

The point that the whole economy of nature demands *simultaneity* of at least a v. great many species is a v. strong one. Thanks: and blessings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept 15th. 1951

Dear Miss Mathews

I will convey your kind message to my brother. St. Ives (it was my friends' choice, not mine) isn't the tucked-away and time-forgotten nook you picture, but a good deal spoiled by holiday-makers.

Since then, I have been really in quiet and almost unearthly spots in my native Ireland. I stayed for a fortnight in a bungalow which none of the peasants will approach at night because the desolate coast on which it stands is haunted by 'the Good People'. There is also a ghost but (and this is interesting) they don't seem to mind *him*: the faerie are a more serious danger.

I am told that *fewer* Americans than usual visited England this year so the Festival, from that point of view, was a failure: it was, in any case, a silly business. With all sympathy, blessings, and, as always, thanks.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
24/9/51

Dear Mr Kinter

I have been in Ireland, revisiting the haunts and some of the friends of my boyhood, and that is why your letter of Aug 22nd. has been so long unanswered. A ham is not a 'small thing', but a glorious creature. If the shortages within our English 'Tin Curtain' did not affect others so much more grievously than me, I could almost give thanks for a state of affairs which restores to men in their fifties a healthy schoolboyish interest in eating. It gives us a chance (which I fear I often forget to take) of making grace before meals a reality.

I rather envy your visit to Boethius' tomb:¹⁴¹ but perhaps his shade wd. be more pleased if I re-read the *Consolatio*.¹⁴²

My Numinor was a misspelling: it ought to be Numenor.¹⁴³ The private mythology to which it belongs grew out of the private language which Tolkien had invented: a real language with roots and sound-laws such as only a great philologist cd. invent. He says he found that it was impossible to invent a language without at the same time inventing a mythology: he adds that Muller was wrong in calling mythology a 'disease of language'¹⁴⁴ and that it wd. be truer to say that language was a disease of mythology. I don't quite understand that.

The private mythology 'clicked' with this world at the moment when the participle *atlan* (fallen or shattered) which had been produced by sound laws with no anticipation of what it wd. lead to, when applied to the vanished land of Numenor, turned out to be so obviously connected with *our* vanished land of *Atlantis*. A letter to him direct (J. R. R. Tolkien, Merton College, Oxford) wd., I am sure, give pleasure and elicit a full and most interesting reply.

I am so glad you liked the *Lion*: there will be another children's story in November. With v. many thanks & good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
27/9/51

Excellent. Will Tu. Oct. 30th do? RSVP.
J.

TO BERNARD ACWORTH (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
4/10/51

Dear Acworth—

No, I'm afraid. I shd. lose much and you wd. gain almost nothing by my writing you a preface. No one who is in doubt about your views on Darwin wd. be impressed by testimony from me, who am known to be no scientist. Many who have been or are being moved towards Christianity by my books wd. be deterred by finding that I was connected with anti-Darwinism.

I hope (but who knows himself!) that I wd. not allow myself to be influenced by this consideration if it were only my personal success as an author that was endangered. But the cause I stand for wd. be endangered too. When a man has become a popular Apologist he must watch his step. Everyone is on the look out for things that might discredit him. Sorry.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

Lewis had been working on Volume III of the Oxford History of English Literature, English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, since 1936. Beginning with the Michaelmas Term of 1951, Magdalen College gave him a year off to complete the book. He did no teaching during that time.

Prince Caspian: The Return to Narnia was published by Geoffrey Bles of London on 15 October.

TO MRS JESSUP (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
15/10/51

Dear Mrs. Jessup—

I agree with everything you say (except that I shd. publish anything on the subject: a bachelor is not the man to do it—there is such an obvious answer to anything he says!).

Our regeneration is a slow process. As Charles Williams says there are three stages: (1.) The Old Self on the Old Way. (2.) The Old Self on the new Way. (3.) The New Self on the New Way.

After conversion the Old Self can of course be just as arrogant, importunate, and imperialistic about the Faith as it previously was about any other interest. I had almost said ‘Any other Fad’—for just as the loveliest complexion turns green in a green light, so the Faith itself may have at first all the characteristics of a Fad and we may be as ill to live with as if we had taken up Nudism or Psychoanalysis or Pure Wool Clothing. You and I, clearly, both know all about that: one makes blunders.

About obedience, the principle is clear. Obedience to man is limited by obedience to God and, when they really conflict, must go. But of course that gives one v. little guidance about particulars. The converted party must pray: I suppose it is not often necessary to pray *in the presence* of the other! Especially if the converted party is the woman, who usually has the house to herself all day. Of course there must be no *concealment*, in the sense that if the question comes up one must say frankly that one does pray. But there is a difference between not concealing and *flaunting*. For the rest (did I

quote this before?) MacDonald says ‘the time for *speaking* seldom arrives, the time for *being* never departs.’¹⁴⁵ Let you and me pray for each other.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS
REF.64/51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
18th October 1951.

Dear Miss Mathews,

Your nice parcel of the 6th September has just arrived, and has I see been opened by our Customs people—which rarely happens. What they saw suspicious about it I can't imagine. I suppose what happens is that they open one parcel in every hundred or so as a routine check.

I feel sure that you won't be offended if I tell you that I have—with great reluctance—sent your gift straight on to some one else, whose need is much greater than mine. It has gone to a particularly hard hit member of the most unfortunate class in this country: an elderly lady (65), who has always had a struggle to make ends meet, and who, owing to a failure of dividends, is now on the verge of actual want. No doubt you have seen in the papers that we are caught in what the economists call 'an inflationary spiral' so far this has not apparently touched the working classes, but amongst the elderly, living on dwindling investment income in a world of rising prices, there is already discomfort, hardship, and I fear in many cases, real suffering. And to the lady in question, your parcel will be a real Godsend.

Our elections take place this day week, and I shall not be sorry when they are over. Already everything possible seems to have been said by every possible candidate, and the reiteration becomes wearisome. There seem to be good prospects of putting Labour out, in spite of the fact that they are promising the earth, whereas Churchill, with his usual good sense, is promising nothing but hard times.

I hope you are keeping well; we both are. With many thanks (should I also say apologies?), and all good wishes, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO WENDELL W. WATTERS (P):¹⁴⁶TS¹⁴⁷
REF.413/51

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
25th October 1951.

Dear Mr. Watters,

Yes. I am not surprised that a man who agreed with me in *Screwtape* (ethics served with an imaginative seasoning) might disagree with me when I wrote about religion. We can hardly discuss the whole matter by post, can we?

I'll only make one shot. When people object, as you do, that if Jesus was God as well as Man, then He had an unfair advantage which deprives Him for them of all value, it seems to me as if a man struggling in the water shd refuse a rope thrown to him by another who had one foot on the bank, saying 'Oh, but you have an unfair advantage' it is because of that advantage that He can help.¹⁴⁸

But all good wishes: we must just differ: in charity I hope. You must not be *angry* with me for believing you know: I'm not angry with you!

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO HARRY BLAMIRES (BOD): TS
REF.401//51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
29th October 1951.

Dear Blamires,

I hope my refusal will rank as a very 'flat' one.¹⁴⁹ I am struggling with a preface for another book at the moment and wishing I'd never undertaken it!¹⁵⁰ I don't believe I would really do you any good, for[I] think the Educational world is rather anti-me. I could write a *paragraph*—the sort of thing that comes out in the catalogue or on the dust jacket. I'm sorry. But I must get out of these 'little jobs one after another' that, in the aggregate, really cripple one.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD): PC

Magdalen College
Oxford
5/11/51

How is the Back? And if it is better, cd. you come and dine with me on Wed. next 7 (not dressed: call in my rooms at 7. sharp) or, if that is not convenient, cd. you lunch at 1 o'clock the same day? My duty to your wife
C. S. Lewis

TO HERBERT PALMER (TEX):[151](#)

20/11/51

'To which' [i.e. to Rhetoric] 'poetry would be made subsequent, or indeed rather precedent, as being less subtle and fine, but more simple, sensuous, and passionate' –*Tractate on Education* (*Prose Wks*, Bohn's Edtn. Vol. III, p. 473.)[152](#)

Bad luck on 'impassioned' wh. he certainly did NOT say, whatever E.S. may think. I imagine, tho', that *passionate* and *impassioned* meant v. nearly the same.

I'm afraid I never see the *Fortnightly*, but will look out for yr. article if I do.[153](#) I am v. sorry you have been so ill and hope there is a better time coming. I'm alright.

Blessings–
C.S.L.

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalen etc.
27/11/51

Dear Evans

(I wish you wouldn't *doctor* or *mister* me!) I was a pig not to send you a *Caspian*, but you know how, at the moment of making out one's list one has first 3 names wh. some recent event makes obvious, and after those one can only think either of 100 people or no one. I now rectify the omission. I am delighted that it pleased you. I look forwardv. much to the 'booklets'. The conception sounds excellent and, I hope they will be a great success.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD): TS
REF.310/51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
27th November 1951.

Dear Mr. Kinter,

Thank you for your kind letter of the 19th. What it is to have a real reader! No one else sees that the first book is Ransom's *enfances*:¹⁵⁴ if they notice a change at all, they complain that in the later ones he 'loses the warm humanity of the first' etc.

All the best.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MISS TUNNICLIFF (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Dec 1st 1951

Dear Miss Tunnicliff

(1.) Oddly enough I have more than once thought of writing on the *Problem of Pleasure*. As for the title and subject of my actual book¹⁵⁵ [they] were not of my own independent choice: I had been asked to deal with that subject for a series.¹⁵⁶

(2.) 'Rough male taste'¹⁵⁷ is, of course, a metaphor. It still seems to me the right one—but of course all metaphors are touch-and-go and don't appeal equally to all imaginations.

(3.) I *did* try so to write as to make people less angry. To say that they might be angry was part of the attempt.

(4.) You think I don't go far enough about animals: others think I go too far. If I had gone as far as you wd. like I shd. have raised more incredulity. Yes—my treatment of freedom was crude & hasty.

(5.) No, I don't think I can frame every sentence for reading aloud in mixed company. I think books on such subjects are best read in solitude.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

In his unpublished biography of his brother, most of which became Letters of C. S. Lewis (1966), Warnie Lewis wrote: 'On 3rd December 1951 Jack received a letter from the Prime Minister [Winston Churchill] offering to recommend him for a C.B.E. in the New Year Honour's List. Here is his reply:'[158](#)

TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S SECRETARY (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
[4 December] 1951

s

I feel greatly obliged to the Prime Minister, and so far as my personal feelings are concerned this honour would be highly agreeable. There are always however knaves who say, and fools who believe, that my religious writings are all covert anti-Leftist propaganda, and my appearance in the Honours List would of course strengthen their hands. It is therefore better that I should not appear there. I am sure the Prime Minister will understand my reason, and that my gratitude is and will be none the less cordial.

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS
REF.25/51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
6th December 1951.

My dear Mr. Allen,

As I entered my rooms this morning I was cheered by the sight of a parcel, so admirably packed, that I did'nt have to look at the label to see who was the kind friend who had sent it. How do you do it? I've been trying for years to learn how to make up a package, and still have'nt progressed sufficiently in the art to produce one that I would trust to cross the street. I need hardly say how grateful I am to you for it, coming as it

does at a moment when the new government—very rightly by the way—has refused to woo the electors by playing Father Christmas with a food bonus.

It appears from information given in Parliament that Labour's food gifts to the country in December were really only available by cutting the rations in other months, and this Churchill does'nt propose to do.

But what a mess the world is in, is'nt it? In some respects you must feel it even worse than we do; you are of course better off materially, but we at least have'nt a full-scale war on our hands. And one to which I can't see any end, for I take it that if peace is made in Korea—which does'nt look very likely—it will merely be the prelude to an attack on France in Indo-China or ourselves in Malaya. But we can't do anything about it except pray, so there is no use in grumbling.

After the wettest November on record, with floods all down the Thames valley, we have settled down into a crisp December, and are enjoying it. There is of course the usual coal shortage, but that does'nt worry us much, for we have a good deal of timber about the place, and my brother and I do our own coal mining with axe and saw. So do the neighbours, drat 'em, but its impossible to patrol the place day and night; but as King Louis XV used to say, 'things as they are will last out my time'.

With all best wishes to you and your mother for a happy Christmas from both of us, and with very many thanks, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W): TS

REF.64/51.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
12th December 1951.

Dear Miss Mathews,

Many thanks for your letter of the 8th:— Texas certainly does'nt sound attractive, but you seem to have got some enjoyment out of it; my brother says he has an idea that this is the one which calls itself the *Lone Star State*, and that its inhabitants—like the Scots and the Jews—are always making up good stories against themselves. e.g. that when America entered the war, Texas wired the President 'Texas joins with U.S.A. in fight for freedom'.

Yes, we have been exceedingly lucky (in more senses than one) over your parcels, and the customs took no notice of the things you mention; I think with *all* articles they take the view that as long as you are not making a business of it, a little of this that or the other thing may now be passed. But this is only a guess, I really don't know.

Of course I'll try my hand at commenting on a short story, but don't attach much importance to what I say. I've never had any *professional* (i.e. academical) connection with modern literature, and the short story is a genre I'm particularly bad on. That is, I accept the job, not because I can do it, but because you have such high claim to anything we can even try to do.

With all best wishes from us both to you both for a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

P.S. My brother asks me to add that he too looks forward to seeing the story, and that unfortunately he does'nt know India at all; he was once under orders to go there for five years, but with his usual ingenuity, managed to persuade the War Office to send him to West Africa for twelve months instead.

TO WARFIELD M. FIROR (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Dec. 20th 1951

My dear Firor

How the years flick past at our time of life: don't they: like telegraph posts seen from an express train: and how they crawled once, when the gulf between one Christmas and another was too wide almost for a child's eye to see across. If ever I write a story about a long-liver, like Haggard's *She* or the *Wandering Jew*¹⁵⁹ (and I might) I shall make that point. The first century of his life will, to the end, seem to him longer than all that have followed it: the Norman Conquest, the discovery of America and the French Revolution are all muddled up in his mind as recent events.

My year 'off' has been, as it was meant to be, so far a year of very hard work, but mostly congenial. The book really begins to look as if it might be finished in 1952 and I am, between ourselves, pleased with the manner of it—but afraid of hidden errors. In that way I rather envy you for being engaged in empirical inquiry where, I suppose, mistakes rise up in the laboratory and proclaim themselves. But a mistake in a history of literature walks in silence till the day it turns irrevocable in a printed book and the book goes for review to the only man in England who wd. have known it was a mistake. This, I suppose, is good for one's soul: and the *kind* of good I must learn to digest. I am going to be (if I live long enough) one of those men who *was* a famous writer in his forties and dies unknown—like Christian going down into the green valley of humiliation.¹⁶⁰ Which is the most beautiful thing in Bunyan and can be the most beautiful thing in life if a man takes it *quite* rightly—a matter I think and pray about a good deal. One thing is certain: much better to begin (at least) learning humility on this side of the grave than to have it all as a fresh problem on the other. Anyway, the desire wh. has to be mortified is such a vulgar and silly one.

Most of us are v. much cheered by having got rid of the Labour government and at finding that we have done so without yet plunging into a period of strikes and sedition and 'cold' revolution, which we feared. There are some, not Labour, who feel quite differently. Have you ever heard of Captain Bernard Acworth R. N., a distinguished submarine commander in World War I and v. good Christian of the Evangelical type—but his head absolutely buzzing with Bees? He was with me the other day explaining that the whole American-English-UNO¹⁶¹ set up is absolutely fatal and part of a plot engineered (so far as I cd. make out) by the Kremlin, the Vatican, and Jews, the Freemasons and—subtlest foe of all—the Darwinians. So I suppose you must be in it too. But there was a core of rationality in it. He

thinks our strategy ought to be purely naval, that we can ruin ourselves by trying to keep up an army in Europe and, even so, cannot succeed on those lines.

Have you given up visiting these parts? I (and others) have a very warm memory of your one descent upon Oxford and would greatly welcome another. *You* are a naturally mobile organism, you know, unlike me. Whether you come or not, all very best wishes and, as always, hearty thanks. I'm sorry for the handwriting: the harder I try, the worse it gets now-a-days.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO DON GIOVANNI CALABRIA (V):

E Collegio S. Mariae Magdalenae
apud Oxonienses

Die S. Stephani MCMLI[26 December 1951]

Dilectissime Pater

Grato animo epistulam tuam hodie accepi et omnia bona spiritualia et temporalia tibi in Domino invoco. Mihi in praeterito anno accidit magnum gaudium quod quamquam difficile est verbis exprimere conabor.

Mirum est quod interdum credimus nos credere quae re verâ ex corde non credimus. Diu credebam me credere in remissionem peccatorum. Ac subito (in die S. Marci) haec veritas in mente mea tam manifesto lumine apparuit ut perciperem me numquam antea (etiam post multas confessiones et absolutiones) toto corde hoc credidisse. Tantum distat inter intellectûs mera affirmatio et illa fides medullitus infixâ et quasi palpabilis quam apostolus scripsit esse *substantiam*.

Fortasse haec liberatio concessa est tuis pro me intercessionibus! Confortat me ad dicendum tibi quod vix debet laicus ad sacerdotem, junior ad senioem, dicere. (Attamen *ex ore infantium*: immo olim ad Balaam ex ore asini!). Hoc est: multum scribes de tuis peccatis. Cave (liceat mihi, dilectissime pater, dicere *cave*) ne humilitas in anxietatem aut tristitiam transeat. Mandatum est *gaude* et *semper gaude*. Jesus abolevit chirographiam quae contra nos erat. Sursum corda! Indulge mihi, precor, has balbutiones. Semper in meis orationibus et es et eris. Vale.

C. S. Lewis

from the College of St Mary Magdalen
Oxford
St Stephen's Day [26 December] 1951

Dearest Father

Thank you for the letter which I have received from you today and I invoke upon you all spiritual and temporal blessings in the Lord.

As for myself, during the past year a great joy has befallen me. Difficult though it is, I shall try to explain this in words. It is astonishing that sometimes we believe that we believe what, really, in our heart, we do not believe.

For a long time I believed that I believed in the forgiveness of sins. But suddenly (on St Mark's day)¹⁶² this truth appeared in my mind in so clear a light that I perceived that never before (and that after many confessions and absolutions) had I believed it with my whole heart.

So great is the difference between mere affirmation by the intellect and that faith, fixed in the very marrow and as it were palpable, which the Apostle wrote was *substance*.¹⁶³

Perhaps I was granted this deliverance in response to your intercessions on my behalf!

This emboldens me to say to you something that a layman ought scarcely to say to a priest nor a junior to a senior. (On the other hand, *out of the mouths of babes*:¹⁶⁴ indeed, as once to Balaam, out of the mouth of an ass!)¹⁶⁵ It is this: you write much about your own sins. Beware (permit me, my dearest Father, to say beware) lest humility should pass over into anxiety or sadness. It is bidden us to 'rejoice and always rejoice'.¹⁶⁶ Jesus has cancelled the handwriting which was against us.¹⁶⁷ Lift up our hearts!

Permit me, I pray you, these stammerings. You are ever in my prayers and ever will be.

Farewell.

C. S. Lewis

1952

TO EDNA GREEN WATSON (BOD): TS

REF.52/9

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
2nd January 1952.

Dear Mrs. Watson,

Very many thanks for your kind present of the cake, which has just arrived in good condition; good external condition that is, for it will not be opened until I get it out to my house this evening, where it will be received with enthusiasm. I often hear laments about the difficulty of getting cake making materials, so you can imagine how much pleasure it will give.

It will also help to distract attention from all the news in the papers about the shortages which are expected in 1952: news which is not rendered any the more palatable by Churchill's assurance that when he gets back from your country,¹ and meets Parliament, he will have several proposals to make which 'will be very unpleasant for all of us.' But we are in hopes that his treatment will differ from Atlee's in being like the pain after you have had a tooth out—getting less every day—whereas under the late government we were shirking going to the dentist and the pain was getting worse every day.²

With many thanks, and all good wishes for the New Year, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTEr (BOD):

Magdalen etc
Jan 8th. 1952

Dear Miss Pitter

May Maleldil send you a good year.³ Of course use those Spenserian stanzas as you wish.⁴ I think your idea of the sheepdog-trial for readers is excellent.

The poem of yours which I didn't like was the one about the enamoured earwig and the lady:⁵ and it all comes of mere idiosyncrasies of mine. (a.) My imagination goes easily to humanised mammals but stops dead at humanised insects. (b.) I can't *bear* the least suggestion (however sportive) of love affairs between different species or even between children. That is one of the many things which for me sinks *Tom Sawyer* so immeasurably below the divine *Huckleberry*. But as I can't give any reason for the second—I think I could for the first—this doesn't help you v. much. I suspect it originates with the mingled embarrassment and nausea evoked in oneself as a child by grown-up jokes of an arch character at childrens' parties.

Isn't Herbert—?⁶ well: one can only say *well*. I am glad you are swimming in poetry and cannot help hoping great things.

Yours most sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS
REF.52/28

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
8th January 1951 [1952].

My dear Mr. Allen,

A very happy new year to you both, and many thanks for your amusing letter of the 2nd. As you will observe, you were very nearly in time to call up on the old wave length, but not quite; my brother makes a clear sweep of all the old numbers every 31st December. I don't know why, and I dare'nt ask him, in case he should insist on explaining it to me. He by the way asks to send greetings to both of you, and asks me to tell you that your thin blue summer suit is still going strong: and adds, that in view of the amount of summer we get in this country, he reckons on it figuring amongst the assets of his estate when the Landlord terminates his lease.

I doubt if there is a man in America besides yourself who would have seriously contemplated sending a private gift of coal to this country: I believe if I said 'thanks very much, and while you are about it, make me a present of the ship that brings it', you would do your best to comply! But I'm glad to be able to report that your prayers for mild weather have been answered; I got up this morning to find the thermometer standing at 52 in my unheated bedroom, in which the window had been wide open all night. Your weather is the sort I hate—or at least like least, for we should'nt hate even the weather. But I confess I don't enjoy wet snow.

Talking of ships, the epic of the 'Flying Enterprise' has played even the Truman–Winston conference off the front page of our diminished dailies: and rightly so.⁷ The American merchantile marine, and indeed the whole nation must be very proud of their Captain Carlsen. I wonder is a flair for journalism inborn in your people? You must have noticed how good are the reports from the commanders of the U.S.N. destroyers which have been standing by; no professional journalist could have done the thing better. A British naval officer in the same circumstances would be transmitting reports in what we call 'Whitehall English' which would make even the 'Flying Enterprise' story sound dull.

I like the name of your car; over here we are more aristocratic. My brother's old Colonel has a car which has been raised to the Peerage under the title of Victor, Viscount Vauxhall, but he is called Vic for short; on the other hand he had an American friend in Shanghai whose car rejoiced in the name of 'Puddlejumper'.

If you send a letter to Lieutenant-Colonel R. K. Wilson, Royal Artillery, c/o the War Office, Whitehall, London, S.W. 1., it should reach him wherever he is, but of course if he is in Korea or some such place, it will take some time to reach him; it would be as well to endorse the envelope 'Please Forward' anyway. I'm sorry I can't be more helpful, but our army is very scattered these days; I saw in the Sunday paper that at any given moment, we have *ninety thousand* trained troops on board ship, going to or coming from somewhere. As you say, what a muddle. Is this ghastly Korean war never going to end: or are we to spend the rest of our lives running round the Iron Curtain stopping leaks in it?

Yours ever.

C. S. Lewis⁸

TO SISTER PENELOPE CSMV (BOD):

Magdalen etc.
10/1/52

Dear Sister Penelope

It was, as always, a great pleasure to hear from you. Hearty good wishes and prayers for the new year.

I was very intrigued by the Snow Men last time the story came up (about 15 years ago, was it?) but had hardly noticed its re-occurrence: certainly I am not well enough equipped to write to the *Times*.⁹

I have, if not thought, yet imagined, a good deal about the other kinds of Men. My own idea was based on the old problem 'Who was Cain's wife?' If we follow Scripture it wd. seem that she must have been no daughter of Adam's. I pictured the True Men descending from Seth, then meeting Cain's not perfectly human descendants (in Genesis vi. 1-4, where I agree with you), interbreeding and thus producing the wicked Antediluvians.¹⁰

Oddly enough I, like you, had pictured Adam as being, physically, the son of two anthropoids, on whom, after birth, God worked the miracle which made him Man: said, in fact, 'Come out—and forget thine own people and thy father's house'¹¹—the Call of Abraham wd. be a far smaller instance of the same sort of thing, and regeneration in each one of us wd. be an instance too, tho' not a smaller one. That all seems to me to fit in both historically and spiritually.

I don't quite feel we shd. gain anything by the doctrine that Adam was a hermaphrodite. As for the (rudimentary) presence in each sex of organs proper to the other, does that not occur in other mammals as well as in humans? Surely pseudo-organs of lactation are externally visible in the male dog? If so there wd. be no *more* ground for making men (I mean, humans) hermaphroditic than any other mammal. (By the way, what an inconvenience it is in English to have the same word for *Homo* and *Vir*).¹² No doubt these rudimentary organs have a spiritual significance: there ought spiritually to be a man in every woman and a woman in every man. And how horrid the ones who haven't got it are: I can't bear a 'man's man' or a 'woman's woman'.

I haven't read any of the books you mention except Farrer's *Glass of Vision* (if that is the Bamptons)¹³ which I found v. good.¹⁴ Have you read Simone Weil's *Waiting on God*?¹⁵ Erroneous in many ways, but I have rather fallen in love with it. The fragment at the end, about the sons of Noah, wd. interest you especially.

I will order *They Shall be My People*¹⁶ and look forward to it. Congratulations. For my own part, I have been given a year's leave from all

teaching duties to enable me to finish my book on XVIth century literature, so I am plugging away at that as hard as I can. My hope is to kill some popular mythology about that fabulous monster called 'the Renaissance'. There are five fairy tales already written, of which the second has now appeared.

'Jane' died almost a year ago, after a long but, thank God, painless illness. I beg you will often pray for her. She was an unbeliever and, in later years, very jealous, exacting, and irascible, but always tender to the poor and to animals.

Your hand is better than mine (to read, I mean—it may *hurt* more).

Yes, *oremus, oremus*.

Yours very sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalen etc
10/1/52

Dear Evans—

Thanks for the play,¹⁷ and for the other chap's stories.¹⁸ I liked the play very much. You made the astrology of the Magi v. convincing and Simeon was quite a character. I hope the performance pleased you?

As for the stories—the author writes a great deal better than most of the 'science fiction' lot, and is pretty learned. But oh, if only he didn't try to be comic! The Norse story¹⁹ was far the best, for in its atmosphere rough horse-play did no harm. But the attempts at humour in the other two ruined them for me. I can't bear Britomart getting drunk and maudlin. In Ariosto's world there is, of course, plenty of comedy: but not of the kind this author puts in! Perhaps I expected too much. With all good wishes for the new year.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO HARRY BLAMIRE (BOD):

Magdalen.
19/1/52

Dear Blamires (I wish you'd call me *Lewis* instead of *Dr. Lewis*) I have read through the revised passages.²⁰ They all seem to me v. sound now. A few minor points remain: p. 1. *animal kind*. Just a slight danger of ambiguity between kind = sort (i.e. are animalic) and kind = species (*animal-kind* or mankind). P. 24. para 3 *especially brutal*. I'd prefer *cruel*. *Brutal* is unfortunate because the use of *brutal* to mean *cruel* is itself an instance of the same figure that leads to *inhuman* meaning *cruel*. P. 72 End of footnote. Wd. *common* dependence be better than *communal*. The latter might mean that we don't have in common a personal dependence but only a corporate dependence. P. 73 para 2. I'm not quite happy about 'authority of service'. P. 74. Isn't the quotation 'come full circle' not *gone*. (I haven't looked this up).

About your kind compliment to me in the Preface, I like it of course. The real question is whether it will do you good or harm. I am much hated as well as much loved and the connection with me will damn you with certain reviewers. I'd *advise* you to omit it, but you must do exactly as you please.

They were wrong in saying I was away that Friday and I'm sorry they did, because I had staying with me a man whom I wd. like you to have met. He has read your previous books & likes them, and has in common with you the qualities of being (a.) A Christian-R. C. (b.) A schoolmaster (c.) An old pupil of mine. Not that you are exactly a schoolmaster. His name is G. Sayer (The College, Malvern) Of course you were right to send me the MS. All best wishes: you are doing a most valuable work.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO CAROL JENKINS (W):²¹

REF.52/60

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
22nd January 1952.

Dear Miss Jenkins,

It is a pleasure to answer your question. I found the name²² in the notes to Lane's *Arabian Nights*:²³ it is the Turkish for Lion. I pronounce it Ass-lan myself. And of course I meant the Lion of Judah. I am so glad you liked the book.²⁴ I hope you will like the sequel (*Prince Caspian*) which came out in November.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD): TS

REF.52/64.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
22nd January 1952.

Dear Mr. Kinter,

By an odd coincidence your very handsome and acceptable gift arrived by the same post as the enclosed letter: which I send to you as a proof that I was not so rude as to ignore your very interesting and welcome letter of last year. Wise after the event, I now see that you were merely on a visit to New York, and had not changed your permanent address.

You cannot imagine what the arrival of a ham means to the average British household these days: it would be untrue to say that we are short of food, but our sufficiency is a very monotonous one, and such luxuries as you have sent me have a very cheering effect.

With very many thanks, and all best wishes for 1952, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO WAYLAND HILTON YOUNG (P):²⁵

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Jan 31st 1952

Dear Mr. Hilton Young

Lanes²⁶ have sent me a copy of your paper on my novels, and suggested that we shd. meet. If you could run down and lunch with me in college on any day next month *except* the 7th and 12th (Sundays are bad, but possible) I'd be delighted to have a talk afterwards. But—would it be a risk? I have an idea that a critic and a book are company, but that the author is *de trop*.²⁷ Wd. my Milton book have been improved or ruined by a meeting with Milton? Because, you see, there is hardly any limit to our disagreements about my trilogy.

But ought you to take any notice of the fact? When I've said that there is no allegory in it, and that there's nothing at all about the Second Coming in T.H.S.,²⁸ you may reply 'Well, that is what the books mean to an intelligent reader and what does it matter what *you* meant them to mean?'—a point of view I wholly agree with. Still, I hope you'll come: we shd. probably have several other authors to discuss.

You could hardly conceive how different my approach was from yours. The germ of *Perelandra* was simply the picture of the floating islands themselves, with no location, no story, and no [?]²⁹ The way you allegorise the 3 species on Mars is masterly: and *those* three, because—well, however one does invent things: presumably because I'm human and therefore *can't* invent things except by splicing up human nature. Query—is it possible for any man to write a fantastic story which another man can't read as an allegory? (The history of medieval criticism makes it clear that the answer is No).

Do come, and name your day: 1 o' clock at the college lodge, and ask to be shown to the Smoking Room.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen
31/1/52

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

How singular! In the last year my life also became much ‘better’ and, just like you, I often feel a little frightened. We must both distinguish (a.) The bad Pagan feeling that the gods don’t like us to be happy and that it excites Nemesis: see Browning’s *Caliban upon Setebos*³⁰ (b.) The good Christian caution lest we become soft and self indulgent and cease to recognise one’s dependence on God.

That suffering is not *always* sent as a punishment is clearly established for believers by the book of Job and by John IX. 1–4. That it *sometimes* is, is suggested by parts of the Old Testament and Revelation. It wd. certainly be most dangerous to assume that any given pain was penal. I believe that all pain is contrary to God’s will, absolutely but not relatively. When I am taking a thorn out of my finger (or a child’s finger) the pain is ‘absolutely’ contrary to my will: i.e. if I could have chosen a situation without pain I would have done so. But I *do* will what caused pain, relatively to the given situation: i.e. granted the thorn I prefer the pain to leaving the thorn where it is. A mother smacking a child wd. be in the same position: she wd. rather cause it this pain than let it go on pulling the cat’s tail, but she wd. like it better if no situation which demands a smack had arisen.

On the heathen, see I Tim. IV. 10.³¹ Also in Matt. XXV. 31–46 the people don’t sound as if they were believers. Also the doctrine of Christ’s descending into Hell* and preaching to the dead: wd. that would be outside time, and include those who died long after Him as well as those who died before He was born as Man. I don’t think we know the details: we must just stick to the view that (a.) All justice & mercy will be done, (b) But that nevertheless it is our duty to do all we can to convert unbelievers. All blessings.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

* i.e. Hades, the land of the dead: not Gehenna, the land of the lost.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *CHURCH TIMES* (EC):³²

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

I welcome the letter from the Rural Dean of Gravesend,³³ though I am sorry that anyone should have regarded it necessary to describe the Bishop of Birmingham as an Evangelical. To a layman, it seems obvious that what unites the Evangelical and the Anglo-Catholic against the ‘Liberal’ or ‘Modernist’ is something very clear and momentous, namely, the fact that both are thoroughgoing supernaturalists, who believe in the Creation, the Fall, the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the Second Coming, and the Four Last Things. This unites them not only with one another, but with the Christian religion as understood *ubique et ab omnibus*.³⁴

The point of view from which this agreement seems less important than their divisions, or than the gulf which separates both from any non-miraculous version of Christianity, is to me unintelligible. Perhaps the trouble is that as supernaturalists, whether ‘Low’ or ‘High’ Church, thus taken together, they lack a name. May I suggest ‘Deep Church’ or, if that fails in humility, Baxter’s ‘mere Christians’?³⁵

C. S. Lewis

TO JILL FREUD (T):

Magdalen College
Oxford
15/2/52

It lies on my mind that I talked some nonsense about a ‘tread mill’ in my note yesterday. Pretty good rot for a man who is being given full pay for doing what most people do in their spare time. Wash it out. I only meant the engine is happily doing N revs. per second!

J

TO VERA MATHEWS (W):

Magdalen College,
Magdalen
17/2/52

Dear Miss Mathews

You will think I have taken a terribly long time over the *Nabob*,³⁶ but the only time I have for such things is the week ends and the last two have been fully occupied by going through proofs of a new translation (someone else's) of the gospels.³⁷ And now, before I say anything, remember that—as I think I said, the short story is not my Form at all, so that my criticism will be amateurish.

I think the general narrative manner is good, and, with certain reservations, the character of the wife. I don't find Cobham so good: but my reasons will best come out as we go along. These are my notes; P. 2. *Having worked...everything seemed*. Am I pedantic to object to the syntax? If *everything* is the subject of the sentence then it ought to be *everything*, not Hermione, who had 'once worked' etc P. 3. *just that*. I don't understand what these words mean. But perhaps it's an American idiom that I don't know. If so, O.K. *righteously felt sincerely?* genuinely? I don't know what 'righteously feeling' wd. mean P. 4. *his bent was military* etc. This is the first of many passages in wh. you refer to C. as a soldier. But wouldn't the governor of a province in India be in the I.C.S. (Indian Civil Service) not in the Army? *enlisted*. Do you mean went in as a private soldier? (wh. is what *enlist* means to us). If so this is infinitely improbable for a young man of C's social position at that time. You mean, don't you, that he 'went into the army' i.e. got a commission?

P 5. *to never yield*. 'never to yield'?

P. 6. What are the *drafts*?

P. 9. para 3. v. good

P. 20. *How those vicars*. But they wouldn't, you know. They might have v. likely 100 or so years earlier. In C's time they'd all have been talking about a God of love. I don't mean that our Englishman in India, bitten with Oriental wisdom, might not say what C. does, but then he wd. be a fool, which you don't mean C. to be. *savant*. Doesn't this suggest something academic and even scientific? Perhaps 'sage' wd. do.

P. 24. What are *physical virtues*? It ought to mean good muscles, good digestion, sound teeth etc, but I don't think that's what you *do* mean.

P. 25. *better stayed*. No English speaker wd. omit the *have*.

P. 26. *She might even laugh...wd. not have*. Oh but surely—surely—a man so near renunciation and enlightenment as you mean C. to be wd. have got beyond the stage of minding whether people laughed at him or not *ages*

ago. You might as well introduce a great pianist who has difficulty about five finger exercises!

visit the Tower. More what schoolboys, foreigners, or very country cousins wd. do—not an ‘Indian Civilian’ and his bride. They’re not like that.

P 28. *Period* is purely American. The English is ‘full stop’. But of course you may be entitled to translate, just as you’d make ancient Egyptians talk modern American if you were writing a story about them. Still, it raises awkward problems when the two languages are *almost* identical.

P 29. *I’m kind*. Wouldn’t anyone say ‘I *am* kind’?

P. 30. *would they laugh...military man*. See notes on pp. 26 and 4.

P. 36. I’m not quite clear what is meant by putting God ‘primarily’ above everything.

P. 34. *beg apology*. Surely one *begs* a pardon or *makes* an apology?

P. 36. *soldier* etc. see on pp. 4, and 30.

I’m like you...bloody Mary. This sounds to me like the language of an utterly commonplace old grumbler, not one far advanced in the mystic path.

I will pay you the compliment (for it is one: the naked truth is not for fools) of giving you a perfectly honest criticism. I don’t think the story, as it stands, will do. But its partial failure does not prove (this is what you most want to know) an absence of literary talent. That, I think, you probably have. What is wrong with this story is due to inexperience. You have set yourself *two* handicaps, either one of which wd. be enough to wreck most authors. (1.) You are writing about a society you don’t know. I don’t know much about Anglo-Indian life myself, but your picture somehow *smells* all wrong. (2.) You have tried to put across a marvel (the levitation. Whether Swamiji wd. have let us call it a ‘miracle’ or not doesn’t concern us as literary critics).

Now there were only two ways to make us accept it. One was by making the whole story fantastic—like a fairy tale—from the word go. That, of course I see, wd. have been quite inconsistent with the mood you wanted to create. The other was so to build up the spirituality of Cobham or Swamiji or (better) both, that we could believe anything of them. And that’s where you come down. We see v. little of Swamiji and what we do see has no aura of grandeur or mystery, nothing *numinous*, about it. As for Cobham, he is incredible as a mystic. There’s no trace of serenity or love, and his numerous speeches to Hermione are in a vein both of censoriousness and of

slangy bullying which is not only unlike a budding sage but quite untrue to the social group he wd. belong to. In other words the difficulties of the theme have, on this occasion, defeated you. I await with interest a story with a better chosen scene and subject. There is nothing amateurish about the actual *writing* and you have, I think, the gift for *ordonnance*.³⁸

Are we still friends? I hope so, Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO WAYLAND HILTON YOUNG (P):

Magdalen
24/2/52

Dear Hilton-Young—

I think I muffled the point I was trying to make yesterday about the significance-unknown-to-the-artist in a work of art. I certainly didn't intend to treat 'Either Inspiration or the Unconscious' as an exhaustive alternative for its source.

It's more like this. Every fiction, realistic or fantastic, uses forms taken from the real world: a woman, a ship, a gun, a horse etc. Now the total significance of these in the real world (call it T) is known to nobody. And the fraction of it known to each is slightly (or, it may be) widely different. The fraction in the artist's mind (both conscious and unconscious) is T/A: in the reader's T/R. An extreme case of difference wd. be, say, if a child who didn't yet know the facts of generation put a marriage into a story. His ignorance *might* make that bit of his story simply comic & absurd to the adult reader: but it might also make that bit to the adult reader far more significant than the child had ever intended it to be.

Now I hope no individual reader of my work is to me as adult to child. But the aggregate experiences of my readers, contributing to each from T/R1 + T/R2 etc, presumably are. At any rate a classic, wh. has been read by great minds for 1000 years, and discussed, will have all its forms interpreted by a composite mind, which ought to see in them *more* than the artist intended. This is not a complete substitution of a new work for his original one, for it is *his* particular grouping of forms which evoke the whole response. (As if successive generations learned better and better dances to one original tune: a certain formal element in it remaining constant but being more richly & subtly filled).

All this is only an elaboration of the old maxim that what you get out of work depends on what you bring to it. Humanity as a whole brings to the *Aeneid* more than Virgil could: therefore it *must* get more out. After all, you as an Atheist have to believe that in admiring *natural* beauty we are getting out of it what no-one put in: why shd. we not equally get out of verbal compositions what the composer didn't put in?

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO WAYLAND HILTON YOUNG (P): PC

Magdalen College
Oxford
27/2/52

Yes. T/Rn is only an aggregate *unless* either (A.) [?] ³⁹ are real, as Plato & Hegel, in a different way, thought or (B.) Each *educated* T/R is, through tradition & critical discussion modified by the other T/Rs. Now I think A is probably and B is certainly true. Thanks for kind offer of hospitality: I'll try to make it one of these days.

C.S.L.

TO GENIA GOELZ (L/P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
29 Feb 1952

Dear Mrs. Goelz (or may I, being old, and bold, and avuncular, say dear Genia?

I learn from Mrs. Van Deusen that you are 'taking the plunge'.⁴⁰ As you have been now for so long in my prayers, I hope it will not seem intrusive to send my congratulations. Or I might say condolences and congratulations. For whatever people who have never undergone an adult conversion may say, it is a process not without its distresses. Indeed, they are the very sign that it is a true initiation. Like learning to swim or to skate, or getting married, or taking up a profession. There are cold shudderings about all these processes. When one finds oneself learning to fly *without* trouble one soon discovers (usually. There *are* blessed exceptions where we are allowed to take a real step without that difficulty), by waking up, that it was only a dream.

All blessings and good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
29/2/52

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

How odd and delightful that you should meet James! Give him my kind regards.

He has perhaps not given you quite the right idea about our 'Long Vacation'.⁴¹ It is precisely that part of the year on which both dons and serious students rely for their real work: the term for lectures & discussion, the Vacations, and especially the 'Long' for steady reading. I think your universities suffer from not having it. Mine, this year, will be v. busy indeed, and no question of holidays to America.

But don't think I am the less touched or grateful for your most kind offer of hospitality. I am speaking of the 'Long' as it has now come to be: of course originally this prolonged summer gap in all our English institutions—Parliament, Law courts, etc—dates, no doubt, from the days when we were an agricultural community and no one cd., at that time of the year, be spared from the land.

I have written to Genia. Your news is v. good. In a way it is [a] good sign, isn't it?, that the Rector shd. *not* be a person she particularly likes. I will indeed continue my prayers for her. With love to all.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO HELEN D. CALKINS (W):⁴²TS
REF. 52/123.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
1st March 1952.

Dear Mrs. Calkins,

I will read it with pleasure,⁴³ but I must'nt write a foreword. I have done far too many of them. It begins to make both the authors and me ridiculous, and also I run dry. I wish the book all success.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO THE ROYAL LITERARY FUND (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
7/3/52

Sir

I write in support of an application which, I understand, my very deeply respected friend Mr. J. A. Chapman⁴⁴ is making to your Committee. Mr. Chapman has in his old age a serious devotion both to his art and to humanity which we usually meet only in the young; if he has spent on the publication of his poem⁴⁵ a sum very serious to him, though not large, I trust, by the standards of the R.L.F., I am sure he has been moved to do so not by an author's vanity but by a sense of his mission. A grant to him would be a proper recognition of a long and arduous life devoted to letters and learning in a spirit of self-dedication.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
8/3/52

My dear Arthur

I hope to arrive at Crawfordsburn with W.⁴⁶ on Aug. Wed. 20th. He will leave on Aug. Sat. 23rd. If agreeable I wd. like to stay on at the Hotel⁴⁷ for a fortnight of your society, i.e. sail again on Mon. Sept 8th. Will that suit you? I can't manage the Easter as well.

In the *Last Chronicle*⁴⁸ I think all the London parts (the 'Bayswater Romance') a bore and now always skip them. But I think the Crawley parts splendid.

I am wondering how your date with Tchainie went? Give her my love. Blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD): PC

Magdalen College
Oxford
15/3/52

Excellent. I'll be (D.V.) in the Eastgate about 12 noon on Sat. March
22d.

C.S.L.

TO GENIA GOELZ (L/P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
18 March 1952

Dear Genia

Don't bother at all about that question of a person being 'made a Christian' by baptism. It is only the usual trouble about words being used in more than one sense. Thus we might say a man 'became a soldier' the moment that he joined the army. But his instructors might say six months later 'I think we have made a soldier of him'. Both usages are quite definable, only one wants to know which is being used in a given sentence. The Bible itself gives us one short prayer which is suitable for all who are struggling with the beliefs and doctrines. It is: 'Lord I believe, help Thou my unbelief.'⁴⁹ Would something of this sort be any good?: Almighty God, who art the father of lights and who hast promised by thy dear Son that all who do thy will shall know thy doctrine:⁵⁰ give me grace so to live that by daily obedience I daily increase in faith and in the understanding of thy Holy Word, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA MATHEWS (W):

Magdalen etc.
22/3/52

Dear Miss Mathews

I was glad to get your letter. I seem to be as ignorant of America as you are of India. I had no idea your parsons preached Hell-fire: indeed I thought the ordinary presentation of Christianity with you was quite as milk-and-watery as with us, if not more so. We could do with a bit *more* Hell fire over here.

Clearly I misunderstood Cobham. I hadn't thought of a wholly unregenerate man being levitated simply by someone else's sanctity—tho' of course we all hope this will happen to ourselves. Thanks for a picture of two charming creatures. I am glad to have one of them among my correspondents and wish Andy would write too: but I suppose that's not much in his line. They sound as if they were animals with a sense of humour. Shall we see some more literary works by you? I hope you'll go on. With very good wishes from us both.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
24/3/52

My dear Roger—

I have re-read *The Luck*⁵¹ and liked it very much. I felt, as I had felt at the first reading, that tho' it could not have the quality you and I most prize in a story, yet it had a freshness, a real feel of wet wood & spring days wh. make it more than a *mere* treasure hunt. It is also extremely exciting. As luck wd. have it I met a lady who was looking for things to 'read to the children' & the *Luck* is now on her list. I think she's a buyer too, not a library addict.

Now for Logistics. I see that the Beaumaris jaunt must be on my backward journey as, on the outward, it wd. be in the midst of the Aug. bank-holiday period.⁵² I propose to sail from Belfast to L'pool⁵³ on the night of Sept. Mon. 8th. Can we meet, say at Woodside ferry landing stage on the morning of the 9th & lie that night at Beaumaris. I shall be alone and, if quite convenient wd. gladly accept a night's lodging *chez vous* on Wed. 10th, setting out for Oxford the first convenient train on Thurs. 11th. But I trust you to tell me if this is in the least a nuisance, for I can be perfectly well housed in Woodside Hotel. My duty to June. Good hunting.

Yours

Jack

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN:[54](#) PC

Magdalen College
Oxford
24 March 1952

Porcus sum, I am a pig, *porcissimus*, the piggest of pigs. I looked at my diary at about 3 o'clock on Sat. afternoon and found to my horror that I had failed a tryst with you at 12. Please forgive a nit-wit. Will you prove your charity by meeting me at the Eastgate 12 o'clock next Saturday? Even I seldom make exactly the same howler twice! I really am very sorry: I had been much looking forward to it.

C.S.L.

TO MICHAEL IRWIN (P):[55](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford
25th March 1952

Dear Michael

Thank you very much for your nice letter. I am very glad you liked the Narnian books. Yes—there is another one already written but you won't be able to get it till next November: they are printing it at present, and printing takes a long time, especially for a book that has pictures in it.

Lucy and Edmund and Caspian and Reepicheep (but not Peter and Susan, who are now getting a bit too old) all come into the new one. They get into the Narnian world and all go to sea and have a long voyage: it is called *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.

I wonder what other books you like. Do you like E. Nesbitt's *The Phoenix and the Carpet*, and *The Amulet*,⁵⁶ and Tolkien's *The Hobbit*,⁵⁷ and MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblins* and *Curdy and the Princess*?⁵⁸ I think all these are very good. Please thank your father for writing to me. Love to all.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
29/3/52

Hearken, Little Brother, to the wisdom of Baloo.⁵⁹ Neither you nor I will write to the Bulkeley Arms⁶⁰ for rooms for us both, for the modern hotel keeper wd. then be v. likely to put us both in one room without warning or remedy.

But you will write for your room & I will write (to-day) for mine. And then, by the permission of Allah, he will think he has to do with a Mr. Green of Bebington & a Mr. Lewis of Oxford who have no connection.

*High Wind in Jamaica*⁶¹ wh. I've just read is better than I expected. Tho' none of them *speak* about the brother's death we are told that the eldest girl 'missed him badly': her silence was not due to indifference but to a kind of taboo wh. I think quite possible. As to her evidence wh. hanged the pirates, I suppose some children, as some adults, wd. do that and others not. She was in a tight place: and as a certain type of woman wd. play her sex, a certain type of child wd. play its childishness. A grim book but good in its way.

Love to all.
J.

TO HELEN D. CALKINS (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
March 29th 1952

Dear Miss Calkins

I've read *India Looks* with as much interest as if it were an adventure story: especially the parts about ancient Indian history which were absolutely new. That's one of the reasons why I won't do a preface: I am not qualified to sponsor a book on this subject. For all I know it might be (tho' I'm sure it is not) a mass of errors! The other is that you are kind to me and quote me, and after that a preface from me wd. make us both look silly—a mutual admiration society.

It's v. well done. Here are a few notes wh. you may or may not find worth considering.

P. 3. para 4. *Trojan heroes* etc. Does it matter that of those you mention only Hector was on the Trojan side? Or that many people think the Trojans were not Aryans! Wd. *Homeric* for *Trojan* be safer?

P 4. Leaf's poem. *dazzle and the stress*. Are you sure it isn't *dazzle and stress*?

P. 23 Quotation from me. I'm afraid people may think (despite the quotation marks) that the view expressed is mine! Could you without too much labour find another motto for this chapter?

'I am the doubter and the doubt'—is it from Emerson or Henley?—might do by itself.⁶²

P. 36 Para 1. *Its connotation...receptivity*. This clause conveys no meaning whatever to my mind! This *might* be because all the words had different shades of meaning in America. But a knot of abstract nouns, all rather hard to define, is usually a danger signal. (Beware of *aspect*, *framework*, *connotation*, and all their family!) P 41. Quotation from Hooker. For *intensive* read *intensive*.

P 41. last line but one. *of separated*. Something must have dropped here.

P 42. Para 3. Surely the correct construction is 'enamoured of' not 'enamoured with'?

And above, Para 3, for *Origin* read *Origen*.

P. 45 First sentence. Again, conveys no clear meaning to me. Simplify! Simplify!

P 49 Footnote. You quote as if it was mine what I (as I told you) was quoting from Whitehead.⁶³ Return it to him. I haven't got a copy to hand but it'll do you no harm to read his Chapter II! (By the way in a serious book like yours all other books shd. be mentioned with *place* and *date* of

the edition you are using. Otherwise it will look amateurish to publishers' readers.

P. 51 Para 1. *Christ-centric*. Surely the usual word is *Christocentric*? (I'm not quite clear at what date the processes described are meant to be happening.) P 52. Para 1. *The reason for his reluctance was because*. You're saying it twice over! Either *The reason...was that* or *Dr. H. was reluctant because he* (The second is better. Always prefer concrete to abstract nouns when you can get them: it avoids Gobbledegook.) P 53. Was there really no effort to do all these works till modern times? Jesuits in Paraguay? Evangelicals attacking slavery?

P 59. Para 2. *The assumption* etc. Ambiguous. Does it mean 'We can't bear it when others assume that we are naif' or 'when others assume that they are naif'?

P. 67. *It is not...estimate of God*. Good. Very good. That's how to write. Very good wishes; and thanks for an interesting bit of reading.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY NEYLAN (T):⁶⁴

Magdalen College
Oxford
1/4/52

Dear Mrs. Neylan—

Yes, I do miss him.⁶⁵ But what strikes me even more is the sense that he is already helping me more from where he is than he would do on earth. It was v. nice to meet you all and especially Sarah, now at last old enough to talk to! I liked her and cd. have done with less of Mingo! She wants fattening, though! Bless you all.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen etc
April 1st 1952

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

The advantage of a fixed form of service is that we know what is coming. *Ex tempore* public prayer has this difficulty: we don't know whether we can mentally join in it until we've heard it—it might be phoney or heretical. We are therefore called upon to carry on a *critical* and a *devotional* activity at the same moment: two things hardly compatible. In a fixed form we ought to have 'gone through the motions' before in our private prayers: the rigid form really sets our devotions *free*.

I also find the more rigid it is, the easier it is to keep one's thoughts from straying. Also it prevents any service getting too completely eaten up by whatever happens to be the pre-occupation of the moment (a war, an election, or what not). The *permanent* shape of Christianity shows through. I don't see how the *ex tempore* method can help becoming provincial & I think it has a great tendency to direct attention to the minister rather than to God.

Quakers...well I've been unlucky in mine. The ones I know are atrocious bigots whose religion seems to consist almost entirely in attacking other people's religions. But I'm sure there are good ones as well.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
April 3rd 1952

My dear Mr. Allen

Sugar and tea! Hurrah. They are just what we need most, tea being our most powerful addiction-drug, and we thank you v. heartily.

I'm not quite sure whether we *are* playing into Uncle Joe's⁶⁶ hand by messing about in Korea and elsewhere. If the enemy were the Germans I'd agree with you. He has always been a big fighter and it's no good doing anything about him short of a full-dress war. The Russian, so far (whether Tsarist or pseudo-Communist makes no odds, I expect) has not been like that. He grabs things here and grabs things there when he finds them unguarded. I think there's a real chance that by rearmament and resistance at minor points we just might prevent it coming to a real show-down. But heaven knows I am as ill qualified as anyone in the world to have an opinion. At any rate both your country and mine have twice in our lifetime tried the recipe of appeasing an aggressor and it didn't work on either occasion: so that it seems sense to try the other way this time.

I'm all with you about Orion. It's nice to live in the Northern Hemisphere because the winter stars are much better than the summer ones and of course one sees more of them when the nights are longest. The whole combination Sirius–Orion–Aldebaran–Pleiades is magnificent. I wonder what constellation our Sun forms part of as seen from the planets (if any) of Sirius?

Spring has been arrested here by a sudden cold snap, snow & frost and all the crocuses are in a bad way: but the birds, bless them, keep on talking as if it were real April weather. I suffer from your inability to remember what I have to buy. In my case it happens chiefly about razor-blades. One remembers it during the five minutes painful scrape each morning but never when one is among the shops. With many thanks & v. good wishes.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

For some time now a woman calling herself 'Mrs C. S. Lewis' had been living on her 'husband's' credit at the Courtstairs Hotel, Thanet, Kent. The lady had a history of living cheaply by pretending to be married to some well-known person who would soon be joining her. In this instance she told the owners of Courtstairs Hotel, Alan and Nell Berners-Price, that Lewis would soon be arriving and would pay the bill. However, by April 1952 she had been living at Court Stairs for over a year, and Mrs Berners-Price went up to Oxford to confront Lewis with a mass of unpaid bills.

On being admitted to Lewis's rooms in Magdalen College, Mrs Berners-Price said, 'I've come to ask about your wife.' 'But I'm not married,' replied Lewis. Mrs Berners-Price was as surprised by this as Lewis was on learning he had a 'wife'. Following the advice of his solicitor, Owen Barfield, Lewis took out an injunction of jactitation of marriage against the woman.

The woman, Mrs Nella Victoria Hooker, had been in jail a number of times for similar offences. She was arrested in April and her trial set for 8 May in the court at Canterbury. While in jail she wrote letters to Lewis, as he mentions in the letter to Christian Hardie below.

TO CHRISTIAN HARDIE (P):

Palm Sunday [6 April] 1952

Dear Christian

I romped through *The Power and the Glory*.⁶⁷ Its theme makes it suitable enough as a preface to Holy Week but if you intended it as a penance you have bowled a wide. It is a most moving and (in its proper mode) enjoyable book.

As far as I am concerned there is no common measure between it and Waugh.⁶⁸ In Waugh's book the supposedly good end of the old rake had simply to be taken on trust: but one lives through the whole experience of Greene's hunted priest, filled from the first with interest, soon with compassion, and finally with love. Also Greene seems to *know* things. All that about the 'pious woman' in the cell (few laymen perhaps get letters from her so often as I) is excellent: also the bit about forgiveness of sins being easier to believe than forgiveness of the 'habit of piety'. Greene loves and understands his most repulsive characters—the lieutenant and the half-caste—better than Waugh does his favourites.

I think he has a fault. The central tragic theme is not made more effective by filling up all the chinks with other, irrelevant, miseries, like those of the Fellows family. The great tragic artists didn't do that. *Macbeth*⁶⁹ wd. not have been improved by making the drunken porter get cancer: nor the *Iliad* by making the domestic life of Hector and Andromache squalid and miserable. That is the modern nimiety. But it is a very good book all the same.

Thanks very much for the loan of it. (It wd. be unkind to discuss my views on tragedy with Colin just at present. He seems to be a little tired of that subject). A happy Easter to you both.

Yours

Jack

TO DON GIOVANNI CALABRIA (V):

[Magdalen College,
Oxford.]
April 14th 1952

Pater dilectissime

Multum eras et es in orationibus meis et grato animo litteras tuas accepi. Et ora tu pro me, nunc praesertim, dum me admodum orphanum esse sentio quia grandaevus meus confessor et carissimus pater in Christo nuper mortem obiit. Dum ad altare celebraret, subito, post acerrimum sed (Deo gratias) brevissimum dolorem, expiravit, et novissima verba erant *venio, Domine Jesu*. Vir erat maturâ spirituali sapientiâ sed ingenuitate et innocentia fere puerili—*buono fanciullo*, ut ita dicam.

Potesne, mi pater, quaestionem resolvere? Quis sanctorum scriptorum scripsit ‘Amor est ignis jugiter ardens’? Credidi haec verba esse in libro *De Imitatione Christi* sed non possum ibi invenire.

‘Ut omnes unum sint’ est petitio numquam in meis precibus praetermissa. Dum optabilis unitas doctrinae et ordinis abest, eo acrius conemur caritatis unionem tenere: quod, eheu, et vestri in Hispania et nostri in Hibernia Septentrionali non faciunt.

Vale, mi pater,
C. S. Lewis

[Magdalen College,
Oxford.]
April 14th 1952

Dearest Father,

You were and are much in my prayers and thank you for your letters. And do you pray for me, especially at present when I feel very much an orphan because my aged confessor and most loving father in Christ has just died. While he was celebrating at the altar, suddenly, after a most sharp but (thanks be to God) very brief attack of pain, he expired; and his last words were, ‘I come, Lord Jesus.’ He was a man of ripe spiritual wisdom—noble minded but of an almost childlike simplicity and innocence: ‘*buono fanciullo*’ if I may put it so.⁷⁰

Can you, my Father, resolve a question? Which of the holy writers wrote ‘*Amor est ignis jugiter ardens*’? I thought these words were in *The Imitation of Christ* but I cannot find them there.⁷¹

‘That they all may be one’⁷² is a petition which in my prayers I never omit. While the wished-for unity of doctrine and order is missing, all the more eagerly let us try to keep the bond of charity: which, alas, your people in Spain and ours in Northern Ireland do not.

Farewell, my Father.

C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
April 16th 1952

Dear Miss Pitter

It always seems a bit of cheek to send anyone (especially the likes of you) a ticket for one's lecture, unless one could do it in the Chinese style 'In the inconceivably unlikely event of honourable poetess wishing to attend this person's illiterate and erroneous lecture...' ⁷³ Oh dear, to think of that immemorial urbanity, that remote, fantastic world being in the hands of the Bolsheviks!

Hero & Leander ⁷⁴ has no Original in the strict sense. The Greek poem on the subject is late, rather charmingly precious, and was falsely attributed to the primeval and mythical Musaeus: the real author is unknown—some Alexandrian, I think. But neither the Marlovian nor the Chapmanic part is anything like a translation—not so close to pseudo-Musaeus as Tennyson is to Malory.

Have you read Andrew Young's *Into Hades*, ⁷⁵ and what do you think of it. I found the content absorbing and the images like all his, simply enchanting (There's a bit about reflected water-drops from a raised oar rushing up to meet the real water drops—lovely!) but my ear was a bit unsatisfied. I believe 'Blank Verse', unrhymed five footers, is not a metre to be written loosely. I think the unrhymed Alexandrine, written without a break at the 6th syllable wd. be far better: e.g.

*I know far less of spiders than that poetess
Who (like the lady in Comus in the perilous wood)
Can study nature's infamies with secure heart....*

The third line is here the best: one wants plenty of trisyllables to leap across the threatened medial pause. Try a few. Commending me to you in the lowliest wise that I can or may.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS
REF.52/28.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
19th April 1952.

My dear Allen,

I got back today from a delightful three days break in the country, just a little dissatisfied to be at my desk again, and therefore just in the mood for the welcome fillip which your admirable parcel administered. You must by this time be as tired of hearing C.S.L. on the English food situation as I am tired of enduring it: so I will say no more than that all these good things will be a wonderful help at the house, and thank you once again for your kindness.

I have been stopping with an ex-pupil, now a master at my old school, Malvern:⁷⁶ a pleasant little town, about sixty miles from here, lying under the foot of a four miles range of hills, two thousand feet high, in the Severn valley. Of course this is nothing much in the way of height, but they rise so abruptly from the level that one gets the effect of miniature mountains; and there is splendid air and exercise to be had in tramping them. To add to the joy, our curious climate has suddenly decided to give us an advance instalment of summer—at least one hopes it is only an instalment and not *the* summer. It was 75 degrees yesterday, and as hot today; all the women in summer frocks and so forth. Malvern town is a perfect and melancholy example of the change which has come over this country since my schooldays; then, it was a town of large ugly, comfortable Victorian houses, designed to be run by four or five servants apiece. The same houses are still there, but at least seven out of every ten are now either schools, offices, or boarding houses.

I occasionally glance at the news of your Presidential elections with that respectful bewilderment with which one regards another nation's domestic affairs. To us, the question naturally presents itself from the viewpoint of which candidate will be most sympathetic to our troubles. Most people here seem to hope for Eisenhower, and are most afraid of Taft: who, rightly or

wrongly, seems to have the reputation of being the old style Isolationist.⁷⁷ It is being said that if he is returned, his foreign policy will be that America should be defended in America, and not in Europe. But I suspect that this must be a crude exaggeration.

I hope Mrs. Allen keeps well: please remember me very kindly to her. Do you both propose to go to the seaside this year? If all goes well, I shall be in Eire for a fortnight in August, with daily bathing: not the best sort of bathing, but a sight better than none at all. For, being on a bay, there are practically no waves; and where the sea is perpetually calm, I would just as soon, indeed sooner, bathe in a river.

With all best wishes and many thanks to you both, from us both, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO DELMAR BANNER (W):⁷⁸TS

REF.52/196

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
29th April 1952.

My dear Banner,

Thanks for yours of yesterday. But in the words of the immortal Jeeves to Bertie Wooster, 'I fear, Sir, I am unable to recede from my position.'⁷⁹ Yes indeed, I hope to visit your country before I die;⁸⁰ but I have many calls upon my time, and my own Ireland generally lures me to it when I can take a holiday.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

The knowledge that I *could* (*liceret mihi*)⁸¹ advise is no use because I know I *couldn't* (*non possem*).⁸²

With the growing fame of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Lewis was invited to address the Library Association during their Bournemouth conference, held between 29 April and 2 May. On 29 April he read a paper entitled 'On Three Ways of Writing for Children'.⁸³

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
May 1/52

I think the Bournemouth Lecture was a success. One librarian said I had almost converted him to fairy-tales, he having hitherto taken the 'real life' stuff for granted.

Two librariennes said *The Luck of the Lynns* was in much demand and one praised *The Wonderful Stranger*.⁸⁴ I added that some of your unpublished & more 'faerian' books were even better. You were spoken of with much respect.

J.

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
May 5th 1952

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Thank you for your cheery letter and the delightful enclosures. I've seldom seen better photos of children. And the landscape lures one into it. I long to be tramping over those wooded—or, what is better, half wooded hills. I'm as sensitive as a German to the spell of *das Ferne*⁸⁵ and all that.

About the high–low quarrels in the Church, whatever the merits of the dispute are, the 'heat' is simply and solely Sin, and I think parsons ought to

preach on it from that angle.

By the way, the 'conversation-piece' by Paul & Mini is really excellent. I hope you will all go on having a lovely time. God bless you all.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO NELL BERNERS-PRICE (W): TS
REF.52/205.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
6th May 1952.

Dear Mrs. Berners-Price,

Many thanks for your letter of the 4th. This is most kind of you, and I will very gladly accept your hospitality for the night of Wednesday 7th, tomorrow;⁸⁶ I should like to stop over Thursday too, but I fear that will be impossible. Indeed nothing but the Majesty of the Law would have got me out of Oxford for one night at the present moment. I come by a train which reaches Ramsgate at 6.8 p.m.

Yours gratefully,
C. S. Lewis
(modern blotting paper!)⁸⁷

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT*:⁸⁸

Sir,—

The authorship of *The Sheepheards Slumber* (No. 133 in *Englands Helicon*, beginning 'In Pescod time, when Hound to Horne') is not stated in any edition that I have been able to consult. The poem will be found in *A pleasaunte Laborinth called Churhyardes Chance* etc. London. Ihon Kyngston 1580. It is there entitled *A matter of fonde Cupid, and vain Venus*.

C. S. Lewis

TO NELL BERNERS-PRICE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
May 9th 1952

Dear Mrs Berners Price

Thanks to you and your husband the trial now looms so small in the total adventure that I feel more like a man back from a holiday than a witness released from the box: not that it was a box, neither, being more like a nursery fender.

The actual scene in court was horrid. I never saw Justice at work before, and it is not a pretty sight. Any creature, even an animal, at bay, surrounded by its enemies, is a dreadful thing to see: one felt one was committing a sort of indecency by being present. What did impress me was the absence of any resentment or vindictiveness on the part of the witnesses: you two victims especially were, I thought, getting v. high marks. But, as I say, what I really remember most is a delightful visit to very nice people in a charming house. I am sorry I left my kind host without even a hand-shake: but my doom was upon me.

May I now book a room at Courtstairs (in the ordinary way) for the night of May 18th? I think Walsh said he wd. drive us to Canterbury on the morning of the 19th. I expect I can get on from Canterbury on the afternoon of the 19th.

I enclose 'PC'⁸⁹ for Penelope.⁹⁰ And once again many, many thanks. I don't really know why you should have been so kind to a stranger, whose very name must have rather sinister associations in both your minds by now!

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO 'MRS LOCKLEY' (L):

[Magdalen College]
13/5/52

Dear 'Mrs Lockley'

In Bp. Gore's 'Sermon on the mount'...I find the view that Christ forbade 'divorce in such a sense as allowed re-marriage'.⁹¹ The question is whether He made an exception by allowing divorce in such a sense as allowed re-marriage when the divorce was for adultery. In the Eastern Church re-marriage of the innocent party is allowed: not in the Roman. The Anglican Bps. at Lambeth in 1888 denied re-marriage to the guilty party, and added that 'there has always been a difference of opinion in the Ch. as to whether Our Lord meant to forbid re-marriage of the innocent party in a divorce'.⁹²

It wd. seem then that the only question is whether you can divorce your husband in such a sense as wd. make you free to re-marry. I imagine that nothing is further from your thoughts. I believe that you are free as a Christian woman to divorce him especially since the refusal to do so does harm to the innocent children of his mistress: but that you must (or should) regard yourself as no more free to marry another man than if you had not divorced him. But remember I'm no authority on such matters, and I hope you will ask the advice of one or two sensible clergymen of our own Church.

Our own Vicar whom I have just rung up, says that there *are* Anglican theologians who say that you must not divorce him. His own view was that in doubtful cases the Law of Charity shd. always be the over-riding consideration, and in a case such as yours charity directs you to divorce him....

TO NELL BERNERS-PRICE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
May 14th 1952

Dear Mrs. Berners-Price

Those plaguey police (they seem to live on my telephone at present: it might be less trouble to be the prisoner than to be a witness!) have just rung to say that the trial will probably *not* be on May 19th after all and I'm to wait till I get a notice. So may I cancel my room at Courtstairs for the 18th? You'll let me know if I've involved you in any loss, won't you? And I shall probably be wiring for a room some other night when I've got the notice. Heigh-ho!

All the best to both of you, and Penelope. I wish the dog cd. be put in the witness box.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO WAYLAND HILTON YOUNG (W): TS
REF.52/219.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
15th May 1952.

Dear Hilton-Young,

I've no car and no wireless. You might try Professor G. Driver (this College) for a reading list on the Judith period.⁹³ But do take care: a story already very well told in an ancient text, is a bad thing to work on. The only hope is that the Babylonian stuff might start interesting you for its own sake, and lead to a quite new story in that setting. Otherwise...is there a single success in re-telling an ancient story with modern novelistic technique? It is stark ruin.

Thanks very much for the kind suggestion, but no can do. I am tangled up (only as witness) in a trial, and can make no plans.

All good wishes,
yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO GENIA GOELZ (L/P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
15 May 1952

Dear Genia

Thanks for your letter of the 9th. All our prayers are being answered and I thank God for it. The only (possibly, not necessarily) unfavourable symptom is that you are just a trifle too excited.⁹⁴ It is quite right that you should feel that ‘something terrific’ has happened to you (it has) and be ‘all glowy’. Accept these sensations with thankfulness as birthday cards from God, but remember that they are only greetings, not the real gift. I mean, it is not the sensations that are the real thing. The real thing is the gift of the Holy Spirit which can’t usually be—perhaps not ever—experienced as a sensation or emotion. The sensations are merely the response of your nervous system. Don’t depend on them. Otherwise when they go and you are once more emotionally flat (as you certainly will be quite soon), you might think that the real thing had gone too. But it won’t. It will be there when you can’t feel it. May even be most operative when you can feel it least.

Don’t imagine it is all ‘going to be an exciting adventure from now on’. It won’t. Excitement, of whatever sort, never lasts. This is the push to start you off on your first bicycle: you’ll be left to [do] lots of dogged *pedalling* later on. And no need to be depressed about it either. It will be good for your spiritual leg muscles. So enjoy the push while it lasts, but enjoy it as a treat, not as something normal.

Of course, none of us have ‘any right’ at the altar. You might as well talk of a non-existent person ‘having a right’ to be created. It is not *our* right but God’s free bounty. An English peer said, ‘I like the order of the Garter because it has no dam’ nonsense about *merit*.’⁹⁵ Nor has Grace. And we must keep on remembering that as a cure for Pride.

Yes, pride is a perpetual nagging temptation. Keep on knocking it on the head but don’t be too worried about it. As long as one knows one is proud one is safe from the worst form of pride.

If Hoyle⁹⁶ answers your letter, then let the correspondence drop. He is not a great philosopher (and none of my scientific colleagues think much of him as a scientist), but he is strong enough to do some harm. You’re not David and no one has told you to fight Goliath! You’ve only just enlisted. Don’t go off challenging enemy champions. Learn your drill. I hope this doesn’t sound all like cold water! I can’t tell you how pleased I was with your letter.

God bless you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

16th May 1952.

Thank you both very much. It will give me great pleasure to dine with you at 7.30 on May 29th. I shall presume ordinary clothes, unless I hear from you to the contrary.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

In May 1952 John H. McCallum of Harcourt, Brace & World, New York, invited Lewis to contribute an article on Edmund Spenser to Volume I of Major British Writers, under the general editorship of G. B. Harrison. Lewis accepted, and his extant correspondence with Harcourt, Brace & World begins with the following letter:

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
May 21st 1952

Dear Mr. McCallum,

Thank you for yours of the 16th. I think I shall be able to keep all your 'suggested rules' except the first. The proportion 15, 45, 20 for Life, General Essay, Particular Analysis wd. not really be suitable for Spenser. The materials for his life do not really add up to a 'character': I don't mean that I couldn't write one, but if I did I should be contributing to historical *fiction*. Nor is his kind of poetry one which would yield much under detailed analysis of short passages. The chief thing we must do, indeed, is to encourage readers to remember that he is a *romancier, à long haleine*.⁹⁷ I cd. accept your suggested proportions alright if I were doing Milton: but they'd ruin an Introduction to Spenser.

My selections will be all from *Faerie Queene* and *Epithalamion*:⁹⁸ there's no room for anything else. The bits from F.Q. will be often arranged so as to yield something like continuous narrative: as soon as I looked into the matter I saw that a mere conglomeration of the best single stanzas wd. give no idea of his quality and wd., indeed, be almost unreadable. I hope this meets with your approval.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN PILE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
May 21st 1952

Dear Mrs. Pile

What a horrible business! Of course neither I nor anyone who knows you could believe the allegations for a moment. I don't think I cd. do much good by writing to Ld. Nuffield, though I am prepared to try it if nothing better can be done. Have you tried your M.P. I mean, not about the expenses of the case but about the injustice of being forced to answer questions on oath and then accused of slander for answering them? In the meantime I am writing to a legal friend of my own for advice. I can't tell you how sorry I am for you in this trouble. I will write again as soon as I have anything to report.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalen etc.
May 23rd 1952

Dear Vera Gebbert

Well, well, what next? Very hearty congratulations.⁹⁹ Everything in the photos is lovely except the goggles: and they, I suppose, are a Necessary Evil, like civilisation, government, medicine, education, law, and nearly everything else. You'll have to watch those very depraved antelopes. If they are already addicted to gum and tobacco, they will soon develop a taste for cocktails. (Our college herd of deer used to be v. fond of bread soaked in port—in the days when wine was cheaper. They don't get the chance now). I shall think, in all the extenuating circumstances, you might be excused for 'neglecting your writing'. I don't know that I'd really like to marry a girl who wrote fiction all the time on the honeymoon. (Of course if *I* did, that wd. be quite different and it wd. be most unreasonable of her to object.) Nor can I quite believe that an avid expectation of my next book makes a very large part of your present experience. Anyway, it won't be fulfilled. I'm busy at present finishing the heavy, academic work on 16th. Century literature wh. has occupied me (it has been the top tune—all the other books were only its little twiddly bits) for the last 15 years. When it is actually done I expect my whole moral character will collapse. I shall go up like a balloon that has chucked out the last sandbag.

My brother is away for a few days but wd. certainly join in all my felicitations if he were here. I hope you will both live happily ever afterwards and tell stories to your great-grandchildren, travelling in donkey carriages along the mountain roads with hair as white as the snows. God bless you both.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):[100](#)

[Magdalen College]
28/5/52

My dear Dom Bede—

It isn't chiefly *men* I am kept in touch with by my huge mail: it is *women*. The female, happy or unhappy, agreeing or disagreeing, is by nature a much more *epistolary* animal than the male.

Yes, Pascal does directly contradict several passages in Scripture and must be wrong. What I ought to have said was that the Cosmological argument is, for some people at some times, ineffective. It always has been for me. (By the way do read K. Z. Lorenz *King Solomon's Ring* on animal—especially bird—behaviour.[101](#) There are instincts I had never dreamed of: big with a promise of real morality. The wolf is a v. different creature from what we imagine.) The stories you tell about two perverts belong to a terribly familiar pattern: the man of good will, saddled with an abnormal desire wh. he never chose, fighting hard and time after time defeated. But I question whether in such a life the successful operation of Grace is so tiny as we think. Is not this continued avoidance either of presumption or despair, this ever renewed struggle, itself a great triumph of Grace? Perhaps more so than (to human eyes) equable virtue of some who are psychologically sound.

I am glad you think J. Austen a sound moralist. I agree. And not platitudinous, but subtle as well as firm.

I'll write to Skinner. *Merlin* was excellent. I haven't written yet because someone has had my copy, till a day or two ago, almost ever since my first reading.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

P. S. Is the Elgin address going to be permanent?

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD): TS

[June? 1952]¹⁰²

Thank you for a letter which I prize very much. The sonnets, though in a manner which will win few hearers at the moment (drat all fashions) are really very remarkable.¹⁰³ The test is that I found myself at once forgetting all the personal biographical interest and reading them as poetry.

The image of sand is *real* imagination. I thought this was the better of the two at first: but now I don't know. The second quatrain of *The Gap* is tip-top argument—and then the ground sinking *behind*.¹⁰⁴ Excellent.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):[105](#)

As from Magdalen
June 10th 1952

Dear Mrs. Farrer—

I brought home both *The Missing Link*[106](#) and *Merlin*[107](#) yesterday evening, intending to regale myself on light fiction for a bit before tackling poetry. But—well, you foresee what I am leading up to with elephantine delicacy. It happens, however, to be true. I never reached *Merlin* and sat up later than I intended to finish the M.L.

I thought it very well constructed, and it thoroughly excited me. That, of course, is not of much value because I'm such an inexperienced reader of Whodunnits. But there were a great many sources of pleasure besides the mystery. You do the atmosphere of the Wychwood country and of Liverpool docks (both of which I know) very well—though, by the way, on p. 141 'the familiar devil of the stairs' completely defeated me. Is the text corrupt?[108](#) The description of Syd on pp. 24–25 is an excellent bit of writing. The Spanish captain is good. And, of course, there's wit everywhere, and often with weight of thought behind the sting—'Notice how he uses *down*' (p. 50), and the bit about families ><[109](#) family allowances and houses >< housing bit on p. 127. Richard's (delightfully precluded) remarks at the bottom of p. 104 and the top of 105 needed making. (Mrs. Luke, by the way, convinces me completely).

About your dialogue I'm not so happy. Mrs. Harman talks well. But if I were a spiteful reviewer I'd say that the advice 'Don't talk like a C.W. character'[110](#) ought to have been given to Richard (and obeyed!) earlier. Not that C.W. isn't a v. great man but one must not imitate the droop of Alexander's shoulders. Richard is talking like a C.W. character at his worst on the top of p. 85. He (Richard, not C.W.) would have better manners than to quote poetry to Plummer who wd. certainly think he was being somehow made a fool of and be hurt.

I think dialogue is frightfully tricky: partly because it is so hard to stop writing it (characters *will* talk: at least so I find) and partly because so much that wd. be alright in real conversation looks different when it gets into

print. Andrew's clipped G's for instance. It's a v. small thing in real life: but 'in' in print usually suggests *huntin'* at once and all the odious literature written by people who admire those who say *huntin'* and the yet more odious literature by those who dislike them. I dare say we'd be wise to re-read all our dialogue as it might be read by a dull, or vulgar, or hostile reader. And of course it's the *light* dialogue (banter between lovers, small talk at a party) that is dangerous. But I don't know what right I have to talk like this, especially without being asked!

It was a good idea to make the Links so silly that their trouble never really affects us. (Oh—by the way—*does* any ship carry her own gangways and pull them on board when she casts off? In my experience they always belong to the harbour and are pulled onto the quay.) Indeed you have done the Links so well that one wonders if it *is* a happy ending or whether the baby wouldn't have had a better time being brought up by Pyng Pong ©.

Anyway, I thoroughly enjoyed the book 'yet had I rather if I were to choose Thy service in some graver subject use'¹¹¹—I'd like to see your remarkable powers of rendering atmosphere and swift action given their head in a good whacking heroical romance. But no doubt, in the present state of the publishing market, it wd. be crazy to advise you to do so.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

P.S. I've an uneasy feeling this is the sort of letter Dr. Field might have written—wh. raises another really dreadful idea.

TO MARG-RIETTE MONTGOMERY (W):[112](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
June 10th 1952

Dear Miss Montgomery,

(1.) My relations to Anthroposophy¹¹³ were these. When I was a student, all my friends and I were ordinary modern Atheists. Then two of my friends got caught up by Steiner.¹¹⁴ I loathed this and it led to frightful arguments for several years. During these arguments I heard nothing that would convert me to Anthroposophy: but the negative side of Steiner, his case against the common modern pseudo-scientific attitude, proved to be unanswerable. That is, I didn't think what he affirmed was true, but I did think all his denials were right.

His shattering of the ordinary attitude left the way open for Christianity, so far as I was concerned. Since then I have always had a kindly feeling towards his system: and certainly the effect of it upon some anthroposophists I know appears to have been good. There is, however, an element of polytheism in it which I utterly reject. Steinerism is a species of Paganism (using that word in its proper sense, to mean the ancient pre-Christian religions). That is why it is (a.) Incompatible with Christianity: but (b.) Far nearer to Christianity than the ordinary modern materialism. For the Pagans knew more than the modern Ph.D's. The right thing to say to your Ph.D. friends is 'Yes. Steiner is nonsense: but nothing like such nonsense as the things *you* believe.' There is more truth in his nonsense than in their sense. We are free to take out of Anthroposophy anything that suits us, provided it does not contradict the Nicene Creed.

(2.) Oh, I just 'made up' all those things in *That Hideous Strength*: i.e. I took existing evil tendencies and 'produced' them (in the geometrical sense—'Produce the line AB to the point X') to show how dreadful they might become if we didn't take care. And you, apparently, have been living

in a world where they had already in real life got a good deal nearer to my point X than I knew. Well, that is the trouble about satirising the modern world. What you put into your story as fantastically horrid possibilities becomes fact before your story is printed. The reality outstrips the satire!

With all good wishes. You can trust Steiner about fertilisers but not about the nature of Jesus Christ. (I think his architecture horrid, but that's a matter of taste) Yours very sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
10/6/52

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

The new photos raise extreme *Sehnsucht*:¹¹⁵ each a landscape as fulfils my dreams. *That* is the America I wd. like to see, not the great cities, which, except superficially, are really much the same all over the earth.

I think psychiatry is like surgery: i.e. the thing is in itself essentially an infliction of wounds but may, in good hands, be necessary to avoid some greater evil. But it is more tricky than surgery because the personal philosophy & character of the operator come more into play. In setting a broken ankle all surgeons wd. agree as to the proper position to wh. the bones shd. be restored, because anatomy is an exact science. But all psychiatrists are not agreed as to the proper shape of the soul: where their ideas of that proper shape are based on a heathen or materialistic philosophy, they may be aiming at a shape *we* shd. strongly disapprove. One wants a Christian psychiatrist. There are a few of these, but nothing like enough.

If I can successfully say to Genia what you have often said in vain, that is not because of any quality in me but depends on a general (and at first sight cruel) law: we can *all* 'take' from a stranger what we can't 'take' from our own parents. I listen with profit to elderly friends saying the very same things which I neglected or even resented when my father said them. Nay more: I can obey advice from others wh. I have often given myself in vain. I suppose this is one aspect of the *vicariousness* of the universe: Charles Williams's view that every one can help to paddle every one else's canoe better than his own. We must bear one another's burdens because that is the

only way the burdens can get borne: and 'He saved others, himself He cannot save'¹¹⁶ is a fundamental law.¹¹⁷

Yes: 'things' continue almost alarmingly 'better' with me. God bless you all Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM BORST (P):¹¹⁸

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

June 11th 1952

Dear Mr. Borst—

It takes so long to get anything typed now-a-days that I thought you wd. prefer the lesser nuisance of reading the specimen (asked for in your letter of June 4th) in my own hand. I think it raises all the problems wh. are likely to occur in Spenser—who will not need such heavy glossing as Shakespeare. The only one I was doubtful about was *remembrance* = memento in line 11.¹¹⁹ Wd. they need that explained? (We don't want to spoon-feed them more than is necessary.) I am terrified by all the instructions about typing and doubt if I can master them. (You showed great discretion in not producing them at an earlier stage, as I shd. certainly not have touched the job had I known it involved all that!). I suppose # means 'one-space' and is not a challenge to a game of noughts and crosses. And what is meant by the typist 'using' the double right hand margin? In the specimen given she does precisely *not* use it but types straight on across it to the ultimate right hand margin. Do you mean 'Let her draw a vertical line 8 spaces to the left of her actual right hand margin and then ignore this line in typing?' As you begin to see, I have picked up none of the technique of a professional author. Sorry.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

P.S. You might let me have the specimen back.

TO HSIN-CHANG CHANG (BOD):[120](#) TS
REF.52/252.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
12th June 1952.

Dear Mr. Chang,
If you would care to call on me here at 12 o'clock on Friday 20th, it would give me great pleasure.
Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO ROBERT LONGACRE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
June 19th 1952

Dear Mr. Longacre—
All opinions on new poetry are uncertain: especially on poetry read because one has been asked to read it and with the knowledge (which freezes up all the faculties) that one must express a view on it to the author.
You must therefore not attach too much importance to my 're-action'. The truth is, these poems don't work—with me: they might with other readers, and, I dare say, better readers than I. The poetic species to which they belong—which might be called the Rhapsodical—is one to which I am very insensitive: I can't bear Walt Whitman.
My feeling is that the more vast and supersensible a poem's subject is, the more it needs to be fixed, founded, incarnated in regular metre and concrete images. Thus I is, for me, the worst. III is better: the line about the candle in God's window, the best thing in it. But they are not my sort of poetry. You won't take this too seriously: they might well suit some other reader. I can't tell you how I wish I could write something more encouraging: but between Christians the truth must be spoken.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MONSIGNOR FERDINAND VANDRY (WHL):[121](#)

[Magdalen College
? June 1952]

Dear Monsignor Vandry,

Please accept my sincere thanks for the great and unexpected honour offered me in your letter. I do not know whether in order to receive it, I must be present before the Special Convocation on September 22nd. If that is necessary then I am compelled, with great regret and undiminished gratitude, to refuse the Doctorate since my other engagements make it quite impossible for me to visit Quebec in September.

Even if it is possible for me to receive the degree in absence, the question remains whether that would be held to imply any disrespect for Convocation or any insensibility to the great favour you are showing me. Naturally I would rather lose it than receive it under conditions which the University might consider as ungracious on my part.

I await your kind advice on these points.

Whatever the decision may be, I shall retain a vivid sense of the University's kindness.

Please convey to all concerned my most respectful and obliged greetings.

TO GENIA GOELZ (L/P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
20 June 1952

Dear Genia

Thanks for yours of the 10th. I would prefer to combat the 'I'm special' feeling not by the thought 'I'm no more special than anyone else' but by the feeling 'Everyone is as special as me.' In one way there is no difference, I grant, for both remove the speciality. But there is a difference in another way. The first might lead you to think, 'I'm only one of the crowd like anyone else'. But the second leads to the truth that there isn't any crowd. No one is like anyone else. All are 'members' (organs) in the Body of Christ.¹²² All different and all necessary to the whole and to one another: each loved by God individually, as if it were the only creature in existence. Otherwise you might get the idea that God is like the government which can only deal with the people in the mass.

About confession, I take it that the view of our Church is that everyone may use it but none is obliged to. I don't doubt that the Holy Spirit guides your decisions from within when you make them with the intention of pleasing God. The error wd. be to think that He speaks *only* within whereas, in reality, He speaks also through Scripture, the Church, Christian friends, books etc.

I haven't written more than two nonsense poems¹²³ (I enclose the other) but I know my *Just So* stories.¹²⁴

God bless you. C. S. Lewis

*Travellers! In months without an R
Beware the woods of Wongomar,
For then the resident bumble-bear Booms all day through the
thicket there.*

*Its face is round, as is its rump,
Its tail is a preposterous stump.
Its eyes are shut, its whiskers dense,
It lives on butterscotch and bats
And lines its nest with bowler hats
(Arranged in a volmonic¹²⁵ plan).
It cannot talk, but thinks it can,
And there it bumbles, there it hums,
It knocks you down: it rubs its eyes
Intending to apologise.
But when it sees it's laid you flat
It takes offence and steals your hat.*

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
June 22nd 1952

My dear Arthur

I shall be free to be with you from Sat. Aug. 23rd till Mon. Sept. 8th when I sail for L'pool. These dates cannot be changed but if you like to spend all or any of this time motoring me about Ireland, I shd. like it v. much and will fall in with any dates (between those two) or any itinerary you choose. Just us two, of course: I wouldn't face any third.* You and I know the worst about each other by now! I look forward to it immensely.

Yours

Jack

* Except the Unbelievable, of course: he has more sense than we have!

P.S. But I'd forgotten. My room at the C'burn Inn is already booked for that period. I'm afraid I couldn't manage to pay it *and* other ones as well. Can you decide on your dates at once & then see if the Inn will cancel my room for the period of our tour without charging? If *not*, then I'd better stick to my original plan & you take your motor trip after I've gone. But I hope not. I shall be a little anxious till I hear from you again.

P.P.S. No sharing a room: but you'd hate it as much as I, so I'm safe!

TO WILLIAM BORST (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

June 22nd 1952

Dear Mr. Borst (or shall we stop mistering one another? Let's) Dear Borst,

Thanks for your most indulgent letter of the 17th which lifts a load from my mind. It occurs to me that the typist may understand perfectly easily the instructions that baffled me: if so, you shall get the MS. in the form you want. If she is as stupid as I (a pessimistic hypothesis) I shall avail myself of your concession.

I've finished the introduction wh. seemed to write itself, so that I could hardly keep up with it. If it is as good as it seems to me at the moment it's a corker: but of course things never are. You will find one or two allusions in it that your students will not quite understand, but these have been left in on purpose. If they are too carefully shielded from the rumour of worlds they have not yet broken into, what will ever drive them on. Now I shall get on with the scissors and paste work.

At the end of the first day everything in the room (except the bits of Spenser, perhaps) will be pasted to everything else. All will be in the most literal sense CO-HERENT. But no palm without paste.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

Interim Report[126](#)

I merveill much that critiques doe complaine
Of bookes with scisers and with past compylde;
Certes who weenes this is a lesser payne
Then free invention is sore beguyld!
Witness myself who with sic labour vyld
Am oft so dased that I half repent
This great emprise, my fingers all defyld
With slimie stickphast foule and feculent
And deeme Dan Spenser self an easier journie went.

C. S. Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):[127](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
June 22nd 1952

Dear Miss Bodle

It was a great joy to hear from you again. You have been daily in my prayers for a long time and, needless to say, will remain. I shall be grateful for a place in yours.

The work you are engaged in is a magnificent one (much in my mind because, as it falls out, I've just been reading Helen Keller's book):¹²⁸ hard, no doubt, but you can never be attacked by the suspicion that it is not worth doing. There are jolly few professions of which we can say that. The translation of great stories into a limited vocabulary will, incidentally, be a wonderful discipline: you will learn a lot about thought and language in general before you are done. I hope you will sometimes let me know how you get on. God bless you.

Yours most sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

As from Magdalen
June 23rd 1952

My dear Roger

Shortly after you left me I took up *From the World's End*¹²⁹ one night and re-read it: finding it so much better than I had remembered, or perhaps, perceived, that I think I ought to tell you so. The original reading must have caught me in an imperceptive mood. There are, as you yourself wd. now feel, one or two places where one can 'see the works', perceive you deliberately concocting an atmosphere—but they are few and once the main story (which hangs together v. well) takes hold they vanish.

The snatches of 'modern' poetry on p. 62 are exactly like it: you might have been reading Rostrevor Hamilton's *The Tell-Tale Article*, but it was not published then.¹³⁰ The Voice is excellently managed. The most important thing is that (this time) I was really interested in the crisis it depicts throughout, wh. is significant because it never was *my* crisis.

Craigie's *Dark Atlantis*¹³¹ has come and is an almost total disappointment. I don't think he has much real imagination: and he certainly can't write at all. The good reviews and the high praise from Grahame Greene (who certainly can write himself, whether one likes his books or not) alarm me. We here catch the critics on the sort of book we *do* understand, and that shows them to be without any standards at all. (Craigie thinks *rights* means rites and that the Atlanteans had a metal called ORICHAL EUM!¹³² We are in the post-literate age Yours

Jack

TO HARRY BLAMIRE (BOD):

Coll. Magd.
24/6/52

Dear Blamires

Yes, of course. I am sorry the book has not yet found a home. All the best.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26/6/52

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

Incense and Hail Marys are in quite different categories. The one is merely a question of ritual: some find it helpful and others don't, and each must put up with its absence or presence in the church they are attending with cheerful and charitably humility.

But Hail Marys raise a *doctrinal* question: whether it is lawful to address devotions to any *creature*, however holy. My own view would be that a *salute* to any saint (or angel) cannot in itself be wrong any more than taking off one's hat to a friend: but that there is always some danger lest such practices start one on the road to a state (sometimes found in R.C.'s) where the B.V.M.¹³³ is treated really as a deity and even becomes the centre of the religion. I therefore think that such salutes are better avoided. And if the Blessed Virgin is as good as the best mothers I have known, she does not *want* any of the attention which might have gone to her Son diverted to herself.

It seems, nevertheless, quite clear that the Spirit of God is, or is more strongly with Kemper Hall than with P. A. Wolfe. In him you describe a type I know. I think we may except [accept] it as a rule that whenever a person's religious conversation dwells chiefly, or even frequently, on the faults of other people's religions, he is in a bad condition. The fact that he shakes your faith is significant. Pray *for* him but not, I shd. say, *with* him. If he insists on talking religion to you ask him for positive things: ask him to tell you what he knows of God.

All blessings. My 'new trouble' is still there: but I have much to be thankful for.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MISS REIDY (P): TS
REF.52/265.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
28th June 1952.

Dear Miss Reidy,

The point¹³⁴ was that as foolish people on a walk, when by their own errors they are off the course, think the map was wrong, so, when we do not find in ourselves the fruits of the Spirit which all our teachers promise, it is not that the promise was false, but that we have failed to use the Grace we have been given. The 'map' can be found in almost any Christian teaching.

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College.
28th June 52

My dear Arthur

Splendid. The manageress is right: Aug 21st is my first night at Crawfordsburn. Setting off with you on Mon. 25th will do fine. And *of course* I don't want all day & every day in the car: we think just the same on that subject. I look forward to the trip immensely: the first time you and I have been away together since Portsalon in about 1916!¹³⁵ This time we shall at least not quarrel about Hair-Oil!

Yours

Jack

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD):[136](#)

Coll. Magd.
28/6/52

My dear Bles,

Mycroft has been ill,[137](#) but is now better. I don't foresee many occasions for copies of *Le Lion*,[138](#) but if you will kindly send me 2, they might come in useful. The translator deserves to be congratulated of course—French is a v. powerful language—the children become perfect little Frenchmen, but that is all to the good. What pleased and surprised me is the passage at the end where I made them talk like characters in Malory, and he has really got some of the quality of the French 13th century prose romances: *grande honte en aurions*[139](#)—is exactly right.

May I have 10 copies of M.C.?[140](#) I had my first bathe at Parsons' Pleasure yesterday: 68°. [141](#)

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO WAYLAND HILTON YOUNG (W):

[Magdalen College]

1/7/52

Dear Hilton Young, (Shall we drop the honorifics on both sides?) Thanks very much for two copies of the C.J.¹⁴² As I said before, it is almost impossible to make an objective judgement on criticism of oneself, especially when it does one so very proud. But I suspect that your essay is a good one. Certainly the alterations have been made with great skill—invisible mending.

I'm glad Driver played up. I suppose he told you, as he told me, that *Judith* is already a novel.¹⁴³ I still hope that as you poke about among the *realien* they will blaze up and a new story will arise relegating *Judith* to the background.

What do you think of Hesse's *Glasperlenspiel*, which I've just read in a v. bad translation?¹⁴⁴ Heavy, humourless. But has one merit wh. sets it apart from all other stories about the future. Unobtrusively, without any new machines or new forms of government, it really does give you the illusion of a society in which the general quality of *thought* is different from ours. I don't think Wells or Aldous Huxley did that: nor Orwell, except in the epilogue on Newspeak.¹⁴⁵

All the best, and many thanks.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

REF.52/103.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
3rd July 1952.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

We both enjoyed your very interesting letters, and are glad to know that you are so happy. Pity about the antelopes, but inevitable. And we look forward greedily to the promised food parcel. Sun Valley Lodge looks a lovely place, and I hope that I may have the good fortune to see it some day. Here is the translation of the Latin:—Many things will be re-born which have now fallen (into disfavour), and many will fall (into disfavour) which are now fashionable.¹⁴⁶

With all best wishes to you both, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

Mere Christianity: A Revised and Amplified Edition, with a New Introduction of the Three Books, 'Broadcast Talks', 'Christian Behaviour' and 'Beyond Personality' *was published by Geoffrey Bles of London on 7 July 1952.*

TO MARG-RIETTE MONTGOMERY (W): TS

REF.52/248.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

8th July 1952.

Dear Miss Montgomery, Of course they¹⁴⁷ are right in making the Resurrection a cosmic event: what I am not so sure is whether they really regard Christ as the only-begotten Son of the only God.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO DON GIOVANNI CALABRIA (V):

e Coll. Stae Mariae Magdalenae

Jul. XIV. MCMLII Gratias ago, dilectissime pater, et pro opusculis Congregationis vestrae et pro hac epistolâ Jul vii datâ. Hora nostra, ut dicis, gravis est: utrum gravis 'prae omnibus humanae historiae' nescio. Sed semper malum quod proximum et gravissimum videtur esse; est enim, ut oculis, sic cordibus, sua 'perspettiva'. Si tamen nostra tempestas rê verâ pessima est, si rê vera Dies Illa nunc imminet, quid restat nisi ut gaudeamus quia redemptio nostra iam prior est et dicamus cum Sancto Joanne 'Amen; cito venias, domine Iesu.' Interim sola securitas est ut Dies nos inveniat laborantes quemque in suo officio et praecipue (dissensionibus relictis) illud supremum mandatum ut invicem diligamus implentes. Oremus semper pro invicem. Vale: et sit tecum et mecum pax illa quam nemo potest auferre.

C. S. Lewis

from the College of St Mary Magdalen

July 14th 1952

Thank you, dearest Father, both for the tracts of your Congregation and for your letter dated July 7th.

The times we live in are, as you say, grave: whether 'graver than all others in history' I do not know. But the evil that is closest always seems to be the most serious: for as with the eye so with the heart, it is a matter of one's own perspective. However, if our times are indeed the worst, if That Day¹⁴⁸ is indeed now approaching, what remains but that we should rejoice because our redemption is now nearer and say with St John: 'Amen; come quickly, Lord Jesus.'¹⁴⁹

Meanwhile our only security is that The Day may find us working each one in his own station and especially (giving up dissensions) fulfilling that supreme command that we love one another.¹⁵⁰

Let us ever pray for each other.

Farewell: and may there abide with you and me that peace which no one can take from us.¹⁵¹

C. S. Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD): TS

REF.52/294.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
16th July 1952.

Dear Miss Bodle,

Thanks for what you tell me.¹⁵² I will indeed. All good wishes to yourself. In great haste, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM BORST (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
July 21st 52

Dear Borst

I return the copy (signed) of your official letter. I am flattered that Mr. Dunn¹⁵³ should suppose me capable of making any useful comment. But he probably knows much more about Chaucer than I do and certainly knows more about the audience we are addressing.

Also, I *must* have a holiday from English poetry!¹⁵⁴ (I'm doing an orgy of the classics at present: feeling that, all said and done, the *really* delightful thing about any bit of ancient poetry is that it's *not* English and *doesn't* rhyme).^{*} So I shall probably be able to do v. little about the Chaucer Reader. But give Mr. Dunn my compliments and don't let him misunderstand my motives.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

* And also has real grammar, not like Middle English!

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Coll. Magd.
July 22nd 1952

My dear George

Hurrah! We look forward v. much to seeing you at the Kilns for such time as you choose from Sept 15 to 22nd. I hope you will choose the whole.

Tolkien does usually answer letters in the end. At present I can only plead for him that he is in the middle of Vivas.¹⁵⁵ I know he appreciated Moira's letter v. much: he said he meant to run down to Malvern if you wd. have him for a night, and deliver you the next chunk of *The Lord*. I will jog him if I see him but I shan't till Vivas are over. V. glad to hear you have better news. Love to Moira. I'd ask you to bring Sir Henry¹⁵⁶ with you only neither he or Pushkin like that sort of thing.

Yours

Jack

TO I. O. EVANS (W): TS

Magdalen Coll.
23/7/52.

Dear Evans,

Many thanks for the loan of the magazines; which my brother and I however found rather above our heads. It seems to me that we are reaching a stage at which scientifiction has far too much science and too little fiction to make an agreeable brew.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO ANNE SCOTT (BOD):[157](#)

Magdalen
July 28th 1952

Dear Mrs. Scott—

Thanks very much for your most rich and interesting letter which has brought Charles back to me v. vividly so that I shall feel for an hour or so as if I had met him again. It will also be a valuable permanent addition to my Caroline documents.[158](#)

About your (1.), I think my view of ‘canonical Gawaine’ had some basis in something C.W. said,[159](#) but yours sounds likely too—in view of the parallel from the *Meditation*.[160](#) (2.) (‘Women in the world’s base’),[161](#) I think you must be right. I can’t imagine why I didn’t see this.[162](#) (3.) Clearly I was wrong about the date of composition of *Prayers of the Pope*.[163](#) But your words ‘points in the poem had coincided with points in the war’ implies I take it, that the images existed in some shape prior to the events: wh. was my main point.[164](#) (4.) I find your interpretation of Proofs, Roofs etc. v. hard. Even Mercury–Language–Proofs is to me v. strained, & after that I love the planets altogether. At least if that is what he meant it must be the worst passage in the whole cycle![165](#)

By the way ‘The time on my hands has gone to my head’ is a phrase you must make something of: it cries out for literary use.

Thanks v. much again. I’ve enjoyed this bit of the morning.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

REF.52/103.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
28th July 1952.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

(My brother remarks that ‘the new name is’nt properly run in yet, and does’nt slip easily off the typewriter’). Many thanks indeed for the grand parcel, which arrived this morning, and which we are putting aside as a consolation for the end of our holidays. If at the beginning I had known for how long and how generously you were going to provision us, I would have kept a record of what you have sent; it must run into the hundredweights by this time! To say nothing of the imponderable benefit of having made a good friend.

We both leave here on Wednesday morning, and if all goes well, slip through the Iron Curtain about noon on Thursday; it is quite a dramatic performance. You go chugging along in the Dublin express through rocks and heather (‘The Gate of the North’), and presently pass an enormous Union Jack on the side of the track. As soon as you are past the flag, prices for drinks in the dining car drop about fifty per cent: you are *through* and out of the clutches of the Welfare State (now known by the way as ‘The Farewell State’). By tea time we shall be sitting on a bungalow verandah, three miles from anywhere, looking across Dundalk Bay at a range of blue mountains.

The weather has of course played its usual practical joke; we had a blistering month until Saturday night: during which the temperature dropped about twenty degrees without the slightest warning, and now the question is not how many white linen suits to take away with one, but how to pack a winter overcoat for the ‘summer’ evenings.

Does anyone in America understand American politics? Certainly no one over here can make out what is happening, in spite of numerous inspired articles by so called experts; people who pretend to know all about it—on the strength of a lecturing tour in the States—assure me that a Taft victory would have been a disaster and an Eisenhower one would be grand.

Which, as they belong to the same party, seems odd to me; others tell me that as the Democrats are sure to get in anyhow, the Taft–Eisenhower battle was of no importance.¹⁶⁶ I thought I was going to learn something from an old lady in Connecticut the other day,¹⁶⁷ but at the end of eight pages so hot that they nearly burnt my fingers, all I could gather was that the ‘Dumbocrats’ as she called them, are a sort of mixture of Hitler, the Russian secret police, and the inmates of the village lunatic asylum: but no doubt this view is a little prejudiced.

I suppose by this time you have got Mr. Gebbert broken in, and trotting nicely in harness? Please give him my kind regards. I hope to hear from you soon again, as we are both eager to know how you are settling down amongst the elks, auks, reindeer, silver miners and so forth.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Derryherk House Hotel,
Lough Melvin,
Ballyshannon,
Co. Donegal,
Ireland
Aug 31/52

My dear Roger

Good. I shall, D.V., breakfast in Woodside Hotel on the 9th and expect you there at about 10.¹⁶⁸ South Donegal is a terrifying country: I have much to tell, but you see what the pen is like. Have read *Virgin of the Sun*¹⁶⁹ & think it one of the 3 or 4 best books Haggard ever wrote. My duty to June.

Yours

Jack

TO JUNE LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept 11th 1952

Dear June

'Roofers'¹⁷⁰ traditionally begin, I think, with the assurance that the writer arrived safely home—though it is not very easy to see why one's hostess should be supposed to doubt this once she has got the letter. At any rate, I am not *now* writing from the other world. (Perhaps the idea is to assure the hostess that the guest has really gone: arrival at one place being the strongest evidence of departure from another.) Well, thank you both very much. Last night was among the great nights ('devilish' or 'famously snug' as the last century said) and led through a flawless tunnel of sleep to a typically beautiful morning. I see one can't blame Roger for always writing about his own house. By the way, tell him I finished his *Lewis Carol*¹⁷¹ (a word I don't know how to spell) all but two pages in the train. It cd. hardly be better. If he ever has a chance he shd. take out 9 of every 10 exclamation marks, though. I feel about them as the Red Queen felt when she said 'You needn't say *exactly*, I can believe you without that.'¹⁷²

If this letter contains anything insane, take it all for the best and remember I have been writing for hours: mostly dull ones. But I really did love my sojourn, and am v. grateful. Blessings on you all.

Yours ever

Jack Lewis

TO FLORENCE (MICHAL) WILLIAMS (W):[173](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept 12/52

Dear Michal

What day are you coming? Wd. you and Michael¹⁷⁴ care to lunch? or (if you want more *tête-à-tête*, as well you may) can you meet me for a drink anywhere? Joy Gresham is an old & valued pen-friend of mine: I'm so glad you like her.¹⁷⁵ Prod her to say *when* she is coming to us.¹⁷⁶ Yours ever
Jack

TO MARG-RIETTE MONTGOMERY (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Sept 12th 1952

Dear Miss Montgomery

Thanks for your letter of July 24th. That's right: keep on holding the life-line, like someone going down broken stairs into a dark cellar, anxious not to miss any treasure it may contain but even more determined not to make any step wh. can't be retraced.

I think the Anthros^{[177](#)} suffer not so much from heresies about the Son as from heresies—or total vagueness—about the Father. God keep you.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen etc.
Sept 12/52

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

I've just got back from Ireland & found your 2 letters among the mountain of mail. I've written to Genia. No time for a proper letter to you—I've had 9 hours' letter-writing already! Blessings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader' was published by Geoffrey Bles of London on 15 September 1952.

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD):

Magdalen
15/9/52

My dear Bles

Achtung! Here's an imperfect copy omitting the Preface but (*comble de malheur!*)¹⁷⁸ wearing the jacket wh. advertises the Preface. This is the only imperfect copy among those you sent me: but how many more are there? What on earth can be done?

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO FLORENCE (MICHAL) WILLIAMS (W): PC

Magdalen College
Oxford
15/9/52

Good. Mitre Hotel. 12. noon. Wed. Sept 24th. Shall assume this unless I
hear to the contrary.

C.S.L.

TO WILLIAM BORST (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
15/9/52

Dear Borst

I enclose

Introduction (2 copies) Footnotes (2 copies)

Text of Selections (1 copy) If the Introduction is too long I cd. excise some bits. As I shall be working from the MS. (where the pagination is of course different) if you want to refer to a particular paragraph in writing to me, I am afraid you must quote the opening words—as if it were a Papal Bull!

If the Selections are too long, my first choice wd. be to omit *in toto* No. XXI (Britomart in the House of Isis): my second, much more reluctant, to omit *in toto* No XIX (Scudamour in the House of Care). I have also noted some individual stanzas for possible omission, but they matter only if I've been *very slightly* too long.

I've only just come back from the West of Ireland. I hope you get on well with Horace. There *are* easier authors!

All the best.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD):

Coll. Magd.
17/9/52

My dear Bles

The fact that I happened to get an imperfect copy didn't matter two hoots. What worried me (for I never knew that a percentage of such things was normal) was the fear that half the edition might be like that! You have set my mind at ease.

I often smile when I compare my ignorance with the knowingness of some people who, on the strength of having published one book, seem to have the whole mystery of publishing, printing, & binding by heart. I'll write to Miss Baynes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

P.S. I suppose there'll be no difficulty about changing the title of the new one in galley. I want to call it *Night Under Narnia*

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
20/9/52

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

This is indeed most joyous news and as unexpected as if a favourite character out of history or fiction came to England in the flesh! Now look. Shall we book for you at a hotel or will you come and stay with us? It is only fair to tell you that (tho' we have an excellent hot water system) we have so little coal that there are no hot baths in our house, only hot water in jugs (This doesn't mean that we never have baths: but then we bath in College, where ladies can't). Otherwise, we hope the hardships wd. not be too great.

Now don't start asking yourselves the Question which (I confess) this letter invites: viz 'Does this mean that they'll be hurt if we go to a hotel or that they'll be bothered if we go to them? Which do they want?'. Because in fact it doesn't mean either. We do really want you to do whichever you'll like but: and we have enough imagination to understand either point of view—(A.) Oh, for the Lord's sake, let's be free and on our own in a hotel, or (B.) We shall have enough of hotels before we're done, do let's get a chance of an ordinary house.

The usual oriental formula 'Everything in our house is yours' acquires a new sense: so many things in our house in these last (how many years?) have been literally yours! It is outrageous generosity about the liquor and the mufflers. What can I say, except murmur 'whiskey'! If we fight about the mufflers you shall look on and be the 'store of ladies whose bright eyes rain influence and (once more literally) award the prize.'¹⁷⁹ Send us a wire with your decision. We are so excited.

Yours ever { W. H. Lewis }
{ C. S. Lewis }

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

Magdalen
20/9/52

My dear Arthur

No, please don't send H.J.'s *Letters*.¹⁸⁰ The idea of your returning a present was applicable only on the assumption that it was useless to you. And anyway, if they're not much about the books, they wd. be useless to me.

A retired naval captain whom you may have sometimes heard of in the papers (Bernard Acworth) tells me he was at Derryherk¹⁸¹ shortly before us and says the fishing was just as bad as the food. I wonder what the Magic Major is *really* up to.

I've got a 100 Horsepower cold but feel mentally & spiritually much the better from our holiday. It—and you—have done me lots of good. All blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO JONATHAN FRANCIS 'FRANK' GOODRIDGE (P):[182](#)

Coll. Magd.

22/9/52

My dear Goodridge

I'm going to give those lectures next term and cd. hardly separate myself from the notes at the moment.¹⁸³ But for the moment:—the trichotomy is not Hesperian, Aerial, or Celestial, but Terrestrial (Men), Aerial (Aerial Genii or daemons), Aetherial (Angels). At death Man goes from 1 to 2: from which, if they make the grade, they go on to 3, but if ploughed relapse into 1. 1 and 2 are mortal, 3 immortal. It's at one's second death (or an Aerial) that one either goes up or falls back.

Hence ll. 459–472¹⁸⁴ really mean (I believe) 'Chastity carries us safely from terrestrial thro' aerial up to aetherial, but sensuality draws us back to terrestrial. Ghosts are "ploughed" aerial longing to get back to their terrestrial state.'

The Attendant Spirit¹⁸⁵ is an aerial (i.e. a *native* aerial not an ex-human who has been promoted). For he lives not in the highest heaven but only 'before' its 'threshold' (1.)¹⁸⁶ among 'aerial spirits' (3.)¹⁸⁷ in 'serene air' (4.)¹⁸⁸ is called 'daemon' in Trinity MS., & returns to 'suck the liquid air' (980)¹⁸⁹ wh. Aerials live on, in a region still subject to mutability where Venus mourns Adonis (999–1002) and it is 'far above' (1003) his realm that Celestial Love consummates His marriage with human soul (1004–1011). That ought to keep them going for a bit! I am so glad you have a happy job.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARGARET SACKVILLE HAMILTON (BOD):[190](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford
23/9/52

Dear Mrs. Hamilton

The ancient books which put this view best are Plato's *Timaeus* and Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, Book V. (The Loeb Library edition of the latter has a nice 17th century English translation on the right hand pages).[191](#) There is, however, no need to go back to the original sources. Modern statements will be found in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*: (in the part called 'Transcendental Aesthetic')[192](#) and in Von Hügel's *Eternal Life*[193](#)—the latter, I think, far easier. From the scientific angle try Eddington's *Nature of the Physical Universe*.[194](#) There are what may be regarded as evidences for the theory in Dunne's *Experiment with Time*,[195](#) tho' he (wrongly I believe) treats them as evidence for a different and unnecessarily complicated theory of what he calls Serialism.[196](#)

The nearest we get to scriptural support is II. Peter 8–9 where St. Peter transforms the simple Old Testament saying that 1000 years are only one day to God (which in itself might mean only that God is permanent in time) by adding the new and important point that to God one day is like 1000 years.[197](#)

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

Joy Gresham at this time was a 37-year-old New Yorker who had begun a correspondence with Lewis in 1950.¹⁹⁸ Her marriage to the novelist, William Lindsay Gresham, was under strain, and in August she had left their two children, David (b. 1944)¹⁹⁹ and Douglas (b. 1945),²⁰⁰ with their father and a cousin, Renée Pierce, to go to London for a few months, hoping during that time to meet Lewis.

During August and September she stayed in London with her old friend, Phyllis Williams. They invited Lewis to have lunch with them in Oxford, and on 24 September Lewis met Joy and Phyllis at the Eastgate Hotel, across the road from Magdalen College. A few days later Lewis invited them to lunch in his College rooms. Warnie was invited too, but when he withdrew George Sayer took his place. Sayer recalled the luncheon in Magdalen in his biography of Lewis:

The party was a decided success. Joy was of medium height, with a good figure, dark hair, and rather sharp features. She was an amusingly abrasive New Yorker, and Jack was delighted by her bluntness and her anti-American views. Everything she saw in England seemed to her far better than what she had left behind. Thus, of the single glass of sherry we had before the meal, she said: ‘I call this civilized. In the States, they give you so much hard stuff that you start the meal drunk and end with a hangover.’ She was anti-urban and talked vividly about the inhumanity of the skyscraper and of the new technology and of life in New York City...She attacked modern American literature...‘Mind you, I wrote that sort of bunk myself when I was young.’ Small farm life was the only good life, she said. Jack spoke up then, saying that, on his father’s wise, he came from farming stock. ‘I felt that,’ she said. ‘Where else could you get the vitality?’²⁰¹

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Coll. Magd.
26/9/52

My dear Roger—

I find Miss Graham's criticism rather hard to understand. 'Tone' might conceivably refer to the emphasis on poaching or the poacher's religious hypocrisy, but quite possibly masks some objection which she herself cannot understand. I don't know what to advise, for the books you fail to publish seem to me sometimes better than, and sometimes no different from, your published ones. I shouldn't be surprised if it all depends on the time of the month at which Miss G. reads the MS. I am old enough now to realise that one always has to reckon with that.

We also have had visitors. For heaven's sake don't let June increase her toils by bothering to write to me. But let me have her and your advice on my immediate problem wh. is the title of the new story. Bles, like you, thinks *The Wild Waste Lands* bad, but he says *Night Under Narnia* is 'gloomy'. George Sayer & my brother say *Gnomes Under N wd.* be equally gloomy, but *News under Narnia wd* do. On the other hand my brother & the American writer Joy Davidman (who has been staying with us & is a great reader of fantasy and children's books) both say that *The Wild Waste Lands* is a splendid title. What's a chap to do?

Yours

Jack

TO MICHAEL IRWIN (P): TS

REF.52/373.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th September 1952.

Dear Michael,

Thank you for writing. I am so glad you liked the *Voyage*. Your idea of a story about Aslan in England is a good one, but I think it would be too hard for me to write—it would have to be so different. Perhaps you will write it yourself when you are grown up, Love from

C. S. Lewis

TO PATRICK IRWIN (P):[202](#)TS

REF.52/373.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th September 1952.

Dear Mr. Irwin,

I have written to Michael approving the idea, but saying it would be too difficult for me to do. I didn't add that the story of Aslan in this world (if not in England) has been written already. His letter gave me great pleasure, and so does yours.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

REF.52/103.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
30th September 1952.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

We are both delighted to hear that it is Proposition B, and are looking forward eagerly to your visit; and we note that, as one would expect from

you, you come laden with gifts: which however you will have the novel experience of *sharing* with the recipients!

Yes, the dates suit excellently; I hope you will come down on one of the morning trains, in time for us all to have lunch here in my rooms before we go out to the house. Let me know in due course.

Is Andy the Antelope with you? Does he like iced water for breakfast? What brand of hay does he use?

With all best wishes to you both, yours anticipatorily, C. S. Lewis

TO CHARLES MOORMAN (L):²⁰³

Magdalen
2/10/52

Dear Mr Moorman,

I am sure you are on a false scent.²⁰⁴ Certainly most, perhaps all the poems in Williams's *Taliessin* volume were written before the last novel, *All Hallows Eve*, was even conceived,²⁰⁵ and there had been Arthurian poems (not of much value) in his earlier manner long before. I can't tell you when he first became interested in the Arthurian story, but the overwhelming probability is that, like so many English boys, he got via Tennyson into Malory in his 'teens. The whole way in which he talked of it implied a life-long familiarity. Much later (but even so, before I met him) came the link-up between his long-standing interest in *Arthuriana* and a new interest in Byzantium.

Everything he ever said implied that his prose fiction, his 'pot boilers', and his poetry all went on concurrently: there was no 'turning from' one to the other. He never said anything to suggest that he felt his themes 'would not fit with ease into tales of modern life'. What would have expressed the real chronological relation between the novels would have been the words (tho' I don't think he ever actually said them) 'I haven't got much further with my Arthurian poems this week because I've been temporarily occupied with the idea for a new story.'

The question when did he first come across the doctrine of 'Caritas' puzzled me. What doctrine do you mean? If you mean the ordinary Christian doctrine that there are three theological virtues and 'the greatest of these is charity'²⁰⁶ of course he would never remember a time when he had not known it. If you mean the doctrine of Coinherence and Substitution,

then I don't know when he first met these.²⁰⁷ Nor do I know when he began the *Figure of A.*²⁰⁸ His knowledge of the earlier Arthurian documents was not that of a real scholar: he knew none of the relevant languages except (a little) Latin.

The VII Bears and the Atlantean Circle (in *That Hideous Strength*) are pure inventions of my own, filling the same purpose in the narrative that 'noises off' wd in a stage play.²⁰⁹ Numinor is a mis-spelling of Numenor which, like the 'true West', is a fragment from a vast private mythology invented by Professor J. R. R. Tolkien.²¹⁰ At the time we all hoped that a good deal of that mythology would soon become public through a romance which the Professor was then contemplating. Since then the hope has receded....²¹¹

TO PHOEBE HESKETH (W):²¹²

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Oct 4th 1952

Dear Miss Hesketh—

You will have given up expecting any acknowledgement of *No Time for Cowards*²¹³ which you so kindly sent me, and must think me no end of a curmudgeon. But you know what the alternative is—either to write a wholly perfunctory letter at once, or else to wait for that rare day and hour (it's rarer as I get older) when one is receptive of a new book of poems. I now can *really* say Thank you, for I've got many real delights.

You are a superb phrase-maker: 'the bell-noised streams'²¹⁴ and 'infant fists of fern'²¹⁵ on p. 8—'Shack-Age'²¹⁶ on p. 9—'caged in comic bars of camouflage'²¹⁷ on 39—and the really unbearable two lines about Time's finger & the evening train on p. 81.²¹⁸ Ugh! The ones I liked best as wholes (wh. aren't necessarily the ones from which I shall remember bits to quote) are *Lion's Eye*—it has a perfect shape, couldn't be either longer or shorter—*The White Roe*—the extra rhyming line added to some stanzas is delightful—*I Am Not Resigned* (I'd love to have thought of 'greener centuries')²¹⁹—*Strange Country*, and (perhaps best of all) *Second Birth*. A painful book—I understand R. Church's fears²²⁰—but then most good poetry (tho' not the very topmost best of all like parts of Dante) is.

I really am very glad you sent it. Remember me most kindly to dear old Herbert Palmer and accept my very best thanks, good wishes, and congratulations. Perhaps if you are ever in these parts you will come and see me.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

Magdalen
11/10/52

My dear Arthur

James's *Letters* vol. I arrived yesterday. I don't know if I really ought to accept it, James being so much more your kind of author than mine. On the other hand it is too big for an envelope and putting up parcels is one of the many things I can't do. And there seems to be a good deal about books in it after all. Well, thanks very much indeed. Yes, I love my Father's underlinings: the pencil (can't you see him, with his spectacles far down on his nose, getting out the little stump?) so heavily used that, as W. said, he didn't so much draw a line as *dig* a line.

Term began yesterday, so I have now returned to harness after what has been perhaps the happiest year of my life. I began, appropriately, by cutting myself when I shaved, breaking my lace when I put on my shoes, and coming into College without my keys.

There have been some most perfect autumn days here lately and this is a well timbered country which they suit.

Love to *l'Incroyable*

[221](#) and your good self and all blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford. 11th October 1952.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

But hang it all, if you come on the 18th and 19th I shall see so little of you—being engaged to dine out on Saturday; and I can't put it off because it is with people I've had to refuse on several other occasions. Would you think us Pigs if we adhered to the original date? Not if it means you'll have to sleep on the Embankment of course!

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO HERBERT PALMER (TEX):

Coll. Magd.
16/10/52

My dear Palmer

I wrote a letter to Miss Hesketh²²² (I mean, a real one, not the mere acknowledgement) about the book²²³ some weeks ago. As Heinemann is one of those accursed firms that don't put their address on the title page I sent it c/o their old address and it came back as a dead letter. I then sent it c/o my own publisher. Has Miss Hesketh not had it yet?

I liked many of the poems v. much, especially the phrasing. Do let me know if the letter has ever arrived. As for helping the book, what can one do against the massive rampart of false taste in our times? That is the 'railway line': you and Miss Hesketh are the real unmacadamised road or immemorial Right of Way across the field. But they are stopping the Right of Way. How are *you* these days? It was nice to hear from you again.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN ROWLAND (TEX): [224](#)PC

Magdalen College
Oxford
16/10/52

Good. My Mon. evgs. are, unhappily, always filled up by the Socratic Club. The safest thing (for an unspecified week) is Lunch on Monday and as much talk as you can spare me *afterwards*. If you can *fix* which Monday I will book it. I much look forward to meeting.

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
17/10/52

My dear Arthur

I've finished vol. I of the Letters of H.J. I announce this not to hurry you but to show that I have enjoyed yr. gift. I'm afraid he was a dreadful Prig, but he is by no means a bore and has lots of interesting things to say about books. Was it you sent me the Northern 'Whig'?²²⁵ If so thanks.

Yours

Jack

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

52/103.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
18th October 1952.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

What a misfortune for you, and what a disappointment for us! 'Flu is a horrid thing at the best of times, but to contract it when on holiday, and in a strange city, is to have it under the most wretched conditions.

We hope that this does not mean a final cancellation of your visit: but I am making no alternative suggestion until I see what is in the letter you are writing me.

With deepest sympathy to you both and best wishes for a short illness and speedy recovery, yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen etc.
Oct 20th 1952

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

I think you are perfectly right to change your manner of prayer from time to time and I shd. suppose that all who pray seriously do thus change it. One's needs and capacities change and also, for creatures like us, excellent prayers may 'go dead' if we use them too long. Whether one shd. use written prayers composed by other people, or one's own words or own wordless prayer, or in what proportion one shd. mix all three, seems to me entirely a question for each individual to answer from his own experience.

I myself find prayers without words the best, *when* I can manage it, but I can do so only when least distracted and in best spiritual and bodily health (or what I think *best*). But another person might find it quite otherwise.

Your question about old friendships where there is no longer spiritual communion is a hard one. Obviously it depends v. much on what the other party wants. The great thing in friendship as in all other forms of love is, as you know, to turn from the demand to *be* loved (or helped or answered) to

the wish to love (or help or answer). Perhaps in so far as one does this one also discovers how much love one shd. spend on the sort of friends you mention. I don't think a decay in one's desire for mere 'society' or 'acquaintance' or 'the crowd' is a bad sign. (We mustn't take it as a sign of one's increasing spirituality of course: isn't it merely a natural, neutral, development as one grows older?).

All that Calvinist question—Free-Will & Predestination, is to my mind undiscussable, insoluble. Of course (say us) if a man repents God will accept him. Ah yes, (say they) but the fact of his repenting shows that God has already moved him to do so. This at any rate leaves us with the fact that in *any concrete case* the question never arrives as a practical one. But I suspect it is really a *meaningless* question. The difference between Freedom & Necessity is fairly clear on the bodily level: we know the difference between making our teeth chatter on purpose & just finding them chattering with cold. It begins to be less clear when we talk of human love (leaving out the erotic kind). 'Do I like him because I choose or because I must?'—there are cases where this has an answer, but others where it seems to me to mean nothing. When we carry it up to relations between God & Man, has the distinction perhaps become nonsensical? After all, when we are most free, it is only with a freedom God has given us: and when our will is most influenced by Grace, it is still *our will*. And if what *our will* does is not 'voluntary', and if 'voluntary' does not mean 'free', what are we talking about? I'd leave it all alone. Blessings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalen etc.
Oct 20th 1952

Poor dear Gebberts

I *am* sorry. Whatever may be said for foreign travel, it is horrid when one is ill: the wounded animal wants to creep away to its own den. But the total situation, you must now learn, is quite other than you supposed when you wrote on Saturday evening. That same evening our housekeeper (the only stay of our house and the nearest thing you wd. have had to a hostess) also went down with flu'. So if she had gone down 24 hours earlier *we* shd. have been wiring to put *you* off: and if *you'd* gone down 24 hours later our house wd. now be an amateur Nursing Home staffed by two elderly and incompetent bachelors—themselves liable at any moment to become two more patients. So all has not, perhaps, been quite so much for the worst as you supposed.

At any rate you have nothing to apologise for except what we should have had to apologise for if you hadn't. (Don't try to work this sentence out until your temperature is now normal). We had hoped that, tho' we can't now offer hospitality, you might have got down here for lunch some day, but I quite see how you can't. Don't feel in the least bad about the *contretemps*: if you, and our Miss Henry, were to have flu' the times couldn't have fitted in better!²²⁶ And you keep that whiskey and drink it all yourselves: you'll need it—and you won't get any fit to drink over here. Thanks—blessings—sympathies—and all good wishes for a speedy recovery.

Yours,

W. H. Lewis

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
21/10/52

My dear Roger

Your letter was more than usually welcome: for tho' reason assured me that so busy a man might have 100 motives for not writing, I had also a lurking fear that you might be offended. Forgive me the suspicion. It arose not at all because I judge you to be that kind of ass, or any kind, but because, we being 'of one blood', the loss of you wd. be a very raw gash in my life.

I had a letter from G. Greene's secretary to say that he was abroad but wd. be shown my letter as soon as he returned. I fear that will make it too late for him to act on it even if he has justice enough to wish to.

I have just finished Vol. I of Henry James's letters. An interesting man, tho' a dreadful prig: but he did appreciate Stevenson. A *phantasmal* man, who had never known God, or earth, or war, never done a day's compelled work, never had to earn a living, had no home & no duties.

My brother is reading *A.E.W.M.*²²⁷ with great enjoyment. You seem to be getting a pretty good Press: congratulations.

Love to June. I look forward to seeing you next month.

Yours

Jack

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

52/103.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

21st October 1952.

My dear Mr. and Mrs. Gebbert, I am sure you will not misunderstand me when I say that the opening of your wonderful parcel this morning was a melancholy rather than joyful ceremony; we had both looked forward so much to its happening under very different circumstances—your presentation, our (for the first time *verbal*) thanks, the popping of a cork in front of the log fire in our sitting room—well, well, ‘man never is, but always to be blessed’. Once more it is a case of ‘thank you very, very much’ on the typewriter, instead of in person. By the way, it was very naughty of you to send the whisky, unless, as I hope, you had some more with you: for there is no better tonic after ‘flu—*experto crede*.²²⁸

We both hope that the second part of your holiday will be less unfortunate than its beginning, and that by this time you are really over your troubles; if you find time to send a post card letting us know how you fare, it would be very welcome. In any case I feel that climatically Munich must be a change for the better, and no doubt also financially.

Our Vera, Vera Henry doesn't look like escaping as well as you have done; she was removed to a nursing home yesterday, and the doctor talks in the roundabout way that doctors do, about a possible risk of pneumonia. But we shan't know anything definite for a day or two.

While you are leaving a trail of golden dollars across Europe is perhaps hardly a tactful moment to talk about another holiday; but we do both hope that meeting you is but a pleasure postponed, and that another year you will venture to England again, and this time penetrate as far as Oxford.

With all best wishes to you both from us both, yours,

W. H. Lewis

C. S. Lewis*

* who has a suspicious headache himself at the moment. Who knows!...

TO JOHN ROWLAND (TEX): TS

52/213.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
23rd October 1952.

Dear Rowland,
(Let's drop the honorifics on both sides). November 3rd. would be best.
I'll wait for you in the College lodge about 1.10.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *CHURCH TIMES* (EC):²²⁹

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

I am, like Mr Eric Pitt,²³⁰ a layman, and would like to be instructed on several points before the proposal to set up a 'system' of Anglican canonization is even discussed. According to the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*, 'saints' are dead people whose virtues have made them 'worthy' of God's 'special' love.²³¹ Canonization makes *dulia*²³² 'universal and obligatory' and, whatever else it asserts, it certainly asserts that the person concerned 'is in heaven'.

Unless, then, the word 'canonization' is being used in a sense distinct from the Roman (and, if so, some other word would be much more convenient), the proposal to set up a 'system' of canonization means that someone (say, the Archbishops) shall be appointed (a.) To tell us that certain named people are (i) 'in heaven', and (ii) are 'worthy' of God's 'special' love.

(b.) To lay upon us (under pain of excommunication?) the duty of *dulia* towards those they have named.

Now it is very clear that no one ought to tell us what he does not know to be true. Is it, then, held that God has promised (and, if so, when and where?) to the Church universal a knowledge of the state of certain departed souls? If so, is it clear that this knowledge will discern varying degrees of kinds of salvation such as are, I suppose, implicit in the word 'special'? And if it does, will the promulgation of such knowledge help to

save souls now *in viâ*? For it might well lead to a consideration of ‘rival claims’, such as we read of in the *Imitation of Christ* (Bk. III, ch. lvii), where we are warned, ‘Ask not which is greater in the kingdom of heaven...the search into such things brings no profit, but rather offends the saints themselves.’

Finally, there is the practical issue: by which I do not mean the *Catholic Encyclopaedia*’s neat little account of ‘the ordinary actual expenses of canonization’ (though that too can be read with profit), but the danger of schism. Thousands of members of the Church of England doubt whether *dulia* is lawful. Does anyone maintain that it is necessary to salvation? If not, whence comes our obligation to run such frightful risks?

C. S. Lewis

TO J. O. REED (P): [233](#)

[Magdalen College
27 October 1952]

Dear Reed

Wd. this interest you?²³⁴ Mastership at W. would, I *think*, be a pretty good springboard for any academic job that turned up, and, I *know*, a very good springboard for any other schoolmastering job. It is just possible you might increase your *academic* chances by sticking to research & not flirting with school jobs—I'm not sure. On the other hand, the W. job wd. be a safety device in case no academic job is attained. The President might have good advice to give on the question of policy.²³⁵

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

52/103.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
28th October 1952.

Dear Gebberts,

Yes indeed, the whole parcel arrived intact, and I'm sorry that I did not make it clear that we had got your beautiful scarves (and the cigarettes) as well as the whiskey; and when the two latter gifts are, alas, nothing but a fragrant memory, we shall still be enjoying the scarves—which can be used with comfort for about nine months in the English year, as you can well imagine, after your disastrous experience. It is very welcome news that you are through your troubles, and are enjoying yourselves in Munich; it must be a great treat for Mr. Gebbert to have such a reunion after so many years. What you have to say about the re-building is very interesting: but I hope there is not going to be a political rebuild. Our papers are carrying an unpleasant story of a get together party of old concentration guards, anti-allied speeches, shouts of 'Swinehound Eisenhower' etc.

I'm sorry to say our Vera—may I say our *other* Vera?—so far from being better, has developed pneumonia, and is now in a nursing home; she is going along satisfactorily, but we are still not without anxiety about her. Largely her own fault, for she has since confessed that she had been feeling ill for at least a week before she took to her bed. Like all people who normally have perfect health, she is not a good patient, which I fear will retard her recovery.

We shall think of you next week on your way back to your own land, with, I hope, happy memories of the trip: and taking with you our hopes that you will repeat it in the not too distant future.

All good luck.

Yours sincerely,

W. H. Lewis

C. S. Lewis

TO PHOEBE HESKETH (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Oct 29th 1952

Dear Mrs. Hesketh

Surely I didn't say that 'really good' poetry was not painful (which wd. make *Lear* not really good), but that the very best and certainly rarest kind of all was not painful?²³⁶ I hope very much you will come and see me when you are in Oxford. I have just given *The Quenchless Flame* a first reading. I predict it will grow either shorter or longer before it reaches its final form, but it is full of good things. The leaf escaping from the bondage of the tree at the v. beginning wins one's good will for the whole poem. The six lines beginning 'Consider beauty' are particularly good.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARG-RIETTE MONTGOMERY (W): TS
REF.52/248.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

1st November 1952.

Dear Miss Montgomery, It would be a bit hard to believe in Our Lord without believing in the Father, seeing that Our Lord spent most of his time talking about the Father. Also God.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN ROWLAND (TEX): TS
52/213.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

6th November 1952.

My dear Rowland,

There was no need at all to write, but it was nice of you to do so. I don't foresee being in Brighton, but will certainly look you up if I am. No addresses to Literary Groups though!

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS JOHNSON (W):[237](#)

Magdalen etc,
Oxford.

Nov. 8 1952

Dear Mrs. Johnson

I am returning your letter with the questions in it numbered so that you'll know wh. I am answering.

(1.)[238](#) Some call me *Mr.* and some *Dr.* and I not only don't care but usually don't know which.

(2.)²³⁹ Distinguish (A) A second chance in the strict sense, i.e. a new earthly life in which you cd. attempt afresh all the problems you failed at in the present one (as in religions of Re-Incarnation). (B) Purgatory: a process by which the work of redemption continues, and first perhaps begins to be noticeable after death. I think Charles Williams depicts B, not A.

(3.)²⁴⁰ We are never given any knowledge of ‘What would have happened if...’

(4.)²⁴¹ I think that every prayer which is sincerely made even to a false god or to a v. imperfectly conceived true God, is accepted by the true God and that Christ saves many who do not think they know Him. For He is (dimly) present in the *good* side of the inferior teachers they follow. In the parable of the Sheep & Goats (Matt. XXV. 31 and following) those who are saved do not seem to know that they have served Christ. But of course our anxiety about unbelievers is most usefully employed when it leads us not to speculation but to earnest prayer for them and the attempt to be in our own lives such good advertisements for Christianity as will make it attractive.

(5.)²⁴² It is Christ Himself, not the Bible, who is the true word of God. The Bible, read in the right spirit and with the guidance of good teachers will bring us to Him. When it becomes really necessary (i.e. for our spiritual life, not for controversy or curiosity) to know whether a particular passage is rightly translated or is Myth (but of course Myth specially chosen by God from among countless Myths to carry a spiritual truth) or history, we shall no doubt be guided to the right answer. But we must not use the Bible (our fathers too often did) as a sort of Encyclopedia out of which texts (isolated from their context and not read without attention²⁴³ to the whole nature & purport of the books in which they occur) can be taken for use as weapons.

(6.) *Kill* means *murder*. I don't know Hebrew: but when Our Lord quotes this commandment he uses Gk *phoneuseis* (murder)²⁴⁴ not *apokteinein* (kill)²⁴⁵

[(7.)]²⁴⁶ The question of what you wd. ‘want’ is off the point. Capital punishment might be wrong tho’ the relations of the murdered man wanted him killed: it might be right tho’ they did not want this. The question is whether a Xtian nation ought or ought not to put murderers to death: not what passions interested individuals may feel.

(8.)²⁴⁷ There is no doubt at all that the natural impulse to ‘hit back’ must be fought against by the Xtian whenever it arises. If one I love is

tortured or murdered my desire to avenge him must be given no quarter. So far as nothing but this question of retaliation comes in ‘turn the other cheek’ is the Christian law. It is, however, quite another matter when the neutral, public authority (*not* the aggrieved person) may order killing of either private murderers or public enemies in mass. It is quite clear that our earliest Christian writer, St Paul, approved of capital punishment—he says the ‘magistrate’ bears & should bear ‘the sword’.²⁴⁸ It is recorded that the soldiers who came to St John Baptist asking, ‘What shall we do?’²⁴⁹ were *not* told to leave the army. When Our Lord Himself praised the Centurion²⁵⁰ He never hinted that the military profession was in itself sinful. This has been the general view of Christendom. Pacifism is a v. recent & local variation. We must of course respect & tolerate Pacifists, but I think their view erroneous.

(9.)²⁵¹ The symbols under which Heaven is presented to us are (a) a dinner party,²⁵² (b) a wedding,²⁵³ (c) a city,²⁵⁴ and (d) a concert.²⁵⁵ It wd. be grotesque to suppose that the guests or citizens or members of the choir didn’t know one another. And how can love of one another be commanded in this life if it is to be cut short at death?

(10.)²⁵⁶ Whatever the answer is, I’m sure it is not that (‘erased from the brain’). When I have learnt to love God better than my earthly dearest, I shall love my earthly dearest better than I do now. In so far as I learn to love my earthly dearest at the expense of God and *instead* of God, I shall be moving towards the state in which I shall not love my earthly dearest at all. When first things are put first, second things are not suppressed but increased. If you and I ever come to love God perfectly, the answer to this tormenting question will then become clear, and will be far more beautiful than we cd. ever imagine. We can’t have it now.

(11.)²⁵⁷ Thanks v. much: but I haven’t a sweet tooth.

(12.)²⁵⁸ Not that I know of: but I’m the last person who wd. know.

(13.)²⁵⁹ There is a poor barber whom my brother and I sometimes help. I got up one day intending to go to him for a hair-cut preparatory to going to London. Got a message putting off London engagement and decided to postpone hair-cut. Something, however, kept on nagging me to stick to it—‘Get your hair cut.’ In the end, said ‘Oh damn it, I’ll go.’

All good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD): TS
52/42.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
10th November 1952.

My dear Bles

I return Mr. Dell's letter.²⁶⁰ I don't think there'd be any point in republishing *Spirits in Bondage*. I don't remember the 'sermon in the midlands',²⁶¹ but it was probably made from notes, and is now irrecoverable. There are, of course, several short pieces in prose and verse (from *Spectator*, *Punch*, *Time and Tide* etc.) which might be used some day.

I'm glad to hear the *Dawn Treader* goes on well.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Nov. 10th 1952

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

It is a little difficult to explain how I feel that tho' you have taken a way which is not for me²⁶² I nevertheless can congratulate you—I suppose because your faith and joy are so obviously increased. Naturally, I do not draw from that the same conclusions as you—but there is no need for us to start a controversial correspondence!

I believe we are very near to one another, but not because I am at all on the Rome-ward frontier of my own communion. I believe that, in the present divided state of Christendom, those who are at the heart of each division are all closer to one another than those who are at the fringes. I wd. even carry this beyond the borders of Christianity: how much more one has in common with a *real* Jew or Muslim than with a wretched liberalising, occidentalised specimen of the same categories.

Let us by all means pray for one another: it is perhaps the only form of 'work for re-union' which never does anything but good. God bless you.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO J. R. R. TOLKIEN (P): [263](#)

[Magdalen College]
Nov 13/52

My dear Tollers

Just a note to tell you with what agreeable warmth and weight your yesterday's good news lies on my mind—with an inward chuckle of deep content.²⁶⁴ Foremost of course is the sheer pleasure of looking forward to having the book to read and re-read. But a lot of other things come in. So much of your whole life, so much of our joint life, so much of the war, so much that seemed to be slipping away quite *spurlos*²⁶⁵ into the past, is now, in a sort made permanent.

And I am of course very glad on your account too. I think the very prolonged pregnancy has drained a little vitality from you: there'll be a new ripeness and freedom when the book's out. And how pleased Priscilla²⁶⁶ and Mrs. Farrer will be.²⁶⁷ God bless you.

J.

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Nov. 13th 1952

Dear Mrs. Jessup

Yes, of course I will—for all six of you. I am very sorry to hear that your (temporal) news is so grim. Your spiritual news is perhaps better than you think. You seem to have been dealing with the dryness (or 'the wall' as you well name it) in the right way. Everyone has experienced it or will.

It is clearly what G.M. meant when he said 'Have pity on us for the *look of things*, When desolation stares us in the face. Although *the serpent-mask have lied before*, It fascinates the bird.'²⁶⁸

It is v. important to remember that Our Lord experienced it to the full, twice—in Gethsemane when He sweated blood, and next day when he said 'Why hast thou forsaken me?'²⁶⁹ We are not asked to go anywhere where he has not gone before us. The *shining* quality may come back when we least expect it, and in circumstances which wd. seem to an outside observer (or to ourselves) to make it most impossible. (We must not reject it, as there is an impulse to do, on the ground that we *ought*, in the conditions, to be miserable).

What is most re-assuring to me, and most moving, is your sane and charitable recognition that others have as great, or worse, trials: one of

those things wh. no one else can decently say to the sufferer but wh. are invaluable when he says them to himself. And of course there was no 'conceit' or 'selfishness' in your writing to me: are we not all 'members of one another'.²⁷⁰ (I can't reply about Eisenhower. I am no politician. I shd. suppose that the diverse views of his election taken in England depend entirely on the different ways in which our own political parties think they can make capital out of it. As you know public affairs seem to me much less important than private—in fact important only in so far as they affect private affairs.) You are quite right (tho' not in the way you meant) when you say I needn't 'work up' sympathy with you! No, I needn't. I have had enough experiences of the crises of family life, the terrors, despondencies, hopes deferred, and wearinesses. The trouble is that things go on *so long*, isn't it? and one gets so tired of trying! No doubt it will all seem short when looked at from eternity. But I needn't preach to you. You're doing well: scoring pretty good marks! Keep on. Take it hour by hour, don't add the past & the future to the present load more than you can help. God bless you all.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Nov. 17th 1952

Dear Mrs. Jessup

Thanks be to God for your good news. There is a comic, but also charming, contrast between the temperance with which you bore a great fear and the wild excess of your apologies for a wholly imaginary offence in writing that letter. You did perfectly right and there is nothing whatever for me to forgive. And I shd. be v. sorry if you carried out your threat (made, I know, from the best motives) of never writing to me again. *You* are not the kind of correspondent who is a 'nuisance': if you were you wd. not be now thinking you *are* one—That kind never does.

But don't send me any newspaper cuttings. I never believe a word said in the papers. The real history of a period (as we always discover a few years later) has v. little to do with all that, and private people like you and me are never allowed to know it while it is going on. Of course you will all remain in my prayers. I think it v. wrong to pray for people while they are in distress and then not to continue praying, now with thanksgiving, when they are relieved.

Many people think their prayers are never answered because it is the answered ones that they forget. Like the others who find proof for a superstition by recording all the cases in wh. bad luck has followed a dinner with 13 at table and forget all the others where it hasn't. God bless you. Write freely whenever you please.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Nov 18/52

My dear Arthur

Thanks v. much for the 2nd vol. of H.J. which arrived in good order a few days ago. It is really most generous of you. The Letters, even if they had no other interest, wd. be useful as an anthology of all the possible ways of apologising for not having written before—it sometimes goes on for 2 whole pages!

I really feel much as you do about big formal functions, and though I attend many more of them than you, I skip all I can. As I get older I become more impatient of being kept sitting on or hanging about after the meal is over.

I shan't begin the Letters for a few days for I am at present re-reading Montaigne. Sharp frost here this morning: I wish we could have a walk to enjoy it together.

Love to both of you.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
25. xi. 1952

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

No, by wordless prayer I didn't mean the practice of the Presence of God. I meant the same mental act as in verbal prayer only without the words. The Practice of the Presence is a much higher activity. I don't think it matters much whether an absolutely uninterrupted recollection of God's presence for a whole lifetime is possible or not. A much more frequent & prolonged recollection than we have yet reached certainly *is* possible. Isn't that enough to work on? A child learning to walk doesn't need to know whether it will ever be able to walk 40 miles in a day: the important thing is that it *can* walk to-morrow a little further and more steadily than it did to-day.

I don't think we are likely to give *too much* love and care to those we love. We might put in active care in the form of assistance when it wd. be better for them to act on their own: i.e. we might be busybodies. Or we might have too much 'care' for them in the sense of *anxiety*. But we never love anyone too much: the trouble is always that we love God, or perhaps some other *created* being, too little.

As to the 'state of the world' if we have time to hope and fear about it, we certainly have time to pray. I agree it *is* v. hard to keep one's eyes on God amid all the daily claims & problems. I think it wise, if possible, to move one's main prayers from the last-thing-at-night position to some earlier time: give them a better chance to infiltrate one's other thoughts.

Thanks v. much for the stationery. I'm afraid I can't find a W. Chambers book.²⁷¹ It's better not to send the book. They all get lost in the pile on my table.

Yours sincerely, with love to all, C. S. Lewis

TO HARRY BLAMIRE (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Dear Blamires

Yes, I did of course write to Edinburgh and did my best.²⁷² I was much hampered by the fact that my questioner laid great stress on practical ability as a teacher, and of course I could not pretend to have any first hand evidence to give on that. I am sorry the Philistines have won: but am sure you will not allow yourself to be too set down about it. All good wishes,
Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26. xi. 1952

My dear Bles

Thanks for American *M.C.*²⁷³ and for reviews of *D.T.*²⁷⁴ No, I shan't need any more copies of the former, so pray dispose of them as you think fit. No one, not even the artist, liked the *Church Times* picture.²⁷⁵ The *Torso* is not at all imminent:²⁷⁶ I'm very busy with ordinary work these days. All greetings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM BORST (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
28.xi.52

Dear Borst—

The copy has not yet come to hand but I have your letter of the 19th and I'm afraid the position is this. You can have a little more headnote (but *not* a statement what each passage 'illustrates'—it is so bad for the students) and as many more glosses as you like: but you can't have *from me* any drastic revision of the Selections. For one thing I have not now the leisure: but for another, I can't have what is really Mr. Harrison's Selections going under my name.

If you press for such a revision then I will make what seems to me a handsome offer. I will be content with 500 dollars for my introduction and for giving you my selections & glosses as a basis for someone else's work. You will save money, for you needn't get an expensive man to do you the kind of Selections you now want. It is work for any intelligent student. For my Selections were quite a different thing. With labour of which you have no conception I quarried a little F.Q. out of the great F.Q.: reproducing its real characteristics. Of course this involved omitting (within individual selections) stanzas that could be spared: and leaving the first appearances of characters as unprepared as S. leaves them: and being 'tantalising' as S. is tantalising: and omitting some (v. few) of the dear old Show-pieces. *You* have almost sensed what I was at: I don't think Mr. Harrison has. And the result on you is v. significant. You now want *more* Spenser than you allowed me at first. Why? if not that the thing is acting on you as I hoped it wd. act on the students? If I'd simply chucked all the dear old favourites together in the old way you'd have taken them without a murmur and never asked for more.

As I say, you are quite free to get someone else (and, between ourselves, you need get only a hack). Yet I can't help hoping you'll keep my Selections: not for my sake (I shd. not be piqued and I can manage without the other 500 dollars) but for Spenser's. Arrogant tho' it may sound I can't help saying 'Borst, you know not what you do: let well alone. You've got

here a new thing, a thing which will whet the students' appetite as it whets yours. Think twice before throwing it away in favour of one more "specimens of Spenser" such as everyone has done, and no one enjoyed.'

Mr. Harrison is mistaken in thinking that Serena was a foundling of noble birth.²⁷⁷ S. *does* (emphatically) identify RCK²⁷⁸ and St George (Ix. lxi.).²⁷⁹

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
28. xi. 52

Dear Evans

Thank you for *The Space Serpent* which I have read and return.²⁸⁰ Most interesting idea—and I fear I wd. never have noticed your ‘howler’ if you hadn’t warned me. But then, as you know, my interest in ‘science-fiction’ puts the emphasis entirely on the *fiction* end. I must re-read that excellent book *Kipps*,²⁸¹ and thanks you for reminding me of it. How tragically Wells decayed in his later work! With all good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ALAN AND NELL BERNERS-PRICE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Dec 2nd 1952

Dear Alan and Nell

I was going to write to you shortly (I mean 'in a short time', how difficult the English language is!) when your card came. I am sending off under separate cover my last story to your little girl. At least I hope that's what the neat packet contains: I daren't open it to see because I'm so bad at parcels that I'd never get it put up again nicely if I did. I'm afraid it is a poor gift compared with the chinchilla (is that how you spell it?) coat.

I'm afraid I haven't a chance to get down to dear Court Stairs this vacation, though it is just the weather for the South Coast and I shd. love to join your merry circle round the fire. Is the old gentleman with the strong views still there? Your garden must look lovely in the snow.

I hope Nell has quite got over the impact of 'my wife' by now and that it is all sinking away from both of you, as it is for me, into the status of a dream—even a funny dream. All the same, however she may deserve it, I don't enjoy remembering every now & then that she is still in jail. Well, dear friends, a merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you both.

Yours

Jack

TO NELL BERNERS-PRICE (W): TS
REF.52/206.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
3rd December 1952.

Dear Nell,

Despite your kindness I can't promise myself any definite date for coming down: there are so few 'odd times' in my life. I sometimes have to go into Sussex, and when that happens I'll try to run over to Courtstairs.

I say—I suppose the Baron and the Countess are O.K. are they? I'm afraid if I'd had your experience I'd suspect every guest!

Greetings to all.

Yours,

Jack

TO I. O. EVANS (W): TS

REF.52/38.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
6th December 1952.

Dear Evans,

Your discourse on Nauthorship is a most interesting document, and tells us at least as much about writing as many theoretical high-brow articles. How right you are about getting the 'wave-length'.

What I object to most in Wells is his everlasting Gallicism 'figure to yourself'. [282](#)

All the best.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

REF.52/103.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
9th December 1952.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

Many thanks for your letter of the 4th. The more I think of it the more I regret that our intercourse should have been that of heavenly bodies rather than human beings: that your orbit should have swung within thirty miles of ours without our making contact. And now you are back in your normal track, five thousand or more miles from Oxford. And, what is worse, the tone of your letter suggests that it will be a very long time before you risk the European adventure again. But take courage. One *can* visit London without getting influenza, and one *can* travel by Pan-American Airways without the agonies of sea-sickness. (Incidentally, why does everyone regard this frightful illness as a *joke*? With us, and I suppose with you too, it is like drunkenness or mothers-in-law, sure of getting what the actors call 'a hand' in any radio or stage performance.

I was surprised and impressed by what you had to say about Paris; I didn't know that at this time of the day one could still hear the tumbrils rolling along to the place of the guillotine. Nor did I realize the shabbiness of present day Paris. The business and travel advertisements still hold up Paris to us as a little oasis of gaiety in a drab world. I'm very much afraid that the answer is that France is an extinct volcano; and can one wonder? For the last four hundred years France has been losing the best stuff in the nation in war after war, and no people can stand up to that indefinitely. Portugal, Spain, Holland, England, we've all had our innings: and now it is up to your country to go in and bat. If one looks far enough ahead, I'm inclined to think that—after our time thank goodness—China is going to come out on top: for she has unlimited manpower, unlimited grit, and a capacity for hard work on nothing a year paid quarterly which none of the white peoples possess.

I'm sorry to say that 'the other Vera' is not picking up as we had hoped. Of course she is a very bad patient, as are all these women who have been as strong as horses until they get into the 'fifties, and then have a serious illness. The real trouble is that nothing will persuade her that she doesn't know better than the doctors; she has had specialists, X rays, and what have you, all assuring her that there is no organic defect, but she knows that they are just leading her up the garden path. What can one do with such a patient. However, she is out of the nursing home, and in a week or so we hope that she will be well enough to travel to Ireland, where we trust her own family will fatten her up and restore her to us in real good health.

I was interested in your account of Germany. Under the last government, things were much the same here—acute shortage of building materials, but plenty available for children's swimming pools, community centres etc. It is I think part of the modern totalitarian pattern of life—neglect the *home*, but let the community be luxurious.

I envy Mr. Gebbert his garden, which contains luxuries unknown to us. 'Winter peas' indeed! We look forward to the arrival of the book.

With love to both of you from both of us, yours ever,
C. S. Lewis

TO BELLE ALLEN (W): TS
REF.52/28.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
9th December 1952.

Dear Mrs. Allen,

How very nice it is to hear from you again, and I indeed have a sense of 'pleasing satisfaction' at hearing that in Westfield at any rate, my books are being read and enjoyed. Especially do I purr at the story of the minister withdrawing Xtian Behaviour²⁸³ from the sale. But this is the sin of pride, and must be suppressed.

I am so sorry to hear about Ed's cold, and can sympathize with him, for I am a chronic sufferer from colds myself; though so far this winter I have been very lucky. Snow indeed! You should have been in Oxford for the last ten days, where we have had what is for us, very severe weather: and of course the usual fuel shortage. All very unexpected (except the fuel shortage), for we generally don't get our cold weather until well after Christmas. Like you, we have our roads and footwalks practically impassible, and very annoying it is. As my brother says, 'I hate having to go out when you have no chance of thinking, but must concentrate all your attention on the art of walking.'

At the moment, after a fortnight of it, we are having a thaw, but there is of course the chance of its freezing tonight, and 'the last state of that road will be worse than the first',²⁸⁴ to paraphrase the Bible. I used to run a car, but gave it up before the war; first, because our roads are now so crowded that there is no longer any *pleasure* motoring, and secondly because I find it much cheaper and just as convenient to use the bus service.

As you say, we shall no doubt have large numbers of Americans in England for the Coronation, and some of them may not be a good advertisement for your country; but it is an odd thing that I have noticed, that since the war, the type of American visitor we have had is much nicer on the whole than that which came to us between the wars. I suppose it is that, owing to the drop in sterling, we are now getting the Americans of modest means. And it has been my experience that the *rich* of any country are usually the least attractive specimens of the nation.*

Talking of Americans, we have just had a 'pen friend' of long standing, from New York (state not city) stopping with us;²⁸⁵ she belongs to the small income group, and is delightful—a rolling stone, authoress, journalist, housewife and mother, and has been 'doing' England in a way which few

Americans must have done before. Last time I heard from her, she had been at a Cockney wedding in the East End of London, where the guests slept on the kitchen floor after the festivities! She comes back to us next week before sailing for America, and we look forward to hearing her experiences. She ran out of money a little while ago, but has apparently supported herself quite comfortably by giving treatment in 'dianetics'²⁸⁶ (whatever that may be).

You say with your usual kindness 'speak up'. But how or why? We have never had a gift from you which did not give great pleasure and satisfaction; so what am I to say? A tin of peacock's brains? Some frozen lark's tongues by air mail? Whatever you like to send us, you may be sure will be very welcome. With love and all Christmas blessings to both of you, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

* There are v. important exceptions. Also, on further thought, I don't believe much in 'French, American, or English people.' There are only individuals really.

TO PHYLLIS ELINOR SANDEMAN (W):²⁸⁷

As from Magdalen College,
Oxford
10. xii.52

Dear Mrs.* Sandeman, I have read *Treasure on Earth* and I don't believe you have any notion how good it is.²⁸⁸ You have done a most difficult thing: the only parallel (for I won't admit that odious work *Brideshead Revisited*) is Lubbock's *Earlham*.²⁸⁹ I've never seen the hushed internal excitement of a child on Christmas Eve better done. That is something we can all recognise. For the rest, *nous autres*²⁹⁰ who grew up in villas or 'mansions' on the outskirts of industrial towns, might seem ill-qualified to judge: yet perhaps not. 'Nothing is great or small except by position' and the house one grows up in has always a certain immemorial grandeur in one's mind. At least, everywhere else, all one's life, is new, raw, colonial. The big difference is that your houses are given to the Nation while ours simply disappear, pulled down, and the new 'estates' rise over them. It is like the difference between a Mummy and a burial at sea!

I don't know how you could bear to revisit your house: the Epilogue almost made me cry. And it isn't only Houses: the very earth is being destroyed, the shapes of the hills disappear, the rabbits are gassed—'All things are taken from us and become Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.'²⁹¹ Of course they survive somewhere—1910 can't be any less (or more) real in eternity than 1952. I wonder whose they are? Do those panels belong to the Vaynes or to Grinling Gibbons?²⁹²

Oh, by the way, thank you for telling me (I had always suspected it) that knives and forks grate unpleasantly on silver, and therefore presumably on gold: it might add a realistic detail to some high banquet in Narnia.²⁹³

The only page that I can't enter into at all is p. 83. I can't conceive not being afraid, as a child, of those unseen presences.²⁹⁴ I shd. have behaved like little Jane Eyre in the Red Room when she dried her tears for fear a ghostly voice should awake to comfort her.²⁹⁵ One wd. rather be scolded by a mortal than comforted by a ghost.

You will notice when you re-read your book in a different mood that it doesn't really give the impression of a very happy childhood. Ecstatic, yes: shot through with raptures and tingling delights, but not very secure, not very consoled. And that, I believe, is absolutely true: I fancy *happy* childhoods are usually forgotten. It is not settled comfort and heartsease but momentary joy that transfigures the past and lets the eternal quality show through. (I sometimes eat parsnips because their taste, which I dislike, reminds me of my prep-school, which I disliked: but those two dislikes don't in the least impair the strange joy of 'being reminded'.) One could go on meditating on these things indefinitely—Very many thanks for the book: it is that rare thing (rare at our age) a present one really likes. The illustrations are good too, as much of them as the coarse printing and paper has not murdered, but don't believe anyone who says you draw better than you write. The reverse is true. With much gratitude and all good wishes.

Yours very sincerely
C. S. Lewis

* Please forgive. The smudge has a long and complicated history, if you but knew. First I always was a clumsy brute: ten thumbs and not a finger among them. [296](#)

TO PHYLLIS ELINOR SANDEMAN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Dec 11th 1952

Dear Mrs Sandeman

You were perfectly right to put in the bit about the friendly ghosts. I think the absence of fear is, as far as it goes, probable evidence that the experience was not merely imaginary. Everyone fears *lest* he should meet a ghost, but there seems to be some ground for supposing that those who really meet them are often quite unafraid. Notice that angels, on the other hand, seem in Scripture to be nearly always terrifying & have to begin by saying 'Fear not'.[297](#)

In Ireland I stayed at a lonely bungalow last summer which the peasants avoided *not* because a ghost had been seen near it (they didn't mind ghosts) but because the Good People, the Faerie, frequented that bit of coast. So apparently ghosts are the least alarming kind of spirit.

With all good wishes and thanks. You'll enjoy *Earlham* I'm sure. And congratulations, it's nice to be reprinting.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Dec. 13. 52

My dear Roger

You'll be wondering why I haven't acknowledged the *Searching Satyrs*.²⁹⁸ After reading it I wanted to compare it with the original, but the Fragments aren't in my Sophocles, and I've never done it. Your version reads v. crisp & pleasant, almost Gilbertian in places. And what a lovely *book*! It must be nice to have anything of one's own printed so beautifully. Very many thanks.

Love and Christmas wishes to all of you.

Yours

Jack

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalen etc
Dec 13. 52

Dear Evans

Thank you for your kind letter. I am so glad you liked the story. What is one to do with illustrators—especially if, like mine, they are (a far surer defence than obstinacy) timid, shrinking young women who, when criticised, look as if you'd pulled their hair or given them a black eye? My resolution was exhausted by the time I'd convinced her that rowers face aft not (as she thinks) forward.²⁹⁹

All that about the earlier text of the *War of the Worlds* is most interesting. With all good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):[300](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Dec 15th 1952

Dear Miss Bodle

I think the little book quite excellent. The 'baldness & flatness' as you call them—I shd. say 'economy & simplicity' are its great merit. I want only one change: in the prayer beginning 'bless mother & father' there should be some indication that we are to pray for *particular* people by name: a child might think that 'all the people I like' was a rigid formula and that one oughtn't to individualise. And the same with all the clauses of the prayer. You have the rare happiness of being engaged on a work of real & undoubted value: more power to your elbow!

I can quite understand that your brief English life will sometimes seem a mere *entracte* in your N.Z. life. But it doesn't matter what it *seems* (emotionally & imaginatively) so long as what happened to you in England is operative in your will, both at work and elsewhere. But of course you know this. All good wishes. You (and that unnamed colleague of yours) are always in my prayers.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARG-RIETTE MONTGOMERY (W): TS

REF.52/248.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

16th December 1952.

Dear Miss Montgomery, Thanks for the cutting, and for the picture of the charming little church. But you ought to know more about the Father than the Galaxy! Our Lord said 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father',³⁰¹ but also 'My Father is greater than I',³⁰² and St. Paul said 'He is not far from any one of us'.³⁰³ Don't let the Anthros turn it all into a fog for you. You know better. All good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W):³⁰⁴TS

REF52/509.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

17th December 1952.

Dear Mr. Kilby,

Thank you for your very kind and encouraging letter of the 10th. It would give me pleasure to meet you during your visit to Oxford, and I shall expect to hear from you more definitely when your plans are settled. So far as can be foreseen at the moment, I shall probably be out of Oxford for August and the earlier part of September. With all best wishes.

yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

Joy Gresham had arrived at The Kilns during the second week of December to visit the Lewis brothers. As indicated by Lewis's letter to his godson, Laurence Harwood, of 19 December, there appears to have been a misunderstanding about the length of her stay.

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

52/103.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
18th December 1952.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

Many thanks for the book which has just arrived, and which judging from a hasty dip, I am going to enjoy. It is kind of you to send it. I hope that by this time your journey across the Atlantic is a fast fading memory, and that it has not given you both a determination never to cross it again. Courage! Next time (I much hope there will be a 'next time'), try crossing *over* it rather than *on* it.

We have an American visitor with us at the moment, who is starting for home on the 3rd. of next month, and is not much cheered by the fact that we are now having a succession of gales. Is'nt it an astonishing thing that whenever one has a guest in the home, the weather turns freakish? And the host always feels that he is somehow to blame for it. We are now getting the weather which normally we never have until after Christmas—ice, snow, bitter wind etc. However, either out of native politeness or because it is true, the lady assures us that the worst English winter weather is not to be compared for general beastliness with that of New York state. What she does criticise is the heating of the English home: not so much of the rooms, but of the passages and so forth.

As your last letter was dated from Alpine Drive, I send this note there; though of course by the time it gets to California, you may be enjoying the society of Andy on his native heath once more. In whichever spot you are, you may congratulate yourselves on having fled homewards when you did. You would like England even less now than when you visited it!

With warmest good wishes to you both from us both for a happy and prosperous New Year, yours as ever,

C. S. Lewis

TO LAURENCE HARWOOD (BOD):[305](#)

Coll. Magd.
Dec 19th 1952

Dear Laurence

Here's something for usual expenses. I am completely 'circum-vented' by a guest, asked for one week but staying for three, who talks from morning till night. I hope you'll all have a nicer Christmas than I. I can't write (write? I can hardly think or breathe. I can't believe it's all real).

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS JOHNSON (W): TS
REF.52/183

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
19th December 1952.

Dear Mrs. Johnson,

Though it is true that I have not a sweet tooth, I must confess that I eat notepaper and envelopes, so your very kind gift may be described as being of that edible variety that is customary at this season of the year. And I am most grateful to you for it: for paper here is of a miserable quality, and it is not always easy to get hold of. (To say nothing of the fact that one so often runs out at some inconvenient moment, and has to sally out to the shops).

Apropos of shops, one could hardly have a worse time to run out of essentials than this; we—like you no doubt—are in the climax of the ‘Christmas rush’, a time which I always regard with horror. I hope I am not a Scrooge, but with every year that passes I find myself more and more in revolt against the commercialized racket of ‘Xmas’. With us, it now begins about the third week in November, and by now, one is urged—with holly leaves—to buy anything from boots to bathing trunks because they are the perfect expression of the Christmas spirit. If I seem a little peevish about the whole spiritual atmosphere, it is perhaps because the material one is so disagreeable; we have been having snow, ice, sleet, hurricanes and all the kind of treats in fact which we do not expect until well on into the new year. A freak season in fact. But I should be chastened by the fact that a visiting American friend tells me that unless we have seen winter in New England, we don’t know what winter is: and that what we are grumbling about is just nice mild seasonable weather. (But this expression of opinion doesn’t make it seem any warmer)!

With many thanks, and all best wishes for a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

Magdalen etc.
Dec. 20th 52

Dear Mrs. Jessup

Yes: you are very blessed: and I take the communication as a high compliment—though there are a good many words I can't read, for your hand is almost as illegible as mine tho' a great deal neater!

You won't expect me to reply at length when I tell you that we have a visitor, that our usual domestic help is ill, and there are mountains of mail. How wretchedly the Christian festival of Christmas has got snowed under by all the fuss and racket of commercialised 'Xmas'. Blessings to all.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO EDNA GREEN WATSON (BOD): TS
REF.52/9

Magdalen College,
Oxford.[p]
22nd December 1952.

Dear Mrs. Watson,

How very kind indeed of you to sweeten my Christmas with the cake, which arrived this morning: externally in good condition, and before the day is out I shall be examining the internal condition of the parcel. It arrives very apropos, as my brother and I are without our housekeeper, who is convalescing after an illness, and in consequence we two batchelors are having to maintain a 'skeleton service' out at the house—one which does not provide for such luxuries as cakes, and in which the can opener is very much in evidence!³⁰⁶

This is the season when I envy you, living in what is I am told called 'The Deep South' I suppose you are hardly aware that it *is* winter? Here we are having a most unpleasant freak season—ice, snow, blizzard, all the joys which we don't generally get until well after Christmas. However, though we have been pitying ourselves an American visitor from New York told me recently that we don't know what winter is: and that this is *mild* weather! So whatever else is in short supply on this unhappy planet, at least it is'nt *weather*.

I returned to work in the autumn from a year's academic leave: which was not as attractive as it sounds, for it was granted me for the express purpose of finishing a considerable literary task, and my nose was kept pretty close to the grindstone. But my brother and I managed to get the best part of a month's real holiday in Eire, 'on the other side of the iron curtain' as we call it, and came back much the better for it.

It is I'm afraid too late to wish you a happy Christmas but I do send you my very best wishes for a happy and prosperous 1953.

With many thanks,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD): TS
REF.52/519.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
23rd December 1952.

Dear Mr. Kinter,

Thanks for your kind card. I am so glad you liked *The Dawn Treader*. Who am I to say whether Grace works in my own stories? One can only be sure on a much humbler level, that if anything is well done, we must say *Non nobis.*³⁰⁷

All good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Coll. Magd.
Dec 23rd 1952

Dear George and Moira Happy Christmas! I hope what I have to say will not make it *happier*, though. I'm booked to visit your enchanted house on Jan 1st. But it's all No Go. We have a visitor (U.S.A.) who will last till then³⁰⁸ and beyond her looms a fellowship examination.

The whole Vac. is in fact a shambles. Perpetual conversation is a most exhausting thing. I begin to wonder if I have a vocation for La Trappe. I am sick at these numbers. But I love you both: it is one of my most frequent and tonic activities. Blessings upon you.

Yours

(what is left of) Jack **TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS**

52/103.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

26th December 1952.

My dear Mrs. Gebbert, Many thanks. Doubtless a reproduction of a fresco of the early Middle Ages from a Narnian catacomb?

With all blessings to you both for the New Year, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO BONAMY DOBRÉE (W):[309](#)PC

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Dec. 30/52

No, no. The context and, a literal translation, will put *Wanderer* 12 in a different light: 'There is now no one alive to whom I dare clearly declare my mind: I know for a truth that it is an excellent quality in a man that he should firmly bind in what his heart contains—let him *think* what he pleases.'[310](#)

The poet is not talking about tears at all but about keeping one's own counsel, holding one's tongue among strangers. Also I think 'the high brow' a mistranslation. *Earl* means that in prose, but in verse is the heroic word for Man (ANMP).[311](#) All good wishes.

C.S.L.

1953

TO J. KEITH KYLE (BBC):¹TS
REF.3/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
1st January 1953.

Dear Mr. Kyle,

I wish the series every success, but am snowed under with work at present, and cannot assist: anyway, if the public does'nt by now know what I believe I should'nt enlighten them much in 31/2 minutes more!

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Jan 2nd 1953

Dear Miss Pitter—

The year, which I had not thought much of so far, begins to mend with a letter and a prime article from you. And then, as you say, the skies.

It was beautiful, on two or three successive nights about the Holy Time, to see Venus and Jove blazing at one another, once with the Moon right between them: Majesty and Love linked by Virginity—what could be more appropriate?

The Return to Poetic Law is a noble piece and *would* do good if any of those who most need it were at all likely to take any notice.² But they are all in Groups and Parties. What matters to them is not what is said but who says it: one of the Party or an outsider. 'A minor specialist's subject', as you say. Yet some one or two may heed you: you are right to testify.

I do most heartily agree with you about having had too much shame. (Do you, by the way, remember the character-study of Shame in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, all in a conversation between Christian and Hopeful?³ It

is superb fun). It is v. sinister that ‘embarrassing’ or ‘embarrassingly bad’ has become an ordinary term of criticism: this, you see, is a direct appeal away from the reader’s consciousness of the poem to his social self-consciousness. While he reads he must be aware that the set are watching him reading.

That is a bad business, losing your country home. I have lost mine while remaining in it, i.e. it has ceased to be country. Not that I’d quite say ‘All things are taken from us and become Parcels and portions of the dreadful past’. *Dreadful* isn’t the word at all. But it’s thrilling to hear of your ‘closing in on’ Oxford.⁴ It wd. be lovely if you became a neighbour.

My brother joins me in best wishes for the year. How many—and how few—of these here years there seem to be!

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

During her weeks at The Kilns Joy Gresham received a letter from her husband, Bill, saying that while he knew Joy would never be anything but a writer, ‘Renée has a different orientation: her only interest is in taking care of her husband and children and making a home for them.’ The ‘optimum solution’, as he saw it, ‘would be for you to be married to some swell guy, Rene and I to be married, both families to live in easy calling distance so that the Gresham kids could have Mommy and Daddy on hand.’⁵

Joy showed this letter to Lewis and she told Chad Walsh that she asked him for advice. ‘He strongly advised me to divorce Bill,’ she said.⁶ After a fortnight at The Kilns, Joy returned to the United States on 3 January.

TO DON GIOVANNI CALABRIA (V):⁷

Collegium Stae Mariae Magdalenae
apud Oxonienses
Vig. fest. Trium Regum
MCMLIII [5 January 1953]

Dilectissime Pater

Grato animo, ut semper, paternas tuas benedictiones accepi. Sit tibi, precor, suavissima gustatio omnium hujus temporis gaudiorum et intercuras et Dolores consolatio. Tractatum *Responsabilità* apud *Amicum* (Dec.) invenire nequeo. Latet aliquis error. Orationes tuas peto de opera quod nunc in manibus est dum conor componere libellum de precibus privatis in usum laicorum praesertim eorum qui nuper in fidem Christianam conversi sunt et longo stabilitoque habitu orandi adhuc carent. Laborem aggressus sum quia videbam multos quidem pulcherrimosque libros de hac re scriptos esse in usum religiosorum, paucos tamen qui tirones et adhuc (ut ita dicam) infantes in fide instruunt. Multas difficultates invenio nec certe scio utrum Dominus velit me hoc opus perficere an non. Ora, mi pater, ne aut nimia audacitate in re mihi non concessâ persistam aut nimia timiditate a labore debito recedam: aequè enim damnati et ille qui Arcam sine mandato tetigit et ille qui manum semel aratro impositam abstrahit.

Et tu et congregatio tua in diurnis orationibus meis. Haec sola, dum in via sumus, conversatio: liceat nobis, precor, olim in Patria facie ad faciem congregari. Vale.

C. S. Lewis

Adhuc spero tractatum *Responsabilità* accipere.

The College of St Mary Magdalen, Oxford
Vigil of the Feast of the Three Kings, 1953
[5 January 1953]

Dearest Father

Thank you, as always, for your fatherly blessings.

May you, I pray, have the sweetest relish of all the joys of this life and consolation amid cares and griefs.

I am unable to find the article 'Responsibility' in the December issue of *Friend*. There is some unexplained mistake here.⁸

I invite your prayers about a work which I now have in hand. I am trying to write a book about private prayers for the use of the laity, especially for those who have been recently converted to the Christian faith and so far are without any sustained and regular habit of prayer. I tackled the job because I saw many no doubt very beautiful books written on this subject of prayer for the religious but few which instruct tiroes and those still babes (so to say) in the Faith. I find many difficulties nor do I definitely know whether God wishes me to complete this task or not.⁹

Pray for me, my Father, that I neither persist, through over-boldness, in what is not permitted to me nor withdraw, through too great timidity, from due effort: for he who touches the Ark without authorization¹⁰ and he who, having once put his hand to the plough, draws it back are both lost.¹¹

Both you and your Congregation are in my daily prayers. While we are in the Way, this is our only intercourse: be it granted to us, I pray, hereafter, to meet in our True Country face to face.

C. S. Lewis

I still hope to receive the article 'Responsibility'.

TO DON GIOVANNI CALABRIA (V):

e Coll. Stae Mariae Magdalenae
apud Oxonienses

Jan. vii. MCMLIII Tandem, pater dilectissime, venit in manus exemplar *Amici* (Oct.) quod continent tractatum tuum de clade illa Serica. De illa natione quum ibi per multos annos evangelistae haud infeliciter laboravissent, equidem multa sperabam: nunc omnia retro fluere, ut scribis, manifestum est. Et mihi multa atrocia multi de illa re epistolis renuntiaverunt neque aberat ista miseria a cogitationibus et precibus nostris.

Neque tamen sine peccatis nostris evenit: nos enim justitiam illam, curam illam pauperum quas (mendacissime) communistae praeferunt debueramus

jam ante multa saecula rê verâ effecisse. Sed longe hoc aberat: nos occidentales Christum ore praedicavimus, factis Mammoni servitium tulimus. Magis culpabiles nos quam infideles: scientibus enim voluntatem Dei et non facientibus major poena. Nunc unicum refugium in contritione et oratione. Diu erravimus. In legendo Europae historiam, seriem exitiabilem bellorum, avaritiae, fratricidarum Christianorum a Christianis persecutionum, luxuriae, gulae, superbiae, quis discerneret rarissima Sancti Spiritus vestigia? Oremus semper. Vale.

C. S. Lewis

from The College of St. Mary Magdalen
Oxford
Jan 7th 1953

At last, dearest Father, there has come to hand that copy of *Friend* (Oct.) which contains your article on that Chinese disaster. I used myself to entertain many hopes for that nation, since the missionaries have served there for many years not unsuccessfully: now it is clear, as you write, that all is on the ebb. Many have reported to me too, in letters on this subject, many atrocities, nor was this misery absent from our thoughts and prayers.¹²

But it did not happen, however, without sins on our part: for that justice and that care for the poor which (most mendaciously) the Communists advertise, we in reality ought to have brought about ages ago. But far from it: we Westerners preached Christ with our lips, with our actions we brought the slavery of Mammon. We are more guilty than the infidels: for to those that know the will of God and do it not, the greater the punishment.

Now the only refuge lies in contrition and prayer. Long have we erred. In reading the history of Europe, its destructive succession of wars, of avarice, of fratricidal persecutions of Christians by Christians, of luxury, of gluttony, of pride, who could detect any but the rarest traces of the Holy Spirit?

Let us pray always. Fare well, C. S. Lewis

TO SISTER PENELOPE CSMV (BOD):

Coll Magd.
Jan 9th 1953

Dear Sister Penelope As usual, your letter is full of interest, and I shall chew it over very thoroughly. That is, I shall go on wondering whether $\text{O}\text{O}\alpha$ can mean quite the same as $\text{O}\text{T}\alpha\text{V}$ ¹³ and whether it is or is not an objection that your interpretation involves the assumption that what is being prayed for is something internal. One couldn't (or could one?) believe that a dead man *had* risen before you saw him rise. I don't know. You might believe the prayer *had* been answered before he did. By the way, what are Aramaic tenses like? Does it have futures and preterits?

The poor old soul in Holloway is a famous confidence trickster, Mrs. Hooker, against whom I had to appear as a witness because she had borrowed money by pretending to be my wife! I am sure you will pray for her. It was nice to meet the other day.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO J. O. REED (P): TS

REF.34/53.

Magdalen College,
9th January 1953.

Dear Reed,

Can you meet me for a pot of beer in the Eastgate at 12.30 tomorrow,
Saturday 10th?

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO DON GIOVANNI CALABRIA (V):

E Coll. Stae Mariae Magdalenae
apud Oxonienses
Jan. xiv LIII Pater dilectissime

Multo gaudio accepi epistolam tuam die ix Jan. datam: credo jampridem te meam accepisse quam de tractatu *Responsabilità* scripsi. Et vides me per errorem putavisse te auctorem esse et Sac. P. Mannam esse id quod Galli vocant *nomen plumae*. At minime refert quum liber *De Imitatione* nos doceat ‘Attende quid dicatur, non quis dixerit’. Multas ex corde gratias refero, quia tanta caritate ob libellum meum propositum meditare et orare voluisti. Sententiam tuam pro signo accipio. Et nunc, carissime, audi de quâ difficultate maximo haesito. Duo paradigmata orationis videntur nobis in Novo Testamento exposita esse quae inter se conciliare haud facile est. Alterum est ipsa Domini oratio in horto Gethsemane (‘si possibile est... nihilominus non quod ego volo sed quod tu vis’). Alterum vero apud *Marc XI*, v. 24 ‘Quidquid petieritis credentes quod accipietis, habebitis’. (Et nota, loco quo versio latina *accipietis* habet et nostra vernacula similiter futurum tempus *shall receive*, graecus textus tempus praeteritum *ἐλάβετε*, accepistis, id quod difficillimum est). Nunc quaestio: quomodo potest homo uno eodemque momento temporis et credere plenissime se accepturum et voluntati Dei fortasse negantis se submittere? Quomodo potest dicere simul ‘Credo firmiter te hoc daturum esse’ et ‘si hoc negaveris, fiat voluntas tua’.

Quomodo potest unus actus mentis et possibilem negationem excludere et tractare? Rem a nullo doctorum tractatam invenio.

Nota bene: nullam difficultatem mihi facit quod Deus interdum non vult facere ea quae fideles petunt. Necesse est quippe ille sapiens et nos stulti sed cur apud Marc. XI 24 pollicetur se omnia (*quidquid*) facere quas plena fide petimus? Ambo loci Dominici, ambo inter credenda. Quid faciam? Vale. Et pro te et pro congregatione tua oro et semper orabo.

C. S. Lewis

from The College of St Mary Magdalen
Oxford
14th January 1953

Dearest Father

I received your letter dated 9th Jan. with much joy. I trust that long since you have received my letter on the tract *Responsabilità*. And you see that I mistakenly thought that you yourself were the author and that ‘Sac. P. Mannam’¹⁴ was what the French call a *nom de plume*.

But it is of no consequence since the *De Imitatione* teaches us to ‘Mark *what* is said, not *who* said it.’¹⁵

I send you many heartfelt thanks for your charity in being willing to meditate on my proposed little book¹⁶ and pray for it. I take your opinion as a good sign.

And now, my dearest friend, hear what difficulty leaves me in most doubt. Two models of prayer seem to be put before us in the New Testament which are not easy to reconcile with each other.

One is the actual prayer of the Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane (‘if it be possible¹⁷hellip;nevertheless, not as I will but as Thou wilt’).¹⁸

The other, though, is in Mark XI v. 24. ‘Whatsoever you ask believing that you shall receive you shall obtain’ (and observe that in the place where the version has, in Latin, *accipietis*—and our vernacular translation, similarly, has the *future* tense, ‘shall receive’—the Greek text has the *past* tense *ἐλάβετε* = *accepistis*—which is very difficult).

Now the question: How is it possible for a man, at one and the same moment of time, *both* to believe most fully that he *will* receive *and* to submit himself to the Will of God—Who perhaps is refusing him?

How is it possible to say, simultaneously, ‘I firmly believe that Thou wilt give me this’, *and*, ‘If Thou shalt deny me it, Thy will be done’? How can one mental act both exclude possible refusal and consider it? I find this discussed by none of the Doctors.

Please note: it creates no difficulty for me that God sometimes does not will to do what the faithful request. This is necessary because He is wise and we are foolish: but why in Mark XI 24, does He promise to do everything (whatsoever) we ask in full faith? Both statements are the Lord’s; both are among what we are required to believe. What should I do?¹⁹

Farewell. And for you and for your Congregation I pray and shall ever pray.

C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD): TS
REF.51/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
17th January 1953.

Dear Mr. Kinter,
Yes. Eustace, Edmund, Jane, and Mark²⁰ are all meant to be recipients of Grace.
All good wishes.
Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Jan. 19th 1953

Dear Mrs. Shelburne
Thank you for your kind letter of Dec. 29th which arrived to-day. I am afraid I have no idea what the first editions of *Screwtape* or the *Divorce* sell at: I haven't even got a first of the former myself. But you would be foolish to spend a cent more on them than the published price: both belong to the worst war-period and are scrubby little things on rotten paper—your American editions are far nicer.
Your letter was most cheering and I am full of agreements. Of course we'll help each other in our prayers. God bless you.
Yours most sincerely C. S. Lewis

TO BELLE ALLEN (L, WHL):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
19 January 1953

I don't wonder that you got fogged in *Pilgrim's Regress*. It was my first religious book and I didn't then know how to make things easy. I was not even trying to very much, because in those days I never dreamed I would become a 'popular' author and hoped for no readers outside a small 'highbrow' circle. Don't waste your time over it any more. The *poetry* is

my own...We all feel ashamed of receiving so much from you and are not even sure—*now*—whether our scarcities are any worse than your high prices. Don't you think you ought to stop?....

TO MARG-RIETTE MONTGOMERY (W): TS

REF.65/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

21st January 1953

Dear Miss Montgomery, This is a splendid poem of Edna Millay's and the last two lines put the whole of one's experience in a nut-shell.²¹ You were right not to send me the R.S.²² books: I have several Anthroposophical friends here who would readily supply me with all his works. And by the way, the point about a musician is surely her music, not her advice about reading! Keep your independence.

All good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO NELL BERNERS-PRICE (W): TS

REF.67/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

21st January 1953.

Dear Nell,

Your letter is tantalisingly cryptic, but as I have to go to Holloway next Sunday, no doubt I shall see for myself!

Love to all.

Yours,

Jack

TO CHAD WALSH (W): TS
REF.73/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
24th January 1953.

Dear Chad,

I wonder if I may trouble you to do me a service? You will already guess what it is when you have read the enclosed note, which was an answer to Revd. Jones B. Shannon,²³ who kindly invited me to lecture at his College. The only address he gave was:— St. Andrew's Episcopal Church,
State College,

Pennsylvania

and the U.S. mail has returned the letter, stamped 'No Post Office named'. You presumably have his full address, and I would take it kindly if you would send my note to him. Thank you.

Joy Gresham left here on the first of the month for New York; and I think really enjoyed her English adventures. She visited Oxford twice, and I saw quite a lot of her. She certainly got well off the beaten tourist track, her adventures including attendance at a wedding in the East End of London, where she and the other guests were invited to spend the night on the kitchen floor. It was pleasant news that she is about to join the church, and will shortly be confirmed.²⁴

How goes it with you? We got a little news of you from Joy, but would have liked more.

With all blessings,
yours,

Jack Lewis

TO SARAH NEYLAN (T): PC

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Jan 26/53

Thanks for most interesting letter and congratulations on the good time you seem to be having. Just as you are going back to old experiences in liking parties again, so I am by pulling out one of my teeth with fingers the other day, wh. I can't have done for many a year!*

I liked *Mrs. Masham's Repose*²⁵ far the best of White's books myself. Our Christmas was conditioned by having a visitor for nearly 3 weeks: very nice one but one can't feel quite free. Love to all.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

* This is the beginning of Act V, I suppose?

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Jan. 26th 1953

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen Thank you for your letter of the 17th and the wholly delightful photographs. I am glad things are still Fine. I've never thought of becoming an Associate of anything myself and feel difficulty about advising. You mention externals—what Associates have to do and that they have asked you to become one—but say nothing about the motives in your own mind either for or against it.²⁶ They are the real point, aren't they? I don't think one ought to join an Order, however much one might like it or however nice the people who have asked you—unless one thinks that God especially presses one to do so as the only, or the best, way of doing some good to others or receiving some good oneself. And if one does think that, then I suppose one must join however much one disliked it & however nasty the particular inviters were! It is not as if it were a club! Why not try living according to their Rule for a bit *without* joining them and seeing what it is like for a person such as you in circumstances such as yours?

Confession, of course, you can have without joining anything. I think it is a good thing for most of us and use it myself.

That is v. good news about really good people beginning to go into government jobs, and at a sacrifice. I have always thought of how that the greatest of all dangers to your country is the fear that politics were not in the hands of your best types and that this, in the long run, might prove ruinous. A change in that, the beginning of what might be called a *volunteer* aristocracy, might have incalculable effects. More power to your myriad elbows!

M. James is wrong.²⁷ It is my brother, not I, who is or was a vestryman.²⁸

With love to all.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS
REF.53/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th January 1953.

My dear Edward,

Many thanks for your letter of the 21st: and for the welcome news that a 'guided missile' is even now winging its way from Highland Avenue to Magdalen College. Yes, anticipation v. realization is a very old problem, is'nt it? Certainly there is a time when realization *always* falls flat, as compared with anticipation; but one of the advantages of old age—naturally a stripling of 45 like you won't appreciate this—is that anticipation comes to be pitched so low that realization generally exceeds it.

The G.B.S.²⁹ remark was new to me; and is a typical example of what he thought funny and others would think merely ill-bred. A *silly* man I feel, in spite of his great ability; for you must have noticed that while a fool cannot be clever, a clever man can often be silly. Do you know the story of how this same G.B.S. once got more than he bargained for? He had been asked to stay with Lady Londonderry, a great society hostess in the old days, and sent her a letter warning her that it was not his habit to eat the bodies of dead and often putrefying animals and birds and so on, in typical Shaw style; he got his answer by telegram—'Know nothing of your habits: trust they are better than your manners.'

We will certainly take you at your word and let you have a critical review of the contents of package 204; but as I cannot at the moment remember ever having had a useless article in an Allen parcel, I don't think there will be much to say except 'very many thanks'. Yes, things seem to be looking up a bit in the ration world here; there is even talk of de-rationing meat in 1954—a pretty safe thing though to say, for by that time the politicians will have found some excellent excuse for not doing so. Meat, butter, and sugar are still on rations over here: meat and sugar because we can't afford to buy them, and butter because there is a world shortage—or so our papers say. Though how this can be so, I don't quite see. Are you short of it in U.S.A.?

I am ungallant enough to suspect that perhaps R. L. Stevenson said the last word on the marrying or not marrying question: ‘marriage is terrible, but so is a lonely old age’.³⁰ Not a very consoling remark, but there it is. My brother and I can both sympathize with you over rheumatism: having had it for several years, and it being a family heirloom. We often talk ruefully of the days when we used to think it a *comic* disease, and *laugh* at our elder’s complaints about it!

It is heartening and rebuking to think of your father rising superior to his sufferings and producing champion dahlias; and is, as you say, a sermon on the value of work as an alternative to worry. May he long be spared to continue at his gardening.

With anticipatory thanks for the parcel, and with all best wishes to you and your mother from both of us.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Feb 3rd 1953

Dear Starr

Thanks for your immensely interesting letter from antipodean Po'Lu.³¹ I shall be v. intrigued to hear more of the Arthurian story as told there, tho' more so to hear what their own chivalric stories are like.

I have no adventures to tell you in return—unless it is an adventure that I have at last finished, and am now reading proofs of, my volume on 16th Century literature. It is an adventure to me to be free of that 12–15 year labour. I know now how Ariel felt,³² or how a balloon feels when the sandbags are thrown out.

Your F. H. Heard sounds worth following up. I have just read two books by an American 'scientifiction' author called Ray Bradbury. Most of that *genre* is abysmally bad, a mere transference of ordinary gangster or pirate fiction to the sidereal stage, and a transference which does harm not good. Bigness in itself is of no imaginative value: the defence of a 'galactic' empire is *less* interesting than the defence of a little walled town like Troy. But Bradbury has real invention and even knows something about prose. I recommend his *Silver Locusts*.³³

When do you revisit Europe? Don't stay out yonder till you grow yellow. And try to correct your young friend's idea of what it wd. be like meeting someone who'd been to Heaven! All good wishes for this (so far not v. attractive) year.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

P.S. (By the other Lewis). I too greatly enjoyed the letter. Remember seeing the *tomb* of the 47 Ronin when I was in Japan, but no one cd. tell me who they were or what they did.³⁴ This is Tuesday, *Bird and Baby* day, and I'm off to drink good luck to you.

W.H.L.

TO ANTHONY BOUCHER (P):³⁵

Magdalen College
Oxford
5/ii/53

Dear Mr. Boucher

This is a delightful meeting. I did indeed value *St. Aquin* very highly and I have also greatly enjoyed *Star-Dummy* in its different way.³⁶ This wd. go for nothing if I were the real out-and-out SF reader who is, within that field, omnivorous. In reality I'm extremely hard to please. Most of the modern work in this *genre* seems to me atrocious: written by people who just take an ordinary spy-story or ship-wreck story or gangster story and think it can be improved by a sidereal or galactic setting. In reality the setting, so long as it is a mere setting, does harm: the wreck of a schooner is more interesting than that of a space-ship and the fate of a walled village like Troy moves us more than that of a galactic empire. You, and (in a different way) Ray Bradbury, are the *real* thing.

All my imagination at present is going into children's stories. When that is done, I may try another fantasy for adults, but it wd. be too quiet and leisurely for your magazine.

I don't belong to a press-cutting agency and so miss, along with many brickbats, some bouquets intended for me. I must thank you in the dark, therefore, for kind things you have apparently said about my work. (I found that neither the favourable nor the unfavourable reviews helped one at all: they merely either soothed or wounded one's vanity—neither a very beneficial experience. They v. often hadn't even read the book with any accuracy).

The 'Antiparody' (a word we need) of the Lord's Prayer in *Star Dummy* was very fine.

Thank you v. much for the year of F & SF. I hope there will be plenty of your work in it.

If you are ever in England or I in U.S.A. we must most certainly meet and split a $\text{CH}_3\text{CH}_2\text{OH}$ together. *Urendi Maleldil.*³⁷

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
5th February 1953.

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen, I am writing to Genia, and you have my deepest sympathy. Of course you all have my prayers. No doubt by this time you have had my answer to your last letter.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD): TS

REF.28/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
6th February 1953.

My dear Bles,

Thanks for the highly satisfactory statement and the cheque for £793–12–3. I would like very much to come up to lunch and go through the new illustrations when they arrive.

We are both pretty well thanks: I had no more of the 'flu than could be settled by a week-end of aspirin and early hours. I hope you have both been equally fortunate. How many more false springs are we to have before the real one?

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS

REF.53/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
7th February 1953.

My dear Edward,

Many thanks for your letter of the 2nd. Your point about the internal combustion engine and the lady-bird is both true and interesting. Yes, 'gentleman' is a word which has ceased to have any particular meaning; with us it now means 'male' and lady 'female'.* There are of course many more, e.g. any boat in which it is possible to spend the night, and which is privately owned is 'luxury-yacht', every cinema is 'Super-cinema' and so on.

Please give our belated congratulations to your mother on her birthday, with our wishes for many more happy ones.

This is indeed good of you about the tea and sugar, and I think you have just about hit the right proportions; the business of payment on delivery is rather erratic, sometimes one is charged, sometimes not. But I'll let you know what happens.

Please excuse such a short and scrappy note, but I am snowed under with a vast stack of examination papers for correction.

All the best.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

* The porter at Holloway Jail told me it was 'a ladies' prison'

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):[38](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Feb 9th 1953

Dear Miss Bodle

Thanks for your interesting letter of Feb 1st wh. arrived to-day. It is difficult to one, who, like me, has no experience, to give an opinion of these problems, which, I see, are v. intricate. The story about the girl who had reached the age of 16 under Christian teachers without hearing of the Incarnation is an eye-opener. For ordinary children (I don't know about the Deaf) I don't see any advantage in presenting the Gospels without some doctrinal comment. After all, they weren't written for people who did not know the doctrine, but for converts, already instructed, who now wanted to know a bit more about the life and sayings of the Master. No ancient sacred books were intended to be read without a teacher: hence the Ethiopian eunuch in the Acts says to St. Philip 'How *can* I understand unless someone tells me?'³⁹

Could the bit—and I think there must be *something*—about people I don't like come in as a comment on the *Forgive* clause in the Lord's Prayer?⁴⁰

It is freezing hard here and one takes ones life in one's hand every time one walks.

What an excellent work you are doing! All blessings.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR C. CLARKE (BOD):⁴¹

Magdalen College
Oxford
Feb. 14th [?] 1953

Dear Mr. Clarke

I hope I shd. not be deterred by the danger!⁴² The fatal objection is that I should be covering ground I have already covered in print and on which I have nothing to add. I know that is how many lectures are made, but I never do it. I might at a pinch show great fortitude about the boredom of the audience, but then there's my own. But thank your society very much for the invitation and convey my good wishes to them as regards everything but interplanetary travel.

Yours very sincerely C. S. Lewis

Probably the whole thing is only a plan for kidnapping me and marooning me on an asteroid! I know the sort of thing.

TO ROBIN OAKLEY-HILL (M):⁴³

Magdalen College
Oxford
Feb 16th 1953

Dear Oakley-Hill

It came over me like a thunderclap about 30 seconds after I had left you in the Lodge this afternoon that I must seem to you to have committed, in one very short conversation, all the most unprovoked and indeed inexplicable kinds of rudeness there are.⁴⁴ I implore you to try to understand—and believe—how it came about with no such intention.

The starting point was the fact that I have never noticed the slightest inequality in your gait. Seeing it for the first time when I was waiting behind you to cross the street I therefore immediately assumed some temporary mishap to be the cause: no alternative explanation entered my head. My evil genius then led me to ask you about it—largely because two

people who see each other once a week can't very well meet on an 'island' and say just nothing. After your answer I ought of course to have apologised and dropped the subject at once: but by that time I had completely lost my head.

You are not the first to suffer this kind of thing from me: I am subject to a kind of black-out in conversation which every now and then leads me to ask and say the utterly wrong thing—the Brobdingnagianly tactless thing.⁴⁵ I have (quite against my will) made many enemies this way. I hope very much you will not become one of them: give me a fool's pardon.

If I raised a subject which may be painful to you, I am now punished by having to deal with one that is equally painful for me. It is an old sore: it began in my almost nursery days: and if we could find a suitable magician I think I'd gladly swop *my* Tendency to the Faux Pas for *your* leg. Please accept my sincere, and greatly embarrassed, apology.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W):
REF.53/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
21st February 1953.

My dear Ed,

Just a note whilst overwhelmed with one thing and another, to let you know that nineteen pounds twelve ounces of comfort, posted on the 20th of January, arrived in the usual excellent condition this morning. And very many thanks indeed for it. Much needed, though I really do begin to believe that this government intends to deal with the question seriously; tea is now 'off the ration', so are sweets, and they're beginning to put pork in the sausages. This I should think will probably turn the younger generation into lifelong dispeptics, for it has grown up to think of a sausage as an ounce of soya bean flour fried in a skin! But anyway, we have got rid of the suspicion of rationing for rationing's sake which one felt under the late administration, whose slogan was supposed to be 'jobs for the boys'.

I am somehow or other in the middle of a very heavy term—examining, seeing a big book through the press and other odd jobs, besides of course the regular grind. But I hope to get away for a day or two over Easter, which will freshen me up until the summer vacation looms up on the horizon.

I'm sorry to cut you so short, but 'it's one of those mornings' as we say. Do you know the expression? It means that everything that can go wrong has gone wrong, and I'm in need of two brains and four hands, to say nothing of a day of forty eight hours.

With all best wishes to you both, Yours,

Jack Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W): TS

REF.73/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
21st February 1953.

Dear Chad,

It's disappointing to hear that your English visit is postponed, but nice to hear from you at all: and thrilling to find that you also are doing a (odious word) 'juvenile'.⁴⁶ I'm an examiner for three years now, so I certainly shan't be able to embark on any American lectures: exciting and attractive tho' the idea may be.

The book on Prayer comes on very slowly. The simplest questions about it seem to be the ones no one has ever dealt with.

Sorry I cut you so short: infinite other letters to answer, if possible, before my first pupil comes.

My brother joins me in cordial greetings.

Yours,

Jack Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Feb 21st 1953

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen No, I don't think the motives you describe are too emotional: I think they are good ones. Obviously, where one is 'more sure that God wants one to be' is the place one must go: and even if the surety shd. in fact be mistaken I expect we may rely on God to bring it about that good will come of it. I presume, anyway, that you have to take no irrevocable vows! It looks to me as if you should go on and enter.⁴⁷ I hope it will be a great blessing to you.

I traced in Genia's letter a growing concern for you, and was v. pleased. She is obviously fighting against the temptation to self-centredness wh. comes with ill health. It is all most cheering.

Your question about Communists-in-government really raises the whole problem of Democracy. If one accepts the basic principle of Govt. by majorities, how can one consistently try to suppress those problems of public propaganda and getting-into-govt, by which majorities are formed. If the Communists in this country can persuade the majority to sell in to Russia, or even to set up devil-worship and human sacrifice, what is the *democratic* reply? When we said 'Govt. by the people' did we only mean 'as long as we don't disagree with the people too much'? And is it much good talking about 'loyalty'? For on strictly democratic principles I suppose loyalty is obligatory (or even lawful) only so long as the majority want it. I don't know the answer.

Of course there is no question of its being *our* duty (the minority's duty) to obey an anti-God govt. if the majority sets it up. We shall have to disobey and be martyred. Perhaps *pure* democracy is really a false ideal.

God bless you all. In great haste.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

[Magdalen College]
[25] Feb. 1953

My dear Roger

My brother and I have now both finished *Armadale*⁴⁸ and we enjoyed it very much. One can see, no doubt, why it is so much less popular than the famous two.⁴⁹ The 'common reader' is right. It has no characters to compare with Fosco⁵⁰ and it involves some excessive improbabilities. But it has the true Collins atmosphere and no dull parts. Thank you very much.

I am having mild flu' at present and solaced myself yesterday with re-reading *From the World's End*. I was more surprised than ever at my own insensibility to this story when I first read it, and I believe it is now going to be one of my regular books. The feeling of summer-evenings-miles-from-anywhere-and-much-later-than-one-intended-to-be is really very well caught in chapter I. And there are some jewels I hadn't noticed before such as 'Peeping Tom boasting because he was not Tarquin'⁵¹ (p. 30—a smashing blow from the shoulder, that!) or 'supreme surrender and a supreme assumption of responsibility' (p. 83).⁵² That I believe is entirely new and of immense importance.

Since you *can* write like that, then, though of course exactly the same type wouldn't do, you must introduce the same precision into your factual works.

We've never talked about *Aylwin*⁵³ have we? I don't know it.

Something funny has happened to the spelling of Danae and Pasiphae on p. 79.⁵⁴ I suppose you assumed that [because] Lat. æ (diphthong) = Gr αι in some places, it therefore does in all. But in those two fem. names the ē (ῆ) is the ordinary fem. ending as in Phoebē and the preceding *a* has nothing to do with the matter.

Give my love and duty to June.

I've nearly finished the last chronicle.⁵⁵

Yours ever

Jack

Dānāē but Mōīrāī

TO CLIFFORD W. STONE (BOD):⁵⁶

Magdalen College
Oxford, England
Feb. 27. 1953

Dear Mr. Stone

Thank you very much for *Report from Paradise* which turned up a few days ago.⁵⁷ I read it always with amusement and at times with deep interest. Of course one mustn't expect from it the edge and force of a story on the same subject either by a real believer or a real militant sceptic like Anatole France: but within its limits it is good. How v. unexpected that Mark Twain of all people shd. tell us at such length that Heaven is not egalitarian. That raised my opinion of his insight. And what a light it casts on his religious upbringing that all the great ones of his Heaven are from the Old Testament—prophets and patriarchs, not a word about apostles and martyrs!

I met his work first in a very funny way—reading the *Yankee at the Court of K. Arthur*⁵⁸ as a small boy simply and solely for the sake of the Arthurian stuff in it and ignoring the satiric or burlesque elements. Only years later did I come to know & love the great work—by wh. I mean *Huckleberry Finn*.

With v. many thanks and all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Feb 27. 53

My dear Arthur

I wd. love to come away with you this year again but it couldn't be earlier than last year. I have been put on to examine this year which will keep me busy at Oxford into the first week of August. My jaunt with W. could be made to come *after* my jaunt with you instead of *before* it if you wish, I expect. I hope this doesn't spoil things for you?

Someone has given me *Armadale*. It is clearly not so good as the famous two but well worth reading.

I'm in such pain with sinusitis to-day I can't think straight: so if any of this letter doesn't make sense you'll understand! I'm not lecturing at Queen's.

Yours

Jack

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
ii/iii/53

My dear Bles

I return the drawings⁵⁹ which I think the best set Miss Baynes has done for us yet. There is, as always, exquisite delicacy: and I think the faces (human faces) are greatly improved. It is difficult to find 10 that one wd. willingly reject. The ones I suggest for omission are: 6. 'She found she could lie on her back.' No real sense of *wind* in it. Her hair ought to be blowing straight forward.

8. 'Leaning one hand' etc.

10. The poet. Not our idea of a blind bard at all!

17. The stone-throwing giants. Has its merits, but the travellers ought to be carrying packs, not parcels in their hands like trippers!

36. The gnome. I think better of this than you do but he is too like a human brat out of Dickens's London, and since we must cut some, this is a good candidate.

39. The Dance. Her dances are usually lovely, but this is not one of her best.

42. The Centaurs.

43. Ruined by the utterly un-numinous, foreshortened Aslan in the background. (I wish you, who live in town, wd. take an afternoon off and conduct Miss Baynes round the Zoo! In quadrupeds *claudicat*.)⁶⁰

That's as many as I can find it in my heart to turn down.

In 19, could the shield be painted out in Chinese White & then obliterated? Knights didn't wear shields on the *right* arm.

2 wd. be lovely in colour if it cd. be afforded.

You will hear with mixed feelings that I have just finished the seventh & really last of the Narnian stories. That means there are 3 more. Are you still game? If so, tell me when to send you the next.

The Book of Prayer makes some progress: and will, I hope, make more when term and ill-health are over. As some deaf people suffer from head-noises, I, who cannot now smell anything in the outer world, suffer from nose-smells. I live in a stench: like one of the nastier circles in Dante. Phew! Good apothecary, an ounce of Civet to sweeten my imagination.⁶¹ No doubt it is an allegory. My kindest regards to both of you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO HERBERT PALMER (TEX):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
3/iii/53

My dear Palmer

Alas, I wd. be perfectly useless.⁶² When I first began to sell I had the idea that this would give my opinion about other people's books some weight with publishers. I was soon undeceived. Never once in my whole career has any publisher taken my advice about a book—except, of course, when he had asked for it. I suspect it is a principle with them. 'Do not let your Authors act as volunteer Readers.' It is even possible that such volunteered recommendations do harm. I do sympathise deeply with you.

And there's no sign yet of the present dark dynasty weakening. Not that the modern kind of poet is read except by a *coterie*: but he somehow keeps the rest of you out. With much regret & affection.

Yours always
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD): TS
REF.162/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
3rd March 1953.

Dear Roger,

Alas, I shall be at Malvern in Easter week. Did you know that slithy was a word long before Lewis Carroll?⁶³ I found it in Bunyan:⁶⁴ but see N.E.D.⁶⁵

Love to both of you.

Yours,

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELburnE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
4/iii/53

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

Thank you for your letter of Feb. 26 wh. arrived today. I think the poem succeeds and has both the lightness and massiveness you wanted. I'm not quite sure about *his* in l. 7. It gives the effect of being put in only to fill the line. In so far as you pass from God simply to 'our God' I think you're weakening the very effect you want at that moment. But I don't know how to mend it: diagnosis is often easier than cure. 'Majestic shapes more formidably fair' is a most august line. (Old Solar grammar a bit weak. *Eldila* is the true plural: but you can Anglicise it as *eldils*!)⁶⁶ I am delighted that yr. lecturer approved my angels. I was v. definitely trying to smash the 19th century *female* angel. I believe *no* angel ever appears in Scripture without exciting terror: they always have to begin by saying 'Fear not'.⁶⁷ On the other hand the Risen Lord excites terror only when mistaken for a ghost, i.e. when not recognised as *risen*. For we are in one most blessed sense *nearer* to Him than to them: partly of course because He has deigned to share our humanity, but partly, I take it, because every creature is nearer to its creator than it can be to superior *creatures*. By the way, none of my *Eldila* wd. be anything like so high up the scale as Cherubim & Seraphim. Those orders are engaged wholly in contemplation, not with the ruling the lower creatures. Even the Annunciation was done by—if I may so put it!—a 'mere archangel'. Did your lecturer point out my heavy debt to Ezekiel?⁶⁸

Of course I knew you weren't asking for a copy of a 'First': but I wanted to explain why I was not offering one—quite a different matter!

I also am having a kind of flu' that seems never to get beyond early convalescence, tho' nothing like so acute as yours. For that, and also else, deepest sympathy. Let us continue to pray for each other.

Yours most sincerely C. S. Lewis

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD): TS

REF.28/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
4th March 1953.

My dear Bles,

This is awkward. I am struggling along at present with sinusitis and the kind of 'walking' flu by dint of getting up late and going to bed early and doing as little as I possibly can.

A day in London, even tho' soothed by your Apician* hospitality, would knock me up. How long can you afford to wait without serious inconvenience? Or would it be safe to send them by registered post. Sorry to be a nuisance, but I'm the ghost of a man at present. And thanks, and love to both, yours,

C. S. Lewis

* This is not an afterthought. Mycroft funkyed it!⁶⁹

TO W. K. SCUDAMORE (W):⁷⁰

Magdalen College
Oxford
10/iii/53

Dear Mr. Gardamole⁷¹

Thank you for your most interesting letter. Your explanation produced—I was going to say 'complete conviction', but as you rightly say, one can never be certain that any interpretation of an image in C.W. is *complete*. But I shall be v. surprised if the Druidical sacrifice is not the master key. I now think I was rather stupid not to have seen it before. My copy of *Taliessin* is out of the house and I am in College to the end of the week, so I can't look up any of the passages, and therefore can't help about the worshipped Duke. Could it be Aeneas? With many thanks.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO W. K. SCUDAMORE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
13/iii/53

There are few names I wd. so regret having mangled!⁷² But when a man rides (or writes) with his beaver down—!

C.S.L.

On 16 March Warnie wrote to Arthur Greeves:⁷³

*Magdalen College,
Oxford.
16th March 1953.*

My dear Arthur,

What between sinus and examinations, poor Jack is sunk fathoms deep this morning. However, we talked over your letter of the 11th last night, and he has asked me to ask you whether Saturday 29th August to Saturday 12th September would suit you for the jaunt: to which he is very eagerly looking forward. These dates are tentative, so if you don't like them, please say so. But let us know as soon as possible, as it is part of a 'master plan' and we have all kinds of other things to make fit in with it.

Incidentally, if the dates suit, I hope to be with J. at Crawfordsburn for a few days before you and he set out, and am looking forward to more than one meeting with you. I daresay amongst other things, we may be having a supper with our Jane,⁷⁴ and a drive home across the Hollywood hills.

Love to Lily, Janie, and any others of my old friends you meet; and kindest regards to those good Samaritans, your neighbours and relations, who gave us drinks that Sunday morning.

Can you foresee any end to this winter?

*Yours ever,
Warren*

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
17/iii/53

My dear Bles

I don't feel as you do about the alteration of *it* and *he*, but I will be guided by your advice.⁷⁵ That is, I will try to normalise on *he* throughout (tho' a few *it*'s are sure to slip through by infirmity). Don't blame me if this means heavier corrections than usual!

I see I must write a treatise on the aesthetics of gender!⁷⁶

I'm a bit better, thanks. At least, the *smell* is.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO DON GIOVANNI CALABRIA (V):

Magdalen College
Oxford

Mart. xvii MCMLIII Dilectissime Pater

Gavisus sum, ut semper, de epistola tua. Res mira est et corroboratio fidei duas animas loco, natione, lingua, oboedentiâ, aetate diversas sic in dulcem familiaritatem adductas esse; adeo ordo spirituum ordinem materiale superat. Reddit faciliorem illam necessariam doctrinam, nos arctissime conjungi et cum peccatore Adamo et cum justo Jesu quamquam (secundum carnem, tempus et locum) tam diversi ab ambobus viximus. Haec unitas totius humani generis extat: utinam extaret praestantior illa unio de quo scribis. Nullum diem sine oratione pro illo optato fine praetereo. Quae dicis de praesenti statu hominum vera sunt: immo deterior est quam dicis. Non enim Christi modo legem sed etiam legem Naturae Paganis cognitam neglegunt. Nunc enim non erubescunt de adulterio, prodicione, perjurio, furto, ceterisque flagitiis quae non dico Christianos doctores, sed ipsi pagani et barbari reprobaverunt. Falluntur qui dicunt 'Mundus iterum Paganus fit.' Utinam fieret! Re vera in statum multo pejorem cadimus. Homo *post-Christianus* non similis homini *prae-Christianus*. Tantum distant ut vidua a virgine: nihil commune est nisi absentia sponsi: sed magna differentia intra absentiam sponsi venturi et sponsi amissi! Adhuc laboro in libro de oratione. De hac quaestione quam tibi subjeci, omnes theologos interrogo: adhuc frustra.

Oremus semper pro invicem, mi pater. Vale, C. S. Lewis

Magdalen College
Oxford
17 March 1953

My dearest Father

I was delighted, as always, by your letter.

It is a wonderful thing and a strengthening of faith that two souls differing from each other in place, nationality, language, obedience and age should have been thus led into a delightful friendship; so far does the order of spiritual beings transcend the material order.

It makes easier that necessary doctrine that we are most closely joined together alike with the sinner Adam and with the Just One, Jesus, even though as to body, time and place we have lived so differently from both. This unity of the whole human race exists: would that there existed that nobler union of which you write. No day do I let pass without my praying for that longed-for consummation.

What you say about the present state of mankind is true: indeed, it is even worse than you say.

For they neglect not only the law of Christ but even the Law of Nature as known by the Pagans.⁷⁷ For now they do not blush at adultery, treachery, perjury, theft and the other crimes which I will not say Christian Doctors, but the Pagans and the Barbarians have themselves denounced.

They err who say 'the world is turning pagan again'. Would that it were! The truth is that we are falling into a much worse state.

'Post-Christian man' is not the same as 'pre-Christian man'. He is as far removed as virgin is from widow: there is nothing in common except want of a spouse: but there is a great difference between a spouse-to-come and a spouse lost.⁷⁸

I am still working on my book on Prayer.

About this question which I submitted to you, I am asking all theologians: so far in vain.

Let us ever pray for each other, my Father.

Farewell,

C. S. Lewis

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
20/3/53

My dear Bles

Here is the next tale.⁷⁹

My view about *He* and *It* was that the semi-humanity cd. be kept before the imagination by an unobtrusive mixture of the two. Your re-action, however, shows that either such a mixture cd. not be unobtrusive or else that I, at any rate, could not make it so. Of course I cherish a secret hope that you are merely playing the 'normalising scribe', well known to textual critics: see the Preface to the Oxford Virgil (Hirtzel) on those who *corrigere studentes, floribus Musarum delicatissimis saepius insultaverint*.⁸⁰ That is my hope: but my sober fear is that you are right.

Your friend thinks I am 'smelling things' in the same sense in which the D.T.⁸¹ patient 'sees things'. But it's not quite as bad as that. My smell (ambiguous phrase) is subjective only in the sense that it does not come from the outer world. There is a real physical stimulus within the body—a sinus discharging its corrupt humours just under the olfactory nerves. So don't be alarmed lest in my next letter I tell you that a marsh-wiggle called on me or something of that sort. 'My pulse with yours doth temperately keep time.'⁸²

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO NELL BERNERS-PRICE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
20/3/53

Dear Nell

I am indeed sorry to hear about your Mother. In a way you were most fortunate to have had her so long (mine died when I was a little boy), yet in another way it probably makes it worse, for you have lived into the period when the relationship is really reversed and *you* were mothering *her*: and of course, the more we have had to do for people the more we miss them—loving goes deeper than being loved. But it must be nice for her. Getting out of an old body into the new life—like stripping off tiresome old clothes and getting into a bath—must be a most wonderful experience.

I return Mrs. Hooker's letter. I think 'both sincere and insincere' is about right. She certainly sounds more sensible in the letter than she did when I saw her.

Ugh! Holloway does give one the creeps, doesn't it? But I see it doesn't give them to *you*. It does me. If ever I go to jail (which may happen to anyone now-a-days) I do hope my cell will be white-washed and not that ghastly green!

I've been having a rather thin time with Sinusitis for about 4 weeks. In case you don't know this complaint, it feels like toothache but since it is not a tooth you can't have it out.

It's nice to think of you and Alan working away in that delightful garden. I expect you are further on down there than we are in the midlands. Our daffodils are out and the catkins are all pussy and strokable, but the weather remains wretchedly cold.

I trust the nasty-taste of the Hooker crisis has now all gone away. The far more serious sorrow about your Mother will presumably have put paid to *that*. Remember me to Alan & God bless you all.

Yours ever

Jack Lewis

By the way, Mrs. H's letter is curiously uneducated. All that about her learning must have been imaginary too. Poor creature—there's not much of her when one takes away the fantasies.

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
21/3/53

My dear Arthur

I hope you weren't shocked at getting an answer from W. instead of me the other day. On Monday I was both rather ill and also engaged in viva-voce examinations from 9.15 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., so I couldn't well write, and I thought you wd. like to have all those dates at the earliest moment.

Yours

Jack

TO MICHAEL (W):[83](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
21/3/53

Dear Michael

I see I have thanked your Father for a kind present which really came from *you*. Let me now say Thank *you*, very much indeed. I think it was wonderful of you. At least I know that when I was a boy, though I liked lots of authors, I never sent them anything. The reason there is so much boiled food here is, of course, that we have so little cooking-fat for roasting or frying.

The new book is *The Silver CHAIR*, not CHAIN. Don't look forward to it too much or you are sure to be disappointed. With 100,000 thanks and lots of love.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
23/iii/53

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

Your first story (about mistaking it for sea-sickness) is one of the funniest I ever heard.⁸⁴ In our country there are usually alterations of shape wh. wd. throw grave doubts on the sea-sick hypothesis!...but no doubt you manage things better in America. Any way, congratulations and encouragements. As to wishing it had not happened, one can't help momentary wishes: guilt begins only when one embraces them. You can't help their knocking at the door, but one mustn't ask them in to lunch. And no doubt you have many feelings on the other side. I am sure you felt as I did when I heard my first bullet, 'This is War: this is what Homer wrote about.'⁸⁵ For, all said and done, a woman who has never had a baby and a man who has never been either in a battle or a storm at sea, are, in a sense, rather *outside*—haven't really 'seen life'—haven't *served*. We will indeed have you in our prayers.

Now as to your other story, about Isaiah 66?⁸⁶ It doesn't really matter whether the Bible was open at that page thru' a miracle or through some (unobserved) natural cause. We think it matters because we tend to call the second alternative 'chance.' But when you come to think of [it] there can be no such thing as chance from God's point of view. Since He is omniscient His acts have no consequences which He has not foreseen and taken into account and intended. Suppose it was the draught from the window that blew your Bible open at Isaiah 66. Well, that current of air was linked up with the whole history of weather from the beginning of the world and you may be quite sure that the result it had for you at that moment (like all its other results) was intended and allowed for in the act of creation. 'Not one sparrow,'⁸⁷ you know the rest. So *of course* the message was addressed to you. To suggest that your eye fell on it *without* this intention, is to suggest that you could take Him by surprise. Fiddle-de-dee! This is not Predestination: your will is perfectly free: but all physical events are

adapted to fit in as God sees best with the free actions He knows we are going to do. There's something about this in *Screwtape*.⁸⁸

Meanwhile, *courage!* Your moments of nervousness are not your real self, only medical phenomena. All blessings.

Yours ever,
C. S. Lewis

TO HSIN-CHANG CHANG (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
March 24th 53

Dear Mr. Chang

The humble one, having burned the appropriate charms, has emerged from the Tenacious Mud Formation (Delay) and read the chapters, and the introduction, with very great interest.⁸⁹ It would be no mere ceremonial modesty to describe my opinion on it as 'foolish'. I have not enough cultural background to know whether the effects produced on me are at all like those intended by the author. Thus I do not know which parts are comic and which are not. The giant who smashed a hole in the mountain with his head, I can take as (rather grotesquely) serious: the angry man whose beard knocked the table over is to me funny. What would be their effect on the Chinese reader? Some images are quite baffling to a foreigner. I cannot imagine a 'fairy nun' whether Taoist or otherwise! But this may be due to the fact that neither *fairy* nor *nun* is a really exact translation: though no doubt (for your English is not only correct but sensitive and elegant) both are the best a European language affords. Perhaps 'goddess priestess' (which I can *just* imagine) would be an alternative. But I found it all interesting, except the long scene about the slaves' names in the Copper Formation: this inevitably loses its force in any language except the original. What moved and affected me most—a real, poetic experience—was the stripping-away of the man's whole life in riches. I am wondering if a larger selection (but with frequent omissions) from the whole romance wd. possibly be published in England.

My brother, who is interested in everything Chinese because he spent some v. happy years in Shanghai, wd. like to read the MS. May I keep it for this purpose a week or two longer?

There are only two places where I think your English cd. be criticised. On p. 10 you use *immune* as a verb. It should be 'to make immune': or perhaps even 'to protect' would do. On p. 22 'them five' should be either 'those five' or 'these five'—unless you *intend* to represent the speaker as uneducated.

With very many thanks. Be sure to come and see me if you are in Oxford again.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
25th March 1953.

My dear Arthur

On looking into the matter further, it would suit me better to prolong our jaunt for another 48 hours, i.e. for me to cross on Monday 14th September instead of Saturday 12th. The Sunday train service on the English side is practically useless—one train, and *no* restaurant car. Will 14th suit you?

Yours,

Jack

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
28/3/53

Dear Mr Kinter

I think Ransom is a *figura Christi*⁹⁰ only in the same sense ('only'—my hat!) in wh. every Christian is or should be. But the bus-driver in the *Divorce* is certainly, and consciously, modelled on the angel at the gates of Dis,⁹¹ just as the meeting of the 'Tragedian' with his wife is consciously modelled on that of Dante & Beatrice at the end of the *Purgatorio*:⁹² i.e. it is the same predicament, only going wrong. I intended readers to spot these resemblances: so you may go to the top of the class!

'By the *Furioso*⁹³ out of the *Commedia*' is not far wrong. My real model was David Lyndsay's *Voyage to Arcturus* wh. first suggested to me that the form of 'science fiction' cd. be filled by spiritual experiences.⁹⁴ And as the *Furioso* was in some ways the science-fiction of its age, your analogy works. But mind you, there is already a science-fiction element in the *Commedia*: e.g. *Inferno* xxxiv 85–114.

It's fun laying out all my books as a cathedral. Personally I'd make *Miracles* and the other 'treatises' the cathedral school: my children's stories are the real side-chapels, each with its own little altar.

No, I've ever read *Perce forest*.⁹⁵ The only O.F.⁹⁶ prose romance I've read is *Balain*.⁹⁷ How lovely, how like water—or Grace—that limpid O.F. prose is. Damn the Renaissance.

I return cordially your wishes for a blessed Easter.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN GILFEDDER (W):[98](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
30/iii/53

Dear Gilfedder

(I wish you'd call me *Lewis* not *Sir*) Thanks both for card of Florence and for your letter of the 15th.

I think a glossarial Index (I call it that because your specimens are partly index as well as glossary) wd. be a most useful addition to C.W.'s cycle.⁹⁹ But the chances of the O.U.P. ever re-printing *Taliessin*, let alone adding any matter to the volume, are infinitesimal. They wd. only do that if it showed signs of becoming a popular success: which of course it doesn't.

I am glad you are settled down and hope you are enjoying your work. Please remember me to your wife; all good wishes to both for a happy Easter.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
31/3/53

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

I've no time for a proper letter to-day but this is just a scrape of the pen to thank you for yours of the 27th and to wish you a v. blessed Easter. I expect Jeannie will grow up the most devoted grand-daughter ever. Your silly son-in-law doesn't realise the charm of forbidden fruit: a grandmother one is forbidden to see rises almost into the status of a fairy godmother!

Apropos of horrid little fat baby 'cherubs', did I mention that Heb. *Kherub* is from the same root as *Gryphon*? That shows what they're really like!

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO SISTER PENELOPE CSMV (BOD):

Magdalen
1/4/53

Dear Sister Penelope I am simply *delighted* with *The Coming of the Lord*;¹⁰⁰ delighted, excited, and most grateful. I think it is the best book you have yet done, and the best theological book by anyone I have read for a long time. (You are, among other things, the only person I ever meet who gives me real light on the Old Testament). Chap VIII now convinces me completely.

I was talking nonsense when we last discussed this matter: I hadn't really grasped the point that Man is the true Temple. That is a splendid bit on p. 76¹⁰¹ about the true sense of 'it is finished'—the sword 'finished' when its life as a sword can *begin*.¹⁰² How did you think of it? Why did all the rest of us *not*? And the explanation on p. 26 of why the Bride is never mentioned, is brilliant.¹⁰³ Indeed, I'll say it is *clever*—why should we acquiesce in that word's sliding into a contemptuous meaning. And many, many thanks for St. Bernard's conception of the Palm Sunday procession.¹⁰⁴ And the daring use of *larval* at the bottom of p. 45 is a complete success: I wanted to clap my hands when I came to it.¹⁰⁵

Now for a few tiny flaws, or what I think to be such. P. 3. '*Expectation*, therefore, is a specifically human exercise.'¹⁰⁶ Yes, in the peculiar sense you give it of *ex-spectation*. But you haven't explained that yet, have you? Won't the reader take it in the current sense of *προσδοκία*¹⁰⁷ and say that 'expectation', far from being specifically human, is seen at its v. maximum in a dog waiting to be taken for a walk or to have a ball thrown for it?

P. 5. at top. *Basis* or *foundation* wd. for many reasons be a better word than *fundament*.¹⁰⁸

P 5 later. Oh, oh why should an attitude almost impossible to a Pagan be called 'neo-Paganism'?¹⁰⁹ You *know* that no Pagan, bless him, wd. ever have dreamed of thinking the sky belonged to Man. They had their faults, but that is just the sort of sin they never committed. They had too much *αἰδώς*,¹¹⁰ and *δεισιδαιμονία*,¹¹¹ and all that. You are falling into the

common error of equating the post-Christian with the pre-Christian. They are as different as an unmarried girl is from a woman who has deserted her husband.

P. 44. Here I'm not sure, but, as the barristers say, I 'put it to you.' Can we take [κόσμον¹¹²](#) to mean Universe (as dist. from Earth) in view of other Johannine uses of it? But you are so often right that I dare say you will convince me on this point too.

Anyway, it is a lovely little book. I am very much in your debt. All blessings.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO CORBIN SCOTT CARNELL (W):[113](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
5/4/53

Dear Mr. Carnell

I am myself a little uneasy about the question you raise:[114](#) there seems to be almost equal objection to the position taken up in my footnote and to the alternative of attributing the same kind and degree of historicity to all the books of the Bible. You see, the question about Jonah and the great fish does not turn simply on intrinsic probability. The point is that the whole *Book of Jonah* has to me the air of being a moral romance, a quite different *kind* of thing from, say, the account of K. David or the N.T. narratives, not *pegged*, like them, into any historical situation.

In what sense does the Bible ‘present’ this story ‘as historical’? Of course it doesn’t *say* ‘This is fiction’: but then neither does Our Lord *say* that His Unjust Judge, Good Samaritan, or Prodigal Son are fiction. (I wd. put *Esther* in the same category as Jonah for the same reason). How does a denial, or doubt, of their historicity lead logically to a similar denial of N.T. miracles?

Supposing (as I think is the case) that sound critical reading reveals different *kinds* of narrative in the Bible, surely it wd. be illogical to conclude that these different kinds shd. all be read in the same way? This is not a ‘rationalistic approach’ to miracles. Where I doubt the historicity of an O.T. narrative I never do so on the ground that the miraculous *as such* is incredible. Nor does it deny ‘a unique sort of inspiration’: allegory, parable, romance, and lyric might be inspired as well as chronicle. I wish I could direct you to a good book on the subject, but I don’t know one. With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
6/4/53

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen I think our official view of confession can be seen in the form for the Visitation of the Sick where it says 'Then shall the sick person be moved (i.e. advised, prompted) to make a...Confession...if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter.' That is, where Rome makes Confession compulsory for all, we make it permissible for any: not 'generally necessary' but profitable. We do not doubt that there can be forgiveness without it. But, as your own experience shows, many people do not *feel* forgiven, i.e. do not effectively 'believe in the forgiveness of sins', without it. The quite enormous advantage of coming really to believe in forgiveness is well worth the horrors (I agree, they *are* horrors) of a first confession. [115](#)

Also, there is the gain in self-knowledge: most of [us] have never really faced the facts about ourselves until we uttered them aloud in plain words, calling a spade a spade. I certainly feel I have profited enormously by the practice. At the same time I think we are quite right not to make it generally obligatory, which wd. force it on some who are not ready for it and might do harm.

As for conduct of services, surely a wide latitude is reasonable. Has not each kind—the v. 'low' & the v. 'high'—its own value?

I don't think I owe Genia a letter, and I think advice is best kept till it is asked for. Of course she, and you, are always in my prayers. I think she is of the impulsive type, but one must beware of meddling.

Yours, with all blessings, C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
7/4/53

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen I don't think gratitude is a relevant motive for joining an Order. Gratitude might create a state of mind in which one became aware of a vocation: but the vocation would be the proper reason for joining. They themselves wd. surely not wish you to join *without* it? You can show your gratitude in lots of other ways.

Is there in this Order, even for lay members such as you wd. be, not something like a noviciate or experimental period? If so, that wd. be the thing, wouldn't it? If not, I think I can only repeat my previous suggestion of undergoing a sort of unofficial noviciate by living according to the Rule for 6 months or so and seeing how it works. Most of it is the things you probably do anyway and are things we ought to do. (The only one I'm doubtful about is the 'special intention' clause in No. 3. I'm not quite sure what the theological implications are.) The question is whether the fact of being compelled to it by a vow wd. act as a useful support or be a snare and a source of scruples: I don't think I can tell you the answer to that. Is the vow irrevocable or can you contract out again?

About putting one's Christian point of view to doctors and other unpromising subjects I'm in great doubt myself. All I'm clear about is that one sins if one's real reason for silence is simply the fear of looking a fool. I suppose one is right if one's reason is the probability that the other party will be repelled still further & only confirmed in his belief that Christians are troublesome & embarrassing people to be avoided whenever possible. But I find it a dreadfully worrying problem. (I am quite sure that an importunate bit of evangelisation from a comparative stranger would *not* have done me any good when *I* was an unbeliever.) I hope it's all true about the President.¹¹⁶ But let us hope he will not pursue the line of 'Godliness for the sake of national strength'. We can't use God as a means to any end.

About Democracy and all that. Surely we stand by equality before the Law? If no law disqualifies a man from office, and if he has broken no law, are we entitled to exclude him because we dislike his views? But I don't really know the facts of your situation well enough to apply this.

Thanks for the charming photos of Genia. Yes, I do hope & pray she'll be in smooth water now. Blessings on you all.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
13/4/53

My dear Bles

Thanks for your letter of the 8th.

I'm glad you like the new story. The title needs a little thinking of as this tale is sung or recited after dinner in Chap III of the *Silver Chair* and we must harmonise. What are your reactions to any of the following? *The Horse and the Boy* (wh. might allure the 'pony-book' public) –*The Desert Road to Narnia*–*Cor of Archenland*–*The Horse stole the Boy*–*Over the Border*–*The Horse Bree*. Suggestions will be welcomed.

Please dedicate *The Silver Chair* to Nicholas Hardie. Thanks for reminding me.

As to *realism* in the new one, Miss Baynes may base her ideas of Calormene culture either on the picture of the *Arabian Nights* world, or on her picture of Babylon and Persepolis (all the Herodotus and Old Testament orient) or any mixture of the two. But their swords *must* be curved because it says so in the text. And we want her to try v. hard to make Bree look like a war-horse–big fetlocks etc.

I've had a nice time walking in the Malvern area & feel much better. I hope you are both in good form.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELburnE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
17/4/53

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

I'm not quite so shocked as you by the story of Charles and Mary. If even adult and educated Christians in trying to think of the Blessed Trinity have to guard constantly against falling into the heresy of Tritheism, what can we expect of children. And 'another of whom he was not quite sure' is perhaps no bad *beginning* for a knowledge about the Holy Ghost.

About my fairy-tales, there are three published by Macmillan, New York (*The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe*, *Prince Caspian*, and *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*). Local bookshops are often very unhelpful. If your friend wants these books she shd., of course, write to the publisher at New York.

I expect there *is* a photo of me somewhere, but my brother, who knows where things are, is away and I couldn't find it today. Ask me again at a more favourable hour!—if you still have the fancy for this v. undecorative object.

I'd sooner pray for God's mercy than for His justice on my friends, my enemies, and myself.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARGARET DENEKE (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
18/4/53

Dear Miss Deneke

I do not see what I could put in a preface except a dilution of what I have already sent you: and that wd. be no good.[117](#)

The next step is to try the old device of publishing by subscription. We'll all subscribe of course and it will go hard but we'll raise over £48. A List of subscribers gives a fine 18th. century air to a book, too. What wd. Mr. Johnson (whose advice is much more valuable than mine) say to this.

My brother would join me in good wishes if he were not away.

Yours very sincerely C. S. Lewis

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
22/4/53

My dear Bles

A priori I shd. have thought that a series which doesn't sell too well once a year wd. sell worse if the tempo was speeded up: but I presume you think otherwise and of course your opinion on such a point is much more informed than mine. Of course, then, do exactly as you think fit. No author, on *general* grounds, ever thinks his book appears too soon!

Was it *and his Boy* or *and its Boy*? I'm completely neutral on the point: print which you prefer.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

Your correspondence has contained no Latin verse for a long time!

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
22/4/53

Dear Mr. Van Auken

It was very nice to hear from you. I hope my interest in you both is something less blasphemous than that of a Creator in a creature (it wd. anyway be *begetting* not *creating*, see *Philemon* 10).¹¹⁸ My feeling about people in whose conversion I have been allowed to play a part is always mixed with awe and even fear: such as a boy might feel on first being allowed to fire a rifle. The disproportion between his puny finger on the trigger and the thunder & lightning wh. follow is alarming. And the seriousness with which the other party takes my words always raises the doubt whether I have taken them seriously enough myself. By writing the things I write, you see, one especially qualifies for being hereafter 'condemned out of one's mouth'.¹¹⁹ Think of me as a fellow-patient in the same hospital who, having been admitted a little earlier, cd. give some advice.

The semi-Christians (in dog-collars) that you speak of are a great trial. Our College chaplain is rather of that kind. I'm glad you have something better in your own church.

I feel an amused recognition when you describe those moments at wh. one feels 'How cd. I-I, of all people—ever have come to believe this cock & bull story.' I think they will do us no harm. Aren't they just the reverse side of one's just recognition that the truth is amazing? Our fathers were more familiar with the opposite danger of taking it all for granted: which is probably just as bad.

God bless you both: you are always in my prayers. I hope we may meet again one day.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
25th April 1953.

Dear Starr,

By all means give Masato Hori an introduction,[120](#) but don't give him the illusion that I'm a mystic or an authority on mysticism. Dozens of things in your letter are exciting, but this is the first day of term. In haste. We both send greetings.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
27/4/53

Dear Evans

I am really very sorry. *The Devil you Say*¹²¹ got put on a pile of 'books received'—most of them (I don't include yours) a major plague of my life—and I forgot all about it. I have now read a few pages: there was nothing to tempt one to go on. It certainly seems to be a gross plagiarism: I am writing to New York Macmillan to draw their attention to it. Thanks v. much for sending it. With all good wishes, and thanks also to your American friend.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W): TS

54/53.
Magdalen College,
Oxford.
9th May 1953.

Dear Mrs. Shelburne, There's very little time today, so I must be short. I am afraid it is certainly true in England that Christians are in the minority. But remember, the change from, say, thirty years ago, consists largely in the fact that *nominal* Christianity has died out, so that only those who really believe now profess. The old conventional church-going of semi-believers or almost total unbelievers is a thing of the past. Whether the real thing is rarer than it was would be hard to say. Fewer children are brought up to it: but adult conversions are very frequent.

I'm so glad to hear you have had a more satisfactory talk with your daughter.

I enclose a copy of the only photo which I have at the moment; it's only a passport one I'm afraid.

Yours most sincerely C. S. Lewis

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD): TS

28/53. Magdalen College,
Oxford.
9th May 1953.

My dear Bles,

Cunning man, you don't say how *long* the MS is! If it can be read in a week-end and put up in a large envelope (I'm no good at parcels), I'll read it. But I have honestly neither health nor leisure at present for more than very slight extra jobs.

All sympathy to Madame. I return Stewart's letter.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTEr (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
May 12th 1953

Dear Miss Pitter

Or (to speak more accurately) Bright Angel!

I'm in a sea of glory! Of course I haven't had time to read it properly, and there'll be another, more sober, letter presently. This is just a line to be going on with, and to assure you at once that the new volume is an absolute Corker.¹²² I had feared that you might be one of those who, like poor Wordsworth, leave their talent behind at conversion:¹²³ and now—oh glory—you came up shining out of the font *far* better than you were before. 'Man's despair is like the Arabian sun'¹²⁴—I seriously doubt if there's any religious lyric between that one and Herbert on the same level. And then my eye strays to the opposite page and gets the 'dying-dolphin green'.¹²⁵ And 'What we merit—A silence like a sword'.¹²⁶

I wonder have you yourself any notion how good some of these are? But, as you see, I'm drunk on them at this present. Glory be! Blessings on you! As sweet as sin and as innocent as milk. Thanks forever.

Yours in great excitement C. S. Lewis

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD): TS

Magdalen College
Oxford
12th May 1953.

My dear Bles,

MS duly received: and endleaf returned with thanks. I *had* seen it, but forgot that end leaves naturally are'nt included in the paper-back proof, and thence foolishly wondered if it had somehow miscarried. Authors with book, like expectant mothers, have their wayward fancies.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTEP (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
May 15th 1953

Dear Miss Pitter

The brightness does not fade: appealing from Lewis drunk to Lewis sober, I still find this an exquisite collection. When I start picking out my favourites, I find I am picking out nearly all. *Tree at Dawn* is full of delight for eye and ear. *Great Winter* is extremely new and delightful in rhythm: and 'storm of suns'¹²⁷ is wonderful. The *Other* has, I think, a few flaws (the second stanza on p. 15 seems to use words that precious poets have sucked all the juice out of) but also v. great virtues. The noises all through *Herding Lambs*—not only at 'rainlike rustle of feet',¹²⁸ tho' that is the most striking single aural image—are wonderfully conveyed. *Captive Bird* is pure gold all through: so lovely fair my 'sense aches with it': and I still think as I did about *World is Hollow* (A v. tough undergraduate to whom I showed it thinks the same as I). *Cedar* is, I expect, extremely good in imagery, but I'd need a real cedar before me by which to judge. That's the trouble about very visual writing. On the other hand the colours in *Hill & Valley* came through really well. *Penitence* is taut & accurate as a Yeats poem. *Narrow but Deep & Aged Man to Y.M.*¹²⁹ show you in a v. different vein: not the one I like best, but v. good. *May* is a fine meaty, yet not heavy, meditation. *The Five Dreams* do, I don't know how, build up to a whole greater than the parts. The only one in the book I don't much like is *Father Questioned*. I think Rostrevor Hamilton (see The Tell-Tale Article) wd. justly have something to say about the stanza at the top of p. 24.¹³⁰

I do congratulate you again and again. I hope you are as happy about the poems as you ought to be.

Yours most sincerely C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):¹³¹TS

218/53.
Magdalen College,
Oxford.
18th May 1953.

Dear Mr. McCallum,

I am greatly shocked at your news. My correspondence with Borst was so pleasant and even so intimate that I feel his death as, in some sort, a personal loss. I am sure it will be deeply felt by all of you in many ways. I will try not to give Miss Boxill as much trouble as I gave her predecessor.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO ELSIE SNICKERS (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
May 18th 1953

Dear Mrs Snickers

No. I don't think sin is completely accounted for by faulty reasoning nor that it can be completely cured by re-education. That view has, indeed, been put forward: by Socrates and, in the early 19th Century, by Godwin. But I think it overlooked the (to me) obviously central fact that our *will* is not necessarily determined by our *reason*. If it were, then, as you say, what are called 'sins' wd. not be sins at all but only mistakes, and would require not repentances but merely correction.

But surely daily experience shows that it is just not so. A man's reason sees perfectly clearly that the resulting discomfort and inconvenience will far outweigh the pleasure of the ten minutes in bed. Yet he stays in bed: not at all because his reason is deceived but because desire is stronger than reason. A woman knows that the sharp 'last word' in an argument will produce a serious quarrel which was the very thing she had intended to avoid when that argument began and which may permanently destroy her happiness. Yet she says it: not at all because her reason is deceived but because the desire to score a point is at the moment stronger than her reason. People—you and I among them—constantly choose between two courses of action the one which we know to be the worse: because, at the moment, we *prefer* the gratification of our anger, lust, sloth, greed, vanity, curiosity or cowardice, not only to the known will of God but even to what we know will make for our own real comfort and security. If you don't recognise this, then I must solemnly assure you that either [you] are an angel, or else are still living in 'a fool's paradise': a world of illusion.

Of course it is true that many people are so mis-educated or so psychopathic that their freedom of action is v. much curtailed & their responsibility therefore v. small. We cannot remember that too much when we are tempted to judge harshly the acts of other people whose difficulties we don't know. But we know that some of *our own acts* have sprung from evil *will* (proud, resentful, cowardly, envious, lascivious or spiteful will) although we knew better, and that what we need is not—or not *only*—re-education but repentance, God's forgiveness, and His Grace to help us to do better next time. Until one has faced this fact one is a child.

And it is not the function of psychotherapy to make us face *this*. Its work is the non-moral aspects of conduct. You must not go to the psychologists for *spiritual* guidance. (One goes to the dentist to cure one's

toothache, not to teach one in what spirit to bear it if it cannot be cured: for that you must go to God and God's spokesmen).

For this reason I am rather sorry that you have taken Psychology as a subject for your academic course. A continued interest in it on the part of those who have had psychotherapeutic treatment is usually, I think, not a good thing. At least, not until a long interval has elapsed and their *personal* interest in it, the interest connected with *their own case*, has quite died away. At least that is how it seems to me. All blessings.

Yours most sincerely C. S. Lewis

TO NELL BERNERS-PRICE (W): TS

REF.67/53.
Magdalen College,
Oxford.
20th May 1953.

Dear Nell,

By all means rope me in as a reference to 'the integrity of the family': a subject on which I feel I can speak with conviction. I return the form. Court Stairs must be looking lovely now. Love to Alan and yourself. I'd write more, but there is the devil of a mail this morning.

Yours ever,
C. S. Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
May 20th 1953

Dear Miss Bodle

Your letter written on Good Friday reached me to-day. I was a little shocked at first to hear of a child who found *The Pilgrim's Progress* boring:¹³² but then I remembered that the dialogue, of which there is a good deal, does interrupt the story with matter no child cd. be expected to enjoy.

The restraints imposed on you by 'secular education' are, no doubt, very galling.¹³³ But I wonder whether secular education will do us all the harm the secularists hope. Secular *teachers* will. But Christian teachers in secular schools may, I sometimes think, do more good precisely because they are *not* allowed to give religious instruction in class. At least I think that, as a child, I shd. have been very allured and impressed by the discovery—which must be made when questions are asked—that the teacher believed firmly in a whole mass of things he wasn't allowed to teach! Let them give us the charm of mystery if they please.

It was v. nice to hear from you again. All blessings on you and your work.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
May 21st 1953

Dear Roger

A good many disturbances made me postpone reading the new story¹³⁴ and then (for much longer) writing about it. I enjoyed it thoroughly. It is best after they have left the Castle—the night in the cave is the high light of the whole story—but all enjoyable. My brother read it with such gusto that he was moved to go back & read *The Luck of the Lynns* and then the *Lewis Carroll*, all with great satisfaction.

It is a very odd fact that I enjoy a story no more, and perhaps even a little less, for having been at the scene of operations. It certainly isn't your fault, for I have had the same experience with other authors: but certainly the memory of the real Beaumaris did not help me. I thought the way in which the malapropisms were slightly toned down in this book—appropriately, as the malapropist gets older—was v. skilful.

I'm not in the best of health at present but perhaps better than I was. The last Narnian story is complete & shall go to you when typed: my present leisure, such as it is, goes mainly on proofs and bibliography for the OHEL volume.

Love to all of you and many thanks for the book.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
May 30th 1953

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

Thank you for your letter of the 26th. I am particularly glad to hear that you had a 'fairly pleasant' talk with your daughter. Yes, we are always told that the present wide-spread apostasy must be the fault of the clergy, not of the laity. If I were a parson I shd. always try to dwell on the faults of the clergy: being a layman, I think it more wholesome to concentrate on those of the laity. I am rather sick of the modern assumption that, for all events, 'WE', the people, are never responsible: it is always our rulers, or ancestors, or parents, or education, or anybody but precious 'US', WE are apparently perfect & blameless. Don't you believe it. Nor do I think the Ch. of England holds out many attractions to the worldly. There is more real poverty, even actual want, in English vicarages than there is in the homes of casual labourers.

I look forward to Martin's¹³⁵ 'appreciations'. Yes, we have the word 'dither'—and the thing too. And our offices are in a dither too. This is so common that I suspect there must be something in the very structure of a modern office which creates Dither. Otherwise why does our 'College Office' find full time work for a crowd of people in doing what the President of the College, 100 years ago, did in his spare time without a secretary and without a typewriter? (The more noise, heat, & smell a machine produces the more power is being wasted!) I'd rather like to see one of your hail storms: our climate is in comparison, v. tame. Have you read S. V. Benét's *Western Star*?¹³⁶ Excellent, I think.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II took place in Westminster Abbey on 2 June 1953.

TO HELEN D. CALKINS (W):[137](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
June 3rd 1953

Dear Miss Calkins

Your yesterday's cable was a gracious and cheering surprise. I can only reply, God bless Miss Calkin: God bless California! The weather was not what one wd. have wished for a Coronation, but it was lovely getting the news about Everest on the same day.¹³⁸ With heartiest good wishes.

Yours most sincerely C. S. Lewis

TO HILA NEWMAN (W):¹³⁹

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

June 3rd 1953

Dear Hida (is that right) Newman Thank you so much for your lovely letter and pictures. I realised at once that the coloured one was not a particular scene but a sort of line-up like what you would have at the very end if it was a play instead of stories. The Dawn Treader is *not* to be the last: There are to be 4 more, 7 in all. Didn't you notice that Aslan said nothing about Eustace not going back? I thought the best of your pictures was the one of Mr. Tumnus at the bottom of the letter.

As to Aslan's other name, well I want you to guess. Has there never been anyone in *this* world who (1.) Arrived at the same time as Father Christmas. (2.) Said he was the son of the Great Emperor. (3.) Gave himself up for someone else's fault to be jeered at and killed by wicked people. (4.) Came to life again. (5.) Is sometimes spoken of as a Lamb (see the end of the Dawn Treader). Don't you really know His name in this world. Think it over and let me know your answer!

Reepicheep in your coloured picture has just the right perky, cheeky expression. I love real mice. There are lots in my rooms in College but I have never set a trap. When I sit up late working they poke their heads out from behind the curtains just as if they were saying, 'Hi! Time for *you* to go to bed. We want to come out and play.'

All good wishes,

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
June 8th 1953

Dear Mrs Van Deusen

Yes, I think your position is the right one. If one is asked for advice, then, and then only, one has to have an opinion about the exact rule of life which wd. suit some other Christian. Otherwise, I think the rule is to mind one's own business.

St. Paul goes further than this: it may even be proper at times to adopt practices which you yourself think unnecessary, and which *are* unnecessary to you, if your difference on such points is a stumbling-block to the Christians you find yourself among. Hence, you see, other Christians' practices concern us, when at all, as a ground for concessions on our part, not for interference or complacent assertion that our way is best. This is in *Romans* chap XIV:[140](#) read the chapter and meditate on it. I am very glad you have seen the real point.

My 'troubles', thanks, are in abeyance, except that I am suffering from Sinusitis: but that too is better than it was.

Don't doubt that you and Genia are in my daily prayers. Hasn't what you are kind enough to say about our Coronation a wider relevance?—that nothing stirs us if it has the sole purpose of stirring us: i.e. the stirring must be a by-product.

God bless you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD): TS
REF.162.53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
11th June 1953.

My dear Roger,

You have been having a time, have'nt you? I'm glad you are now in calmer waters. I shall be away on July 2nd, but am good for July 1st. Will you dine then? You can sleep too,* if that helps.

Yours,

Jack

* Later: not, I hope, concurrently. We may then discuss further plans **TO MILDRED BOXILL (P):**[141](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
June 14th 1953

Dear Miss Boxill

Thank you for yours of the 11th. I am sending off to you to day by registered post the corrected galleys, but retaining the carbon of the footnotes (for which many thanks) for later use. In the meantime I send you some corrections of the footnotes on the chance that they might reach you in time to be of use. If they do not I should [be] glad to have this list back again. Like an ass I have in it italicised all that is meant to be printed, which of course I ought not to have done: perhaps someone in the office can re-type it or you can explain to the printer.

In the general list of Contents (for which, again, thanks) I think the words 'Books I–VI' after *Faerie Queene* shd. be deleted. They are not, as you see from the Mutability section, quite accurate, and we are selecting from the whole poem: i.e. the Books of P.L.¹⁴² in Bush's Milton section are not a parallel.¹⁴³

I put in references to Book and Canto at the head of each selection before the proofs of the notes arrived and showed me that it had been done thus. I suppose you will delete whichever is more easily deleted on technical grounds.

I have added a Headnote to the Epithalamion.

I have put in such cross-references as occurred to me in the margin of the galleys: not knowing where or in what form they will appear in the book. Some (not most) of their re-duplicate parallels appear already in the notes.

Accents, being given in the text, need not be repeated in the note: if this occurs anywhere, it shd. be deleted. I'm glad you agreed about having them all restored. Lor bless you, metre doesn't guide the modern student, on either side of the Atlantic. He wholly ignores it. It is not a question of metre guiding him to the pronunciation: we are giving him pronunciation to guide him ('tis a faint hope) to metre. Of course it's a losing battle: but let's fight for the ship till she goes down under us.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO HARRY BLAMIRES (BOD): TS
REF.307/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
15th June 1953.

Dear Blamires,

Heartiest congratulations.¹⁴⁴ This is a most important turning-point: on the other line you would have been in danger of writing what was substantially the same book over and over again. Lloyd is a good man, and we have every reason to believe he is right.¹⁴⁵

How right you are to put the house first in your budget: it is 'the bread and tea of life' that really matter.

All good wishes.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
June 16th 1953

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

It was a kind thought on your part to send on these two little items. Whether it's good for me to hear them is another matter! One of the things that make it easier to believe in Providence is the fact that in all trains, hotels, restaurants and other public places I have only *once* seen a stranger reading a book of mine, tho' my friends encounter this phenomenon fairly often. Things are really very well arranged. I hope you keep well? With all blessings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
June 20th 53

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

The young gentleman looks already, as he should, fathomlessly American: not so much the current model as the heavy millionaire of earlier fiction and film (you'd hardly remember) who was always bringing his clenched fist down on the desk and saying 'We gotta smash the Medicine Hat toothbrush combine.' He clearly has a will of his own. From the height of your new technical expertise you will despise me when I say that the score of 6 lbs 14 oz. means nothing to me. I have no idea what a baby ought to weigh: you will not object to my assuming that he breaks all records within the memory of man! Yes, it must be strange and new for you: and for Charles Marion too of course: one is perhaps tempted to forget that side of it. You'll bring him up v. badly if you start his reading with *The Lion! Peter Rabbit & Benjamin Bunny*¹⁴⁶ ought to come a long way before it.

*Mal-de-Mère*¹⁴⁷ is surely rather a good pun.

Blessings and congratulations to you all.

Yours ever,

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
June 22nd 1953

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

Thank you for your letter of the 18th. I am very sorry to hear of your fall (that sounds sinister, doesn't it!). They are very nasty things: even worse than the subsequent pain, I think, is the dreadful split second in which one knows one is falling and it's too late to do anything about it.

It always brings back to one vividly one's childish days when a fall was one of the commonest catastrophes, and I think it really hurt then more than

it does now: one of the many things that people forget when they wish they were children again! You and I who still enjoy fairy tales have less reason to wish actual childhood back. We have kept its pleasures and added some grown-up ones as well. One hasn't kept the *senses*, though. What a comparatively tasteless thing an egg or a strawberry is now! Yes: I think the palate is the only part of me that need regret the early years I am so glad you saw your daughter. I can't understand that whole business. One is always told over here that America is a country where Women are on top: but the real evidence I have (and I've had a good deal by now) suggests a degree of male tyranny that is quite unknown here.

By the way did the reviewers *mean* 'writes like a woman' to be dispraise? Are the poems of Sappho¹⁴⁸ or, if it comes to that, the *Magnificat*,¹⁴⁹ to be belittled on the same ground.

You are quite right, I didn't go to the Coronation. I approve of all that sort of thing immensely and I was deeply moved by all I heard of it; but I'm not a man for crowds and Best Clothes. The weather was frightful.

As you had forgotten what called for my remarks about WE, THE PEOPLE, so I have now quite forgotten what the said remarks were! That is one way correspondence differs from conversation. On the other hand neither party can interrupt! Oh—I'm often in a *dither*: usually when I've made two engagements for the same time in different places.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO HILA NEWMAN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
23/6/53

Dear Hila

(I never met this name before. What language?) You have got it right. No: the three stories you know are the only three that have yet come out. The fourth will be out this Fall (as you say: we say 'this Autumn'). I am so glad your friends like the books. It's funny they all began with the second one.

All good wishes,

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W): TS
REF.325/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th June 1953.

Dear Mr. Kilby,

Thanks for your letter of the 24th. I should be happy to see you at noon on Wednesday 1st July in my rooms here, if that would fit in with your plans. [150](#)

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO WARFIELD M. FIROR (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
June 27th 53

Dear Firor—

I was reminded of my sins (to you and to many other correspondents) the day before yesterday on receiving a visit from a coal-king called Hishop of (I think) Ohio, who turned out to be an old patient of yours. Apparently you ‘carved him as a dish fit for the gods’, and even proceeded, while his wounds were yet green, to the more drastic operation of lending him the *Screwtape Letters*. In spite of that he is your v. warm admirer.

I have been neglecting everything except the bare minimum of routine duties for many months, being worn to a ravelling by continued *sinusitis* in all its varying phases of much catarrh and little pain, much pain and little catarrh, and (sometimes) much of both. I have rejected the operation because I keep on meeting people who have had it and been no better afterwards. It now begins to clear. This disease has, however, one excellent quality: its pain, unlike all other pains I have known, always gets better at night. But I mustn’t spread myself on the symptoms since hearing symptoms is rather ‘a busman’s holiday’ (have you that phrase?) for you. One may perhaps add that the internal smell (‘bad smell in the nose’ like

'bad taste in the mouth') is rather allegorical: the world seems to stink, but (as often) the real corruption is in the observer.

I've just read S. V. Benét's *Western Star* which I thought, as far as it went, even better than *John Brown's Body*.¹⁵¹ Certainly more interesting and of more real value (so far as any comparison is possible) than any of the 'modern' poetry produced on this side of the Atlantic. I wish your *bad* poets weren't so exportable! You sent us Eliot in the flesh and Pound in the spirit.

My brother and I are both 'with book' at present and read proofs all day.¹⁵² Mine is a big and (to the taste) dull, academic work.

I always hope to hear that you are coming to Oxford again. All blessings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
June [2]9th 53

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen I never know what to say in cases like that of the sick child's mother whom you mention. There seems plenty of evidence that God does sometimes, in answer to prayer, heal in miraculous fashion: sometimes, it wd. appear, not. No doubt there are very good reasons for both.

I wouldn't quite say that 'religious Practices help the search for truth' for that might imply that they have no further use when the Truth has been found. I think about the practices what a wise old priest said to me about a 'rule of life' in general—'It is not a stair but a bannister' (or rail or balustrade—I don't know what you call it in America), i.e. it is, not the thing you ascend by but it is a protective against falling off and a help-up. I think thus we ascend. The stair is God's grace. One's climb from step to step is obedience. Many different kinds of bannisters exist, all legitimate. It is possible to get up without any bannisters, if need be: but no one wd. willingly build a staircase without them because it would be less safe, more laborious, and a little lacking in beauty.

Give my love to Genia. I am so glad all goes well.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELburnE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
July 10th 1953

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

Thanks for your letter of June 30th. I found the poem interesting—especially *metrically* interesting. From that point of view l. 3 is the important one: notice how it keeps the five beats because one is forced to give full value to the two long monosyllables—‘one goal’—

‘Remémber the ónly, the óne góal of lífe’

L.2 where you collapse into a 4 beat-rhythm is not, I think, nearly so good. ‘God speed’ at the end is a trifle weak isn’t it? And if one puts it into God’s mouth—as the context invites one to do—a little comic: like in the old miracle play where God, in a moment of excitement, is made to exclaim ‘By God!’

You know, over here people did *not* get that fairy-tale feeling about the coronation. What impressed most who saw it was the fact that the Queen herself appeared to be quite overwhelmed by the sacramental side of it. Hence, in the spectators, a feeling of (one hardly knows how to describe it)—awe—pity—pathos—mystery. The pressing of that huge, heavy crown on that small, young head becomes a sort of symbol of the situation of *humanity* itself: humanity called by God to be His vice-regent and high priest on earth, yet feeling so inadequate. As if He said ‘In my inexorable love I shall lay upon the dust that you are glories and dangers and responsibilities beyond your understanding.’ Do you see what I mean? One has missed the whole point unless one feels that we have all been crowned and that coronation is somehow, if splendid, a tragic splendour.

I am so glad about your short but precious conversation with your granddaughter. The whole unnatural situation is v. hard for me to understand. Perhaps it will end. We must both pray.

By the way isn’t a motor-car the *safest* place to be in a thunderstorm: isolated from the earth by rubber tyres wh. are non-conductors? Or do I only display my ignorance?

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen
July 10th 1953

My dear Roger

Thank you very much for *The Mahatma & the Hare*.¹⁵³ (But you must stop doing this sort of thing: I didn't forbid roofers in order to get presents instead!). The narrative of the hare is almost unbearable, as it was meant to be, yet unfairly, for it depends on giving poor Wat a human mind. If he had that he would perhaps have guns too. The book is impressive, and shows much more restraint than R.H. usually does in vision literature.

But far more important is your *K. Arthur*.¹⁵⁴ I read every word and think you have done, in general, a v. good job. The non-Malory parts are just as good as the Malory parts. You have managed the events, such as the begetting of Galahad, which present difficulties in a children's book, with wonderful skill. The style is exactly right: no unwelcome modernity, so that only close inspection reveals the absence of archaisms. The only place where, I think, you go wrong is on pp. 275–6 where you use the word *mysterious* four times. It wouldn't be a good adjective if used only once. I forget whether I have said before—and anyway I am going to say *now*—that Adjectives which are a direct command to the reader to feel a certain emotion are no use. In vain do we *tell* him that a thing was horrible, beautiful, or mysterious. We must so present it that *he* exclaims horrible! beautiful! or mysterious! There are exceptions but we must talk of that another time. Despite this blot, it's a grand book: many, many thanks.

Love to all.

Yours

Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
July 13/53

My dear Arthur

We have both of us been a little flustered, it seems. *First* you wrote a letter of wh. you sent me only part: at least, so I conclude from the fact that it had no signature and broke off in the middle of a sentence. *Then* I got it on a day when I was just going for a journey and lost it. So sorry. The facts are these.

Aug. 20th W. and I arrive Crawfordsburn.

Aug. 28th W. departs by L'pool boat.

Sept. 14th I depart

I hope this fits in with you?

R. L. Green has written a v. good Arthurian book for children in the Puffin series—not merely a re-telling of Malory, something much better than that, wh. he explains in the preface. I am sending you a copy when it comes out: if you want to refresh your memory of that cycle, you can get it all here with the 'brasting' left out. [155](#)

Yours

Jack

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
16 July 53

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

Pounds and ounces don't need translating, for we use the same tables (plagues they were at school, too) over here. It's babies need translating. Tho' indeed, now that I come to think of it, I'm not much better on adult weights. I've no idea of my own, and can't understand the interest of the question. I can understand people, and especially women, being interested in their *shape* (tho' those who can mistake *mal de mère* for *mal de mer*¹⁵⁶ must be an exception) but there seems to be a *non sequitur* in relating shape to weight quite so directly as is commonly done.

Screwtape as a 'stunt' idea (like Swift's Lilliput and Brobdingnag) is only good for a short use. I never showed more discretion, I believe, than in cutting that book short and never writing a sequel. The very fact that people ask for more proves it was the right length.

As to the reward for printed work (apart from money) one's first good reviews *are v. sweet*—perhaps dangerously so—and fame has *one* really solid good about it in so far as it makes some strangers approach you with a friendliness they would not have felt otherwise. It may even win you their prayers (as I hope I have yours: you certainly have mine). The rest is all in the order of those things wh. it is painful to miss but not really *v. nice* to get. (It is painful not to be able to scratch a place in the middle of one's back, yet scratching doesn't rank *v. high* among our pleasures).

We are both well, thanks and go to Ireland in August. It is on the whole a cold and wet summer here. This last week it has been more like what we usually get in April: alternate sun and showers with high winds. As the man rightly said, 'All weathers have their own beauty: if only people wd. enjoy that instead of always comparing it with some *other* weather.' I hope Charles (and the play) will grow in goodness, intelligence, wit, and kindness.

All blessings. Love from both.

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
July 16/53

My dear Roger

Hail to the young Richard.¹⁵⁷ Give June my warmest love and congratulations.

Look: I think I must abandon the idea of an expedition on my way back from Ireland, for *this* year. It is becoming clear that I shan't finish the proofs and horrible bibliography of my OHEL volume before we sail on Aug. 11th. That being so, every day between our return and the beginning of Michaelmas term becomes precious as gold: for if the job once drags on into another term, I don't know what will become of me. Anyway, the *jus trium liberorum*¹⁵⁸ will be keeping *you* pretty busy. Do you know why *liberi* means both 'freemen' & 'children'? Think it over and see if your historical imagination can solve the problem.

Yours

Jack

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
July 17/53

My dear George

It is I who shd. be shamed for I wrote asking you both to come & see *Comus* at Ludlow: but as I sent the letter to an address in U.S.A. you naturally never answered!

Thanks, George, for your prayers: I never doubted that I had them, as you both have mine. The *catarrh* phase of the sinus is quite gone: the pain remains, but never at night (which is a great mercy) and for a decreasing number of hours daily. And thanks also for the invitation. But we'll be in Ireland in Aug. We were hoping you'd come to us for some days after Sept 15. Can this be managed: any time between then and your term?

I'm damned with doing Bibliographies for my OHEL vol. How goes *The Isle of the Undead*?¹⁵⁹ All love.

Yours ever

Jack

TO MRS JOHNSON (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
July 17/53

Dear Mrs. Johnson

There are many interesting points in your letter of June 8. I'm v. glad you've seen that Christianity is as hard as nails: i.e. hard *and* tender at the same time. It's the *blend* that does it: neither quality wd. be any good without the other. You needn't worry about not feeling brave. Our Lord didn't—see the scene in Gethsemane.

How thankful I am that when God became Man He did not choose to become a man of iron nerves: that wd. not have helped weaklings like you and me nearly so much. Especially don't *worry* (you may of course *pray*) about being brave over merely possible evils in the future. In the old battles it was usually the reserve, who had to *watch* the carnage, not the troops who were in it, whose nerve broke first. Similarly I think you in America feel much more anxiety about atomic bombs than we do: because you are further from the danger. If and when a horror turns up, you will *then* be given Grace to help you. I don't think one is usually given it in advance. 'Give us our *daily* bread'¹⁶⁰ (not an annuity for life) applies to spiritual gifts too: the little *daily* support for the *daily* trial. Life has to be taken day by day & hour by hour.

The writer you quote ('in all those turning lights') *was* very good at the stage at wh. you met him: now, as is plain, you've got beyond him. Poor boob!—he thought his mind was his own! Never his own until he makes it Christ's: up till then merely a result of heredity, environment, and the state of his digestion. I become my own only when I give myself to Another.

'Does God seem real to me?' It varies: just as lots of other things I firmly believe in (my own death, the solar system) *feel* more or less real at different times. I have dreamed dreams but not seen visions:¹⁶¹ but don't think all that matters a hoot. And the saints say that visions are unimportant.¹⁶² If Our Lord *did* seem to appear to you at your prayer (bodily) what, after all, could you do but go on with your prayers? How cd. you know that it was not an hallucination?

You've got the Coronation right too: especially a sacrificial, even a tragic rite. And a symbol: for we (Man) have had laid on us the heavy crown of being lords of this planet, and the same contract between the frail, tiny person—the huge ritual goes for us all.

Did England, collectively, spend much on it? I shd. have thought most of the money was spent in England, transferred from one pocket to another. (Never forget that these *personifications* 'England does this' 'America does that' are only figures of speech: one has to figure out what they really mean).

No, no, I'm not committed to a real belief in Arthur, Merlin etc: all that comes in a *story*.¹⁶³ I haven't the faintest idea whether there was a real Grail or not. Of course I believe that people are still healed by faith: whether this has happened in any particular case, one can't of course say without getting a real-Doctor-who-is-also-a-real-Christian to go through the whole case-history.

All you say about your little girl is delightful. Bless her and all of you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS FRANK JONES (W): TS
REF.18/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
17th July 1953.

My dear Mrs. Jones,

Many thanks for your interesting letter. To us, the high light naturally is the news that you plan to visit this benighted country; and you shall indeed have two words with my brother and myself—and a lot more than two I hope; indeed we are optimistic enough to imagine that you might come and stay with us for a day or two in our suburban residence, and see how bachelors live. It would make a little break from the routine of hotels, and especially of English hotels. We shall be interested to hear your plans when the time draws nearer.

Oddly enough, we too have been seeing a college reunion, and mainly American at that, here in Oxford. The University had the bright idea of celebrating the Cecil Rhodes centenary by inviting all old Rhodes Scholars to visit Oxford, live in their old College rooms, and attend sundry dinner parties and so forth; there was a large gathering, and they all seemed to enjoy it.¹⁶⁴

I am glad the film interested you; my brother saw the actual coronation on the television, and was very much impressed with it: especially with the real devout piety shown by the Queen, who obviously took her vows very seriously. Like you, we have'nt got a set, and don't propose to get one; it is I think a very bad habit to develop. People who have sets seem to do nothing but go into a huddle over them every evening of their lives, instead of being out walking, or in their gardens. And of course, like all things which begin as luxuries, they end up by being necessities; an unofficial cost of living survey was recently held in our midland manufacturing districts, and quite a large percentage of the working class interviewed complained that if prices did'nt come down, or wages go up, they would not be able to maintain their payments on their television sets—which have now become part of the worker's *basic standard of living*. Just think of men drawing

perhaps \$40 a week, considering an article costing—cash down—perhaps \$250, a *necessity*!

I wish next time you send me a parcel, you would fill it with some of your summer weather; here for the past week and more, it has been just like April—patches of sunshine between heavy showers, and the morning temperature 54–58. No sign of any improvement today, and I have to go up to town this afternoon for a garden party. You would think I would have more sense at my time of life, would’nt you?

With all best wishes to you both, and to Freiherr von und zu Brock von Grabenbruch, Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis¹⁶⁵

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

July 23rd 53

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen I think your decision ‘a rule of life, without membership’ is a good one. It is a great joy to be able to ‘feel’ God’s love as a reality, and one must give thanks for it and use it. But you must be prepared for the feeling dying away again, for feelings are by nature impermanent. The great thing is to continue to believe when the feeling is absent: & these periods do quite as much for one as those when the feeling is present.

It sounds to me as if Genia had a pretty good husband on the whole. So much matrimonial misery comes to me in my mail that I feel those whose partner has no worse fault than being stupider than themselves may be said to have drawn a prize! It hardly amounts to a Problem. I take it that in every marriage natural love sooner or later, in a high or a low degree, comes up against difficulties (if only the difficulty that the original state of ‘being in love’ dies a natural death) which force it either to turn into dislike or else to turn into Christian charity. For all our natural feelings are, not resting places, but *points d’appui*, springboards. One has to *go on from* there, or *fall back from* there. The merely human pleasure in being loved must either go bad or become the divine joy of loving. But no doubt Genia knows all this. It’s all quite in the ordinary run of Christian life. See I Peter iv, 12 ‘Think it not strange etc.’¹⁶⁶

I don't remember any question of Genia's to wh. the answer wd. have been 'Read my children's books'! I have to guard against making my letters into advertisements, you know!

The sinusitis is *much* better, if not quite gone. You are all in my prayers: and now I must go to my work.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen etc.
Aug. 1st [1953]

Dear Mrs. Shelburne— Thanks for yours of the 16th. Our climatic troubles are just the opposite of yours; one of the coldest and wettest summers I remember. But I'd dislike your heat v. much more than our cold.

I am so glad you gave me an account of the lovely priest. How little people know who think that holiness is dull. When one meets the real thing (and perhaps, like you, I have met it only once) it is irresistible.¹⁶⁷ If even 10% of the world's population had it, would not the whole world be converted and happy before a year's end?

Yes, I too think there is lots to be said for being no longer young: and I do most heartily agree that it is just as well to be past the age when one expects or desires to attract the other sex. It's natural enough in our species, as in others, that the young birds shd. show off their plumage—in the mating season. But the trouble in the modern world is that there's a tendency to rush all the birds on to that age as soon as possible and then keep them there as late as possible, thus losing all the real value of the *other* parts of life in a senseless, pitiful attempt to prolong what, after all, is neither its wisest, its happiest, or most innocent period. I suspect merely commercial motives are behind it all: for it is at the showing-off age that birds of both sexes have least sales-resistance!

Naturally I can have no views on a choice between Richmond and Washington any more than on one between Omsk and Teheran! But of course you shall have my prayers.

Sorry to hear about the fall: they're nasty things. I must stop now, for I'm dead tired from standing at catalogue-shelves in a library all morning verifying titles of books & editions. I think, like the Irishman in the story 'I'd sooner *walk* 10 miles than *stand* one'. I go to Ireland on the 11th so don't be surprised if you don't hear from me again till the end of September. All blessings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO LAURENCE HARWOOD (BOD):

Magdalen
Aug 2nd 53

My dear Lawrence—

I was sorry to hear from Owen Barfield that you have taken a nasty knock over History Prelim.¹⁶⁸ Sorry, because I know it can't be much fun for you: not because I think the thing is necessarily a major disaster. We are now so used to the examination system that we hardly remember how very recent it is and how hotly it was opposed by some quite sincere people. Trollope (no fool) was utterly sceptical about its value: and I myself, tho' a don, sometimes wonder how many of the useful, or even the great, men of the past wd. have survived it. It doesn't test all qualities by any means: not even all qualities needed in an academic life. And anyway, what a small part of life that is. And if you are not suited for that, it is well to have been pushed forcibly out of it at an earlier rather than a later stage. It is much worse to waste three or more years getting a Fourth or a Pass. You can now cut your losses and start on something else.

At the moment, I can well imagine, everything seems in ruins. That is an illusion. The world is full of capable and useful people who began life by ploughing in exams. You will laugh at this *contre temps*¹⁶⁹ some day. Of course it wd. be disastrous to go to the other extreme and conclude that one was a genius because one had failed in a prelim—as if a horse imagined it must be a Derby winner because it couldn't be taught to pull a four-wheeler!—but I don't expect that is the extreme to which you are temperamentally inclined.

Are you in any danger of seeking consolation in *Resentment*? I have no reason to suppose you are, but it is a favourite desire of the human mind (certainly of my mind!) and one wants to be on one's guard against it. And that is about the only way in which an early failure like this can become a real permanent injury. A belief that one has been misused, a tendency ever after to snap and snarl at 'the system'—that, I think, makes a man always a bore, usually an ass, sometimes a villain. So don't think *either* that you are no good *or* that you are a Victim. Write the whole thing off and get on.

You may reply 'It's easy talking.' I shan't blame you if you do. I remember only too well what a hopeless oyster to be opened the world seemed at your age. I would have given a good deal to anyone who cd. have assured me that I ever wd. be able to persuade anyone to pay me a living wage for anything I cd. do. Life consisted of applying for jobs which other people got, writing books that no one wd. publish, and giving lectures wh. no one attended. It all *looks* perfectly hopeless. Yet the vast majority of us manage to get in somewhere and shake down somehow in the end.

You are now going through what most people (at any rate most of the people I know) find in retrospect to have been the most unpleasant period of their lives. But it won't last: the road usually improves later. I think life is rather like a lumpy bed in a bad hotel. At first you can't imagine how you can lie on it, much less sleep in it. But presently one finds the right position and finally one is snoring away. By the time one is called it seems a v. good bed and one is loth to leave it.

This is a devilish stodgy letter. There's no need to bother answering it. I go to Ireland on the 11th. Give my love to all & thank Sylvia for my bathing suit.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS EMILY MCLAY (W):[170](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Aug 3rd 1953

Dear Mrs. McLay

I take it as a first principle that we must not interpret any one part of Scripture so that it contradicts other parts: and specially we must not use an Apostle's teaching to contradict that of Our Lord. Whatever St Paul may have meant, we must not reject the parable of the sheep and the goats (Matt. XXV. 30–46). There, you see there is nothing about Predestination or even about Faith—all depends on works. But how this is to be reconciled with St Paul's teaching, or with other sayings of Our Lord, I frankly confess I don't know. Even St Peter you know admits that he was stumped by the Pauline epistles (II Peter III. 16–17).[171](#) What I *think* is this. Everyone looking back on *his own* conversion must feel—and I am sure the feeling is in some sense true—'It is not *I* who have done this. I did not choose Christ: He chose me. It is all free grace, wh. I have done nothing to earn.' That is the Pauline account: and I am sure it is the only true account of every conversion *from the inside*. Very well. It then seems to us logical & natural to turn this personal experience into a general rule 'All conversions depend on God's choice'.

But this I believe is exactly what we must not do: for generalisations are legitimate only when we are dealing with matters to which our faculties are adequate. Here, we are not. *How* our individual experiences are *in reality* consistent with (a) Our idea of Divine justice, (b) The parable I've just quoted & lots of other passages, we don't & can't know: what is clear is that we can't find a consistent formula. I think we must take a leaf out of the scientists' book. They are quite familiar with the fact that, for example, Light has to be regarded *both* as a wave in the ether and as a stream of particles. No one can make these two views consistent. Of course reality must be self-consistent: but till (if ever) we can *see* the consistency it is better to hold two inconsistent views than to ignore one side of the evidence.

The real inter-relation between God's omnipotence and Man's freedom is something we can't find out. Looking at the Sheep & the Goats every man can be quite sure that every kind act he does will be accepted by Christ. Yet, equally, we all do feel sure that all the good in us comes from Grace. We have to leave it at that. I find the best plan is to take the Calvinist view of my own virtues and other people's vices: and the other view of my own vices and other people's virtues.¹⁷² But tho' there is much to be *puzzled* about, there is nothing to be *worried* about. It is plain from Scripture that, in whatever sense the Pauline doctrine is true, it is not true in any sense which *excludes* its (apparent) opposite.

You know what Luther said: 'Do you doubt if you are chosen? Then say your prayers and you may conclude that you are.'¹⁷³

Yrs. Sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD): TS

365/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
5th August 1953.

My dear Bles,

I know naught of these people: but perhaps it will do if I ask you to send them *Mere Christianity* and *Miracles*. A Portuguese American Presbyterian must be a most fearful wildfowl!—or am I mistranslating.¹⁷⁴

Kind regards to both.

Yours,¹⁷⁵

TO MRS EMILY MCLAY (W):

Magdalen
Aug 8th 1953

Dear Mrs. McLay

Your experience in listening to those philosophers gives you the technique one needs for dealing with the dark places in the Bible. When one of the philosophers, one whom you know on other grounds to be a sane and decent man, said something you didn't understand, you did not at once

conclude that he had gone off his head. You assumed you'd missed the point.

Same here. The two things one must NOT do are (a) To believe, on the strength of Scripture or on any other evidence, that God is in any way evil. (In Him is no *darkness* at all.)¹⁷⁶ (b) To wipe off the slate any passage which seems to show that He is.¹⁷⁷ Behind that apparently shocking passage, be sure, there lurks some great truth which you don't understand. If one ever *does* come to understand it, one will see that [He] is good and just and gracious in ways we never dreamed of. Till then, it must be just left on one side.

But why are baffling passages left in at all? Oh, because God speaks not only for us little ones but for the great sages and mystics who *experience* what we only *read about*, and to whom all the words have therefore different (richer) contents. Would not a revelation which contained nothing that you and I did not understand, be for that v. reason rather suspect? To a child it wd. seem a contradiction to say both that his parents made him and that God made him, yet we see both can be true.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO DON GIOVANNI CALABRIA (V):

Collegium Stae Mariae
Magdalenae apud
Oxonienses

Aug. x. MCMLIII Dilectissime Pater— Accepi litteras tuas V to Augusti datas. Expecto cum gratiarum actione opuscula, specimen artis vestrae typographicae: quae tamen non videbo nisi post V hebdomadas quia pertransibo cras (si Deo placuerit) in Hiberniam; incunabula mea et dulcissimum refugium, quoad amoenitatem locorum et caeli temperiem quamquam rixis et odiis et saepe civilibus armis dissentientium religionum atrocissimam. Ibi sane et vestri et nostri ‘ignorant quo spiritu ducantur’: carentiam caritatis pro zelo accipiunt et reciprocam ignorantiam pro orthodoxia. Puto, fere omnia facinora quae invicem perpetraverunt Christiani ex illo evenerunt quod religio miscetur cum re politica. Diabolus enim supra omnes ceteras humanas vitae partes rem politicam sibi quasi propriam—quasi arcem suae potestatis—vindicat. Nos tamen pro viribus (sc. quisque) suis mutuis orationibus incessanter laboremus pro caritate quae ‘multitudinem peccatorum tegit.’ Vale, sodes et pater.

C. S. Lewis

The College of St Mary Magdalen
Oxford
Aug. 10 1953

Dearest Father—

I have received your letter dated the 5th August. I await with gratitude the pamphlets—a specimen of your people’s printing skill: which however I shall not see for 5 weeks because tomorrow I am crossing over (if God so have pleased) to Ireland: my birthplace and dearest refuge so far as charm of landscape goes, and temperate climate, although most dreadful because of the strife, hatred and often civil war between dissenting faiths.

There indeed both yours and ours ‘know not by what Spirit they are led’.¹⁷⁸ They take lack of charity for zeal and mutual ignorance for orthodoxy.

I think almost all the crimes which Christians have perpetrated against each other arise from this, that religion is confused with politics. For, above all other spheres of human life, the Devil claims politics for his own, as almost the citadel of his power. Let us, however, with mutual prayers pray with all our power for that charity which ‘covers a multitude of sins’.¹⁷⁹
Farewell, comrade and father.

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen
Aug. 10th 53

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

I have just got your letter of the 6th. Oh I *do* so sympathise with you: job-hunting, even in youth, is a heartbreaking affair and to have to go back to it now must be simply—I was going to say ‘simply Hell’, but no one who is engaged in prayer and humility, as you are, can be there, so I’d better say ‘Purgatory’. (We have as a matter of fact good authorities for calling it something other than Purgatory. We are told that even those tribulations wh. fall upon us by necessity, if embraced for Christ’s sake, become as meritorious as *voluntary* sufferings and every missed meal can be converted into a fast if taken in the right way).¹⁸⁰

I suppose—tho’ the person who is *not* suffering feels shy about saying it to the person who *is*—that it is good for us to be cured of the illusion of ‘independence’. For of course independence, the state of being indebted to no one, is eternally impossible. Who, after all, is more totally dependent than what we call the man ‘of independent means’. Every shirt he wears is made by other people out of other organisms and the only difference between him and us is that even the money whereby he pays for it was earned by other people. Of course you *ought* to be dependent on your daughter and son-in-law. Support of parents is a most ancient & universally acknowledged duty. And if you come to find yourself dependent on anyone else you mustn’t mind. But I am very, very sorry. I’m a panic-y person about money myself (which is a most shameful confession and a thing dead against Our Lord’s words)¹⁸¹ and poverty frightens me more than anything else except large spiders and the tops of cliffs: one is sometimes even tempted to say that if God wanted us to live like the lilies of the field He

might have given us an organism more like theirs! But of course He is right. And when you meet anyone who *does* live like the lilies, one *sees* that He is.

God keep you and encourage you. I am just about to go off to Ireland where I shall be moving about, so I shan't hear from you for several weeks. All blessings and deepest sympathy.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

The *Silver Chair* was published by Geoffrey Bles of London on 7 September 1953.

On 8 September Warnie wrote to Geoffrey Bles:

REF.28/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
8th September 1953.

Dear Mr. Bles,

My brother will be in Eire until the 14th and I have just returned from that delectable land to find a heavy accumulation of mail. From you, I have to acknowledge on his behalf, (1). Spanish Screwtape.

(2). Proofs of *The horse and his boy*, and (3). Statement and cheque for £886–16–1.

He will no doubt be writing to you himself after his return.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Mycroft

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
14/9/53

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen I am just back from Donegal (wh. was heavenly) and find as usual a ghastly pile of unanswered letters, so I must be brief. The important idea of a Christian sanatorium is worth a whole letter, but I want to use *this* one for another subject. I hope you won't be angry at what I'm going to say— I think that idea of Genia's job being to concentrate on 'bringing out the best of Eddie' is really rather dangerous. Wouldn't you yourself think it sounded—well, to put it bluntly, a bit *priggish*, if applied to any other couple? It sounds as if the poor chap were somehow infinitely inferior.

Are you giving full weight to the very raw deal he has had in marrying a girl who has nearly always been ill? Men haven't got your maternal instinct, you know. To find a patient where one hoped for a helpmeet is much more frustrating for the husband than for the wife. And by all I hear he has come through the test v. well. But if just as she is ceasing to be a patient she were to become the self-appointed Governess or Improver—well, wd. any camel's back stand that last straw? I don't think Genia is at present inclined (or not much) to start 'educating' her husband. I am sure you will take care not to influence her in that direction. Because, really, you know, it wd. be so easy, without in the least intending it, to glide into the rôle (I shudder to write it) of the traditional home-breaking mother-in-law. All those old jokes have *something* behind them.

I do hope I haven't made you an enemy for life. If I have taken too great a liberty, you have rather lured me into it. And I did feel signs of danger. And don't you think in general that a girl who has a faithful, kind, sober husband (there are so many of the other kind) whom she has promised to love, honour, & obey, had better just get on with the job? Do forgive me if I misunderstand and put the point too crudely. At any rate, my prayers will not cease.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO PHYLLIDA (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
14th Sept 1953

Dear Phyllida

Although your letter was written a month ago I only got it to-day, for I have been away in Donegal (which is glorious). Thanks v. much: it is so interesting to hear exactly what people do like and don't like, which is just what grown-up readers never really tell.

Now about *Kids*. I also hate the word. But if you mean the place in *P. Caspian* chap 8, the point is that Edmund hated it too.¹⁸² He was using the rottenest word just because it *was* the rottenest word, running himself down as much as possible, because he was making a fool of the Dwarf—as you might say 'Of course I can only *strum*' when you really knew you could play the piano quite as well as the other person. But if I have used *Kids* anywhere else (I hope I haven't) then I'm sorry: you are quite right in objecting to it. And you are also right about the party turned into stone in the woods. I thought people would take it for granted that Aslan would put it all right. But I see now I should have said so.

By the way, do you think the Dark Island is *too* frightening for small children? Did it give your brother the horrors? I was nervous about that, but I left it in because I thought one can never be sure what will or will not frighten people.

There are to be 7 Narnian stories altogether. I am sorry they are so dear: it is the publisher, not me, who fixes the price. Here is the new one.¹⁸³

As I say, I think *you* are right about the other points but I feel sure *I'm* right to make them grow up in Narnia. Of course they will grow up in this world too. You'll see. You see, I don't think age matters so much as people think. Parts of me are still 12 and I think other parts were already 50 when I was 12: so I don't feel it v. odd that they grow up in Narnia while they are children in England.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
14/9/53

Dear Miss Boddle

I have had 'Miss Boddle's colleague' in my daily prayers for a long time now: is that the same young man you mention in your letter of July 3rd, or do I now say 'colleagues'? Yes: don't bother him with *my* books if an aunt (it somehow *would* be an aunt—tho' I must add that most of my aunts were delightful) has been ramming them down his throat.

You know, *P. Progress* is not, I find (to my surprise) everyone's book. I know several people who are both Christians and lovers of literature who can't bear it. I doubt if they were made to read it as children. Indeed, I rather wonder whether that 'being made to read it' has spoiled so many books as is supposed. I suspect that all the people who tell me they were 'put off' Scott by having *Ivanhoe*¹⁸⁴ as a holiday task are people who wd. never have liked Scott anyway.

I don't believe anything will keep the right reader & the right book apart. But our literary loves are as diverse as our human! You couldn't make me like Henry James or dislike Jane Austen whatever you did. By the bye did Chesterton's *Everlasting Man* (I'm sure I advised you to read it) succeed or fail with you?¹⁸⁵ And how wd. it be likely to succeed with D. Dale?

All blessings.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
15/9/53

Just back from Donegal (wh. was as near heaven as you can get in Thulcandra)¹⁸⁶ and of course piles of letters to plough through. Thanks v. much indeed for the revised *T. of T.*¹⁸⁷ and the nice things you say about me.

Here's the latest Narnian book. Love to all. J.

TO DON GIOVANNI CALABRIA (V):

Magdalen College
Oxford

XV. Sept. MCMLIII Pater dilectissime

Gratias ago pro epistola tua, data iii Sept., necnon pro exemplari libri cui nomen *Instaurare Omnia in Christo*.

De statu morali nostri temporis (cum me jusseris garrere) haec sentio. Seniores, ut nos ambo sumus, semper sunt *laudatores temporis acti*, semper cogitant mundum pejorem esse quam fuerit in suis juvenilibus annis. Ergo cavendum est ne fallamur. Hôc tamen proposito, certe sentio gravissima pericula nobis incumbere. Haec eveniunt quia maxima pars Europae apostasiam fecit de fide Christiana. Hinc status pejor quam illum statum quem habuimus ante fidem receptam. Nemo enim ex Christianismo redit in statum quem habuit ante Christianismum, sed in pejorem: tantum distat inter paganum et apostatam quantum innuptam et adulteram. Nam fides perficit naturam sed fides amissa corrumpit naturam. Ergo plerique homines nostri temporis amiserunt non modo lumen supernaturale sed etiam lumen illud naturale quod pagani habuerunt. Sed Deus qui Deus misericordiarum est etiam nunc non omnino demisit genus humanum. In junioribus licet videamus multam crudelitatem et libidinem, nonne simul videmus plurimas virtutum scintillas quibus fortasse nostra generatio caruit. Quantam fortitudinem, quantam curam de pauperibus aspicimus! Non desperandum. Et haud spernendus numerus (apud nos) iam redeunt in fidem.

Haec de statu praesenti: de remediis difficilior quaestio. Equidem credo laborandum esse non modo in evangelizando (hoc certe) sed etiam in quâdam praeparatione evangelica. Necesse est multos ad legem naturalem revocare *antequam* de Deo loquamur. Christus enim promittit remissionem peccatorum: sed quid hoc ad eos qui, quum legem naturalem ignorent, nesciunt se peccavisse. Quis medicamentum accipiet nisi se morbo teneri sciat? Relativismus moralis hostis est quem debemus vincere antequam Atheismum aggrediamur. Fere auserim dicere 'Primo faciamus juniores bonos Paganos et postea faciamus Christianos'. Deliramenta haec? Sed habes quod petisti. Semper et tu et congregatio tua in orationibus meis.

Vale,

C. S. Lewis

Magdalen College
Oxford
15 September 1953

Dearest Father

Thank you for your letter dated 3rd September¹⁸⁸ and also for the copy of the book entitled *The Renewal of All Things in Christ*.¹⁸⁹ Regarding the moral condition of our times (since you bid me prattle on) I think this. Older people, as we both are, are always 'praisers of times past'.¹⁹⁰ They always think the world is worse than it was in their young days. Therefore we ought to take care lest we go wrong. But, with this proviso, certainly I feel that very grave dangers hang over us. This results from the apostasy of the great part of Europe from the Christian faith. Hence a worse state than the one we were in before we received the Faith. For no one returns from Christianity to the same state he was in before Christianity but into a worse state: the difference between a pagan and an apostate is the difference between an unmarried woman and an adulteress. For faith perfects nature but faith lost corrupts nature. Therefore many men of our time have lost not only the supernatural light but also the natural light which pagans possessed.

But God, who is the God of mercies,¹⁹¹ even now has not altogether cast off the human race. In younger people, although we may see much cruelty and lust, yet at the same time do we not see very many sparks of virtues which perhaps our own generation lacked? How much courage, how much concern for the poor do we see! We must not despair. And (among us) a not inconsiderable number are now returning to the Faith.

So much for the present situation. About remedies the question is more difficult. For my part I believe we ought to work not only at spreading the Gospel (that certainly) but also at a certain preparation for the Gospel. It is necessary to recall many to the law of nature *before* we talk about God.¹⁹² For Christ promises forgiveness of sins: but what is that to those who, since they do not know the law of nature, do not know that they have sinned? Who will take medicine unless he knows he is in the grip of disease? Moral relativity is the enemy we have to overcome before we tackle Atheism. I would almost dare to say 'First let us make the younger generation good pagans and afterwards let us make them Christians.'

These are ravings? But you have what you requested.

Always you and your Congregation are in my prayers.

Farewell,

C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD):

Magdalen etc.
15/9/53

Dear Mr. Kinter

I have been away in Donegal (which is glorious beyond all my dreams) and have only just got your letter of Aug 23d. It was nice to hear from you again. Yes: it is great watching these images of the Mountain, the Wood, the Island etc. as they pass from one man's work to another's. I don't know Read's *Green Child*,¹⁹³ but have no difficulty in believing what you say of it. There is a deal of really *Hellish* literature going about at present. I am also interested in what you say about Messiaen (an odd name, by the way).¹⁹⁴ But if I heard the works they wd. only probably be quite beyond me. Please remember me to your wife and accept my kindest regards.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

P. S. Harding is exciting, isn't he?¹⁹⁵

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD): TS

28/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
17th September 1953.

My dear Bles,

Thanks for yours of the 16th. I am glad you pointed out that passage.¹⁹⁶ No: it won't do. Of course the children (except Aravis when telling her story in the grand manner)¹⁹⁷ don't talk Arabian Nights style anywhere: but they must'nt, I agree, go so far in the other direction as 'rot'. I'll mend it.

I hope you both had as good a holiday as I.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO PHYLLIDA (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford

Dear Phyllida

I feel as one does when *after* 'showing up' one's work one realises one has made the very same mistake one got into a row for last week! I mean, *after* sending off the book, I read it myself and found 'Kids' again twice. I really will take care not to do it again. The earlier part of Rilian's story, told by the owl, was *meant* to sound further-off and more like an ordinary fairy-tale so as to keep it different from the part where I get on to telling it myself. I think the *idea* of making some difference is right: but of course what matters in books is not so much the ideas as how you actually carry them out.

All good wishes and love to both.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Oct 1st 1953

Dear Ruth,

Rachel has been ready for a long time: you know I am of the generation who was brought up to hold that the initiative must come from you.¹⁹⁸ Long Crendon—long since endeared to me because Owen Barfield used to live there—will now have a second good association. I shall be among the first etc—but this sounds rather like Mr. Collins!¹⁹⁹ Warnie joins me in our duties and warm welcome to these parts. It is, as you have seen, a lovely village.

Yours in all service Jack Lewis

TO NELL BERNERS-PRICE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Oct 3.53

Dear Nell

My correspondence has lately been in much the same state as yours: that is, on coming back from a holiday in Ireland I found about 60 letters to deal with.

I had a lovely time over there: the best part in Donegal, all Atlantic breakers & golden sand and peat and heather and donkeys and mountains and (what is most unusual there) a heat wave and cloudless skies. Walks were much interrupted by blackberries: so big and juicy, and sweet that you just couldn't pass without picking them. Some funny hotels, though. One has often found bathrooms with no *hot* water but I found one with no *cold*! You've no idea how tired one gets waiting for a bath to cool. In fact, with all the steam round you, it really means having a Turkish bath before the ordinary one!

I'm delighted to learn of your good year: how cosmopolitan you have become! Also thanks for telling me about Penelope and the books: give her my love.

You were a shrew to come so near without looking me up—and then, God bless my soul, to expect *me* to go to you! I'll try one of these days all the same: it's too nice to miss. I agree about prison—at least for Mrs. Hooker. She has so often been there, for similar offences, that it ought to be quite clear the treatment doesn't work. Have you been having, like us, the most exquisite autumn? Love to Alan & yourself.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
3/10/53

Dear Mrs Van Deusen

I was extremely glad to get your letter. I was beginning to feel that my own had been presumptuous and intolerable and had been praying not that it might do good but that it might not do harm. Whether I was right or wrong, you came out of it with flying colours: if few can give good advice, fewer still can hear with patience advice either good or bad.

About your Project (it was, wasn't it, for the founding of a sort of rest-home where people in psychological difficulties could get Christian advice, sympathy, and, if necessary, treatment?), the whole thing—as with most conceptions either practical or literary—turns on the execution. All depends on the quality of the individual helpers. I suspect you will find them only by what seems chance but is really an answer to prayer. No 'machinery' of committees and selection & references, however well devised, will do it, I imagine. And perhaps it is just by your discovering, or failing to discover, the right people, that God will show you whether He wishes you to do this or not (Beware here of *my* unsanguine temper, more tempted to sloth than to precipitance, and ready to despond: take my advice always with a grain of salt).

It is hard, when difficulties arise to know whether one is meant to overcome them or whether they are signs that one is on the wrong track. I suppose the deeper one's own life of prayer and sacraments the more trustworthy one's judgement will be.

You 'get me where I live' about Van's Aunt. I have been in v. close contact with a case like that. It is harrowing. My doctor (a v. serious Christian) kept on reminding me that *so much* of an old person's speech & behaviour must really be treated as a medical not a spiritual fact: that, as the organism decays, the true state of the soul can less and less express itself thro' it. So that things may be neither so miserable (nor so wicked, we must sometimes add) as they seem. I sometimes wonder whether the incarnation of the soul is not gradual at both ends?—i.e. not *fully* there yet in infancy and no longer fully there in old age.

The first syllable of Donegal rhymes with FUN, the last with ALL, there are 3, and the accent is on the last—Dun-i-GaÚ l. Blessings on all of you.

Yours (most relieved) C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Oct 6/53

My dear Arthur

I have ordered Blackwells to send you a copy of Barfield's ('G. A. L. Burgeon's') book.²⁰⁰ I enclose one wh. I found worth reading but don't want to keep. If you don't like it, pass it on to someone else. You'll agree with the author about Noise! I think you'll find in him an approach to Christianity wh. you haven't v. much met yet & wh. is worth knowing about; it is fairly widely spread here. Of course parts of it are too explicitly R.C. for us but a lot of common ground remains.

Here are some C. M. Yonge titles, all good books: *The Daisy Chain* and its sequel *The Trial*; *The Pillars of the House*; *The Three Brides*; *The Two Sides of the Shield*; *Dynevor Terrace*. Not so good (but W. differs from me) is *Nutty's Father*.²⁰¹

I wish you had enjoyed our holiday as much as I did! But I expect you're enjoying yourself all the more now. All blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO JOHN RICHARDS (BOD):²⁰²TS
449/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
13th October 1953.

Dear Mr. Richards,

Thank you for your kind and encouraging letter of the 11th.

Tolkien's great romance, *The Lord of the Rings*, of which the first volume will soon be published, just skirts the theme of the True West. You'll find it immensely worth reading on other accounts as well.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Oct 15/1953

Dear Mrs. Jessup

It is a very long time since any letters passed between us. I am in fact in your debt, counting it strict 'turn-about', but I regarded your last letter as an answer—certainly not a question, for I think it contained none!

But you have not all this time been absent from my daily prayers. I have been very heavily worked, except for a holiday in Ireland, and I have not been very well: nothing serious, only the harmless complaint which is called *sinusitis*, which gives pain and rather 'gets you down', but nothing worse. I hope you are well and happy (as happiness goes with mortals like us—I know you are on earth, not in heaven!). Some time, where you have nothing urgent to do, write me a line to say how you go on. This of mine of course calls for no answer: it is only a little wave of the flag to show you I'm still here and never unmindful even when I'm silent.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Oct 17/53

My dear Arthur

I wonder are you allowing for the fact that in the *Heir*²⁰³ one of the main characters is, and is meant to be, a horrible prig, and the other a man who believes himself to be under (almost) a hereditary curse? This justifies dramatically in both a degree of introspection which may not at all be C. M. Yonge's idea of normal Christian life. Mrs Edmonstone (clearly a good woman) does not show the same trait, nor does Amy.

I shall of course be perfectly happy to spend our joint holiday in the Inn at C'burn this year, if it so falls out. If you are in England I think you might find a few nights in the College guest room not unendurable and I'd try to give you breakfast as late as the servants cd. be expected to bear. (There are, however, clocks that chime the quarters all over Oxford; perhaps that wd. be fatal.) I'll send you W's book²⁰⁴ as soon as it is out. I think you'll like it. V. difficult to write to Gundred about J.F.'s death, wasn't it.²⁰⁵

This has been the most exquisitely beautiful autumn I can remember.

Yours

Jack

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Oct 20th 53

My dear Bles

How stupid of me not to see that our old friend 'out of the frying pan into the fire' becomes nonsense when converted into 'better the frying pan than the fire'. I'm glad you pointed it out. And I can't think of any good substitute wh. cd. be fitted into the same number of spaces. So *dele.*²⁰⁶ The Phillips one is v. curious, because surely the argument at that point in Hebrews does precisely identify 'man' in the psalms with 'the Man', Our Lord.²⁰⁷

I am of course delighted at all you tell me about M.C. Very over-driven at present. We're both well: kindest regards to both of you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalen
Oct 25th 53

Dear Evans

I return the cuttings. I enjoyed them all, but the phrase-book items were the cream. And not only because you had good raw material: the showmanship was just right. I quite agree that when it comes to absurdity nature beats art: there's nothing in the lists of imaginary 'howlers' as funny as things I have really seen when examining. You will hardly believe the following but we had it offered in the college entrance exam: 'In any controversy half the people generally side with the majority and half with the minority.'

I have no brief against co-education. I am, in principle, inclined (having no school-mastering experience I wd. not go further than an inclination either way) to approve it. But just as fine printing (in itself a delightful thing) has *in fact* got itself mixed up with pornography, so co-education has *in fact* got itself mixed up with crank schools, take Dartington Hall.²⁰⁸ I didn't make Experiment House²⁰⁹ cranky because it was co-ed: I made it co-ed because it was cranky.

I must look up *A. G. Pym*:²¹⁰ can't remember if I've read it or not.

With all good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY NEYLAN (T):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Nov 5/53

Alas, it couldn't come at a worse time. I'm at it all day trying to finish the Bibliography (odious job) of my big OHEL book against time, in between tutorials: usually my day allows no leisure between 8.30 a.m. & 9.45 p.m. So I must hope to meet Sarah another time. Thanks *pro orationibus*.²¹¹ The sinus is not yet anything like so bad as it was last winter. Blessings on all— C.S.L.

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Nov 5/53

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen This must be a hasty scrawl as I'm working against time at present & usually have no free moment between 8.30 a.m. & 9.45 p.m.

So glad to hear all your good news. About CSR²¹² I'm the last person to give an opinion. I am so much the reverse of the type that 'joins things' or 'gets things up' that I'd be no fair judge even if I knew the parish and the people. Of course it all depends what the latter are really like! On that turns whether it is (a.) A holy, beneficent & sensible activity (b.) A harmless, if rather fussy, hobby (c.) A pestilent coven of snoopers & busybodies (d) A mixture of all three. It might be *anything* almost! I'm afraid you'll have to find out! Praying for 'a right judgement in all things'.²¹³

I hope in a few weeks I'll be through my present furore of work & able to correspond properly again. Bless you all Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Nov. 6/53

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

Oh I *am* glad, I *am* glad. And here's a thing worth recording. Of course I have been praying for you daily, as always, but latterly have found myself doing so with much more concern and especially about 2 nights ago, with such a strong feeling how very nice it would be, if God willed, to get a letter from you with good news. And then, as if by magic (indeed it is the whitest magic in the world) the letter comes to-day. Not (lest I should indulge in folly) that your relief had not in fact occurred *before* my prayer, but as if, in tenderness for my puny faith, God moved me to pray with especial earnestness just before He was going to give me the thing. How true that our prayers are really His prayers: He speaks to Himself through us.

I am also most moved at hearing how you were supported thro' the period of anxiety. For one *is* sometimes tempted to think that if He wanted us to be as un-anxious as the lilies of the field He really might have given us a constitution more like theirs! But then when the need comes *He* carries out in us His otherwise impossible instructions. In fact He always has to do all the things—all the prayers, all the virtues. No new doctrine, but newly come home to me. Forgive a short letter, quite inadequate to the subject: I am at present just so busy (tho' not unhappily so) that I don't know if I'm on my head or my heels. God bless you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

During the first week of November Joy Gresham arrived in London, this time with her two sons, David and Douglas. They took rooms in the Avoca House Hotel, 43 Belsize Park, Hampstead. A few days later they moved into a flat at 14 Belsize Park, in the hotel annexe.

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Nov 7th 53

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

This will have to be an inadequate scrawl for my brother, who drives the typewriter, is away and I've so much to do that I can hardly write—in the double sense that I've hardly time and that my right hand is stiff and tired with compulsory scribbling! Yes, babies (tho' I know yours is quite unlike all other babies!) do look like Sir W.²¹⁴ I wonder why? 'Trailing clouds of glory' I suppose.²¹⁵ I'd love to have seen that shop window and hope they have done the same with all the *Lion's* successors: there are 3 of these now, I hope you know.

Mrs. Williams²¹⁶ lives at 23 ANTRIM MANSIONS, LONDON, N.W.3. I think life is pretty hard for her and am *very* glad to hear of your friend's wish to write to her. You shd. warn her that Mrs. W. is *not* at all intellectual.

How wrong you are when you think that streamlined planes and trains wd. attract me to America. What I want to see there is yourself and 3 or 4 other good friends, after New England, the Rip Van Winkle Mts., Nantucket, the Huckleberry Finn country, the Rockies, Yellowstone Park, and a sub-Artic winter. And I shd. never come if I couldn't manage to come by sea instead of air: preferably on a cargo boat that took weeks on the voyage. I'm a rustic animal and a maritime animal: no good at great cities, big hotels, or all that. But this is becoming egotistical. And here comes my first pupil of the morning. All blessings, and love to all.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

I'd love to see a bear, a snow-shoe, and a real forest **TO GEOFFREY
BLES (BOD):**

Magdalen College
Oxford
Nov 12th 53

My dear Bles

Right-oh. I'll take the £17-0-0 and expect to have £8-10-0 Royalties deducted.

I can't tell you how glad I am that you spotted that howler about the frying pan and the fire. I wonder no hostile reviewer seized on it.²¹⁷ Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
27/xi/53

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

Thank you for your letter of Nov. 23rd. We have a good many things in common at the moment, for I also am dead tired (cab-horse tired) and I also have sinusitis. I don't think we exactly 'call it catarrh' over here. Intense catarrh is *one* symptom of sinusitis, and as none of us have heard of s. till quite lately I suppose cases of it used to be wrongly diagnosed as mere catarrh. I find myself that when it produces most catarrh it produces least pain and vice versa.

About sleep: do you find that the great secret (if one can do it) is not to *care* whether you sleep? Sleep is a jade who scorns her suitors but woos her scorners.

I feel exactly as you do about the horrid commercial racket they have made out of Christmas. I send no cards and give no presents except to children.

It is fun to see you agreeing with what you believe to be *my* views on prayer: well you may, for they are not mine but scriptural. 'Our prayers are God talking to Himself' is only Romans, VII, 26-27.²¹⁸ And 'praying to the end' is of course our old acquaintance, the parable of the Unjust Judge.²¹⁹

I am sure you will be glad to hear that your recent adventures have been a great support and 'corroboration' to me. I am also v. conscious (and was especially so while praying for you during your workless time) that anxiety is not only a pain wh. we must ask God to assuage but also a weakness we must ask Him to pardon—for He's told us take no care for the morrow. The news that you had been almost miraculously guarded from that sin and spared that pain and hence the good hope that we shall all find the like

mercy when our bad times come, has strengthened me much. God bless you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Nov 28th 1953

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen— Your letter links onto something I've been thinking of lately. There *are* two patterns of prayer in the N.T. (a) That in Gethsemane, 'Not my will but thine'²²⁰ (b) That in Mark xi, 24.²²¹

In the one the pray-er sees that what is asked may not be God's will: in the other he has complete faith not only 'in God' but in God's giving him the particular thing asked for. If both are taken as universal rules we get a contradiction for no one (so far as I can see) cd. follow both in the same prayer.

I can only suppose that neither is a universal rule, that each has its place, and that when-and-if God demands faith of the B type, He also gives it, & we shall know that we have to pray in the b manner, and that this is what happens to miracle workers.

If your Rector is such a person then he is right in praying that way himself, tho' presumably wrong in demanding that everyone shd. do the same. If he is a presumptuous person who *thinks* he is in the A [B?] class and isn't—well, that is not for us to judge.

As to whether God ever wills suffering, I think he is confused. We must distinguish in God, and even in ourselves, absolute will from relative will. No one absolutely wills to have a tooth out, but many will to have a tooth out *rather than* to go on with toothache. Surely in the same way God never absolutely wills the least suffering for any creature, but may will it *rather than* some alternative: e.g. He willed the crucifixion rather than that Man shd. go unredeemed (and so it was *not*, in all senses, His will that the cup shd. pass from His Son).

That's how I see the theoretical side of the thing. As for the practical—oh dear, oh dear! I certainly can't conceive any less suitable preparation for Holy Communion than a Discussion or any grosser abuse of language than to call a Discussion a 'meditation'. I think you and you only can decide whether it's *your* job to 'lead' a study group or not.

As for the 'blasting' sermon no doubt the *type* blasted is an evil one. Is there good evidence that the preacher meant you to be included in that type? It does sometimes happen that utterances intended to be general are given particular application by the hearers. If it really was addressed to you, then no doubt you must just try to forgive it (as you have done) and otherwise do nothing about it.

The Bishop sounds a good one and I don't see how you can go wrong in following his orders. He will know much better than I cd. at what point the frustrations and the risk of loss of charity (in oneself or others) occasioned by your parochial activities begin to outweigh the probabilities of usefulness. What a coil it all is: so much so that (as in graver matters) only by putting the will of God first & other considerations nowhere can one have peace. So glad to hear that all goes well with the young people. Love to all.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Dec 1st 1953

Dear Mrs. Jessup

I am so glad to hear that certain mountains have shrunk to molehills. As to the problem of Thomas Merton *versus* C.W., E.U., G.M.,²²² and C.S.L.:—
A. There are two meanings of *World* in N.T. (i) In ‘God so loved the World’²²³ it means the Creation—stars, trees, beasts, men, and angels. (ii) In ‘Love not the World’²²⁴ it means the ‘worldly’ life, i.e. the life built up by men in disregard of God, the life of money-making, ambition, snobbery, social success and ‘greatness’.

B. Most spiritual writers distinguish two vocations for Christians (i.) The monastic or contemplative life. (ii) The secular or active life. All Christians are called to abandon the ‘World’ (sense ii) in spirit, i.e. to reject as strongly as they possibly can its standards, motives, and prizes. But some are called to ‘come out of it’²²⁵ as far as possible by renouncing private property, marriage, their professions etc: others have to remain ‘in it’ but not ‘of it’.

I of course am in the second class and write for those who are also in it. This isn’t to say that I may not be (you may be sure I am) far too much ‘of it’. You, and your friend, must help me against that with your prayers. In so far as she accuses me of ‘worldliness’ she is right: but if by ‘earthiness’ she means my tendency to ‘come down to brass tacks’ and try to deal with the ordinary petty sins & virtues of secular & domestic life, she is wrong. That is a thing that ought to be done and has not yet been done enough.

About avoiding amusements & noise, it depends a bit who one is. Is the temptation to be absorbed by them? Then avoid. Is the temptation to avoid them thro’ distaste when charity bids one to participate? Then participate. At least that’s how I see it.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS
192/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
1st December 1953.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 20th. November, which should have been answered sooner, but I am very behindhand, owing to the illness of my brother (nothing serious, and now happily over); but of course his absence always delays matters. He sends you all good wishes, and promises you a letter as soon as he has got himself 'sorted out'. We both look forward with that schoolboy greediness which distinguishes the post-war Englishman, to the arrival of the little parcel, which we are sure will be of the standard which we have learnt to associate with the House of Gebbert. You shall indeed have a copy of the CHAIR, suitably autographed,²²⁶ and I only wish I could make you some better return for all your kindness to us.

I look forward to seeing the snapshot of the son and heir. So ignorant am I of all these matters, that I had always understood that *all* children were born with hair on their heads; apparently this is not the case? And that C.M. beat fourteen other arrivals?

Life here flows on much as usual, with one important exception; we are having the most extraordinary 'fall' within living memory; believe it or not, last Sunday, 29th. November, down at Brighton, they had to dig the deck chairs out of winter storage to meet the demands of the crowds which wanted to sit and bask on the beach. Tell *that* to your millionaires who go to Florida at this time of the year! Your (I mean American) stock is high here at the moment, over your behaviour about the Bermuda conference; some journalist of genius sent over an excerpt from the American Press which said, that whilst entirely disbelieving in the utility of the performance, it must be held 'because we must'nt run out on old Winnie',²²⁷ We don't think, any more than you, that the circus will accomplish anything, but this is the sort of small touch that *counts* in international relations.

Apropos of which, it seems a pity that our Queen could'nt have dropped in on America in the course of her tour; but I suppose international etiquette demands that, if she went there at all, it must be a full-dress state visit to Washington. Anyway I suppose a visit to the Republic of Panama *is* to all intents and purposes a visit to U.S.A. [228](#)

I am in the final agonies of producing a learned work for the Oxford Press, and very, very busy: so I hope you will excuse such a scanty letter.

With all best wishes to all three of you from us two, yours ever, [229](#)

TO SIR STANLEY UNWIN (BOD): [230](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 4th 1953

Dear Mr. Unwin

I would willingly do all in my power to secure for Tolkien's great book the recognition it deserves. Wd. the enclosed be any use? If not, tell me, and I will try again. I can't tell you how much we think of your House for publishing it.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

It would be almost safe to say that no book like this has ever been written. If Ariosto rivalled it in invention (in fact he does not) he would still lack its heroic seriousness. No imaginary world has been projected which is at once so multifarious and so true to its own inner laws; none so seemingly objective, so disinfected from the taint of an author's merely individual psychology; none so relevant to the actual human situation yet so free from allegory. And what fine shading there is in the variations of style to meet the almost endless diversity of scenes and characters—comic, homely, epic, monstrous, or diabolic!

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec. 4th 1953

Dear Mrs. Farrer

Yes, I know. That issue about the leonine form divides people sharply and you and I are on opposite sides of a fence.²³¹ I too have got *The Fellowship of the Ring* and have gluttonously read two chapters instead of saving it all for the week-end. Wouldn't it be wonderful if it really succeeded (in selling, I mean)? It would inaugurate a new age. Dare we hope?

Yours sincerely

Jack Lewis

TO J. R. R. TOLKIEN (P):

[The Kilns]
Dec 7th 1953

Dear Tollers

I have been trying—like a boy with a bit of toffee—to take Vol. I slowly, to make it last, but appetite overmastered me and it's now finished: far too short for me. The spell does not break. The love of Gimli²³² and the departure from Lothlórien is still almost unbearable.²³³ What came out stronger at this reading than on any previous one was the gradual coming of the shadow—step by step—over Boromir.²³⁴ **U**

I wrote what I could to Unwin.²³⁵ Even if he and you approve my words, think twice before using them: I am certainly a much, and perhaps an increasingly, hated man whose name might do you more harm than good. In *festina lente*.²³⁶ All the best.

Yours

Jack

TO EDNA GREENE WATSON (BOD): TS

504/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

7th December 1953.

Dear Mrs. Watson,

How very kind indeed of you to send me such a nice Xmas present; for, though things are improving over here under Winston, we are still not exactly living in a land of milk and honey—cake in particular remaining something of a luxury. So your parcel comes in very apropos to ‘mend our cheer’ as the older writers would have put it.

In one way we are exceptionally lucky this year, and that is in having so far a freak winter. I am writing in an *unwarmed* room, temperature 60, though it is a dull, sunless day; and the Sunday before last, the crowds were out sun-bathing on Brighton beach! Yesterday it was reported on the wireless that the butter-cups are out in Switzerland, the tulips in Holland, and that wild strawberries are being gathered in Norway; whilst in Petrograd they are having what I suppose seems to them like a heat wave—temperature in the open, 41. I hope you too in America are benefiting by this postponement of winter; not that I, personally, think it very healthy, but no doubt the real winter is lurking not far away.

Weather apart, there is not much to report here. Term is just over, and I have finished a troublesome academic book, and look forward to my vacation. But, alas, at my time of life, vacations get shorter and shorter: though to be sure, so do terms.

With all best wishes for a happy Christmas, and many thanks, Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO R. B. GRIBBON (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford

Dec. 10th 1953

Dear Mr. Gribbon

Thanks for your letter of the 7th, and all good wishes to the readers of Lucretius.²³⁷ Harding has fought his way *towards* genuinely Christian Theism, but whether he has yet quite reached it is another matter.²³⁸ I think his 'God' could be said to 'transcend'. Isn't each being in his hierarchy related to the one below it rather as my consciousness is related to any obscure consciousness there may be in my particles. And 'I' am not related to them (I think) simply as a Pantheistic god is to finite beings: for I am something v. much more than their sum or even their organising principle. Of course H's God is immanent in all things: but it is not the affirmation of immanence, but the denial of transcendence that constitutes Pantheism. In fact my main objection to Harding's system wd. be a v. different one: that we are in it completely *cut off* from God. There can be no I-Thou relation between Him and us any more than between me and my particles. Memo: I said in the preface that I wasn't at all sure whether his method of trying to restore reality to the universe wd. work. It was the mere attempt to do so which seemed to me so important and welcome.²³⁹

You'll have fun with Lucretius. I looked into him the other day & came to the melancholy conclusion that I didn't know so much Latin as I had done 30 years ago. With all good wishes.

Yours very sincerely, C. S. Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):²⁴⁰

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 16th. 1953

Dear Miss Sayers,

Thank you for a really august card. I have spent several minutes doing the Paper Pilgrimage with the aid of the pen-knife point—*dig*—and it shall be opened. Not *all* the doors in my copy do actually open: but that admits (only too easily) of an allegorical interpretation.²⁴¹ I see we have been in the pillory together along with company which I enjoy less than yours. Have you read Miss Nott yet?²⁴² And should I? I had hoped she might send us all (as someone said) UN complimentary copies: for I'm an Ulster Scot and don't like spending good siller²⁴³ on the lady. As for answering her (if one can) the trouble is that the people who read answers have hardly ever read the attack.

When may we expect the *Purgatorio*?²⁴⁴ It is perhaps my favourite part of the Comedy and I look forward very much to going up and round the terraces with your guidance. (By the way some of the paths on the Malvern hills are exactly like them.

I hope you are reading my brother's *Splendid Century*. It is his first book, tho' he is three years my senior, but he has been at the court of Louis XIV pretty well all his life. It seems to be going down well. I have got my huge 16th. c volume for the Oxford History of English Literature nearly off my chest now, and feel inclined never to do any work again as long as I live.

It seems very long since we met. Are you at all likely to be here in 1954? I hope so. In the meantime, all good wishes, all my duty, yours ever

C. S. Lewis

Lewis invited Joy and her sons to The Kilns for a three-day visit, from 17 to 20 December. Renée Pierce had now divorced her husband, Claude, preparatory to marrying Bill Gresham.

TO PHYLLIDA (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 18th 53

Dear Phyllida

Thanks for your most interesting cards. How do you get the *gold* so good? Whenever I tried to use it, however golden it looked on the shell, it always looked only like rough brown on the paper. Is it that you have some trick with the brush that I never learned, or that gold paint is better now than when I was a boy? The ‘conversation-piece’ (I think that is what the art critics wd. call your group) is excellent and most interesting. If you hadn’t told me your Father was mixing putty I shd. have thought he was mixing colours on a palette, but otherwise everything explains itself. I never saw a family who all had such a likeness to their Mother.

I’m not quite sure what you meant about ‘silly adventure stories without any point’. If they *are* silly, then having a point won’t save them. But if they are good in themselves, and if by a ‘point’ you mean some truth about the real world wh. one can take *out* of the story, I’m not sure that I agree. At least, I think that *looking for* a ‘point’ in that sense may prevent one from getting the real effect of the story in itself—like listening too hard for the words in singing which isn’t meant to be listened to that way (like an anthem in a chorus). I’m not at all sure about all this, mind you: only thinking as I go along.

We have two American boys in the house at present, aged 8 and 6 1/2.²⁴⁵ Very nice. They seem to use much longer words than English boys of that age would: not showing off but just because they don’t seem to know the short words. But they haven’t as good table manners as English boys of the same sort would.

Well—all good wishes to you all for Christmas, and very many thanks.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

P.S. Of course you're right about the Narnian books being better than the tracts: at least, in the way a picture is better than a map.

TO LAURENCE HARWOOD (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 21st 1953

My dear Lawrence,

What luck now? I enclose a trifle for current expenses. Please tell your father how sorry I was I couldn't have him for either of the two days he mentioned: we have had an American lady staying in the house with her two sons, eldest 9 1/2. Whew! But you have younger brothers, so you know what it is like. We didn't: we do now. Very pleasant, but like surf bathing, leaves one rather breathless. Love to yourself and Sylvia and all.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

Millions of letters to write.

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 21st 53

My dear Ruth

Welcome to what Tolkien calls the Little Kingdom, at least to the marches of it. Its centre lies about Worminghall: see his *Farmer Giles of Ham*.²⁴⁶ I hope much happiness awaits you there. It will be interesting to see how soon you rusticate—grow slow-witted like us and believe that the streets of Thame (now your metropolis) are paved with gold and shiver delightfully at the thought of its mingled wickedness and splendour.

Warnie (short for Warren, for my mother's mother was of that stock so we have 1/4 of gentle blood in us the rest being peasant and bourgeois) and I are dazed: we have had an American lady staying in the house with her two sons aged 9 1/2 and 8. I now know what we celibates are shielded from. I will never laugh at parents again. Not that the boys weren't a delight: but a delight like surf-bathing which leaves one breathless and aching. The energy, the *tempo*, is what kills. I have now perceived (what I always suspected from memories of our childhood) that the way to a child's heart is quite simple: treat them with seriousness & ordinary civility—they ask no more. What they can't stand (quite rightly) is the common adult assumption that everything they say shd. be twisted into a kind of jocularity. The mother (Mrs. Gresham) had rather a boom in USA in the *entre-guerre* as the poetess Joy Davidman: do you know her works?

This Vac. is pretty chock-a-block so far (oh if we could have Christmas without Xmas!) so that I rather hope than expect to knock on your door. Meanwhile, all greetings to you both. God bless the house, as we say in Ireland.

Yours

Jack

TO JOY GRESHAM (BOD):

Dec 22/53

Dear Joy—

As far as I can remember you were non-committal about *Childhood's End*.²⁴⁷ I suppose you were afraid that you might raise my expectations too high and lead to disappointment. If that was your aim, it has succeeded, for I came to it expecting nothing in particular and have been thoroughly bowled over. It is quite out of range of the common space-and-time writers; away up near Lindsay's *Voyage to Arcturus* and Wells's *First Men in the Moon*.²⁴⁸ It is better than any of Stapleton's.²⁴⁹ It hasn't got Ray Bradbury's delicacy, but then it has ten times his emotional power, and far more mythopoeia.

There is one bit of bad execution, I think: caps 7 and 8, where the author doesn't seem to be at home. I mean, as a social picture it is flat and stiff, and all the gadgetry (for me) is a bore. But what there is on the credit side! It is rather like the effect of the *Ring*²⁵⁰—a self-riching work, harmony piling up on harmony, grandeur on grandeur, pity on pity. The first section, merely on the mystery of the Overlords, wd. be enough for most authors. Then you find this is only the background, and when you have worked up to the climax in chap 21, you find what seems to be an anti-climax and it slowly lifts itself to the utter climax. The first climax, pp 165–185 brought tears to my eyes. There has been nothing like it for years: partly for the actual writing—'She has left her toys behind but ours go hence with us',²⁵¹ or 'The island rose to meet the dawn',²⁵² but partly (still more, in fact) because here we meet a modern author who understands that there may be things that have a higher claim than the survival or happiness of humanity: a man who cd. almost understand 'He that hateth not father and mother'²⁵³ and certainly wd. understand the situation in *Aeneid* III between those who go on to Latium & those who stay in Sicily.²⁵⁴

We are almost brought up out of *psyche* into *pneuma*.²⁵⁵ I mean, his myth does that to us imaginatively. Of course his own *thoughts* about what that higher level might be are not, in our eyes, very new or very profound: but that doesn't really make so much difference. (Though, by the way, it wd. have been better, even on purely literary grounds, to leave it in its

mystery, to philosophise less.) After all, few authors' glosses on their own myths are as good as the myths: unless, like Dante, they take the glosses from other men, real thinkers. The second climax, the long (not too long) drawn-out close is magnificent.

There is only one change (in conception) that I wd. want to make. It is a pity that he suggests a jealousy and a possible future revolt on the part of the Overlords. The motive is so ordinary that it cannot excite interest in itself, and as it is never going to be worked out the handling cannot compensate for the banality. How much better, how much more in tune with Clarke's own imagined universe, if the Overlords were totally resigned, submissive yet erect in an eternal melancholy—like the great heroes and poets in Dante's Limbo who live forever 'in desire but not in hope'.²⁵⁶ But now one is starting to re-write the book....

Many *minor* dissatisfactions, of course. The women are all made up out of a few abstract ideas of jealousy, vanity, maternity etc. But it really matters v. little: the thing is great enough to carry far more faults than it commits. It is a strange comment on our age that such a book lies hid in a hideous paper-backed edition, wholly unnoticed by the *cognoscenti*, while any 'realistic' drivel about some neurotic in a London flat—something that needs no real invention at all, something that any educated man could write if he chose, may get seriously reviewed and mentioned in serious books—as if it really mattered. I wonder how long this tyranny will last? Twenty years ago I felt no doubt that I should live to see it all break up and great literature return: but here I am, losing teeth and hair, and still no break in the clouds.

And now, what do *you* think? Do you agree that it is AN ABSOLUTE CORKER?²⁵⁷

TO PHYLLIS ELINOR SANDEMAN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 22d 1953

Dear Mrs. Sandeman—

First, you may be quite sure that I realise (I'd be a fool if I didn't) that there is something in a loss like yours which no unmarried person can understand. Secondly, that nothing I or anyone can say will remove the *pain*. There are no anaesthetics. About the bewilderment and about the right

and wrong ways of using the pain, something may perhaps be done: but one can't stop it hurting. The *worst* way of using the pain, you have already avoided: i.e. resentment.

Now about not wanting to pray, surely there is one person you v. much want to pray for: your husband himself.²⁵⁸ You ask, can he help you, but isn't this probably the time for you to help him. In one way, you see, you are further on than he: you had begun to know God. He couldn't help you in *that* way: it seems to me quite possible that you can now help more than while he was alive. So get on with that right away. Our Lord said that man & wife were one flesh and forbade any man to put them asunder:²⁵⁹ and we may be sure He doesn't do Himself what He forbade us to do. Your present prayers for yr. husband are still part of the married life.

Then as for your own shock in discovering that you hadn't got nearly as far as you thought towards loving the God who made your husband & gave him to you more than the gift. Well, no. One keeps on thinking one has crossed that bridge before one has. And God knows that it has to be crossed sooner or later, in this life or in another. And the first step is to discover that one has *not* crossed it yet. I wonder could He have really shown you this in any other way? Or even if we can't answer that, can't we trust Him to know *when* and *how* best the terrible operation can be done? Of course it is easy (I know) for the person who isn't feeling the pain to say all these things. You yourself wd. have been able to say them of anyone else's loss. Whatever *rational* grounds there are for doubt, you knew them all before: can it be rational (of course, it is *natural*) to weight them so differently simply because, this time, oneself is the sufferer? Doesn't that make it obvious that the doubts come not from the reason but from the shrinking nerves? At any rate, don't try to argue with them: not now, while you are crippled. Ignore them: go on. Be regular in all your religious duties. Remember it is not being loved but loving wh. is the high & holy thing. You are now practising the second without the full comfort of the first. It was certain from the beginning that you wd. some day have to do this, for no human love passes onto the eternal level in any other way. God knows, many wives have had to learn it by a path harder than even bereavement: having to love unfaithful, drunken, or childish husbands. And have succeeded too: as God succeeds in loving us. May He help you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

192/53.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
23rd December 1953.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

‘Thank heavens’ said my brother, knee deep in Christmas cards and packing paper, ‘here’s something like a *real* present at last!’ And of course, he was right, though we have so far merely got down to the package: for, like good little boys, we would not for worlds open the box until the morning of the 25th. Thank you very much for your kindness in remembering us. Though the calendar says it is Christmas week, there is nothing about the weather to indicate the fact: still mild, indeed at times warm, and no signs of snow; and I gather that conditions are just the same in eastern America.

My brother was much interested in your recommendation of the Panama Canal route in your last letter, and has often told me of it: he having come by cargo boat from Shanghai to Boston in his army days. He adds that if you ever take a vacation in the Eastern States, you would find it great fun to join the ship at San Pedro, Cal., and go via Panama and the West Indies.

We have not much news here; the chief event has been that last week we entertained a lady from New York for four days, with her boys, aged nine and seven respectively. Can you imagine two crusted old batchelors in such a situation? It however went swimmingly, though it was very, very exhausting; the energy of the American small boy is astonishing. This pair thought nothing of a four mile hike across broken country as an incident in a day of ceaseless activity, and when we took them up Magdalen tower, they said as soon as they got back to the ground, ‘Let’s do it again!’ Without being in the least priggish, they struck us as being amazingly adult by our standards and one could talk to them as one would to ‘grown-ups’—though the next moment they would be wrestling like puppies on the sitting room floor. The highlights of England for them are (a), open coal fires, especially if they can get hold of the bellows and blow it up, and (b), English policemen for whom they keep a smart look-out. The latter they

seemed to find even more thrilling than what they call the 'toy soldiers', i.e. the Guards in scarlet outside Buckingham Palace. But I am forgetting that to you there is nothing exotic about American small boys, and no doubt at present your interest is concentrated on one American small boy—who I hope is in the best of health and spirits.

Do you know the admirable French word *Tohu-bohu*? In Scots, a 'kerfuffle'? Meaning a domestic upsidedownedness which overtakes us all at this season? When it has subsided, I plan to go down to Malvern for a couple of days to prepare myself for the ordeal of the oncoming term with a few walks over the hills.

With all best wishes to you and both the Mr. Gebberts for a happy and a prosperous 1954, Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO NELL BERNERS-PRICE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 26. 53

Dear Nell

What a lovely card! Please give Penelope my very great thanks. Indeed 'card' is the wrong word. You, or she, also included a piece of blotting paper: is this a subtle way of suggesting that some previous letter of mine looked as if I were rather short of that commodity—? Well, anyway, I usually *am*, and welcome a new piece. I am delighted to hear that Peter is doing so well at school: how proud you must be of him.

My brother and I have just had the experience (a v. rum one for two hardened old bachelors) of an American lady to stay with us accompanied by her two sons, aged 9½ and 8. Whew! Lovely creatures—couldn't meet nicer children—but the pace! I realise I have never respected you married people enough and never dreamed of the Sabbath calm wh. descends on the house when the little cyclones have gone to bed and all the grown-ups fling themselves into chairs and the silence of exhaustion.

Christmas is now catching me up too: so far as I can see I have several thousands of letters to answer. Please give my love to all, and best wishes for a good 1954.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD): [260](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 26/53

Dear Miss Bodle

Thanks for yr. most interesting letter. I am delighted to hear of your success in getting some Christian knowledge across to these children. It is wicked that they shd. be so deprived. Even an agnostic who does not believe the stories to be true ought to see that they are, at the very least, part of our common heritage, like Homer and the Arthurian stories.

About re-reading books: I find like you that those read in my earlier 'teens often have no appeal, but this is not nearly so often true of those read in earlier childhood. Girls may develop differently, but for me, looking back, it seems that the glories of childhood and the glories of adolescence are separated by a howling desert during which one was simply a greedy, cruel, spiteful little animal and imagination, in all but the lowest form, was asleep.

I hope your new house will be very blessed. It was Charles Williams from whom I got the words 'holy luck'. And now for piles of Christmas letters: many of them, unlike yours, from people I don't want to write to at all. Every blessing.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W): PC, TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th December 1953.

Dear Starr,

Yes, Hori did call: an interesting man. Glad you're home again, and no doubt so are you.

All good wishes from us both for a happy and prosperous New Year.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 28th 53

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen Thanks for yr. letter of the 20th: my congratulations to yr. husband on his interesting work. About Paul, I believe (having been a sickly child myself) that there are compensations. I think that from many minor illnesses in the first 12 years one develops sometimes a certain amount of *immunity* later on: ones system has had so much practice in dealing with bacilli. It also probably helps to make one a reader: not that there isn't a danger of falling or sinking too far into the life of the imagination, but a habit of reading is a great source of happiness.

I think someone ought to write a book on 'Christian life for Laymen under a bad Parish Priest' for the problem is bound to occur in the best churches. The motto wd. be of course Herbert's lines about the sermon 'If all lack sense, God takes a text and preaches patience'.²⁶¹

Like you, we suffer (but under a v. good priest) from the virtual extinction of Morning Prayer in favour of an 11 o'clock Celebration.²⁶² But I suppose there is something to be said for it. This is the only ritual act Our Lord commanded Himself. It is the one we can have *only* thro' a priest, whereas we can all read Matins to ourselves or our families at home whenever we please. So here I have no difficulty in submission.

Is there not something especially good (and even, in the end, joyful) about mere obedience (in lawful things) to him who bears our Master's authority, however unworthy he be—perhaps all the more, if he *is* unworthy? Perhaps we are put under tiresome priests chiefly to give us the opportunity of learning this beautiful & happy virtue: so that if we use the situation well we can profit more, perhaps, than we shd. have done under a better man. I have seen lovely children under not v. nice parents, & good troops under bad officers: and a good dog with a bad master is a lesson to us all. I mean, of course, as long as the bad orders are not in themselves wrong: and attendance at Holy Communion can't be that!

Yes, we must both go on thinking about the two kinds of prayer. I think the one in Mark xi is for very advanced people: and you point out it was said to the disciples, not to the crowds. All blessings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO PHYLLIS ELINOR SANDEMAN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Dec 31/53

Dear Mrs Sandeman—

You have of course been much in my prayers since your first letter and to-day's seems like an answer to them. I was afraid of some real crack in the structure! Now it is clear that you have to deal only with what we may call a 'clean pain'.

I can well understand how in addition to, and mingling with, the void and loneliness, there is a great feeling of unprotectedness and a horror of coping with all the things—the harsh, outer world—from which you have hitherto been shielded. I first met this 'cold blast on the naked heath'²⁶³ at about 9, when my Mother died, and there has never really been any sense of security and snugness since. That is, I've not quite succeeded in growing up on that point: there is still too much of 'Mammy's little lost boy' about me. Your position is of course v. different, both because dependence on a husband is more legitimate than dependence (after a certain age) on one's Mother, and also because, at your age, tho' it will feel just as bad, it is not so likely to go down into the unconscious and produce a *trauma*. And one sees too (tho' it sounds brutal to say it) how this miserable necessity of fending for oneself might be an essential part of your spiritual education. I suppose God wants a bit of Imogen and Portia in you, having worked in the Miranda and Perdita part enough²⁶⁴ (it is sometimes helpful to think of oneself as a picture wh. He is painting).

By the way, I share to the full—no words can say how strongly I share—that distaste for everything communal and collective wh. you describe in your husband. I really believe I wd. have come to Christianity much less reluctantly if it had not involved the Church. And I don't wonder you failed to convince him that *that* community is perfectly right. It is holy and commanded: not at present (I think) perfect! No doubt he is learning 'togetherness' now as you, alas, are learning 'aleness'. Both painful lessons: it can so seldom happen that what we need is what we like (for if

we liked it we'd have helped ourselves to it already & wouldn't need it—aren't children made to eat fat wh. they hate?). You will be all right, Mrs. Sandeman. All will be well in the end, tho' by hard ways. All earthly loves go thro' some fire before they can inherit the Kingdom. If it weren't this, it wd. be some other fire. God bless you. Let us pray for one another.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

P.S. *Of course*, I'm not obeying your request, 'Help me to find some comfort in faith again.' We shan't find faith by looking for comfort. That's why, even brutally, I can't help talking in terms of a work to be done. You are, on my view, being moved into a higher form of the great school and set harder work to do. Comfort will come as you master that work, as you learn more & more to be a channel of God's grace to your husband (and perhaps to others): not for trying to get back the conditions you had in the lower form.

Keep clear of Psychical Researchers.

1954

At the beginning of the year Lewis resigned from the presidency of the Oxford University Socratic Club. With his help, its founder Stella Aldwinckle had built it into one of the most exciting and best-attended clubs in Oxford. But Lewis was now tired. He had been working since 1938 on his massive English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, and he was in the middle of writing the last Chronicle of Narnia. The Narnian stories were being published at a rate of one per year, and there were three more to go. Yet in resigning as president of the Socratic Club to give himself more leisure, Lewis was unaware of an invitation he would receive from Cambridge University in May 1954. Meanwhile, Stella Aldwinckle met with others of the Socratic Club to decide who should be their new president.

TO STELLA ALDWINCKLE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Jan 1st 1954

Dear Stella

Thank you for your kind card. And I must ask your pardon for not (I think) having yet 'placed in your hands' my resignation from the Presidency of the Socratic. I do so now, wishing you a better and more active man as my successor.

The moment seems a good one for saying how very much I have admired the great work you have been doing in Oxford all these years; a work which, I expect, no one else could have done, and v. few others *would* have done. I have worked with some who had your energy and with some who had your good temper, but I am not sure that I have worked with any who had both. It has been a great privilege and I have at all times appreciated it more than (I fear) my behaviour showed. May you long continue the work.

Oremus pro invicem.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Jan 1st 1954

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

Thanks for your letter of the 28th, to which I'm afraid I can only manage a v. small answer, for Christmas mails have 'got me down'. This season is to me mainly hard, gruelling work—write, write, write, till I wickedly say that if there were less *good will* (going through the post) there would be more *peace on earth*.

By Jove, I do sympathise with you about the sinus (I am warned by everyone who has ever had it *not* at any price to have the operation. One doctor said that he wd. like to prosecute any surgeon who did it. This concerns you too!). I am sure that when God allows some cause like illness or a 'bus-strike or a broken alarm clock to keep us from Mass, He has His own good reasons for not wishing us to go to it on that occasion. He who took care lest the 5000 should 'faint' going home on an empty stomach¹ may be trusted to know when we need *bed* even more than Mass.

I don't think there is anything superstitious in your story about the Voice. These visions or 'auditions' at the moment of death are all v. well attested: quite in a different category from ordinary ghost stories. I am so glad people liked your poem, which deserved it, and that you liked mine² of which (a v. unusual thing for me) I can't now remember a single word.

Then I *must* stop: wishing and praying for you 'a happy issue out of all your afflictions'³ and better days in 1954.

Yours
C. S Lewis

TO DANIEL DAVIN (OUP):⁴

Magdalen College
Oxford
Jan 1st 1954

Dear Davin

By all means make the Norman Davis⁵ corrections;⁶ or rather, that selection of them (about 85%) which I accepted in the list I sent you some time ago. I have not, myself, found any other misprints. I added to the Davis list one correction of my own—the omission of the word *first* before *printed* in the Bibliographical account of ‘The Court of Love’ under Anonyma. I can’t tell you the page for all my books are now packed.⁷

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Jan 4th 54

Dear Ruth—

Yes, but wouldn't Evelyn⁸ and Bp. King⁹ and all our ancestors and many contemporary foreigners be equally astonished at the amazing *retardation* wh. the English Nineteenth Century methods imposed on human growth. In my brother's period (I trust you are reading his *Splendid Century!*) boys of 15 successfully commanded cavalry regiments in action. Juliet¹⁰ was dying in the tomb at an age when our girls are thinking only of Lacrosse. I never really understood Shakespeare's Berownes¹¹ and Mercutios¹² till I realised that they were, in age, Fifth Form boys let loose with ducats in their pockets and swords at their sides.

I'm not saying which is best: only that one mustn't assume our tempo to be 'nature' and all the others to be artificial. I remember two or three of us at my prep-school discussing v. eagerly whether the future was like a line wh. one can't see or like a line not yet drawn. We didn't think we were doing anything 'grown-up'—the subject just arose like any other. We probably thought we were *more* grown up when reading *Pickwick*¹³ than when discussing metaphysics. I suspect that, tho' we have merriment from infancy we learn triviality as an adult accomplishment.

I can go to Crendon with v. little main-road, but at the moment I have (dooced¹⁴ gentlemanly complaint, what?) gout! There's glory for you!¹⁵ If that's not grown up (I beg their pardon, *adult* is the word, now) I'd like to know what is. You're sure to have to come to Oxford one day, aren't you? Dentist? Bookshop? Bodleian? Let me know and let us lunch together. On *provenance*, I always thought the Pitters (*diespiter*¹⁶ and all that) descended from Jove, probably through Aeneas¹⁷ and Brute.¹⁸ My doctor's wife, who died a few years ago,¹⁹ came in right line from Cerdic,²⁰ hence from Odin. So of course does H.M.²¹ 'In every way we are sprung of earth's best blood, have titles manifold'.²² Have you read Vincent Benét's (inspired) *Western Star*? Better than *John Brown's Body* which I thought good.

A very happy New Year,

Yours

Jack

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Jan 5th 1954

Dear Mrs. Jessup

Oh I am sorry. How dreadful. I don't know to which of you my sympathy goes out most. Your share is, however, easier to imagine, for I know what it's like to have to be the comforter when one most needs comforting, and the competent arranger at the v. moment when one feels most disabled.

I don't know whether anything an outsider can say is much use; and you know already the things we have been taught—that suffering *can* (but oh!, with what difficulty) be offered to God as our part in the whole redemptive suffering of the world beginning with Christ's own suffering: that suffering by itself does not fester or poison, but resentment does; that sufferings which (heaven knows) fell on us without and against our will can be so taken that they are as saving and purifying as the voluntary sufferings of martyrs & ascetics.

And it *is* all true, and it is so hard to go on believing it. Especially as the dark time in which you are now entering (I've tried it; my own life really begins with my Mother's illness & death from cancer when I was about 9) is split up into so many minor horrors and fears and upsets, some of them trivial & prosaic.

May God support you. Keep a firm hold of the Cross. And try to keep clear of the modern fancy that all this is abnormal & that you have been singled out for something outrageous. For no one escapes. We are all driven into the front line to be sorted sooner or later. With all blessings & with deep sorrow.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE AND MOIRA SAYER (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Jan 8, 1954

My dear George and Moira

What a lifeline you both are—‘bless’d pair of Sirenes’.²³ It was a very minor operation, done under gas, the lancing of an inflamed ‘sebaceous cyst’, tho’ there might be a slightly bigger one (excision of said cyst) later. But I have to have daily dressings, and the penicillin with which they’ve filled me up with leaves me never really *quite* awake. Distinguish sebaceous from Herbacious, lest the latter lead you to think there has been a revolt of my Vegetable Soul. (Why does one feel less shame at surrendering to the Vegetable in oneself than to the Animal?). *Sebum* appears to be the source of Fat, the *Vis pinguifica*. I suppose I am now so fat in the ordinary way that the V.P. has to seek fresh outlets. Staying with you wd. hardly be the right treatment: not that I wouldn’t come (and a plague on treatment) if I was mobile. But only thanks and longings can go.

Talking of new romances have you both read Arthur Clark’s *Childhood’s End*? A great tragic myth. And has Tolkien sent you proofs of *The Fellowship of the Ring*? And is *The Isle of the Undead* finished?

Congratulations on your new H.M.²⁴ It is nice to find that the Enemy sometimes commits blunders too.

A thousand thanks & blessings from Yours

*Aeterno devinctus amore*²⁵

Jack

TO BELLE ALLEN (L):

[Magdalen College]

Jan 9th '54

Dear Mrs Allen.

Thank you for your nice woody and earthy (almost like Thoreau or Dorothy Wordsworth) letter of the 6th. I think I go with you in preferring trees to flowers in the sense that if I had to live in a world without one or the other I'd choose to keep the trees. I certainly prefer tree-like people to flower-like people—the staunch and knotty and storm-enduring to the frilly and fragrant and easily withered....

I think what makes even beautiful country (in the long run) so unsatisfactory when seen from a train or a car is that it whirls each tree, brook, or haystack close up into the foreground, *soliciting* individual attention but vanishing before you can give it...Didn't someone give a similar explanation of the weariness we feel in a crowd where we can't help seeing individual faces but can do no more than see them so that (he said) 'it is like being forced to read the first page, but no more, of a hundred books in succession'?....

TO SARAH NEYLAN (T):

Magdalen College,

Oxford.

16/i/54

My dear Sarah

Thanks for your most interesting letter. It sounds as if you were having a much nicer time at school than most of us remember having, and if you reply 'I should hope so too', well, I can't agree with you more. I particularly envy you having half a pony and learning to ride. I can't, but I love the sight and sound and smell and feel of a horse and v. much wish that I could. I'd sooner have a nice, thickset, steady-going cob that knew me & that I knew how to ride than all the cars and private planes in the world.

I've been reading *Pride and Prejudice*²⁶ on and off all my life and it doesn't wear out a bit. Lamb, too. You'll find his letters²⁷ as good as his essays: indeed they are almost exactly the same, only more of it.

I don't believe anyone is 'good' or 'bad' at languages. If you ever want really badly to read something which you can't get in English, you'll find you can learn a foreign language alright.

I liked the account of yr. XII Night Party, a ceremony I knew nothing about. Where I grew up the great thing was Halloween (eve of All Saints' Day). There was always a slightly eerie, spooky feeling mixed with games, events, and various kinds of fortune telling—*not* a good night on which to walk through a churchyard. (Tho' in fact Irish people, believing in both, are much *more* afraid of fairies than of ghosts).

I've been having a sebacious (no, not Herbacious) cyst lanced on the back of my neck: the most serious result is that I can never at present get my whole head & shoulders under water in my bath. (I like getting down like a Hippo with only my nostrils out). Give my love to all and I hope you'll have a grand year in 1954.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
16/i/54

My dear Dom Bede

Thanks for interesting articles: I couldn't agree with you more.²⁸ I suspect that a great going-to-meet-them is needed not only on the level of thought but in method. A man who had lived all his life in India said 'That country might be Christian now if there had been *no* Missions in our sense but many single missionaries walking the roads with their begging bowls. For that is the sort of Holy Man India believes in and she will never believe in any other.' Of course we must beware of thinking of 'the East' as if it were homogeneous. I suppose the Indian and the Chinese *ethos* are as alien to each other as either is to us.

The article on Tolerance in that same issue made my flesh creep.²⁹ What do they mean by 'Error has no rights?' Of course Error has no rights, because it is not a person: in the same sense Truth has no rights. But if they mean 'Erroneous persons have no rights', surely this is as contrary to the plain dictates of Natural Law as any proposition could be?

Quite a different question. Has any one composed prayers for children NOT in the sense of special prayers supposed suitable for their age (which easily leads to wish-wash) BUT simply in the sense of *translations* of ordinary prayers into the easiest language? And wd. it be worth doing?

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
18/i/54

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

Charles is changing, and for the better! There is less of the Tycoon. He smiles. He is learning to relax. 'Years have brought the philosophic mind.'³⁰ Did you know that your upbringing of perpetual rocking & teetering had the authority of Plato? I couldn't find the place but I'm almost sure he says that continual rhythmic motion is the thing for children and a ship at sea wd. be the best nursery.³¹ (This wd. reintroduce yr. old confusion between *mal-de-mer* and *mal de mère* with a vengeance!)³² Yes—great volleys of New Thought and Higher Thought (new enough to be raw, and 'high' enough to be as full of maggots as gorgonzola, but why call it *thought*?) do reach us even here from your shores. It solves all problems by declaring that there never were any problems to solve.

Of course one cd. say that the Incarnation *was* God's 'weak moment': when Omnipotence becomes a baby in a manger it has 'weakened' itself. That's the great joke and pathos of our faith. But I'm afraid your friend didn't mean anything of the sort. N.B. The temptation (can't she see it?) is precisely a temptation to *evade* the self-imposed weaknesses, to be strong, omnipotent, again—to make stones into bread,³³ to be emperor of the world,³⁴ to do 'levitations'.³⁵ The weakness *was* the strength.

We had a v. odd few days this Vacation: a lady & two sons (aged 91/2,8) staying with us. A tough 'assignment'—I talk American like a native, don't I?—for two old bachelors. Phew! We never respected married people enough before. We had led a sheltered life & just didn't know! Not that the boys weren't absolute charmers: but I had no conception of the *tempo*—nor of the Sabbath calm³⁶ wh. descends when the little whirlwinds have gone to bed. Longfellow was quite wrong: he shd. have written 'A pause in the day's occupations wh. is known as the *grown-ups* hour'.³⁷ You'll know all about it in a few years' time. My brother joins me in affectionate good wishes to all there.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR C. CLARKE (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Jan. 20/54

Dear Clarke (let us not Mister one another) Thanks v. much for yr. letter and for the *E to A.*,³⁸ wh. I look forward to with pleasure. I meant the English *cognoscenti* of course: I don't see American papers.

If you will let me know *which* bits of my letter your people want to use,³⁹ I am sure I shall have no objection—as you know one doesn't like to give a free hand for *selection*. It is sometimes so done as to credit one with ungrammatical or even nonsensical sentences. Are you ever in this city? If so, be sure to let me know and we will make a tryst. I know where the best beer & the best cider and the only draught stout are.

It was a grand book and I shall be interested to see where you go from there. Not, I devoutly hope, into the kind where we leap forward to a date at wh. space-travel has become as common & dull as tramways and *within* that framework we get an ordinary spy-story, or wreck-story, or love-story wh. might as well, or better, be located in present-day Hampstead. With all good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR C. CLARKE (BOD):

Great Western Royal Hotel
Paddington,
London, W.2
Jan 20/54

Dear Clarke—

This is about 2 hours later, having read *If* (I.2)⁴⁰ in the train, and feeling how well it illustrates what is to me a *bad* tendency in modern S-F. Your *Jupiter 5*⁴¹ is good: but—forgive me—even there, what a pity that the lost reptilian culture (a glorious idea) which is what you really want to tell us about and we really want to hear about is almost thrust into a corner by the little drama about a theft and a hoax. Similarly in M. Clifton's⁴² *The Kenzie Report* the really interesting thing, & well worth the whole story, is the ants. Why, in heaven's name, shd. [it] be pushed out of the centre & the centre taken up by an unutterably banal little laboratory intrigue?

With K Neville's⁴³ *She knew he was coming* we touch rock-bottom. The old theme of the sentimentalised brothel & the whore-with-a-heart-of-Gold is mawkish anyway, but tolerable; but what, in heaven's name, is the point of locating it on Mars! Surely in a work of art all the material should be *used*. If a theme is introduced into a symphony, something must be made of that theme. If a poem is written in a certain metre, the particular qualities of that metre must be exploited. If you write a historical novel, the *period* must be essential to the effect. For whatever in art is not doing good is doing harm: no room for passengers (In a good black and white drawing the areas of white paper are essential to the whole design, just as much as the lines. It is only in a child's drawing that they're *merely* blank paper). What's the excuse for locating one's story on Mars unless 'Martianity' is through & through *used*.*

Stockham's⁴⁴ *Circle of Flight*, tho' not at all well executed, is the real thing: i.e. the thing he professes to be doing is the thing he is *really* doing. And there, for once, the love interest is relevant. By the way do readers of S-F. really want a 'heart-interest' as they call it ('crutch-interest' wd. be

more accurate) always dragged in? Am I missing some relevant point? I'd be glad to know your views on the whole subject of this letter.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

* Emotionally & atmospherically *as well as* logically.

TO PAULINE BAYNES (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
21/i/54

Dear Miss Baynes

I lunched with Bles yesterday to see the drawings of *The Horse* and feel I must write to tell you how very much we both enjoyed them. It is delightful to find (and not only for selfish reasons) that you do each book a little bit better than the last—it is nice to see an artist growing. (If only you cd. take 6 months off and devote them to anatomy, there's no limit to your possibilities).

Both the drawings of Lasaraleen in her litter⁴⁵ were a rich feast of line & of fantastic-satiric imagination: my only regret was that we couldn't have both. Shasta among the tombs (in the new technique, wh. is lovely)⁴⁶ was exactly what I wanted. The pictures of Rabadash hanging on the hook and just turning into an ass⁴⁷ were the best comedy you've done yet. The Tisroc was superb:⁴⁸ far beyond anything you were doing 5 years ago. K. Lune etc.—were, this time, really good.⁴⁹ The crowds are beautiful, realistic yet also lovely wavy compositions:⁵⁰ but your crowds always were. How did you do Tashbaan?⁵¹ We only got the full wealth by using a magnifying glass! The result is exactly right. Thanks enormously for all the intense work you have put into them all. And more power to your elbow: congratulations.

What are you and I and the firm going to do now that Bles is retiring? Shall we seek a Literary Agent or just go to whoever buys his business? I shd. be interested in your views.

I hope you'll have a nice 1954. I *did* acknowledge your v. beautiful card, didn't I? If not, I'm a Pig, for I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W): PC

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
23/i/54

I *have* a taste for Dickens but don't think it a low one. He is the great author on mere *affection* (στοργή):⁵² only he & Tolstoi (another great favourite of mine) really deal with it. Of course his error lies in thinking it will do instead of Agape.⁵³ Scott, as D. Cecil said, has, not the civilised *mind*, but the civilised *heart*. Unforced nobility, generosity, liberality, flow from him.⁵⁴

But Thackeray I positively dislike. He is the voice of 'the World'. And his supposedly 'good' women are revolting: jealous *pharisiennes*. The publicans and sinners will go in before Mrs Pendennis and La. Castlewood.⁵⁵ In haste.

C.S.L.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
24/i/54

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

Thanks for the lovely bundle of letters and pictures from the Kilmer family which, as you anticipated, I revelled in: I have written them a joint letter⁵⁶—not mentioning the poem as I gather you are not supposed to have a copy. They sound a delightful family.

But surely you are not going to put the whole trilogy in their hands? I shd. have thought *That Hideous Strength* both unsuitable and unintelligible to children, and even *Perelandra* rather doubtful.

I hope you have got rid of that cold. There seems no way of guarding against them, does there? One part of me almost envies you that deep snow: *real* snow. This is v. late at night and my writing is dreadful, so I must stop. All blessings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO THE KILMER CHILDREN (W):⁵⁷

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Jan 24th 1954

Dear Hugh, Anne, Noelie (there's a name I never heard before: what language is it, and does it rhyme with *oily* or *mealy* or *Kelly* or *early* or *truly*?), Nicholas, Martin, Rosamund, Matthew, and Miriam— Thank you very much for all the lovely letters and pictures. You don't say who did the coloured one of Ransom being paddled by the Hross.⁵⁸ Hugh? I liked it. That's very much what a Hross is like but a bit too fat. And I don't know who did the one of the Prince fighting the Serpent: but it's a fine snaky snake. (I was born in Holy Ireland where there are no snakes because, as you know, St. Patrick sent them all away.) And I think Nicholas's picture of the Prince and Jill and the Chair very good—especially the Prince's legs, for legs aren't too easy to draw, are they? Noelie's White Witch is *superb!*—just as proud and wicked as I meant her to be. And Nicholas's other one of the L., the W, and the W (I can't write it all out!) is a nice *deep* picture, going away into the distance. Thank you all.

I have done lots of dish-washing in my time and I have often been read to, but I never thought of your very sensible idea of doing both together. How many plates do you smash in a month?

There is no snow here yet and it is so warm that the foolish snowdrops and celandines (little yellow flowers; I don't know if you have them or not) are coming up as if it was spring. And squirrels (we have hundreds and thousands about this college) have never gone to bed for their winter sleep at all. I keep on warning them that they really ought to and that they'll be dreadfully sleepy (yawning their heads off) by June if they don't, but they take no notice.

You *are* a fine big family! I shd. think your mother sometimes feels like the Old-Woman-who-lived-in-a-shoe (you know that rhyme?). I'm so glad you like the books. The next one, *The Horse and His Boy* will be out quite soon. There are to be 7 altogether. Lots of love.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W): TS

54/70.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
25th January 1954.

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen,

All presents—or nearly all presents—are welcome, but how rarely does it happen that just exactly the right one arrives at the right moment. Stationary is an article of which there is a constant and acute shortage in these rooms, and you have plugged the gap which would have occurred tomorrow morning. Thank you very much.

Winter has at last come to these islands, and an encouraging observation from the weather people that conditions now are identical with those in late January 1947, when we began the new year with fifty five days of continuous frost, burst pipes, fuel famine, and all the rest of it. It's a queer thing that nothing will convince us English that we have extremes of weather, like other people; our whole set-up is based on the assumption that the weather will be mild and wet for most of the year, and either a hot or a cold spell always takes us by surprise.

I hope all goes well with you. With best wishes, Yours sincerely,
C. S.

Lewis

TO HERBERT PALMER (TEX): PC

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
25/i/54

Your presence was one of my reasons for coming to the Do on March 2nd.⁵⁹ Yes, do spend the night here. But I can't ask you to dine for I'm committed to dining with Thwaite.⁶⁰ Surely they have asked you to dinner too?

The poetical situation seems to me still without one spark of hope. And the cunning devils are now translating Virgil & Sophocles into the modern style so as [to] make people believe that poetry *always* was the same sort of muck it is now.⁶¹ And some of the worst are schoolmasters & boys [who] are being *brought up* on the muck: so that it won't be 'all the same 100 years hence'.

C.S.L.

TO RUTH PITTEr (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
26/i/54

Bravissima! Unless I hear to the contrary I shall assume that you will meet me in the lounge of the Eastgate Hotel (nearly opposite College) at 1 o'clock on Monday Feb 1st.

J.⁶²

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):⁶³

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Jan 26/54

Dear Miss Sayers

But how good! Will you come and lunch at 1.15 on Thurs Feb 18th?

Yours very sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR C. CLARKE (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Jan 26/54

Dear Clarke,

Human interest, yes. But that is inevitably present if the fears and hopes and wonders of the astronauts are vividly realised—e.g. as in Bedford & Cavor on the Moon⁶⁴ or even Crusoe on the island.⁶⁵ And an author who can't do that won't mend matters by dragging in Crooks, Crutches, or Conspiracies: for the sort of story he drags in will be just as lacking in Human interest as his space story.

About 'escapism', never let that flea stick in your ear. I was liberated from it once & for all when a friend said 'These critics are v. sensitive to the least hint of Escape. Now what class of men wd. one expect to be thus worked-up about Escape?—*Jailers*.' Turn-key critics: people who want to keep the world in some ideological prison because a glimpse at any remote prospect wd. make their stuff seem less exclusively important.

Fantasy & S-F. is by miles the best.⁶⁶ Some of the most serious satire of our age appears in it. What is called 'serious' literature now—Dylan Thomas & Pound and all that—is really the most frivolous. All the best.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26/i/54

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Thanks for your letter of Jan 20 and also (v. much) for the most useful stationary: the thing I needed most.

I quite agree that God 'takes a text' much more forcibly in the general behaviour of a bad priest than in a bad sermon, wh. is, in comparison, a trifle. You seem, if I may say so, to be taking the treatment well! Finding (as Shakespeare ought to have said) 'sermons in prigs, books in the cross-grained toughs' etc.⁶⁷

I suppose I thought the B type of prayer⁶⁸ higher because of the portentous promises attached to it and because it seems the type used by Elijah when he calls down fire on the altar⁶⁹ or the Apostles when they heal the sick and raise the dead. But I think we are both coming to the right practical conclusion: not struggling, but always saying, as the disciples did, 'Lord, teach us how to pray.'⁷⁰

That's all modern pseudo-democratic nonsense, isn't it, about obedience being 'weak'. One doesn't think nurses, sailors, & soldiers weak: and when we believe spiritual things to be as important as operations, storms at sea, and 'last stands' we shall see obedience as a strong thing there too. Surely one of the marks of the disobedient child is that it is *feebler* than the obedient, and can't do dozens of things that the other can?

I'm not qualified to comment on the Goetz move to California. Unless a doctor ordered it I shd. never, myself, think of choosing my home primarily for the sake of the climate. I wd. if I were a vegetable: being a human I think the first thing about a place to live in is the people one meets, and the second thing is the beauty of the landscape. But of course others think differently. They are so lucky to be able to make the choice at all (999 out of a 1000 have no choice about where they'll live) that I don't expect it will matter much which they do—bless 'em! I hope for your sake they'll stay put.

Bitter cold here to-night. But we need it: it will kill the slugs in my garden which, thanks to the unusually mild autumn, have now pretty nearly qualified for the Old Age Pension. Five years, is it? Well, God bless you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26/i/54

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

Thanks for yours of the 23rd and for copy of my verses, which I had almost totally forgotten. 'Pon my word, they're not so bad as I feared. I'm very sorry about your cold. We mustn't let these modern doctors get us down by calling a cold a *virus* and a sore throat a *streptococcus*, you know! (Do you ever read Montaigne? He says 'The peasants make everything easier by the names they use. To them a consumption is only a cough and a cancer only a stomach ache').⁷¹ You shd. have stayed tucked up in a warm bed all that day instead of trying to write and walking up and down the room.

We wouldn't call Alfred and Egbert and all those the 'British' line. They are the 'English' line, the Angles, who come from Angel in South Denmark. By the *British* line, we'd mean the Celtic line that goes back through the Tudors to Cadwallader and thence to Arthur, Uther, Cassibelan, Lear, Lud, Brut, Aeneas, Jupiter. The present royal family can claim descent from both the British and the English lines. So, I suppose, can most of us: for since one has 2 parents, 4 grandparents, 16 great grandparents, and so on, one is presumably descended from nearly everyone who was alive in this island in the year 600 A.D. In the long run one is related to everyone on the planet: in that quite literal sense we are all 'one flesh'.⁷²

Of course I don't mean to ignore (in fact I find it nice) the distinction between a peasant's grandson like myself and those of noble blood. I only observe that the nobility lies not in the ancient descent (wh. is common to us all) but in having been for so many generations illustrious that more of the steps are *recorded*. I do hope you'll be better by the time this reaches you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO PAUL PIEHLER (W):[73](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
28/i/54

Dear Piehler

Blurb enclosed. Never again throw out the old water before you've got new on tap! Good hunting.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

I have much pleasure in recommending my friend and former pupil Mr. P. Piehler. Mr. Piehler is a sound and sensitive scholar whose interest in his subject is widening and deepening as he grows and from whom we may reasonably expect valuable contributions. He has the clarity of voice and language which a lecturer requires. His manners and personality are attractive; he was generally liked here and bore a thoroughly good character. I should be very glad to have him as a colleague in any English Faculty of which I was a member myself. I understand that he already knows Swedish.

C. S. Lewis
Fellow & Tutor
Jan 28th 1954

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
30/i/54

Dear Dom Bede

Yes, I'd certainly rule out Little Emily and Little Nell and all the 'littles'. The Marchioness is the real thing.⁷⁴ The trouble with Thackeray, is that he can hardly envisage goodness except as a kind of εὐηθεία:⁷⁵ all his 'good' people are not only simple, but simpletons. That is a subtle poison wh. comes in with the Renaissance: the Machiavellian (intelligent) villain presently producing the idiot hero. The Middle Ages didn't make Herod clever and knew the devil was an ass. There is really an un-faith about Thackeray's ethics: as if goodness were somehow charming, & 'seelie' & infantile. No conception that the purification of the will (*ceteris paribus*)⁷⁶ leads to the enlightenment of the intelligence.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO HILA NEWMAN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Jan 30/54

Dear Hila

Upon my word, a statue of Reepicheep.⁷⁷ He stares at me from my mantelpiece with just the right mixture of courtesy and readiness to fight. Thank you very much.

It is very cold here now—not so cold as in N.Y., I expect, but then we have no central heating in College, so my fingers are hardly able to write. I am so glad you liked the *Chair*. With all good wishes.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Feb 3/54

Dear Mrs Farrer

Sternly suppressing my conscience (in George Herbert's style, you know 'Peace, prattler, do not lour')⁷⁸ I have allowed no duties to interfere with my reading *The Cretan Counterfeit*.⁷⁹ I admire very much the thick-woven texture: it doesn't easily come apart. Janet and Shrubsole are very well done and Janet wins my heart. Two scenes that especially engaged me were that where Richard is hunting for Shrubsole in Janet's house and the final scene. The tragic-heroic twist at the very end is good technique as well as being moving in itself. Georgios is, in his smaller way, a wonderful little horror.

Would Clare have giggled (p. 201)? Or even if she had, isn't the word 'giggled' too damaging? (I'm always reminding people that nothing can get into literature save by becoming a word, and that *things* may be O.K. where the *words* are not. The bearings of this are wide, as you'll see if you reflect on the difference between drawing a nude and verbally describing it,⁸⁰ or the impossibility of mentioning Cheko-Slovakia (is that how you spell it) at the apex of a lyric however deeply one may feel about that country).

I am outraged on p. 96 when you describe the moon 'like the white face of an idiot lost in a wood'. Dear lady, this is simply Eliotic:⁸¹ for (a.) It illustrates what we've all seen by what most of us have *not* seen (b.) It denigrates, in the leering modern mode, the high creation of God. If I were your *directeur* you'd learn Psalm 136 by heart.⁸² Not safe, either, to be rude to goddesses—Artemis still owes Aphrodite a come-back for the Hippolytus affair and we shd. hate you to be the target.⁸³

I labour this because in general the actual writing is so good. But of course the great thing is the invention—a fine *prodigality* of characters, far beyond what a Tekky⁸⁴ needs but by no means beyond what it can carry and be all the better for. Thank you very much indeed. Can you read a word of this? It is so cold I can't write any better, not if I tried ever so.

If you come across Arthur Clarke's *Childhood's End*, I recommend it.

Yours gratefully
C. S. Lewis

TO O. T. BRYANT (P):⁸⁵

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Feb 5/54

Dear Mr. Bryant

Thanks for your kind & encouraging letter.⁸⁶ The idea of voluntary ignorance (like your man refusing a secret) is v. interesting. One has often wished for ignorance oneself. I expect there are logical difficulties about Omniscience voluntarily annihilating its own knowledge, but there may be ways out of this. The terrible text 'Depart from me, ye wicked, I *never knew* you',⁸⁷ comes in here: also St Paul's promise not (as we shd. expect) that the Christian knows God but 'is known of God.'⁸⁸

Thanks for a fruitful idea. *Genia* (trans. 'generation') might mean *race*—i.e. the Jews will not disappear till all is accomplished. And they have certainly outlived nearly all the races of that time.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Feb 5/54

Dear Mrs. Jessup

I fully agree with you about the difference between a doctrine merely accepted by the intellect and one (as Keats says) 'proved in the pulses'⁸⁹ so that [it] is solid and palpable. You have clearly progressed from the one stage to the other as regards those sins by which (there again you're right) we daily fashion the Nails. About 2 years ago I made a similar progress from mere intellectual acceptance of, to realisation of, the doctrine that our sins are forgiven. That is perhaps the most blessed thing that ever happened to me. How little they know of Christianity who think that the story *ends* with conversion: novelties we never dreamed of may await us at every turn of the road.

About the question of abandoning the 'World' or fighting right inside it, don't you think that both may be right for different people? Some are called to the one and some to the other. Hence Our Lord, after pointing the contrast between the hermit and ascetic John the Baptist, and Himself who drank wine & went to dinner parties and jostled with every kind of man, concluded 'But Wisdom is justified of *all* her children':⁹⁰ meaning, I take it, both these kinds. I fancy we are all too ready, once we are converted ourselves, to assume that God will deal with everyone exactly as He does with us. But He is no mass-producer and treats no two quite alike.

I'm so glad your news is a little better. In great haste.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO 'MRS LOCKLEY' (WHL):

[Magdalen College]
Feb 8/54

Dear Mrs Lockley

You behaved like an angel in *not* writing at Christmas or the New Year: that whole period is to me simply one long ‘imposition’ (in the schoolboys’ sense) so that I often say, ‘If there were less *goodwill* there would be more *peace on earth*’. But I was very glad to hear from you now. How nice it is to hear of the wound healing—things getting ‘ordinary’ again....

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Feb 9th 54

Dear Mrs. Farrer

I must admit that I was mounting too high a horse about the ‘idiot-moon’.⁹¹ And I do fully allow the pathetic fallacy.⁹² I’m afraid you came in for the backwash of my feeling about a widespread tendency in modern literature which strikes me as horrid: I mean, the readiness to admit extreme uses of the pathetic fallacy in contexts where there is nothing to justify them and always of a kind that belittles or ‘sordidises’ (‘sordidifies’) nature. Eliot’s evening ‘like a patient etherised upon a table’⁹³ is the *locus classicus*.⁹⁴ I don’t believe one person in a million, under any emotional stress, wd. see evening like that. And even if they did, I believe that anything but the most sparing admission of such images is a v. dangerous game. To invite them, to recur willingly to them, to come to regard them as normal, surely, poisons us?

I don’t mean you do this: I think a lot of moderns do. The real (human) idiot is another matter. I suppose him to be like ‘this daughter of Abraham whom Satan hath bound’.⁹⁵ Of course, higher than the Moon or all the Galaxies. But a transitory reference (‘like an idiot’) carries my mind only to the *binding*. If I said (in the cheery modern way) ‘dawn reddened like a chilblain on the horizon’, it wouldn’t be quite a defence to say that people with chilblains are immortal souls. Or would it? Perhaps I’m over-sensitive on this point. All that Eliotic world is so unlike anything I’ve ever seen—and perhaps I’m only making a peculiarity into a Norm. Of course to me, as to others, Nature may look dreadful, hostile, sinister, etc: but never just dingy or silly.

‘A man, not the Moon’, by the way, is splendid: I wish that was what you had said. She wd. look to me like Idiocy—like a power threatening me with idiocy—rather than an idiot. But I’m wasting your time. Don’t bother to reply.

I am so sorry to hear of your father-in-law’s illness.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

P.S. By the bye *idiot* itself is one of those words wh. has power different from the *thing*.

TO SISTER PENELOPE CSMV (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
15/ii/54

Dear Sister Penelope

‘What a life,’ indeed. I mean, how rich, how enviable: we who have waiting lists of things to do hardly realise the involuntary (and felt) vacancy of some lives. Though here too, I sometimes think ‘how hardly shall the *rich* enter’⁹⁶—I mean, the very work God gives us to do seems at times to separate us from God—

*Oh that my Lord wd. give me power to be
Mary and Martha simultaneously!*

I am v. glad all goes so well, and look forward with great pleasure to reading the MS of *Alma Mater*.⁹⁷ I will try to read Grimble⁹⁸ if it comes my way.

I have had to abandon the book on prayer: it was clearly not for me. Have you read Miss Nott’s *Emperor’s New Clothes* where I am pilloried along with some of my betters? All blessings.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS JOHNSON (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Feb. 18. 1954

Dear Mrs. Johnson—

My word, you *are* getting on! A printed author (and a well written, well organised article too) and a T.V. star! I congratulate you. It must have been all great fun.

Of course taking in the poor illegitimate child is ‘charity’. *Charity* means *love*. It is called *Agapē* in the N.T.⁹⁹ to distinguish it from *Eros* (sexual love), *Storgē* (family affection) and *Philia* (friendship).¹⁰⁰ So there are 4 kinds of ‘love’, all good in their proper place, but *Agapē* is the best because it is the kind God has for us and is good in all circumstances. (There are people I *mustn’t* feel *Eros* towards, and people I can’t feel *Storge* or *Philia* for: but I can practise *Agape* to God, Angels, Man & Beast, to the good & the bad, the old & the young, the far and the near.) You see *Agape* is all giving, not getting. Read what St Paul says about it in First Corinthians Chap. 13. Then look at a picture of *Charity* (or *Agape*) in action in St Luke, chap 10 vv. 30–35. And then, better still, look at Matthew chap 25 vv. 31–46: from which you see that Christ counts all that you do for *this* baby exactly as if you had done it for Him when He was a baby in the manger at Bethlehem: you are in a sense sharing in the things His mother did for Him. Giving money is only *one* way of showing charity: to give time & toil is far better and (for most of us) harder. And notice, tho’ it is all giving—you needn’t expect any reward—how you *do* gets rewarded almost at once.

Yes, I know one doesn’t even *want* to be cured of one’s pride because it gives pleasure. But the pleasure of pride is like the pleasure of scratching. If there is an itch one does want to scratch: but it is much nicer to have *neither* the itch *nor* the scratch. As long as we have the itch of self-regard we shall want the pleasure of self-approval: but the happiest moments are those when we forget our precious selves and have *neither*, but have everything else (God, our fellow-humans, animals, the garden & the sky) instead.

Yes, I do believe people are still healed by miracles by faith: but of course whether this has happened in any one particular case, is not so easy to find out.

God bless you, you are always in my prayers.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO HERBERT PALMER (TEX):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Feb 19/54

Dear Palmer—

As far as I know the history is roughly thus. Soul (*Psyche*) is the ordinary Gk. for 'life' of a plant, beast, or man. In Aristotle a man has vegetable *Psyche* (shared with plants), sensitive *Psyche* (shared with beasts) and intellectual *Psyche*.¹⁰¹ In St. Paul there comes in a different distinction, between *Psyche* and Spirit (*Pneuma*). There are 2 kinds of man the Psychic (A.V. 'natural') man and the Pneumatic (A.V. 'spiritual') man.¹⁰²

God is *Pneuma*, not *Psyche*: and 'evil spirits' are *Pneumata*. The tripartite division of Man into Body (*Sarx* or *Sôma*, *Psyche*, and *Pneuma*) was, I'm told (but I don't know) ecclesiastically condemned in the Middle Ages. But none of this comes through intact into any modern language, so far as I know.

Lat. *Spiritus* is no doubt the normal trans. of Gk. *Pneuma*, but the derivatives, Fr. *esprit* and It. *spirito* have taken on quite different meanings such as 'intellect', 'wit' etc. Where the native Eng. *sawol* ('soul') and *gâst* (ghost) fit into the jigsaw I really don't know. I don't know any scheme wh. wd. separate consciousness from both spirit and soul as you do. For *mind*, by the way, no real equivalent seems to exist in any modern language.

I suppose you will find your room in College and get 'dug in' before going to the dinner?¹⁰³ What is the time of the said dinner, and place? I've no note of either. Will you call in my room about 1/2 hour before the zero hour & we'll go together?

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Feb 22/54

My dear Roger—

Oh angel! What a lovely present,¹⁰⁴ and all the more valuable for being the copy from that enchanted place your own library. I re-read it at once. It is perhaps the most complete of his books: as funny, or v. nearly as funny, as *Vice Versa*¹⁰⁵ but with a beauty wh. V.V. did not attempt. The ogre is somehow a v. real character. Very, very many thanks.

I've read *The Buzzard*¹⁰⁶ with total approval. I rather think it is the best of your realistic stories. It is certainly a masterpiece of construction. You set yourself a difficult problem in interlocking all the different interests, and you have solved it, for they all *seem* to get their turn naturally and inevitably. The characters are all alive, and Diana is maturing nicely. I like her better than in any of the previous books.

There is a bad sentence on p. 81. 'After making a brew of tea, the fire was etc.' Better, 'They stamped'.

All the scenes, mountaineering, etc. is v. *real*.

The MS. is just too big to fit into the biggest strong envelope I can get. Do you want it back, or will it do if you called [for] it at your next visit?

I was relieved that *P&D*¹⁰⁷ got your *nihil obstat*. I was afraid you might object to Uncle Andrew as a character more amusing to adults than to children. You can always feel a paternal interest in this tale, for it owes more than half its merit to your shrewdness in discerning, and honesty in pointing out, the fatal 'sag' in the original draft.

Love to all.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Feb 22/54

Dear Mrs Van Deusen—

Thanks for yr. letter of Jan 13th. I don't think one gains anything from calling Genia's fears 'Hypochondria' and regarding them as something pathological. They are, like the fears of a soldier under fire, rational and natural fears of a real evil, so that her problem, like the soldier's, is moral, not medical. They must be faced on the conscious level and overcome by the Grace of God.

If only people (including myself: I also have fears) were still brought up with the idea that life is a battle where death and wounds await us at every moment, so that courage is the first and most necessary of virtues, things wd. be easier. As it is, fears are all the harder to combat because they disappoint expectations bred on modern poppycock in which unbroken security is regarded as somehow 'normal' and the touch of reality as anomalous. Notice, too, how our bad habit of lying to those who are really ill renders vain our true assurances to those who are not!

I've had an exchange of letters with Genia on this very subject. I hope she won't go to a psychiatrist. How cd. a psychiatrist help her except by saying 'It is perfectly certain that you will *never* get any painful or dangerous disease'—and do you want her to be fool enough to believe *that*?

I feel some of the same qualm as you about the Ecumenical Movement. In great haste. (I'll be examining this summer, alas, not going for trips![])
All blessings.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELburnE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Feb 22/54

Dear Mrs. Shelburne—

I am very sorry indeed to hear that anxieties again assail you. (By the way, don't 'weep inwardly' and get a sore throat. If you must weep, weep: a good honest howl! I suspect we—and especially, my sex—don't cry enough nowadays. Aeneas & Hector & Beowulf & Roland & Lancelot blubbered like school-girls, so why shouldn't we?).¹⁰⁸ You were wonderfully supported in your worries last time: I shall indeed pray that it may be so again.

Wd. the Kilmer family like to have the next story but one dedicated to them? Let me know: the site is still vacant.

I didn't object to the family reading the trilogy¹⁰⁹ on the ground that it wd. be too difficult—that wd. do no harm—but because in the last one there is so much evil, in a form not, I think, suitable for their age, and many specifically sexual problems which it wd. do them no good to think of at present. I daresay the *Silent Planet* is alright: *Perelandra*, little less so: T.H.S. most unsuitable.

I don't think that an *appreciation* of ancient & noble blood is 'snobbery' at all. What is snobbery is a greedy desire to know those who have it, or a mean desire to flatter them, or a conceited desire to boast of their acquaintance. I think it quite legitimate to feel that such things give an added interest to a person who is nice on other grounds, just as a hotel wh. was nice on other grounds wd. have an added charm for me if it was also a building with 'historic interest'.

I write in great haste—I can't, like you, do it in working hours! But you're nothing to Lamb: as far as I can make out all his letters, which now fill two volumes, were written in the office. Happy days those.

Well I hope I shall have better news in your next. God bless you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JILL FREUD (T): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
2nd March 1954.

My dear June,

This is most kind of you, and we are both very grateful; the book shall certainly circulate amongst those worthy to read it.

Glad to hear you are well; I'm rather run down, having had a very strenuous term which is now working up to its finale, with everything playing fortissimo—including an examination. But the sinus has so far behaved itself.

Warnie has spoken to Paxford about the generous offer of the puppy, and I hear that Paxford replied (at great length, and about three times over), that he would like to know what the father was. If Polly made a misalliance I think he'll take one, but if she married an aristocrat of her own race, no; because what he wants is a mongrel, having no faith in well-bred dogs. I don't blame him after several years of Bruce, a gentleman if ever there was one, but as Dickens says, 'with a head three hundred years thick'.¹¹⁰ From your remark that some of the pups are chocolate coloured, I presume they *are* mongrels?

Love to you and Mr. and Miss Freud (and Polly) from both of us; and we're very glad indeed to hear that the night club flourishes.

Yours ever,

Jack

P.S. Belated Christmas box herewith.

J.

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford

March 4th 1954

Dear Miss Sayers—

Whole seas of scholarship papers and other interruptions already flow salt and estranging between me and your delightful visit, so that I have only in the last few days begun to study polarity.¹¹¹ The *Me Meum* is the best of all:¹¹² so good, and so diabolical, that it is hardly funny and has its own infernal poetry. The hymns are more for ‘pure delight’. ‘We are but lower age groups’ is perhaps my favourite—or else *Alimony*. But none is without its charm and I look forward to more.

I doubt (frankly) whether my enclosed effort is quite on the right lines. It is not a sufficiently close parody of the real hymn, and it is perhaps too much of an argument (even if one by *reductio ad absurdum*).¹¹³ What matters more is that it is not really an attack on Polarity *proprement dite*, but on a false philosophy which must be allowed to be not individualistic nor self centred and indeed has some generosity tho’ in a phoney way. However, you will judge.

I had the young Williams¹¹⁴ to dine the other night, and thought him not a bad chap (certainly not dull) tho’ rather alarmingly young for his age.

If my brother had not gone home for the night he wd. join me in our ‘duty’. We both hope you will be in these parts soon again (it grows late, you know!). He has been re-reading *Gaudy Night*¹¹⁵—to prolong (in some sort) your visit.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

Libellous? Or too nasty?
C.S.L.

*Lead us, Evolution, lead us
Up the future's endless stair,
Chop us, change us, clip us, weed us,
For stagnation is despair:
Groping, guessing, yet progressing,
Lead us nobody-knows-where.*

*To whatever variation
Our posterity may turn,
Hairy, squashy, or crustacean,
Bulbous-eyed or square of stern,
Bland or ruthless, tusked or toothless,
Towards that unknown god we yearn.*

*Ask not 'Is he god or devil?'
Brethren, lest your words imply
Static norms of good or evil
Throned immutable on high;
Such a dated, antiquated
Mode of thought we must defy.*

*Since the goal of our endeavour
Has no content, form, or name,
No position, we can never
(Happy warriors!) miss our aim;
Since improvement means just movement,
All directions are the same.*

*But unnatural selection
Must bring aid to Nature's plan;
Sterilise each backward section
Of the family of Man:*

*Gas the creatures, change the features
Of the planet if you can!*

*Mercy, justice, in the present,
Beauty, wisdom, what are they,
So our offspring (though unpleasant
By the standards of to-day)
With no rival by survival
Value rules the Milky Way?¹¹⁶*

*D. H. Lawrence, Dr Stopes,¹¹⁷
Taught by you we fix our hopes
On that balmiest of dopes,
Wholly earthly Luv.
Money-making calls for brains,
And of all our hard-won gains
After taxes what remains?
No one taxes Luv.*

*Whiskey, port, or gin-and-It
Harm the liver, sap the wit;
We can take (and yet keep fit)
Lots and lots of Luv.*

*All the outdoor games we play
Fail us as years pass away:
Even the very old, they say,
Still can manage Luv.*

*Even when toothless, blind, and hoar,
Able to perform no more,
Still in thought we fumble o'er
Dreams and drams of Luv.*

*Therefore let each film and book,
Every dinner that we cook,
Every tonic, garment, look,
Nudge us onto Luv.¹¹⁸*

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W): TS

54/76

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
9th March 1954.

Dear Miss Sayers,

Yes, of course Dr. Stopes is fatal. Would it go 'D. H. Laurence, Sigmund Freud, Taught by you we now avoid, All restraints that once destroyed, Wholly earthly Lerv'—accepting your spelling, which is better than mine.¹¹⁹

Yes: I felt that M.W.¹²⁰ was somewhat over-mothered. His only other trouble is that he is in a badly paid job, and probably has really no claims on a better one.

My brother is delighted that you are enjoying the book.¹²¹ We both read the proofs: it does'nt seem to make any difference when it's we who do it! We must try to meet in London.

Yours ever,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
March 10/54

Dear Mrs. Shelburne

I am sorry things are not better. I am v. puzzled by people like your Committee Secretary, people who are just nasty. I find it easier to understand the great crimes, for the raw material of them exists in us all: the mere disagreeableness which seems to spring from no recognisable passion is mysterious. (Like the total stranger in a train of whom I once asked 'Do you know when we get to Liverpool' and who replied 'I'm not paid to answer your questions: ask the guard'). I have found it more among Boys than anyone else. That makes me think it really comes from inner insecurity—a dim sense that one is Nobody, a strong determination to be Somebody, and a belief that this can be achieved by arrogance. Probably *you*, who can't hit back, come in for a good deal of *resentful* arrogance aroused by others on whom she doesn't vent it, because they *can*. (A bully

in an Elizabethan play, having been sat on by a man he dare not fight, says 'I'll go home and beat all my servants'). But I mustn't encourage you to go on thinking about her: that, after all, is almost the greatest evil nasty people can do us—to become an obsession, to haunt our minds. A brief prayer for them, and then away to other subjects, is the thing, if one can only stick to it. I hope the other job will materialise.

I thought the poem by that woman was very good Christianity, but not a v. good poem: no rhythmic vitality, no reason why the lines should end where they do, & no vocalic melody. But then I'm old fashioned. I think *vers libre* succeeds only in a few exceptional poems and its prevalence has really ruined the art.

I too had mumps after I was grown up. I didn't mind it as long as I had the temperature: but when one came to convalescence and a convalescent appetite and even *thinking* of food started the salivation and the pain—ugh! I never realised 'the disobedience in our members'¹²² so clearly before. Verily 'He that but looketh on a plate of ham and eggs to lust after it, hath already committed breakfast with it in his heart' (or in his glands).¹²³

I shall wait anxiously for all your news, always praying not only for a happy issue but that you may be supported in all interim anxieties.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO HELMUT KUHN (W):¹²⁴TS

54/175

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
11th March 1954.

Dear Mr. Kuhn,

It was most kind of you to write. I look forward to reading the book (when the translation arrives!¹²⁵ My German is wretched, and what there is of it belongs chiefly to the libretto of the *Ring and Grimm's Märchen*—works whose style and vocabulary you very possibly do not closely follow).

I am glad you are happy at Munich: especially as I hope you will visit England more often from there than you could from America.

With all good wishes,
Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO HARRY BLAMIRES (BOD):

As from Magdalen College.
March 14th. 54.

Dear Blamires—

I started your book¹²⁶ as soon as it arrived and was interrupted (shortly after the transition from Helicon to Fordshaw)¹²⁷ first by scholarship papers and then by proofs, so that I was able to finish it only to day. This was of course the worst way to read it, for the first part was then still too fresh for a genuine re-reading and yet not quite fresh enough to give me a single impression as a whole. So I shall probably be able to give you a more reliable account of it about a year hence than I can now.

In the meantime, however, I have no hesitation in saying that it is the best thing you have done yet. It is very good moral theology and (this is what you most want to know) caused me uneasiness, as intended. The earlier chapters—the examinations—are so good that I wanted them to go on longer. Their theme is necessarily larger (*quidquid agunt homines*)¹²⁸ than in the two cities: in that way, they are possibly a slight structural error—a

promise of a different book. But this is not v. serious, and the cities themselves are good.

In *Lamiel* you tackle a desperately difficult job. (I had thought of having letters to the guardian angel from an archangel side by side with those from *Screwtape* to *Wormwood* in my *Letters* but funk'd it). As a corrective of the feminine soothing angel dear to XIXth. Century fancy, he is a success. Whether you quite get (but could anyone?) the beauty of charity shining through the hardness, is doubtful. And he is at times in danger of being not only severe (wh. he should be) but *rude*: as if he disagreed with Bacon's principle that rebukes to inferiors shd. be 'grave and weighty, not taunting'.¹²⁹ Perhaps I am demanding impossibilities. How to show that he can *pity*, without letting in the least idea of indulgence? Especially when, not being human, he cannot, like Our Lord, weep. I've an idea that his most devastating remarks shd. have the air of devastating by accident, in a sort of innocent objectivity. (Have you noticed, by the way, that we devastate our pupils never when we intended to wound or snub but just when we [are] dealing dispassionately with the facts and had no intention of severity? A blessed paradox. Men need to be humiliated, but the *intention* to humiliate, being wicked, is always frustrated).

That's the only serious criticism. I look forward to the next book with v. great interest. And thank you for this.

I am so glad you 'all' liked *The Silver Chair*. I am often surprised by the extreme youth of some of my child readers. I get lovely letters, and sometimes dare to hope that the Narnian infiltration may bear a little fruit. those who underwent in childhood grow up and begin to do things.¹³⁰

You know there is always dinner, bed & breakfast to be had here!

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO THE KILMER CHILDREN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
March 19th 1954

Dear Kilmers

You have sent me such a lot of treasures I don't know where to begin. Your story, Martin, is good and keeps one right to the end guessing what is really happening. I am a little bit surprised that the Policeman did not feel afraid of such a strange hostess. Or did he, and you didn't tell us? I think just a word about how he felt, and a name for him, are the only improvements I can suggest. The one place where you do tell us what it felt like for him ('He thought a moment') does a bit of good to the story.

In Hugh's picture of the Dufflepuds what I like best (though the D's themselves are quite good) is the ship, just the right sort of ship, and the shadow of the ship, and the *windiness* of the sky. I mean, I like a picture of out-of-doors things to look as if it was really out of doors—as this does. But you all seem able to do that. Nicky's Reepicheep shows the sunlight splendidly by the shadows of the trees. But what I like best of all is the 'spirit of a tree'. It is so beautifully wavy and graceful and is moving so. Bravo!

The typescript of *your* book went off to the publisher last week, though it will not be out till next year. It is called *The Magician's Nephew*.¹³¹ You must have often wondered how the old Professor in *The Lion, Witch & W* could have believed all the children told him about Narnia. The reason was that he had been there himself as a little boy. This book tells you how he went there, and (of course that was ages and ages ago by Narnian time) how he saw Aslan *creating* Narnia, and how the White Witch first got into that world and why there was a lamp-post in the middle of that forest. The one *before* yours (*The Horse and his Boy*) is also dedicated to two Americans¹³² and will be out 'this Autumn' (Fall, as you say). It is still cold here but the snowdrops, crocuses, primroses and daffodils are up and the thrushes are building nests. Love to all.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO HERBERT PALMER (TEX): PC

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
19/iii/54

Yes, what a fatuous waste of time that evening was, except that it gave us a chance to meet. I thought the poet K. (tho' not nasty) almost an imbecile.¹³³ Yes, do come next term. In haste.

C.S.L.

TO GEOFFREY BLES (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
March 20th 54.

My dear Bles

The resourceful Bank seems to have found a solution, which their letter (enclosed) will, I hope, make clear. I send you the cheque, and await a smaller cheque from you in return: after the proper date you will send me the residue. All right? It is, indeed, the v. expedient you thought of: I shd. never have had the wit myself.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JILL FREUD (T): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
22nd March 1954.

My dear June,

Many thanks for your letter of the 18th. To my surprise and pleasure, Paxford has come round about the puppy, though I was quite honest and told him he was getting an aristocrat. Like everyone else, he would of course like a *dog*, if there is one going, but will take a bitch: and I need hardly tell you that Polly's daughter or son can look forward to a happy home.

With love to all, yours ever,

Jack

Warnie

P.S. I take it that the puppy arrives in about 6 weeks?

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):[134](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
March 24/54

Dear Miss Bodle

Oh how you touch my conscience! I treated my own father abominably and no sin in my whole life now seems to be so serious. It is not likely you are equally guilty.

Feelings of affection are not at the command of the will and perhaps the very attempt to produce them has the opposite effect. I have been astonished at the ease (and even the affection) with which I have been able to treat in *other* old men the very same characteristics I was so impatient with in my Father. I wonder can something be done along those lines?—by remembering how merely funny, how endearing in a whimsical way, the things that divide you from your Father wd. seem if he were a casual acquaintance. By voluntarily standing further off might one in effect come closer? Part of the difficulty, I fancy, is heredity—a deep awareness that what one likes least in our parents has been bequeathed to oneself and, in oneself, needs to be resisted. While my Father was alive I was shocked when I caught myself acting or speaking like him: now I am amused, and not hostilely. At any rate, work now for the night cometh.¹³⁵

I am delighted to hear how well your Sunday School goes on. I have come to like Hans Anderson better since I grew up than I did in childhood. I think both the pathos and the satire—both v. delicate, penetrating and ever-present in his work—disquieted me then. I agree about *The Little Mermaid*: I'd add *The Storks*, the *VII Swans* and (best of all satires) *The Emperor's New Clothes*.¹³⁶

He was, you know, a friend of Kierkegaard's¹³⁷ and a v. disappointed novelist, for it was by his novels, not his fairy tales that he wished to be known. I wonder if the story of the *Shadow* is connected with that—the shadow outgrowing the man as a fairy-tale-writer outgrew the novelist. But I'm glad he did! All blessings.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
March 25/54

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

I must be short for I have had a run of absolutely full days and there are endless things waiting to be done. You ask 'for what' God wants you. Isn't the primary answer that He wants *you*. We're not told that the lost sheep was sought out for anything except itself.¹³⁸ Of course, He may have a special job for you: and the *certain* job is that of becoming more and more His. Yes, isn't Law¹³⁹ good?

Yours in haste,
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
March 25/54

My dear Arthur

W. will be crossing back to England on Aug 30th and I shall then be at your disposal. I couldn't come earlier in the year as I shall be examining till the v. end of July. As for *place* I shall be perfectly content either to repeat last year's excellent menu of Inver and Rathmullan or to try any new experiment if one occurs to you. To me the pleasures of returning to the same place (wh. begins to acquire homeliness) and those of adventuring to a new, tho' different in kind, are about equal in degree. It wd. be wise if you pointed out to both managers that I am an unseasonably early riser and you a light sleeper so that you wd. be greatly obliged if we could be put in rooms *not* adjacent. (This is not meant as a joke!).

If it is convenient for you not to start till Wed. Sept. 1st I have no objection to sleeping at the Crawfordsburn inn on the 30th & 31st.

I happen to have 2 copies of this ugly book¹⁴⁰ in wh. you may find some of the articles worth reading. Joy Davidman's is the best, I think.

I am suffering from a number of small diseases one of which entails daily visits to hospital for 'dressings', but none of them are dangerous.¹⁴¹

No author minds having to answer letters in praise of his own book: not even Warnie.

Blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO I. O. EVANS (W): TS

54/204

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th March 1954.

Dear Evans,

No thanks. I live among these modern linguistic birds, and have quite enough of them. I expect that Shipman¹⁴² really means that Martians talk like Professors Ayer and Ryle. If so, why go to Mars?—‘see your own planet first’. I look forward to the Great Persian War.¹⁴³ With all good wishes.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
March 26/54

Dear Mrs. Jessup—

I quite understand about closing your correspondence (with me; not with God, I trust). All congratulations on your good news and sympathy on your bad, and thanks for the merry photo. One last word, about getting rid of fear.

Two men had to cross a dangerous bridge. The first convinced himself that it wd. bear them, and called this conviction Faith. The second said ‘Whether it breaks or holds, whether I die here or somewhere else, I am equally in God’s good hands.’ And the bridge did break and they were both killed: and the second man’s Faith was not disappointed and the first man’s was.

God bless you.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
March 31st 54

Dear Mary—

(I return the compliment by telling you that my friends call me Jack). I am sorry the persecution still goes on. I had that sort of thing at school, and in the army, and here too when I was a junior fellow, and it does v. much darken life. I suppose (tho' it seems a hard saying) we should mind humiliation less if [we] were humbler. It is, at any rate, a form of suffering which we can try to offer, in our small way, along with the supreme humiliation of Christ Himself. There is, if you notice it, a very great deal in the N.T. about His humiliations as distinct from His sufferings in general. And it is the humble and meek who have all the blessings in the *Magnificat*.¹⁴⁴ So your position is, spiritually, far safer than the opposite one. But don't think I don't know how much easier it is to preach than practice.

Yes, I have read Martin Kilmer's story, with much interest. I don't think the nonchalance of the policeman was one of its merits, though: I think it only means that Martin (v. naturally) is still at the stage of imagining an event but not yet at the stage of imagining the reactions. Of course this has a whimsically comic effect for a grown-up reader, but that is accidental.

How right you are to see that anger (even when directed against oneself) 'worketh not the righteousness of God'.¹⁴⁵ One must never be *either* content with, *or* impatient with, oneself. My old confessor (now dead)¹⁴⁶ used to impress on me the need for the 3 Patiences: patience with God, with my neighbour, with oneself.

Need one ever be anxious about mumps in a woman? It sometimes is serious in men if they get it as adults. Yes, I'm sick of our Abracadabrist poets.¹⁴⁷ What gives the show away is that their professed admirers give quite contradictory interpretations of the same poem—I'm prepared to believe that an unintelligible picture is really a v. good horse if all its admirers tell me so: but when one says it's a horse, and the next that it's a

ship, and the third that it's an orange, and the fourth that it's Mt. Everest, I give it up.¹⁴⁸ All blessings.

Yours

Jack

P.S.—You speak of the ‘cult of the OBSTUSE’. Do you mean ABSTRUSE, OBTUSE or OBSCURE? Ld. Dunsany is a glorious writer in prose: try *The Charwoman’s Shadow*.[149](#)

TO MARTIN LINGS (BOD):[150](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
April 2nd 54

Dear Martin

Driver told me you were in for that job and I did what I could for you in our brief conversation. It is nice to see a poem from your hand again—and, I think, a good one. The downwards leaning branches as an image of the Mercy are v. moving. I'm sorry you told me the garden was partly imaginary: credulous stay-at-home that I am, I should have believed it all. This is probably the first Islamic poem in alliterative metre?

All good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE AND MOIRA SAYER (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
April 2nd 1954.

My dear George and Moira

It was *very* nice to hear from you: for I sometimes wonder when I think of you (which, for a reason you know, happens at least once a day) how long your amazing friendliness can be expected to stand the strain of my frequent unavailability. I'm glad it does: there are no two people I'd be sorrier to lose.

Now, look. By bad luck Mrs. Gresham (our queer, Jewish, ex-Communist, American convert) and her two boys will be here all next week. So we can't come and dine. But cd. you both come in on the Tue. or Wed and meet at the Eastgate at 11 for an hour or more's talk? She's a queer fish and I'm not at all sure that she is either yours or Moira's cup of tea (she is, at any rate, *not* a Bore). But it wd. be a v. bright spot for W. and me. Do.

Yours

Jack

On 2 April Warnie wrote to Arthur Greeves:¹⁵¹

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
2nd April 1954.

My dear Arthur,

Hurray, I'm so glad you enjoyed the book, and it was good of you to write. I must re-read that chapter on the army, for you are by no means the first person who has spoken of it as you do. Whether there is to be any more book-making depends on how this book goes; the latest London report is that 'sales are steady, not sensational', which is as good as a beginner can hope for I think. The New York edition came out on the 17th, and of it I have as yet no news—beyond a positively rapturous review in the N.Y. Times, which is all to the good, as far as it goes.

Yes, I too look forward to another meeting. Jack and I plan to come to the north first this year, and then go on to the south—arriving at Crawfordsburn about the 7th August. I've given Jack your message.

*Yours ever,
Warren*

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
April 10/54

Dear Mrs. Gebbert—

Oddly enough I read *Peter Ibbetson*¹⁵² for the first time some months ago. It is a v. painful book and, I think, painful in a rather unjustifiable way, for it is not realistic in the ordinary sense, nor is there any element either of heroic resistance or Christian resignation—just sheer unrelieved pathos. *Parva*¹⁵³ doesn't necessarily mean a little girl any more than *petite* in French, which might be short for *petite fille* but also for *petite maison* or *petite souris*¹⁵⁴ or dozens of other things. Both *parva* and *apta* must be either Feminine Singular or Neuter Plural. I don't know what the quotation

is from but I suspect the full phrase was *Parva sed apta domus* which a. Makes sense; 'a small but fit house (or home)' b. Makes grammar, for *domus* is feminine c. makes poetry, for a hexameter line might begin like that.

God bless my soul, how out-of-date your Narnian news is! After the *Dawn Treader*, *The Silver Chair* came out last autumn, and *The Horse and his Boy* ought to be out this summer. After that there will be two more, which makes seven, and then the whole cycle is complete.

I hope your son is as adorable as the baby bears we saw in Whipsnade Zoo yesterday:¹⁵⁵ two mothers in the ecstasies of lactation and three beautiful woolly little cubs which seemed to use the mothers indiscriminately. Though the cage or pit was about half an acre in area the mothers were doing all this right against the bars, doubtless in order that the public might admire their beautiful families, in which they succeeded. Such happiness!

Love to all, in which my brother joins me, Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO SISTER MADELEVA CSC (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
April 12th 1954

Dear Sister Madeleva,

Thank you for your letter of the 8th and your kind assurances about Miss Deneke. I am very greatly obliged to you and I am sure her visit will give pleasure to both sides.

I am afraid I shall not be able to visit America in the near future; I have recently had a year's leave from College and it would be unreasonable to ask for more just at present. Please remember me to Fr. D'Arcy and tell him that he is still missed at the Dante Society:¹⁵⁶ what a fine mind, both rich and sharp, he has!

I hope you are well yourself and that your work prospers. With kindest regards.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
April 13th 54

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for your letter of the 10th and hearty congratulations both on the new job (which I hope will be blessed) and on your painful but hopeful meeting with your daughter. I have no time for anything but briefest Easter wishes as we have had visitors for a week and are all behind hand.

Yours

Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
April 13/54

Dear Arthur

No, I have no suggestions; I lack knowledge. For one's own peace of mind I think it is best to set a time limit for one's decisions (I mean, decisions of mere pleasure where duty & necessity don't come in)—e.g., that if you haven't thought of a new plan instead of Rathmullan by noon on a certain day, about a week hence, you will at once write to Rathmullan. Also, we might find rooms all booked if we delayed too long. I suppose Sept. 15 is the night for which I shd. book my berth to L'pool? Of course I quite understand that it wd. be hard on Esther¹⁵⁷ if you put me up—and perhaps on you!

Yours

Jack

During the spring of 1954 Geoffrey Bles retired from the firm he founded in 1923. The controlling shares in his business were sold to the publisher (Sir) William Collins (1900–76) of William Collins, Sons & Co., Ltd. Two of Bles’s colleagues, J. G. Lockhart¹⁵⁸ and Jocelyn Gibb, remained on the board of the company, the latter becoming managing director of Geoffrey Bles Ltd. The change was to have great significance for Lewis. His books passed from a small publisher to a large one, and a few years later Collins’s remarkable wife, Priscilla Collins (1901–90), enabled the books to enjoy greater popularity than ever before by publishing them in her Fontana Paperback series, beginning in 1955.¹⁵⁹ Meanwhile, the new managing director of Geoffrey Bles Ltd, Jocelyn Gibb, wrote to Lewis on 14 April 1954:

I send you an invitation to attend the opening of the ‘Christianity in Books’ Exhibition on 3rd May...Of course we would be delighted if you could attend and you would see all your books well displayed. As you know Mr. Bles has now retired from business. He has not been well lately and I am hoping the rest will restore him to full health...I hope to have the privilege of meeting you before long. The new board here comprises Mr. W. A. R. Collins as Chairman and myself as Managing Director...Perhaps I could call on you in Oxford or we could meet here...on 3rd May.¹⁶⁰

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):¹⁶¹TS

54/63

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
15th April 1954.

Dear Mr. Gibb,

I am quite vain enough to enjoy a display of my own books but, alas, I shall be starting off to the tutorial engine for term on May 3rd. I shall be delighted to see you here, either for lunch, or for dinner, bed, and breakfast.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):[162](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
April 15th 1954

Dear Joan Lancaster

Thank you very much for your kind letter with beautiful painting and interesting photo which reached me to-day.

I am so glad you like the Narnian books, and it was nice of you to tell me. There are to be seven stories altogether. The ones which have already come out are 1. *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* 2. *Prince Caspian*

3. *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* 4. *The Silver Chair*.

Some time this year, Number 5, *The Horse and his Boy*, will be out: and the 6th, *The Magician's Nephew* has already gone to the printer (you have no idea how long it takes getting a book printed). The 7th is already written, but still only in pen-and-ink, and I have not quite decided yet what to call it. Sometimes I think of calling it *The Last King of Narnia*, and sometimes, *Night Falls on Narnia*. Which do you think sounds best?

I was at a Zoo last week and saw the real lions: also some perfectly lovely bears nursing their cubs.

How lucky you are to have a pool.

With love to your brother and yourself.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELburnE (W): TS
54/28.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
17th April 1954.

Dear Mary

Only a scrap, for everyone writes to me at Easter, so that what ought to be a bright spot in the year threatens to become for me a very dark one. Will you, please, always avoid 'holiday' periods in writing to me?

All blessings, and I hope the new job will go nicely.

Yours

Jack

TO HARRY BLAMIRE (BOD): TS

54/178.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
19th April 1954

Dear Blamires,

Come on Thursday 22nd. Meet me in the Smoking Room at seven sharp. We don't dress. Most welcome Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARGARET POLLARD (P):[163](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
April 20th 1954

Dear Mrs. Pollard

I was extremely glad to hear from you again for I had lost your address and I believe that I was therefore unable to acknowledge your fine water colour study of the altruistic unguilate.

But she no longer stands alone. Did you see in the paper the account of that dog who after a lifetime of honesty began to steal food daily? The change coincided with the disappearance of the two other dogs kept in the same house; and on investigation it was found that they were at the bottom of a small mine shaft, alive, and that their noble colleague had been dropping food down it for them every day?

I really begin to wonder if we have been quite wrong about the beasts all these centuries.[164](#) Or have they changed? Perhaps St. Francis has put through some little business on their behalf.[165](#)

Thanks for the kind things you say (my own work frightens me: I expect to be asked, if you knew all this why didn't you do it?) and for writing. I value your prayers very much. With all best wishes for Easter.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W): TS

54/240.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
20th April 1954.

Dear Starr,

Poor Day Lewis, this will be a trial to him.¹⁶⁶ With what sweet cunning you glide thence into Narnia; many thanks. When may we look to see you again? I shall await the Arthurian book¹⁶⁷ with interest.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO PHOEBE HESKETH (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
April 21st 1954.

Dear Mrs. Hesketh

Ordinary life (that rare visitant) returns & I have now read *Out of the Dark*,¹⁶⁸ now that my 'silent room'¹⁶⁹ once more 'extends a friendship'¹⁷⁰ etc. That by the way is to me the most completely satisfying poem in the book—tho' a quieter name, or name that promises less than 'Vision' wd. have set it off to more advantage. In itself it is perfect, and very new: the 'finite frame'¹⁷¹ and the way the furniture & leaves work together to the last quatrain are really admirable.

All through the volume I find again the fine phrasing that pleased me in its predecessor: the sunlight 'fingering' the bulbs,¹⁷² the 'trodden' springs¹⁷³ (you're v. good on moss and humus throughout), the 'broomstick' memory,¹⁷⁴ the lake 'sacred to those in love',¹⁷⁵ the moors 'furred' with snow¹⁷⁶ and the stoat as 'foul-furred lightning',¹⁷⁷ the deer walking 'on twigs of fear'¹⁷⁸ and (brilliant variation on the older phrase) 'fleshed with the strength of grass'.¹⁷⁹

What I can't make up my mind about is whether the strong Wordsworthian influence is now doing, or is likely to do in the long run,

good or harm. It seems to me to do both in 'The Quenchless Flame'. The actual description of the birdsnesting & 'collecting'¹⁸⁰ is, I think, good Wordsworthian. But the passage on p. 61 beginning 'and think when flesh shall rot'¹⁸¹ seems to me a *bad* infection from Wordsworth in his pseudo-Miltonic vein—I mean the inversion in 'sore' and the Latinised syntax of 'who selfless bore'.¹⁸² But then on the next page the quatrain beginning 'Man feeds'¹⁸³ wh. *perhaps* (I'm not sure) owes something to the W. of Laodamia,¹⁸⁴ the W. who had been reading Daniel, is v. good. And I keep on changing my mind about 'Behind the Cloud'. There are such good things in it, but it is so v. close to the style & metre of W. at his most namby-pamby. Can you risk that association?

I think the single poems that I like best on the whole are the Bell Ringer,¹⁸⁵ Four Aspects¹⁸⁶ (an absolute corker) Snowdrops (how big and strong they, legitimately, become in your treatment!) Wild Deer, No Escape, and of course Vision.

The only two I really did not like at all are Resurrection & Full Circle. In the first, I dislike *swerve* as a transitive verb & I think it phonetically bad to have it so close to *serve*.¹⁸⁷ And throughout aren't you merely diluting & weakening the original narrative? Do compare the 16 words beginning 'the spirit wills' with the words Christ said!¹⁸⁸ You wd. better have left 'em alone. Full Circle is too rhapsodical. Don't you think that the more infinite the theme, the harder, tighter, severer the poem ought to be? That's where Patmore was so right. Eternity & infinity shd. always be dealt with either in v. strict form (like Dante) or in v. homely symbols (like Herbert).

I'm reading much modern poetry & am hampered by the *alien* character of the experience expressed. If I'm ever doubtful what to think of you it is for the opposite reason: afraid that I'm being, as it were, bribed by my strong sympathy. The Lonely Heart is so exactly like many walks in my own youth! And Mountain Purpose. And dozens. The only place where my experience differs sharply from yours is in Breath of all the World. I don't (or not yet) find Age the surest ally of Head.¹⁸⁹ In youth my head was harder & more tyrannous and my heart colder than now.

Well, thanks very much. I have had a most enjoyable time in this book and look forward with a good appetite to more. Remember me to Palmer.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
April 22nd 1954

Dear Ruth

This flamboyant notepaper is a gift from an American, and I'm so papyrophagous I feel I mustn't waste it: but I wouldn't like you to think I've become a tycoon or to feel that it needs only INC. after my name to be complete.

I hadn't heard of 'David's mishap'¹⁹⁰ but I quite understand that guests mustn't see a new house till it has all its 'bravery on and tackle trim'.¹⁹¹

Have you read Phoebe Hesketh's poems and do you like them? I had the increasingly pathetic Herbert Palmer here last term: now an old man in a rage like Oedipus or Lear. I'd give a lot to be able to tell him he was a great poet. But the sheer vigour of his rage is sometimes exhilarating (and, I hope, at least a momentary comfort to himself) as when he called Dylan Thomas 'a drunken, illiterate, leg-pulling, Welsh foghorn'.¹⁹²

I think poetry thrives more, is less of an Alexandrian coterie in America than he[re]. I've read lately Master's *Spoon River Anthology*¹⁹³ and all Robinson Jeffers:¹⁹⁴ much to criticise in both but not that *boredom* which you spoke out about in your lecture.

Go to Whipsnade. I was there with some children a fortnight ago. There were two mother bears with cubs lying in the ecstasies of lactation with heads close together as if they were sharing maternal confidences, and all close up to the bars for fear the public would not see the beautiful children (so like their dear father). And there was an amiable tigress shut up away from the others—enforced celibacy, I fear—who nearly cried when we left her. Oh, and the gay happiness of the sea-lions, *curvicervicum pecus*.¹⁹⁵

There's lots to be said for a dumb choir. I wish ours were. All Easter blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
22/4/54

Dear Dom Bede—

I write in haste at the end of a morning of letter writing. I feel as you do about modern English poetry. American is better. Lee Masters, Frost,¹⁹⁶ and Robinson Jeffers all really have something to *say* and some real art.

Don't imagine that the Logical Positivist menace is over. To me it seems that the apologetic position has never in my life been worse than it is now. At the Socratic the enemy often wipe the floor with us.¹⁹⁷ *Quousque domine?*¹⁹⁸

Of course I look forward v. much to your Confession¹⁹⁹ and will take all that's coming to me about myself.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
April 22nd 54

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

It is a pity, isn't it, that the great feasts wh. shd. be times of joy are so often marred in one way or another. (We have a *very* trying curate in our parish).²⁰⁰ Some say 'the devil lives v. near the altar', anxious to cut us off from Grace by instilling sinful thoughts, or, if that fails, at least to deprive us of the sensible comforts of Grace by instilling worry, fears, and inconveniences.

I take it your Rector is just an instance of the brother one has to forgive unto seventy times seven.²⁰¹ I don't think the *recurrence* of uncharitable thoughts is v. serious provided one knocks them on the head each time, tho' of course it is an unhappiness and a proper ground for self-humiliation. But the real serious sin wd. lie in yielding to them. And I think you are free to take a spiritual holiday: i.e. when it is v. hard to think kindly of someone, one may take a spell of not thinking about him at all. Of course it is hard to be closely connected with something and remain 'detached'. But does not God want us to reach, is He not helping us to reach, a sort of detachment from things (after all) a good deal *closer* than a parish: from our very selves, from all our hopes and fears? If they have a bad priest they need good laity all the more. And when one comes to think of it, the place where one is most wanted can hardly ever be the place where one wd. have chosen for one's own comfort. (The part of the line which needs troops is not the part where troops will have the best time). But don't omit those 'holidays'. One has to *act* as if everything depended on one's own exertions and then, as soon as the moment of action is over, 'cast all your care'²⁰² upon God and realise that in some deeper sense, you don't matter in the least and it is only for *your* sake He uses you to do what He cd. do v. much more easily Himself.

All parents are apt to treat their grown up sons & daughters at times as if they were still children: and perhaps all children are apt to think that this

is happening even when it is not. I'm sure myself that *respect*—or let us say frankly *reverence*—is the disinfectant without wh. no affection will work properly.

All good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO HUGH KILMER (W): TS
54/141.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
28th April 1954.

Dear Hugh,

Oh, very good. Eustace as a dragon is your best picture yet. Really awesome! Love to all.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTYN SKINNER (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
April 29/54

Dear Skinner

I don't know much about publishers.²⁰³ The one most likely to take risks over what they think a good work is Allen & Unwin: witness their heroic venture of publishing Tolkien's new huge heroic romance in 3 vols at about £1 each! The O.U.P. will take no risks.

My own advice is the obvious advice: don't dream of publishing at your own charge till you've tried every single firm in the country—and perhaps in U.S.A. too. (By the way poetry over there seems to be in a far better state than here. Instead of a funny little Alexandrian coterie they have poets really writing to be read—big works with invention & architectonics in them: e.g. Masters, Robinson,²⁰⁴ Jeffers, Vincent Benet, & P. Warren.)²⁰⁵

I'd sooner read Merlin II in print than in typescript: if (*absit omen*)²⁰⁶ it is denied print, then I'd greatly value a typed copy. Cancel your order for that book of mine: why waste your money on that sort of thing?²⁰⁷

With deep sympathy: it's horrid to be 'with book' and Lucina²⁰⁸ not on her job.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO TONY POLLOCK (P):

Magdalen College
Oxford
May 3rd 54

Dear Pollock (if I may make old neighbourhood an excuse for dropping the Mr.) Thanks for your letter. What 'facts' there may or may not be behind C.W.'s novels I don't know: except that I believe he had had actual experience of something like the practice of 'Substitution' or 'exchange'.²⁰⁹

Behind my own stories there are no 'facts' at all, tho' I hope there are truths. That is, they may be regarded as imaginative hypotheses illustrating what I believe to be theological truths. *Silent Planet* is in part an answer to the popular unbeliever's objection: 'In the light of modern astronomy how can you go on believing that God was incarnate on one petty little planet of a minor star?' Ans: perhaps it was the only one that needed redemption, the one lost sheep whom He went seeking, leaving the 99.²¹⁰

Perelandra answers the view 'By a Fall, don't you really mean only the inevitable finiteness & incompleteness of Man?' Ans: no, I don't. I believe it resulted from a free act of sin & cd. have been avoided. If God created any other rational animals in some other part of the universe, perhaps they did *not* fall. One may imagine....

THS paints, under wholly fictional conditions, what I really believe about a certain type of modern scientific humanist planner. I don't mean that such a man *does* obey devils and practices magic. I do say 'Your ethics is such that *if* you cd. get diabolical aid you wd. have no scruples about using it.'

I don't of course mean that I started with these abstract 'morals' & then invented yarns to illustrate them. I could not work like that: stories begin, for me, simply with *pictures* coming into my head. But these are the *thoughts* that accompanied the writing.

About Logres—I do think there is a 'better England' always getting lost in, but always showing through, the actual one.

I hope this is fairly clear.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD): PC

Magdalen College
Oxford
4/5/54

Splendid. Do I sleep the night of the 15th at Rathmullan & cross to L'pool on the 16th, or leave R. on morning of the 15th & cross that night? All the best.

J.

I have more copies of a huge 2 vol. American collection of Eng. poets (preface to Spenser by me) than I know what to do with. [211](#) Wd. you care for one?

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
May 7th 1954

Dear Joan Lancaster

Thanks for letter and pictures. I say, you are lucky to have armour: I would have loved it when I was a boy but it never came my way. The kind you have would be even better for Vikings etc. than for Arthurian knights.

As for doing *more* Narnian books than 7, isn't it better to stop when people are still asking for more than to go on till they are tired?

Love from,

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ROBERT PENN WARREN (P):[212](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford
May 8th 1954

Dear Mr. Warren

May a stranger (with the slight excuse that we are both in the same profession) write to offer you very serious congratulations on your *Brother to Dragons?*[213](#) It might sound to some like damning with faint praise to say that I am almost inclined to call it a great poem: but you are a critic as well as a poet and will understand that this is about as far as one could sanely go about a work which one has read only once. But I have good hopes that my first impression will turn out to have been correct.

For one thing, the long poem is rather my special subject—I'd trust my own criticism on that Form more than on any other. For another, my admiration is certainly not dependant on any agreement with your view of life, so that I'm not ideologically bribed in your favour. I think the Form (in the largest sense) is a wonderful invention: I mean, having the story told thro' the actors, still chewing it over. I suppose this might be called an adaptation of the *Ring and the Book* technique. But having it told in Sheol adds a particular sense of unchangeableness—the eternity of the past. And how do you manage to use this device without for one moment raising (even in so theological an imagination as mine) the least interest in anyone's beliefs about the actual status of the dead? which of course wd. be a ruinous distraction.

Another most brilliant success is the utterly unexpected addition of rhyme on p. 121, which, coming against the vast metrical background of unrhymed verse, is as if a Bell began to toll. And another is the intrusion of yourself among the speakers (you have noticed how, on a tiny scale and with predominantly comic effect, this is anticipated by Henryson in some of the *Fables?*).[214](#) I see from the dust-jacket that someone is already picking out delectable favourite bits. Inevitable, but what a pity! These may prove in the end as big an obstacle to *real* appreciation as all the other nuisance-passages (Aeneid II, IV and VI, or P.L. I and II[215](#) or 'To be or not to

be’):²¹⁶ for most emphatically this is a real whole and not a *cake* with plums in it. One or two bits seemed to have a certain (purely verbal) suggestion of our Charles Williams. Is there any influence?

The next English edtn. shd. have a Glossary. Only one of my colleagues knew what a ‘painter’ means in American. I got it right myself, but it was by guessing.

I think America is going through rather a good poetical period at present, while we’re going into a metrical *coterie* alexandrianism. Not that it wasn’t you, drat you, who wished on us both Pound & Eliot! But you wisely kept them for export. With us, in any periodical the dullest article seems to me to beat the best poem in all the v. qualities poetry shd. have—structure, invention, freshness, humanity. Jeffers overcalls his hand and strains his voice into a scream sometimes; Benet can be commonplace for 100 lines together; Frost can be tame. But they never give me the feeling I so often get from modern English verse—‘No *hour* in my life has proved to be more interesting than this man’s whole life seems to have been.’ But I begin to ramble....

With many thanks for a profoundly moving and (without this, to be ‘moved’ is nothing) satisfying experience.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

On 18 January 1954 the Council of the Senate of Cambridge University recommended ‘That there be established in the University on 1 October 1954 a Professorship of Medieval and Renaissance English, and that...the Professor of Medieval and Renaissance English shall treat the subject on literary and critical rather than on philological and linguistic lines.’²¹⁷ On 31 March a new Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English was announced, with application to be made by 30 April 1954.²¹⁸ Lewis’s friends, such as J. R. R. Tolkien, knew the change of jobs would make a huge difference to him. Besides the fact that his salary would treble—from £600 per annum to £1,950, including rooms and meals in College—it would mean the end of the tutorials that had exhausted him after thirty years.

The Electors for the new Chair, all of whom were very friendly towards Lewis, included Tolkien, Henry Stanley Bennett (University Reader in English and the Librarian of Emmanuel College, Cambridge),²¹⁹ David

Knowles (Regius Professor of Modern History in Cambridge),²²⁰ F. P. Wilson (Merton Professor of English at Oxford),²²¹ Basil Willey,²²² and E. M. W. Tillyard (Master of Jesus College, Cambridge).²²³ The meeting of the Electors was presided over by Sir Henry Willink, Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, and Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University. On 11 May 1954 Willink wrote to offer Lewis the Chair:

*I was asked by my colleagues [the Electors], who were unanimous with a warmth and sincerity which could not have been exceeded, to invite you to become the first holder of what we feel will be a Chair of great value to the University. Throughout the discussion stress was laid on the fact that we were electing to a first tenure, a moment of critical importance.*²²⁴

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC):²²⁵

Magdalen College
Oxford
May 12th 1954

Dear Mr. Vice-Chancellor

I feel more pleased and honoured than I can express at your invitation: and the prospect (socially and academically considered) of migrating from Oxford to Cambridge would be more an incentive than a deterrent.

The very regretful and very grateful refusal which I have to make is based on different grounds. Domestic necessities govern all our lives at present, and by moving I should lose an invaluable servant.²²⁶ I have, moreover, led another possible candidate to believe that I was not in the field.²²⁷ Thirdly, I come of a stock that grows early old and I already know myself to have lost a good deal of energy and vigour which the first holder of this important chair most certainly ought to have.

It is very difficult to say that the decision I have based on these reasons is now quite fixed without seeming to suppose, like a coxcomb, that you might press me. You will understand that my only motive is a wish to save you from any waste of your time.

With renewed thanks and with the most cordial good wishes to the new Chair, I am Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
May 14/54

My dear Van Auken—

I have seen less than you but more than I wanted of this terrible problem.²²⁸ I will discuss your letter with those whom I think wise in Christ. This is only an *interim* report.

First, to map out the boundaries within which all discussion must go on, I take it for certain that the *physical* satisfaction of homosexual desires is sin. This leaves the homo. no worse off than any normal person who is, for whatever reason, prevented from marrying. Second, our speculations on the cause of the abnormality are not what matters and we must be content with ignorance. The disciples were not told *why* (in terms of efficient cause) the man was born blind (Jn. IX 1–3): only the final cause, that the works of God shd. be made manifest in him.²²⁹

This suggests that in homosexuality, as in every other tribulation, those works can be made manifest: i.e. that every disability conceals a vocation, if only we can find it, wh. will ‘turn the necessity to glorious gain.’²³⁰ Of course, the first step must be to accept any privations wh., if so disabled, we can’t lawfully get. The homo. has to accept sexual abstinence just as the poor man has to forego otherwise lawful pleasures because he wd. be unjust to his wife and children if he took them. That is merely a negative condition.

What shd. the positive life of the homo. be? I wish I had a letter wh. a pious male homo., now dead, once wrote to me—but of course it was the sort of letter one takes care to destroy. He believed that his necessity *could* be turned to spiritual gain: that there were certain kinds of sympathy and understanding, a certain social rôle which mere *men* and mere *women* cd. not give. But it is all horribly vague—too long ago. Perhaps any homo. who humbly accepts his cross and puts himself under Divine guidance will, however, be shown the way. I am sure that any attempt to evade it (e.g., by mock-or quasi-marriage with a member of one’s own sex *even* if this does not lead to any carnal act) is the wrong way. Jealousy (this another homo. admitted to me) is far more rampant and deadly among them than among us. And I don’t think little concessions like wearing the clothes of the other sex in private is the right line either. It is the duties, the burdens, the

characteristic virtues of the other sex, I expect, which the patient must try to cultivate.

I have mentioned humility because *male* homos. (I don't know about women) are rather apt, the moment they find you don't treat them with horror and contempt, to rush to the opposite pole and start implying that they are somehow superior to the normal type. I wish I cd. be more definite. All I have really said is that, like all other tribulations, it must be offered to God and His guidance how to use it must be sought.

I heard you had been troubled with the old spine again. I hope the silence on this topic in your letter does not merely result from selflessness but means that you are now well. Remember me to your very nice wife. You both keep your place in my daily prayers. It is a sweet duty, praying for our friends. I always feel as if I had had a brief meeting with you when I do so: perhaps it *is* a meeting, and the best kind. Pray for me to be made more charitable: we're in the middle of a Faculty crisis wh. tempts me to hatred many times a day.[231](#)

Yours
C. S. Lewis

P.S. I'd nearly forgotten your other point. I presume God grants prayers when granting wd. be good for the petitioner & others and denies them when it wd. not. Might there be cases where *a*. The worthiness of the p. made it *bad* for him to have his prayers granted: i.e. might lead him to think there was an element of *bargain* about it.

b. The unworthiness made it *bad*: i.e. might lead him to think that God did not demand righteousness.

c. The worthiness made it *good*: i.e. might free him from scruples, show him that his conduct had been right after all.

d. The unworthiness made it *good*: i.e. produced humbled compunction—*unde hoc mihi?*²³²

All v. crude. The point is that worthiness might easily be taken into account tho' not in the way of direct *earning* and *reward*

C.S.L.

In encouraging the philologist G. V. Smithers to apply for the Chair Lewis was ignorant of the fact that, under the terms of the appointment ('That the Professor of Medieval and Renaissance English treat the subject on literary and critical rather than on philological and linguistic lines'), Smithers was ineligible.

The Electors' second choice was Helen Gardner,²³³ at that time Fellow of English at St Hilda's College, Oxford. On 14 May Sir Henry Willink wrote to tell Lewis that he would not inform their second choice until June, and urged him to accept the Chair. Lewis replied the next day:

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC):

Magdalen College
Oxford
May 15th 1954

Dear Vice-Chancellor

I am most moved by your extremely kind letter. But you offer persuasion to one who needs liberation. You knock at my door but I can't

unlock it because I haven't the key. The more I look at it the less possible it seems to transport the peculiar domestic set-up of my brother, our man, and myself. There is a whole network of conveniences and life-lines slowly built up here (my brother, in your ear, is not always in perfect psychological health) which I really dare not abandon. I am assuming, of course, that your Chair involves residence at Cambridge, at any rate in term (and it certainly *ought* to).

It is delightful to salute a Williamsite,²³⁴ or, as I have heard it called, a 'Caroline Divine'. I look forward to meeting you when I next visit Magdalene; I greatly enjoyed my week end there last Vacation.

With thanks, and again thanks.

Yours most sincerely
C. S. Lewis

*After this there seemed nothing the Electors could do, and Willink wrote to Lewis on 18 May: 'It is abundantly clear that you have cogent reasons for not making the move which we had so much hoped would be possible.'*²³⁵

Professor Tolkien was, however, determined that Lewis should have the Chair and in a conversation with him on 17 May he convinced him that he would not let down Warnie, Paxford or Smithers by going to Cambridge. Tolkien wrote to Willink on 18 May:

*Besides being the precise man for the job, Lewis would probably be happy there, and actually be reinvigorated by a change of air. Oxford has not, I think, treated him very well, and though he is incapable of 'dudgeon', or of showing resentment, he has been a little dispirited. After our talk he said he would accept! It was as I thought: the chief obstacle is domestic. He has a house and some dependants—including his brother. He will not contemplate closing that establishment. But if he could be assured that Cambridge would provide him with the equivalent (more or less) of his rooms in Magdalen (which he will lose), in which to live during term and house a lot of his books—then I think you can have him.*²³⁶

Tolkien's great news arrived too late. Willink had already invited Helen Gardner to accept the Chair. Lewis, unaware of this, wrote to him reopening the matter.

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC):

Magdalen College
Oxford
May 19th 1954

Dear Vice Chancellor

It is I who should apologise as the cause of multiplied letter writing, the more so since I am now writing again, and in a strain which may make me rather ridiculous. Since my last letter to you I have had a conversation with Tolkien which has considerably changed my view.

He told me, first, that the electors would in no case elect a philologist. This is to me important, for it sets me free (in honour)—I have thought myself bound to refuse it by certain words I have already said to another candidate. If, as now appears, he is not effectively eligible, then I am not bound.

He told me, in the second place, that full residence, with an 'establishment' at Cambridge, was not thought necessary: that four days a week in term time (less or more—there wd. of course be periods of pressure when I might be there for a fortnight or so) would fit the bill. Tolkien's lively mind sometimes leads him (with perfectly innocent intentions) to overstate things. Is his view correct? If so, it would remove my difficulty. As long as my normal housekeeping can be at Oxford, and that the life-lines I told you of are intact, and it is a question of rooms in Cambridge (could any College supply me with these?) I cd. manage well. I can both work and sleep in trains so that the prospect of spending much of my life on the Bletchley route does not alarm me. I have no right to assume these conditions—they seem too good to be true—but if they are the real condition I shd. like nothing better.

I feel a fool in saying all this. But you know how it is when a man has a possible change before him. It is impossible not to toy with the idea of what you would do, or would have done, if you accepted. I have begun composing imaginary lectures and this has had a good deal to do with it: you know what good lectures those ones always are!

Tolkien also said all the Oxford members of the committee had warned you that I was not a great exponent of 'Research'.

It wd. not be honest not to add that if I were an elector I shd. prefer a fully resident Professor to a semi-resident one even if he were slightly less desirable in other respects.

Whatever your conclusion, I shall always be grateful for your kindness and rather ashamed of the trouble I have given.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
May 20th 54

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Well, well—so *that* struggle is over. Perhaps God uses this reverend Marshall as a hair shirt for the faithful and thinks you have worn (or borne) him long enough ('Deliver me from the ungodly who is a sword of thine').²³⁷ It doesn't surprise me in the least that one who can't do a job himself shd. be set to teach others. Failed schoolmasters become inspectors of schools and failed authors become critics. It's the normal thing.

When we speak of Detachment (from worldly interests) we mean it of course only as a preliminary for Attachment to spiritual things: as St. Paul wishes to be rid of the earthly body *only* in order to put on the heavenly (2 Cor. V.1–4). All the Christian demands are in the end positive—to receive, take, embrace something ('Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it')²³⁸—and negative ('Love not the World')²³⁹ only as means to that. As one might say to a slum-child 'Stop making that mud pie & come for a holiday to the sea.'

About Reverence, you know, I believe all people like us, all who come from a Western, decayed-Protestant, liberal, commercial background, have a lot of lee-way to make up. We have our own advantages over those who come from a Latin, Catholic, decayed-feudal background: our veracity, manliness, energy. But we are *spiritually ill-bred*: raw & harsh & crude like yokels in a drawing room. How much even of what we take for democratic feeling is really *gaucherie*? i.e. we disapprove of 'bowings & scraping' partly because, not having had good dancing-masters, we don't know how to bow gracefully. What a pity that the progress of democracy in this country has meant that certain people who used to call me Sir now don't: it ought to have meant that I began calling *them* Sir. And we carry the same boorishness into spiritual matters.

The sinus is behaving much better this year than last. Oh yes, my examining will leave me some summer holiday, but a v. contracted one.

All blessing.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARGARET POLLARD (P):

Magdalen College
Oxford
May 22d 54

Dear Mrs. Pollard

Thank you very much for the cream; I ought to have thanked you before, but we are having a political crisis in our Faculty and life has been a whirl.

I shd. jolly well hope there *were* uncovenanted mercies²⁴⁰—after all Dante put Rhipeus and Trajan in heaven²⁴¹—and I daresay Greene is getting it all right.²⁴² Non-existent saints are a problem (for you! not for hum-drum little Prots like me) which I never thought of.²⁴³ But after all non-existent Gods, if appealed to with good heart, probably have done quite a lot to[o]: I mean, the real God, of His infinite courtesy, re-addresses the letters to Himself and they are dealt with like the rest of the mail.²⁴⁴

Balaam's ass, along with the ass of the flight into Egypt²⁴⁵ and the ass of the entry into Jerusalem,²⁴⁶ all have a paddock and stable (prob. *the* Stable of the Nativity, 'assumed' for that purpose) just outside the walls of the celestial city and he-haw *ad majorem*.²⁴⁷ St. Francis often looks in with some glorified thistles. They are famously snug.²⁴⁸ Only up there their braying is more melodious than the song of a nightingale. I hope we may meet them. Perhaps you won't know me, though. Perhaps people like me, who hardly make the grade for *human* heaven are turned into celestial donkeys. This wd. fit your definition of Limbo, you see: a state of perfect *natural* happiness.²⁴⁹

I'll give you a ride willingly if all comes off.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO A FIFTH GRADE CLASS IN MARYLAND (W):[250](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

May 24th 1954

Dear Fifth Graders

I am so glad you liked the Narnian books and it was very kind of you to write and tell me. There are to be 7 of them altogether and you are already one behind. No. 4, *The Silver Chair*, is already out.

You are mistaken when you think that everything in the book 'represents' something in this world. Things do that in *The Pilgrim's Progress* but I'm not writing in that way. I did not say to myself 'Let us represent Jesus as He really is in our world by a Lion in Narnia': I said 'Let us *suppose* that there were a land like Narnia and that the Son of God, as He became a Man in our world, became a Lion there, and then imagine what would happen.' If you think about it, you will see that it is quite a different thing.

So the answer to your first two questions is that Reepicheep and Nick-a-brick don't, in that sense, represent anyone. But of course anyone in our world who devotes his whole life to seeking Heaven will be *like* R., and anyone who wants some worldly thing so badly that he is ready to use wicked means to get it will be likely to behave like N.

Yes, Reepicheep did get to Aslan's country. And Caspian did return safely: it says so on the last page of the *Dawn Treader*. Eustace did get back to Narnia, as you will find when you read *The Silver Chair*. As for who reigns in Narnia to-day, you won't know till you have had the seventh and last book.

I'm tall, fat, rather bald, red-faced, double-chinned, black-haired, have a deep voice, and wear glasses for reading.

The only way for *us* to Aslan's country is through death, as far as I know: perhaps some very good people get just a tiny glimpse before then.

Best love to you all. When you say your prayers sometimes ask God to bless me.

Yours ever,
C. S. Lewis

Sir Henry Willink had written to Helen Gardner on 16 May offering her the Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English. Unlike Lewis, she took some time to consider the offer. While waiting for her to respond, Willink wrote to Lewis on 24 May telling him that the offer had gone out to 'No. 2' but asking him to hold on because the regulations about residence were not inflexible: 'A Professor can be absent as much as he wishes outside Full

Term provided that he is not habitually absent from a residence within 5 miles of Great St Mary's Church (e.g. rooms in College) more than two nights in the week during Full Term...Oh that my letter to Choice No. 2 had not gone on its way. [251](#)

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC):

Magdalen College
Oxford
May 26th 54

My dear Master

(if I may thus follow your lead) Thank you for your letter. Whatever the upshot (and unless No 2 is as trickily placed as myself, I can't quite see him turning down the offer) I shall long remember your inexhaustible kindness, and if I don't reach Cambridge as a Professor I shall come to Magdalene as a week-ender at the first opportunity in the hopes of making your acquaintance Yours

In utrumque paratus^{[252](#)}

C. S. Lewis

TO THE KILMER CHILDREN (W): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th May 1954.

Dear Kilmers

Thank both Martin and Micky for their nice letters. Do you mean Miriam *fell* into the stove? 'was put on' sounds as if you did it on purpose—were you thinking of having her for dinner? I do hope she will soon be better. Burns are horrid.

Yours ever,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
May 27th 1954

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for yours of the 24th, I am glad to hear you have moved into pleasanter quarters and hope there will be a great blessing both upon them and on the new job. The saving of time and money on bus travel is a great point: or rather, if your experience is at all like mine, the time spent not in travelling but in waiting at 'bus stops, often in v. cold or v. hot weather.

I've no idea what a 'pent-house apartment' may be! I'm sorry to disappoint you with such a scrap of a letter, but the rush is still on (I foresee no end to it before August) and the mails have been above the average for weeks now: I don't know why. It's a cold backward spring here but there are some lovely days. Sunshine just flirts with us and then disappears. You are always in my prayers.

Yours ever

Jack

TO NELL BERNERS-PRICE (W): PC

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
29/5/54

Of course call in with the young people if you are in Oxford. I shall be away a good deal this summer, but if you don't mind taking a *chance*, give me a try. Can't quite join in 'admiration' of anything about Mrs. H.²⁵³ except her cheek! All the best.

J.

On 3 June Sir Henry Willink received a letter from Helen Gardner, declining the Chair. She did not divulge her reasons at the time, but years later, in Lewis's obituary for the British Academy, she wrote:

In the same year as he published [English Literature in the Sixteenth Century] Lewis moved to Cambridge to be the first holder of the Chair in English Medieval and Renaissance Literature. When first approached he was unwilling to leave Oxford and the Chair was indeed offered to someone else. Fortunately, the 'second string' declined, partly on account of having heard that Lewis was changing his mind, for it was obvious that this ought to be Lewis's chair.²⁵⁴

Willink wrote to Lewis on 3 June: 'No. 2 has declined, and I am filled with hope that after all Cambridge will obtain the acceptance of No. 1.'²⁵⁵ As it happened, Willink was both Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University and Master of Magdalene College, and as Vice-Chancellor he advised Lewis to write to the Master of Magdalene to inquire about the possibility of making his 'Cambridge home within its wall'.²⁵⁶ So on 4 June Lewis sent Willink two letters—one as Vice-Chancellor and one as the Master of Magdalene.

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC):

Magdalen College
Oxford
June 4th 1954

Dear Vice Chancellor

Thank you for your letter of the 3rd. I feel much pleasure and gratitude in accepting the Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English. As regards the beginning of the tenure I will be guided by the wishes of the electors: but two factors make me prefer January to October. One is that I am examining in our Final Honour School which means, as you know, that I shall be able to do hardly any of my own work this Long Vacation: and I hope it is not only vanity that makes me reluctant to begin my new duties with old lectures hastily refurbished or new ones inadequately prepared. The other is that (through my own fault) it is now so late that my own College might feel they were being allowed insufficient time for choosing my successor.

I should much like to come over and see you, but from next week until almost August I shall have to average 20 scripts a day, so I dare not play truant even for 24 hours I enclose a letter to the Master of Magdalene.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC):

Magdalen College
Oxford
June 4th 1954

My dear Master

The Vice Chancellor—with whom, in obedience to the Delphic precept, you are no doubt intimately acquainted, has suggested my doing something which, but for his authority, would seem to me pert and immodest. The proposal is nothing less than that I should ask if there is a possibility of my making my Cambridge home in Magdalene when I take up the new Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English. The attractions of such a privilege for me are so clear—and its attractions for Magdalene, I cannot help feeling, so very obscure—that I do not think I can add anything. If the arrangement is possible I should value it most highly on every ground: if it is not, my gratitude for the mere suggestion will not be the less. *Unde hoc mihi?*²⁵⁷

Yours most sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
7th June 1954.

Dear Vice-Chancellor,

The formula of election from October 1st 1954 with dispensation until January 1st 1955 is most obliging, and would of course suit me admirably. If I can get away earlier than January 1st then, since a dispensation is presumably permissive and a man need not avail himself of it longer than he wishes, no new legislation would, I suppose, be necessary.

With very many thanks,
Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC): TS
CONFIDENTIAL.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
7th June 1954.

Dear Master,

Thanks very much indeed to you and the College. I am sure the *piano* will be *nobile* enough for me. Inches of bookshelf space is the important factor. What exactly ought I to reply to any other College which was kind enough to offer me a Fellowship? I mean, having regard to the confidential nature of the present correspondence. You'll find me a child in all such matters.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO RICHARD SELIG (HAR): [258](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford

7/6/54

Dear Selig

Far the best of these poems,²⁵⁹ I think, is the first,²⁶⁰ which I find v. good. I've always wanted the possibilities of the alexandrine-without-a-medial-break further explored. Two flaws, I think. Ll. 10, 11 seem to me a conventionally violent image wh. doesn't really fit in with the general wind-like, evasive quality of your island. Lunch & snapping twigs belong, for me, to some other poem.²⁶¹ And in 13, 14 I think the 3-syll rhymes—what the Italians call *sdrucchioli*—are coarse. 24–27 and all the Italianised coda are excellent. Next best I liked *Marriage Song*. 'He sleeps in a new flesh'²⁶² is good. I'm baffled by your use of 'be' in *Way up* 4. l. 1²⁶³ and *Song for a T* l. 2.²⁶⁴ Is it some idiom I don't know? Many thanks.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
June 7th 1954

Dear Joan Lancaster

Thank you for your nice letter of May 25th. I, too, like opening my eyes under water, both in the sea and in my bath, but one must not do it in a bath if it is very hot because it is bad for them.

All seven Narnian books are now written and the fifth might be out any day now. As for poems, I don't think I could do them. Some poems I did like (or would have liked) at your age are: Longfellow's *Saga of King Olaf*,^{[265](#)} Matthew Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum*,^{[266](#)} Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*,^{[267](#)} and G. K. Chesterton's *Ballad of the White Horse*.^{[268](#)} I wonder do you like any of these.

I used to use fountain pens but somehow I don't like them now.^{[269](#)}

It is dreadfully cold, wet summer here. The cuckoo (do you have cuckoos?) only speaks about once a day and even the squirrels are depressed.

With love,

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO DELMAR BANNER (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
June 8th. 54

Dear Banner

It was nice to hear from you again. I'm on the eve of a great adventure, having accepted the new Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English at Cambridge. I'm already half frightened of what I've done: but 29 years of pupils' essays is enough, bless 'em. There have been many nice pupils: even many nice essays. I haven't noticed that College is anxious to have my portrait painted before I go! Otherwise we might hope to see your egg. (The metaphor of sitting *in* it is intriguing!) But this summer is quite full! First, examining in the Final Honour School (20 scripts a day including Sundays) and, when that's over, Ireland. But many thanks. My duty to Mrs. Banner.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO THE KILMER CHILDREN (W): TS

54/141. Magdalen College,
Oxford.
9th June 1954.

Dear Kilmers,

Congratulations on Deborah²⁷⁰ to you all. I like red hair. I never saw a picture of a shower before. I had to put up my umbrella to look at it. The picture of the lamp-post is good too. Tell Nicky I don't smoke cigars. Love to all.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC): TS CONFIDENTIAL.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
10th June 1954.

Dear Master,

Thank you very much for the formula, which I will certainly use. A professorial fellowship at Magdalene is exactly what I would like best. I should like (among other things) to remain under the same Patroness.²⁷¹ Why should one trouble the celestial civil service with unnecessary change? Thanks again for all your kindness.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
12/6/54

Dear Miss Sayers,

Thanks very much. I'm not sure whether I really am the Professor at the moment. If you wd. call me Jack as others do, the difficulty wd. not arise. (I believe such suggestions ought to come from the lady, but years pass and the lady doesn't move!). I shall still live in Oxford in the Vac and on most term-time week ends.

I'll try to come and look on at the Nicking of Nott. Is it wise? Shall we be shent? She's a pretty good mistress of her weapon. Uncle Tom,²⁷² I'm told, isn't: nor am I, now. You'll have to do all the fighting.²⁷³

You couldn't embalm a body till Sunday, surely, because embalming is works & wd. be a breach of the Sabbath!

In great haste. Thousands of letters from mere acquaintances *plus* schools papers to mark.

Yours ever

Jack Lewis

TO HARRY BLAMIRES (BOD): TS

54/178.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
12th June 1954.

Dear Blamires,
Many thanks. Snowed under with letters and Schools papers.
Yours in haste,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W): TS

54/28. Magdalen College,
Oxford.
14th June 1954.

Dear Mary Willis,
Yes, I'm through the Easter letters, and now examining. I have averaged 20 scripts a day (including Sundays) for six weeks—the viva voce examinations will take eight hours a day. I shall become human again at about the end of September. Meanwhile, love and good wishes.

Yours,
Jack.

TO MR ALLWOOD (P):

Magdalen College
Oxford
18/6/54

Dear Mr. Allwood

As far as I know any baptism given in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, whoever gives it, is valid. But any instructed parson will tell you for sure.

No, I don't for a moment think that conversion wh. can be fixed to a definite date is in the least necessary Do we need to know the answer to your third question? God bids us spread the Gospel & we must obey. How it all works out from this point of view I don't think we know. If we have sinned by *not* spreading it in our pre-Christian days (and have we sinned? no man *can* give another what he hasn't got himself), well, sins are forgiven. In great haste (middle of an exam.).

Yrs. sincerely
C. S. Lewis

The first suggestion that the Narnian stories be filmed came from Jane Douglass of New York. She wrote to Geoffrey Bles on 27 May 1954:

*I am interested in the right to make a Radio and Television series of the Narnian stories by C. S. Lewis. In there anyone in New York with whom I could deal, as the idea may be repulsive to Mr. Lewis and he would doubtless like to hear from someone who had seen me and passed upon the project before saying yes or no?...I write in the second place because I realize the importance of having it done well.*²⁷⁴

While waiting for an answer, Douglass wrote to Lewis about the proposal. The following is his reply:

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W):²⁷⁵TS

54/63.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

19th June 1954.

Dear Miss Douglas,

I have heard nothing from Jocelyn Gibb. I am sure you understand that Aslan is a divine figure, and anything remotely approaching the comic (above all anything in the Disney line) would be to me simple blasphemy. But how are you going to manage *any* of the animals? I would welcome a fuller account. Thanks for the kind things you say.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

54/63.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

19th June 1954.

Dear Mr. Gibb,

Thanks for your letter of the 18th. I'm sorry, but I'm afraid I'm incommunicado till October: and particularly at the end of this month, when I shall be racing against time to finish off the task of examining in Final Honours Schools.

I have heard nothing about the enclosed, [276](#) which I return to you in case you want to refresh your memory. Could you tell me anything?

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

Over the next few days Jocelyn Gibb wrote to Douglass and Lewis, and in a letter to Lewis of 21 June 1954 he said:

The trouble about these Radio and Television adaptations is that whereas you have some control over them in this country, you have very little in the United States. In fact I suggest you would not wish to commit yourself without knowing what would be involved and that you could not know until the whole thing was irretrievably on its course towards production. However, you might like to know a little more if you think there is anything in the idea, and I will willingly write to Miss Douglas asking her for further and fuller particulars. Of course

she still has to arouse someone's interest on the Radio and Television side in a country where a good deal of both is intensely commercial. [277](#)

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
22/6/54

Dear Mr. Gibb

(1.) I wrote to Miss Douglass emphasising the fact that Aslan is a divine figure and I shd. regard any comic element in the treatment of him as blasphemous. For the rest, I left it to you. I feel we shd. allow it only under safeguards which the T.V. people will almost certainly not give us: i.e. specimen photos of the characters and a full script with a right of *veto* on our part.

(2.) I don't see that the play cd. do any harm and it might do good. So 'Yes' as far as I'm concerned. I think Monopods & even the Mouse will be rather beyond the amateur producer, but that's their funeral.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

P.S. I've made two small corrections to their script.

On 23 June 1954 Gibb wrote to Lewis about another important matter, the possibility of his religious books appearing in paperback:

*I do not know if Bles discussed with you the question of doing any of your books in paper backs so I do not know your views on the subject. I was talking to Sir Allen Lane on Monday and he would very much like to do one of your books in Penguins.²⁷⁸ This would mean an initial printing of 50,000 to 100,000 and I told him at once that the present continuing sales of 'Screwtape' at 7s. 6d. made it unlikely we would agree to his taking that title. There are others, however, and from past experience, which I find confirmed by what has happened in Collins, I know these 2s. paper backs reach a much wider public and do nothing but good by hustling the sales of the more expensive books by the same author. On looking through the books I would suggest that *THE PROBLEM OF PAIN* has too much in common with 'Screwtape' in the way of sales to let it go...*THE GREAT DIVORCE*, however, is a possibility and perhaps better still might be *MIRACLES* as the gap between 2s. and 12s. 6d. is greater than between 2s. and 7s. 6d.²⁷⁹*

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

54/63.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
25th June 1954.

Dear Mr. Gibb,

I would be quite in favour of trying either *Great Divorce* or *Miracles** as a Penguin. The result of the first experiment would give us guidance about the other.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

* If *Miracles*, I wd. like to make a few alterations in one chapter first. [280](#)

TO CORBIN SCOTT CARNELL (W): TS

54/354.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
25th June 1954.

Dear Carnell,

Your letter finds me in the middle of exams, and an adequate reply is impossible. If you are losing your faith in argument, why trust the arguments that lead you to do so? (This scepticism about reason under-cuts itself). Some people can be converted on rational grounds, but more can't. All rests with God, and one must not get flustered. If in a particular case He doesn't use *you* or *me* as His instrument, no doubt he has excellent reasons. No general conclusion follows.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
July 10th 1954

Dear Mr. Gibb

Thanks: I think the £670 may as well wait till its ordinary time in Sept.

I really don't know what to say about the Penguin question. [281](#) You are a better judge than I and both our interests are equally involved. I think I must leave you to decide. The result of the experiment will give us a clue what to do next time, if there is a 'next time'.

I suppose the *Abolition of Man*, a v. poor seller so far, might not find the public it needs in Penguin?

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):[282](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
12/7/54

Dear Joan

I am so busy marking examination papers that I can hardly breathe! The very good ones and the very bad ones are no trouble, but the in-between ones take ages.

Thanks for telling me the bits you liked (yes, I have old copies). Chautauqua sounds lovely. In great haste.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
13/7/54

Dear Miss Bodle

Yes, I will indeed. We are in the midst of exams here, so you will forgive me for not writing more. With all blessings.

Yours very sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC):

Magdalen College
Oxford.
15/7/54

My dear Master

I am surprised—and you, though you waive it, have a good right to be equally surprised—that you have had no answer to your most kind letter of June 14th. I replied to it by return and have before me at this moment the draft I handed to my secretary.

It ran (and of course this *runs*) ‘I accept with the warmest gratitude your very kind arrangement: please thank my future colleagues most cordially on my behalf. I should be very happy to be present for a degree by incorporation. It sounds most ungracious of me not to run over and see you pretty soon. But Vivas do not end till the end of this month and I leave for Ireland on Aug 5th. Of the tiny interval some has already been stolen by a guest.’ There will be barely 48 hours left for shopping, packing etc.

I look forward very much to coming over when that dear thing Ordinary Life begins again in October. It troubles me that I begin an acquaintance which I hope will be a most valued friendship by being a nuisance.

Yours most sincerely
C. S. Lewis

On 19 July Warnie wrote to Rhona Bodle:[283](#)

54/201.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
19th July 1954.

Dear Miss Bodle,

My brother tells me he has had a letter from you, and to explain that he is in the throes of examining in the Final Honour School twelve hours a day, seven days a week; and he feels sure that in the circumstances you will understand and excuse his not replying to you personally.

*Yours sincerely,
W. H. Lewis*

TO SISTER PENELOPE CSMV (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
July 30/54

Dear Sister Penelope

Yes, I have been made Professor of 'Medieval & Renaissance English' at Cambridge: the scope of the chair (a new one) suits me exactly. But it won't be as big a change as you might think. I shall still live at Oxford in the Vac. and on many week ends in term. My address will be Magdalene, so I remain under the same Patroness. This is nice because it saves 'Admin' re-adjustments in Heaven: also I can't help feeling that the dear lady would understand my constitution better than a stranger would.

I can't read the title of St. Bernard's book, but look forward to it. Forgive me for a meagre letter: I've had 14 days of Vivas and have huge arrears of correspondence to make up.

Yours very sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
July 30/54

Dear Mr. Kinter

I am afraid the name St. Anne's²⁸⁴ was chosen merely as a plausible & euphonious name, and for no such deep reasons as you suggest. The Witch²⁸⁵ is of course Circe,²⁸⁶ Alcina²⁸⁷ etc because she is (and they are) the same Archtype we find in so many fairy tales. No good asking where any individual author got *that*. We are born knowing the Witch, aren't we?

The stone²⁸⁸ has a glance at the stone tables of the Mosaic Law and its breaking to our liberation from the curse of the law at the crucifixion. Mr. Sensible²⁸⁹ is that type of which Montaigne was the *best* specimen: inferior ones wd. be Horace, Ld. Chesterfield,²⁹⁰ Walter Pater,²⁹¹ Matthew Arnold²⁹²

(as critic, not as poet), George Saintsbury,²⁹³ Prof. Walter Raleigh,²⁹⁴ George Gordon.²⁹⁵ The closest conscious debt to Dante in *G. Divorce* is the angel who drives the bus: of *Inferno* IX, 79–102. The unsuccessful meeting between the 'Tragedian' and his wife is a sort of pendant to the successful meeting of D. and Beatrice in the Earthly Paradise.²⁹⁶

I'm not sure I know what Xtian humanism is. I think T.H.S. is about a triple conflict: Grace against Nature and Nature against Anti-Nature (modern industrialism, scientism, & totalitarian politics). I shd. be v. surprised if I owe anything to Politian or Ascham.²⁹⁷ Taking the word Humanist in the old sense in wh. they are Humanists, I am solidly anti-Humanist: i.e. tho' I love the classics I loathe classicism. My OHEL volume ought to be out this Sept and will make the last sentence clearly [clear].²⁹⁸

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
July 30th 54

Dear Starr

K.A. Today arrived just when I was in need of a new book and I romped through it. I think it is a useful and friendly book and almost sure I shd. have read it even if it had come to me as the work of a stranger. It tells me of several *Arthuriana* I didn't know. Which means of course that I can't tell you how good it is on that side: I mean, you probably know, but I don't, and you are safe from any reviewers' saying 'incredible as it may seem, while finding room for some v. minor living writers, Mr. Starr wholly ignores the epoch-making works of Bluff, Bloggs, and Picksniffe'

It's nice to find you are a sound Nennian!²⁹⁹ I've seen nothing of a B. and B³⁰⁰ for weeks having been busy examining—3 shifts an hour, 9 hours a day! My brother joins me in hearty greetings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
July 31/54

Dear Roger

We never defined the details of our tryst on Sept. 16th.³⁰¹ Same as last time, no doubt. But I've quite forgotten what we did last time! Did I await you at Woodside Hotel or on the Belfast boat? And do you remember what I did with the luggage, other than pack?

I leave here for Ireland on Aug 6th. If your reply can't reach me before then, a safe address is J. A. GREEVES ESQ, SILVER HILL, CRAWFORDSBURN, CO DOWN, NORTHERN IRELAND.

Love to all.

Yours

Jack

TO F. MORGAN ROBERTS (W): [302](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
July 31st 1954

Dear Mr Roberts

Thanks for your kind letter of the 23rd. I am certainly unfit to advise anyone else on the devotional life. My own rules are (1.) To make sure that, wherever else they may be placed, the main prayers should *not* be put 'last thing at night'. (2.) To avoid introspection in prayer—I mean not to *watch* one's own mind to see if it is in the right frame, but always to turn the attention outward to God. (3.) Never, never to try to generate an emotion by will power. (4.) To pray without words when I am able, but to fall back on words when tired or otherwise below par. With renewed thanks. Perhaps *you* will sometimes pray for *me*?

Yours very sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY MARGARET MCCASLIN (W):[303](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Aug 2 d 54

Dear Mrs. McCaslin

Thank you for your letter of the July 25th. I will certainly put you in my prayers. I can well believe that you were divinely supported at the time of your terrible calamity. People often are. It is afterwards, when the new and bleaker life is beginning to be a routine, that one often feels one has been left rather unaided. I am sure one is not really so. God's presence is not the same as the feeling of God's presence and He may be doing most for us when we think He is doing least.

Loneliness, I am pretty sure, is one of the ways by which we can grow spiritually. Until we are lonely we may easily think we have got further than we really have in Christian love: our (natural and innocent, but merely natural, not heavenly) pleasure in *being loved*—in being, as you say, an object of interest to someone—can be mistaken for progress in love itself, the outgoing active love which is concerned with giving, not receiving. It is this latter which is the beginning of sanctity.

But of course you know all this: alas, so much easier to know in theory than to submit to day by day in practice! Be very regular in your prayers and communions: and don't value special 'guidances' any more than what comes thro' ordinary Christian teaching, conscience, and prudence.

I am shocked to hear that your friends think of following *me*. I wanted them to follow Christ. But they'll get over this confusion soon, I trust.

Please accept my deepest sympathy.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Aug 5/54

Dear Chad

It's true. I become 'chair borne' and do less work for more pay. But I shall still live at Oxford most of the year and hope to see you all in some of our old haunts. I look forward to your children's book. I shall be seeing both Joy and my brother to-day, I expect, & will give them your message. My skill on the recorder about equal to that of Rosencrantz.³⁰⁴ All the best,
Yours

Jack

Some months earlier, Bill Gresham had filed for divorce from Joy on the grounds of desertion and incompatibility. He received his divorce in Miami, Florida, on 5 August 1954. He married Renée Pierce that same day.

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD): TS

Magdalen College
Oxford
August 6, 1954

My dear Arthur

We ought to have been crossing tonight, but Warnie is in a nursing home (the usual thing). I will get across by hook or crook for my jaunt with you, arriving Crawfordsburn Monday, August 30th. I am writing to the Inn to cancel the original bookings and confirm a room for myself on the night of the 31st. But so many letters to that blasted Inn have gone astray that I'd be very glad if you would walk round and see for yourself that they've got these instructions all right.

Blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO CYNTHIA DONNELLY (P): [305](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
August 14, 1954

Dear Mrs Donnelly

Thank you for your most kind and encouraging letter. I think you have a mistaken idea of a Christian writer's duty. We must use the talent we have, not the talents we haven't. We must *not* of course write anything that will flatter lust, pride or ambition. But we needn't all write patently moral or theological work. Indeed, work whose Christianity is latent may do quite as much good and may reach some whom the more obvious religious work would scare away.

The first business of a story is to be a GOOD STORY. When Our Lord made a wheel in the carpenter shop, depend upon it it was first and foremost a GOOD WHEEL. Don't try to 'bring in' specifically Christian bits: if God wants you to serve him in that way (He may not: there are different vocations) you will find it coming in of its own accord. If not, well—a good story which will give innocent pleasure is a good thing, just like cooking a good nourishing meal. (You don't put little texts in your family soup, I'll be bound.) By the way, none of my stories *began* with a Christian message. I always start from a mental picture—the floating islands, a faun with an umbrella in a snowy wood, an 'injured' human head. Of course my non-fiction works are different. But they succeed because I'm a professional teacher and explanation happens to be one of the things I've learned to do.

But the great thing is to cultivate one's own garden, to do well the job which one's own natural capacities point out (after first doing well whatever the 'duties of one's station' impose). *Any* honest workmanship (whether making stories, shoes, or rabbit hutches) can be done to the glory of God. I hope you can read this!

With heartiest good wishes to all.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Aug 15/54

My dear Arthur

W. and I sail tomorrow & go straight to the South. I hope to be at C'burn on the 30th and have now booked a room there for 30th and 31st. I am sorry you come in for a share of the bother. If I had my wits more about me perhaps I cd. have spared you: but I am a muddler at the best of times and was then in a good deal of distress. I embark on the 'holiday' with W. full of gloomiest forebodings.

Let me have your prayers: I am tired, scared, & bewildered.

Yours

Jack

TO MRS SACHER (P):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Aug 18. 54.

Dear Mrs. Sacher

Certainly I had no right to assume development after death. I wd. have been taking a safer line if I had said 'not so bad to live with for 70 years, but Hell to live with forever'.³⁰⁶ At the same time, who knows if Hell is not, in fact, simply the working out of the soul's evil to its logical conclusions? No one had pointed out this passage to me before.

Thank you for the kind things you say.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Silver Hill etc.
Aug 31st 54

My dear Roger

V. good. I await you after breakfast in Woodside Hotel on Sept 16, and dine & sleep (thanks hugely) with you on 17th. I'm afraid I must get to Oxford on the 18th.

V. sorry to hear about the *Buzzard*. I don't understand their views at all.

Yours with love to all.

Jack

The Horse and His Boy was published by Geoffrey Bles of London on 6 September 1954.

On 9 September Warnie wrote to Jocelyn Gibb:

54/63.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
9th September 1954

Dear Mr. Gibb,

I am 'holding the fort' for my brother, C. S. Lewis, who is in the west of Ireland and has—very wisely—left me no address; so all that I can say about your letter of the 6th is that he shall have it as soon as he returns. Probably in about a fortnight's time. The six copies of the new book arrived a couple of days ago, and I'm sure he will be as pleased as I am with the get-up.

Yours sincerely,
W. H. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD): TS

54/232.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
9th September 1954.

Dear Joan,

Many thanks for your nice letter of 31st August, which I found most interesting. You are lucky that at your age you are having such lovely dreams: and how very well you describe them. This, I may add, is not just compliment, I really mean that what you write is *good*. I do see your Coloured Mountains. When I was young, all my dreams were horrors—insects the size of small ponies which closed in upon me, etc.

I've never seen Aida, [307](#) but I've known the music since I was a small boy: and how good it is. It's rather the fashion over here now amongst the musical snobs to look down their noses when Verdi is mentioned and talk

about the 'cheapness of his thematic material'. What they really mean is that Verdi could write *tunes*, and they can't!

With love,

Yours,

C. S. Lewis³⁰⁸

English Literature in the Sixteenth Century Excluding Drama, *Vol. III of the Oxford History of English Literature*, was published by the Clarendon Press of Oxford on 16 September 1954.

TO MARY MARGARET MCCASLIN (W):

Magdalen College

Oxford

Sept 19. 54.

Dear Mrs. McCaslin

I got your letter only yesterday on my return from Ireland. I can't refrain from playing back over the net to your *Rom* x. 14³⁰⁹ with I *Cori*. 12–14.³¹⁰ Then, I suppose, we can call it a draw?

I must have expressed myself badly if you thought I denied that purely human love cd. be outgoing & giving as well as in-drawing and receptive. I only meant that the former was more essentially love & more divine: especially when expended (as it can be by saints) on an unlovable object. All this is much better said by Geo. MacDonald. Look at him in my *G. MacDonald: an Anthology*.³¹¹

I can't boast as many jobs as you (how do you keep up with them?) but at present I have 5 weeks' accumulation of letters to answer with my own hand, so you will not wonder why this is short. All blessings.

Yours most sincerely
C. S. Lewis

You have been in my daily prayers ever since your first letter.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
Sept 19/54

Dear Mary Willis—

I got back from my holiday yesterday, to the usual pile of letters wh. makes one wonder if holidays are worth it. (I had been in Ireland, Donegal, which is lovely. All the mountains look like mountains in a story, and there are wooded valleys, & golden sands, & the smell of peat from every cottage). I'm glad I wasn't in your heatwave! Your description fully reconciles me to the unusually cold & wet summer we have had here. But I *wd.* like to have a stage-door acquaintance with a star Rabbit! I was v. glad to hear about Jeannie. (How different girls are from boys. To me at her age clothes *wd.* have been the dullest of all presents).

About the lack of religious education: of course you must be grieved, but remember how much religious education has exactly the opposite effect to that wh. was intended, how many hard atheists come from pious homes. May we not hope, with God's mercy, that a similarly opposite effect may be produced in her case? Parents are not Providence: their bad intentions may be frustrated as their good ones. Perhaps prayers as a secret indulgence which Father disapproves may have a charm they lacked in houses where they were commanded.

And congratulations on the Virginia Anthology. All you tell me about yr. daughter's position is dreadful: and I can well understand yr. fears about old age. And of course you are doing the v. best thing in meditating on the sufferings of Our Lord. (Drat—on top of all the letters comes a telephone call to say that 'a lady' in the Lodge wants to come across & see me).

I've been made a Professor at Cambridge, which will mean less work & therefore of course ('tis the way of the world) more pay. I've also got rheumatism, but not v. bad: only like always feeling you've just had a 20

mile walk on a rather hard road! It is nice to be able to write again: I've had a very hectic summer. You are always in my prayers.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept 25th 1954

Dear Mr. Gibb

Wd. you kindly get them to send the Narnian stories (complete set up to date) to Miss M. Radcliffe, Treetops, Sandheath Rd, Hindhead, Surrey?³¹² THAHB³¹³ has arrived & looks v. nice. Collins is coming down to lunch one day soon. I gather you and he are now in harness together, so I can discuss all questions about the paper-backs with him?

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept 25th 54

Dear Dorothy

(1.) The enclosed, from a friend, gave me a shock. I know nothing of a BBC programme. Do you?

(2.) Did you know when you wrote it—or have 1000 other busybodies told you since—that the phrase wh. started Harriet's sonnet in *Gaudy Night* had probably come into her mind from Milton (P.L. VIII 164–5)?[314](#)

Yours

Jack

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

54/229.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
25th September 1954.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

Many thanks for your nice letter of the 15th., though it would have given both of us more pleasure if your account of your own state had been better: which I hope it now is. And I'm so glad that the HORSE helped to see you through an illness, which I trust is now a thing of the past. My brother thanks you too for all the kind things you say of the CENTURY,³¹⁵ and says he hopes to have another book out either late this year or early next, of which you shall have a copy.

I'm afraid it would be sheer dishonesty to pretend that we now have *any* kitchen needs; this government has done a magnificent job in getting us on our feet again, and a few weeks back, we solemnly burnt our Ration Books. Everything is now 'off ration', and though at first of course, prices went up with a rush, they are now dropping. But cheer up, if our friends the Socialists get back into power, you will be able to exercise your unfailing kindness once more by supplying us, not with little luxuries, but with the necessities of life!

'How is Cambridge?' Well, so to speak, it is'nt; in other words, I have not yet begun my Cambridge career. And when I do, the break will not be so big as you might imagine; for I shall be non-resident. Cambridge will be content with my presence there from Tuesdays to Saturdays in term time, so I shall be able to keep on the house at Oxford and become what I think you call a 'commutor' don't you? Our sister college, Magdalene, has been good enough to give me a set of rooms, so I shall be very snug during the week.

I hope you will soon have all this wretched business of yours finished,³¹⁶ and it must be a great consolation to you to know that the Tycoon³¹⁷ is flourishing and growing up in your own home atmosphere. We look forward to the pictures.

With love from us both to you both, Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept 27/54

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

I was delighted to hear through your letter to my brother that all goes well with Genia, and of your Father's lovely end. If we cd. all go like that! I had a lovely time in Donegal (tho' I picked up some rheumatism) and am now externally, but happily, busy. Love to all.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS 'JONES'³¹⁸(W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept 27th 1954

Dear Mrs.

'Why has sex become man's chief stumbling block?' But has it? Or is it only the most *recognisable* of the stumbling blocks? I mean, we can mistake Pride for a good conscience, and Cruelty for zeal, and Idleness for the peace of God etc. But when Lust is upon us, then, owing to the obvious physical symptoms, we can't pretend it is anything else. Is it perhaps only the least *disguisable* of our dangers. At the same time I think there is something in what you say. If marriage is an image of the mystical marriage between Christ & the Church, then adultery is an image of apostasy. Also, all the sexual vices have this unfair advantage that the very temptation is itself pleasurable: whereas the temptations, say, to Anger or Cowardice are in themselves *unpleasant*.

I don't think I can solve yr. question about the pains of childbirth. I can only say that *vicarious* suffering seems to be deeply embedded in the post-fall world so that the Atonement is simply the supreme instance of a universal law. Wd. the inequality between man's & woman's share of the cause be less marked if Man (or selected, fortunate men) had not now managed to evade his share? If he still in person tilled the earth and fought the wild beasts? And has civilisation increased the woman's pain? I've heard of savage women who suffer much less. But I am only offering conjectures. I don't know the answer.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept 28th 1954

Dear Gibb (If we may drop the honorific both sides) Thanks for cheque (£1156-12-10) and letter.

I dare say neither G.B.³¹⁹ nor anyone else is to blame for my not fully understanding the situation: I am such a duffer at business that an explanation wh. wd. have been clear to any experienced person may have been made and failed of 'reception'!

I think I've got it now. Anyway, all that matters from my point of view is such an understanding between Collins & you as will save you both the trouble of writing, and me of answering, two different letters about any one transaction.

My new job is Professor of Medieval and Renaissance English in the U. of Cambridge. It is a new Chair. I shall not be regularly resident at Cambridge till January next. I shd. welcome a visit (lunch or dinner & bed) from you *here* this term.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO PAULINE BAYNES (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Oct 2nd 1954

Dear Miss Baynes

I say! You have learned something about animals in the last few months: where did you do it. This Horse,³²⁰ whether charging with his hansom,³²¹ or growing his wings,³²² or flying,³²³ is the real thing: and so is the elephant.³²⁴ Congratulations! I mention the beasts first because they show the greatest advance: the ruins of Charn³²⁵ and the dwarfs³²⁶ and the landscape are excellent too—but then I knew they wd. be. Indeed, indeed, you have *not* let the side down. R. Hugh says I've got to reject 6, so I have reluctantly done so: none of your favourites, I think. I was v. sorry to lose Aunt Letty mending the mattress—a nice, homely scene—but doomed her in the end because she is dressed more in the style of the 1860's than in that of the 1900's.³²⁷ (The difference naturally seems more to me than to you!).

My brother, who is well, joins me in cordial greetings. I hope you will go on from triumph to triumph.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W): TS

54/70.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
2nd October 1954.

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen,

This is indeed luxury; I have'nt seen so much 'candy' all in a heap since I was a small boy at Christmas time. Many thanks for your kindness, and my brother asked to be joined in this. I often wonder if in the England of a couple of hundred years ago, 'candy' was the term for all kinds of sweetmeats, and whether the Pilgrim Fathers took the word over to America; for with us now, as I dare say you know, 'candy' is a word for a special kind of sweet, being short for 'sugar candy'—an amber coloured stuff, too hard to bite, which you suck.

We are at present 'enjoying' the sort of weather which I most dislike—grey skies, humid air, and a temperature of about 60: hotter indeed than it has been during the so-called 'summer', but I'd prefer some real autumn weather. Most of your sex I know, do not like autumn, but to me, crisp sunny autumn days, with the leaves changing colour, is the crown of the year.

With renewed thanks, and all best wishes, Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis³²⁸

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W): TS

54/240.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
4th October 1954.

Dear Starr,

Lockhard is the kindest and most courteous of men, so your friend can be quite sure that the Post Office must be to blame for his silence. He had better try again, for Lockhard (and he alone) knows the answer to all the questions.

I had a delightful visit from your sister:³²⁹ please remember me to her. There are excellent pubs at Cambridge; and I speak from first-hand knowledge, having just returned from a week of spying out the land there. I'm afraid one must admit that, architecturally, Cambridge beats Oxford; there is so much more variety in Cambridge.

Yes, Mrs. C. Williams³³⁰ is still alive (address, 23, Antrim Mansions, London, N.W.3), and I'm sure would not object to being approached; whether she would have anything of value to communicate is another matter.

My brother joins me in cordial greetings, and asks me to point out to you that I shall still be spending my week-ends and vacations in Oxford: so that, when you return to these shores, you will find the B. & B. still functioning.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO HARRY BLAMIRES (BOD): TS

54/178.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
8th October 1954.

Dear Blamires,

I should be very flattered (indeed touched) by a dedication but I think it would be a mistake.³³¹ Those who like my kind of book are the people already most likely to welcome yours, so the dedication won't help you with them. And it will deter those who don't like my kind. Also, the more you associate yourself with me, the less you will be regarded as a new phenomenon. This is serious advice, and I'd value the compliment of your following it more than that of a dedication. I look forward to the trilogy very much.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Oct 9th 54

Dear Mary Willis—

Thanks for your letter of the 6th, enclosing poem which I enjoyed. Fairies—the people of the *Shidhe* (pronounced Shee)—are still believed in many parts of Ireland and greatly feared. I stayed at a lovely bungalow in Co. Louth where the wood was said to be haunted by a ghost *and* by fairies. But it was the latter who kept the country people away. Which gives you the point of view—a ghost much *less* alarming than a fairy. A Donegal man told a parson I know that one night when he was walking home on the beach a woman came up out of the sea and ‘her face was as pale as gold’. I have seen a leprechaun’s shoe, given to a doctor by a grateful patient. It was the length, and hardly more than the breadth, of my forefinger, made of soft leather and slightly worn on the sole. But get out of your head any ideas of comic or delightful creatures. They are greatly dreaded, and called ‘the good people’ not because they *are* good but in order to propitiate them. I have found no trace of anyone believing or ever having believed (in England or Ireland) in the *tiny* fairies of Shakespeare, wh. are a purely literary invention. Leprechauns are smaller than men, but most fairies are of human size, some larger.

I don’t know that a professorial chair or anything else will now provide for a comfortable old age in this country. You see pensions & investments are taxed as ‘unearned income’ and that leaves v. little of them.

It will be a pretty tough job translating a French book with no more knowledge of French than a dictionary can give! I don’t see how any dict. will enable one to understand a phrase like *est ce qu’il y en avait*.³³² Get the French trans. of some book you have in English (say the Bible) and try to get the hang of the language from that. Or perhaps the French *Lion, Witch, & W.*,³³³ which I enclose, would be more up to date and idiomatic. Between ourselves, I don’t think you’ll translate your present book very well, but you’ll learn quite a lot of French in struggling with it and then your next attempt might be good. I wish I cd. relieve any of your various troubles—but it is v. clear that the Holy Ghost is leading you through them all. With every blessing.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD): TS

54/232.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
20th October 1954.

Dear Joan Lancaster,

It was very nice of you to send me the telegram, and I am so glad you liked the *Horse and his Boy*. I was going to send this to your New York home, but I see you are still on holidays in Florida. I hope it has been nicer than my seaside holiday, when it was very cold, and rained nearly all the time.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

The Milton Society of America had invited Lewis to 'A Milton Evening in honor of Douglas Bush and C. S. Lewis' to be held in New York City on 28 December 1954. Following this letter to Chad Walsh is Lewis's undated reply to their invitation.

TO CHAD WALSH (W): TS

54/274.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
25th October 1954.

Dear Chad,

Many thanks for your note of the 21st. I've already told Roberts that I can't come;³³⁴ am in the middle of, or rather on the edge of all the *tohobohu* of evacuating Magdalen, Oxford for Magdalene, Cambridge, where I take up my new post at the beginning of next year. And then will come the job of digging in and consolidating my position. I'm very sorry, for I should have welcomed not only the chance of meeting the Miltonists, but many old friends, not least yourself. My brother sends his greetings and good wishes.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO THE MILTON SOCIETY OF AMERICA: [335](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

To the Milton Society of America.

Gentlemen

Mr. Hunter³³⁶ informs me that your Society has done me an honour above my deserts. I am deeply grateful to be chosen for it and also delighted by the very existence of such a Society as yours. May it have a long and distinguished history!

The list of my books which I send in answer to Mr. Hunter's request will, I fear, strike you as a very mixed bag. Since he encourages me to 'make a statement' about them, I may point out that there is a guiding thread. The imaginative man in me is older, more continuously operative, and in that sense more basic than either the religious writer or the critic. It was he who made me first attempt (with little success) to be a poet. It was he who, in response to the poetry of others, made me a critic, and, in defence of that response, sometimes a critical controversialist. It was he who, after my conversion led me to embody my religious belief in symbolical or mythopoeic forms, ranging from *Screwtape* to a kind of theologised science-fiction. And it was, of course, he who has brought me, in the last few years to write the series of Narnian stories for children; not asking what children want and then endeavouring to adapt myself (this was not needed) but because the fairy-tale was the genre best fitted for what I wanted to say.

But you see already that it is dangerous to ask an author to talk about his own work. The difficulty is to make him stop: and I should ill repay your kindness if I did not sternly draw rein.

With many thanks, Gentlemen, I remain Yours most obliged, obedient

Servant
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

54/229.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th October 1954.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 23rd. You have both our sympathy and our prayers in the ordeal through which you have passed, and are about to pass, and we hope that the ‘waking up’ as you call it, will bring you peace.³³⁷ I don’t think many of us in this country take to motoring—even in the nursery—at the Tycoon’s age, and I should like to see him travelling in reverse. I must have been six or seven before I acquired my first vehicle, a tricycle with solid tyres; but it was for use out of doors. I pity the modern child here its toy shops when I see the miserable quality and variety of toys as compared with the displays when I was a child; with the tycoon it is no doubt *embarras de richesses*. We look forward to the photos.

There is a neat wooden case reposing on my table which emits a pleasing gurgling noise, and my brother and I have been speculating on its contents; now we know, and we shall proceed to investigate the matter in due course—‘due course’ in this context probably meaning Christmas.³³⁸ It is very good of you indeed, and will be a great treat; for, while we can now buy plenty of so called whiskey, all the *real* stuff is reserved for the export market only.

I am in the preliminary agonies of casting one shell and growing another. On 31st December I have to move all my goods and chattels out of these rooms and distribute them between Cambridge and the Kilns; indeed when your letter arrived, we were going round with a stick of chalk, marking the destination of each piece of furniture. I need hardly say I shall be very glad when the move is completed.

With love to you all from both of us, yours, C. S. Lewis **TO J. O. REED (P): TS**

54/478.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th October 1954.

My dear Reed,

Of course, with pleasure, and all good wishes. It would be hard luck if you had to write testimonials and could'nt get others to write one for you! Anyway, its only a referee you want, is'nt it?

I expect the OHEL is full of things you've heard me say already.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W): TS

54/240.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
26th October 1954.

Dear Starr,

I never heard Charles Williams mention the Mark Twain story.³³⁹ I fear the Grail has been 'found' pretty often, and Archdeacons (not very rare in real life) are common in fiction.³⁴⁰ It would be hard to discover if there was more than a co-incidence here.

My horse, though of course he talks, is rather an ass.³⁴¹ Not at all like Swift's.³⁴² My brother joins me in greetings. Remember me to your sister when you meet.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD): TS

54/407.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
28th October 1954.

Dear Kinter,

Thanks for your most interesting letter. I simply don't know how my Lion is related to Spenser's. Aslan is the Turkish word for a lion: I chose it for the sound. I can't see the misprint on p. 392.³⁴³

With all good wishes,
Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO BELLE ALLEN (L):

[Magdalen College]
1/11/54

Dear Mrs Allen

I think it would be dangerous to suppose that Satan had created all the creatures that are disagreeable or dangerous to us for (a) those creatures, if they could think, wd. have just the same reason for thinking that *we* were created by Satan. (b) I don't think evil, in the strict sense, can *create*. It can spoil something that Another has created. Satan may have corrupted other creatures as well as us. Part of the corruption in us might be the unreasoning horror and disgust we feel at some creatures quite apart from any harm they can do us. (I can't abide a spider myself.) We have scriptural authority for Satan originating diseases—see Luke XIII.16.³⁴⁴

Do you know, the suffering of the innocent is *less* of a problem to me v. often than that of the wicked. It sounds absurd: but I've met so many innocent sufferers who seem to be gladly offering their pain to God in Christ as part of the Atonement, so patient, so meek, even so at peace, and so unselfish that we can hardly doubt they are being, as St Paul says, 'made perfect by suffering'.³⁴⁵ On the other hand I meet selfish egoists in whom suffering seems to produce only resentment, hate, blasphemy, and more egoism. They are the real problem.

Christian Scientists seem to me to be altogether too simple. Granted that all the evils are illusions, still, the existence of that illusion wd. be a real evil and presumably a real evil permitted by God. That brings us back to exactly the same point as we began from. We have gained nothing by the theory. We are still faced with the great mystery, not explained, but coloured, transmuted, all through the Cross. Faith, not wild over-simplifications, is what will help, don't you think? It is so v. difficult to believe that the travail of all creation which God Himself descended to share, at its most intense, may be necessary in the process of turning finite creatures (with free wills) into—well, into Gods....

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen
Nov 1st 54

Dear Mary Willis—

If you tell me that you don't know French, of course I believe you! If you were only coying and found my literal acceptance of the statement a shock—well, it'll 'larn you' to practice mock modesty another time. It never

works with me, I assure you. If a man tells me he can't do something I always believe him: *he* ought to know!

I am v. sorry to hear you have been ill. You don't give me any idea what the 'old trouble' is. Anyway, I hope it has stood off again.

About copies of the *Lion et la Sorcière* I presume the price and publisher's name & address are printed in the one you have, and an order to that publisher enclosing the requisite sum will elicit the goods! (People so often ask me how to get a book, and it seems an odd question. Are they equally puzzled how to order a cwt. of coals or a bottle of gin?) I'm afraid I don't know about E. Charllier.³⁴⁶

No, my rheumatism is not really bad. It only produces extreme foot-soreness in the left foot, so that after 50 yards, tho' the right one is fresh as a daisy the left keeps on whimpering 'Stop! Stop! We've been 25 miles already.' The real nuisance is that I am beginning to get horribly fat and this foot comes just when I ought to be slimming by long walks. I have had to give up potatoes, milk, & bread: perhaps having to fast for medical reasons is a just punishment for not having fasted enough on higher grounds!

Did I tell you I've been made a professor at Cambridge? I take up my duties on Jan. 1st at Magdalene College, Cambridge (Eng.). Note the difference in spelling. It means rather less work for rather more pay. And I think I shall like Magdalene better than Magdalen. It's a tiny college (a perfect cameo architecturally) and they're so old fashioned, & pious, & gentle and conservative—unlike this leftist, atheist, cynical, hard-boiled, huge Magdalen. Perhaps from being the fogey and 'old woman' here I shall become the *enfant terrible* there.

It is nice to be still under the care of St. Mary Magdalene: she must by now understand my constitution better than a stranger wd., don't you think. The allegorical sense of her great action³⁴⁷ dawned on me the other day. The precious alabaster box wh. one must *break* over the Holy Feet is one's *heart*. Easier said than done. And the contents become perfume only when it is broken. While they are safe inside they are more like sewage. All v. alarming.

Yours

Jack

TO P. H. NEWBY (BBC):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Nov. 3rd 1954

Dear Mr. Newby

Thanks for your offer of Nov 2nd. I am tempted, but I must resist.³⁴⁸ I have too much on the plate already. I still have hopes of someday talking into a Microphone again, but I can't at present.

With regards.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS (BOD):

[Magdalen College]
Nov 5/54

Dear Dom Bede—

The best Dickens always seems to me to be the one I have read last! But in a cool hour I put *Bleak House* top for its sheer prodigality of invention.

About death, I go through different moods, but the times when I can *desire* it are never, I think, those when this world seems harshest. On the contrary, it is just when there seems to be most of Heaven already here that I come nearest to longing for the *patria*. It is the bright frontispiece [which] whets one to read the story itself. All joy (as distinct from mere pleasure, still more amusement) emphasises our pilgrim status: always reminds, beckons, awakes desire. Our best havings are wantings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):³⁴⁹TS

54/63. Magdalen College,
Oxford.
12th November 1954.

Dear Gibb,
Golly! It will be nice for royalties, tho' rather horrifying in some ways.
Thanks for letting me know.
Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

As from Magdalen,
Oxford
Nov 14th 1954

Dear Dorothy—
Your *Introductory Papers*³⁵⁰ have given me a regular feast. They have even enlarged my vocabulary. If you had looked into my mind (in-mee'd yourself)³⁵¹ as I puzzled over p. 193 you wd. have smiled on me as a mother smiles on her desirous babe. I was ready to admit that one bull-finch might be bigger than another, and even—I am no ornithologist—that there might be a black variety, altho' *ne' vedi stesso ne' credo che posse*.³⁵² But how a man on a horse 'negotiated' a songbird, or why the bird sat still to be 'negotiated'—then I asked my brother who told me what a bullfinch was. (Dialectical form of 'bull-fence'? a hedge thick and high enough to confine a bull? The suggestion is his. And he sends his duty).

It is a lovely book. I suppose the absolute high light is *The City of Dis*—we all do Hell best, not *quite* for the reason our critics suppose—but every essay and nearly every page enriched me. Do you know? I'd *never* seen the Virgilian parallel you point out on pp 16–17. Nor have I read Isaac Pennington: if your quotation is at all characteristic, I must certainly do so.³⁵³ You 'do' the angel (p. 27) magnificently and the point—that D. *can* be 'awful' but his Hell is, rightly, *not* awful—is just what was needed.³⁵⁴ Your

bit of evidence from Belsen on p. 33 (I didn't know it) makes all the difference to Ugolino's line.³⁵⁵

The distinction between Spenser & D. on pp 35–36, excellent. Perhaps on p. 37 you make too much of *tace*:³⁵⁶ *tacente luna*, you know, is good classical Latin and D. wd. have known it. Your point stands, but is really more a point about language in general ('language is a perpetual Orphic song')³⁵⁷ than about D's language.

P. 44 is, as we expected of you, 'the stuff to give 'em'.³⁵⁸ P. 47, 6 lines from end, I wish that instead of 'could no more'³⁵⁹ you'd said 'could much less'. Surely a poet *does* add to himself by the poem. (We know better what we mean, and we mean it more, if we can express it in a poem). P. 52 is a blaze of (just) splendour. (Drat our homophones: by *just* I don't mean 'nothing but', I mean 'justified', 'veracious') Thank you for the fine contrast between the Islamic, and the real, Heaven on pp 58–9.³⁶⁰ Poor old Santayana! I thought he would have known better, for he had, hadn't he, his own Pagan nobility—if only in his style.³⁶¹

What a good (and *now* obvious) point about the Fall story at the bottom of p. 63!³⁶² And some fine, chastening comedy on pp. 64–5. I'm not sure (p. 63) whether there'd be simultaneity in Hell. Von Hügel says the opposite, if I remember rightly: that as the rising above time to one's wholeness (in God) will be part of beatitude, so the ever more total submergence in time, the falling apart into utterly inconsistent succession—each mood hostile to the last—might be part of perdition.³⁶³ It is already the mark of the ruining soul that she 'isn't the same for two minutes together'. (That may be why our Gigadibs's³⁶⁴ are now so 'decade-conscious'!) P. 97 is you at your very best: and how good you can be! On P. 114, para 3, l 4 I have my only grumble. Surely 'evolving in the direction of perfectibility' says twice over what you meant to say once? If a thing is capable of evolving to *perfection* then it is *perfectible*. You don't want it to 'become capable of being capable of perfection' do you? For that, after all, wd. be the same as 'being capable of perfection' *tout court*? P. 122 to the end of that essay is first class.

I am just a little divided in my mind about the comedy of the Comedy (not especially the essay of that name, but your view on that subject throughout). On the one hand, I have no doubt at all that your resolute stand against the 'awful' Miltonic, Caryish,³⁶⁵ high-brow D., and your defence of all the comic, novelistic, and science-fiction elements (I, of course, wd.

have made more of the last) is right, and will turn out hereafter to give you your chief permanent place in the history of Dantology. That is the great debt we all owe you.

But I've a feeling that in handling particular passages you are too certain that whatever is comic to us was, and was meant to be, comic at the time. Because, as any one can see even from the old *Punches*, nothing changes so quickly as the sense of humour: so that in reading any old book there is nothing we are less sure of than which places wd. welcome a smile. And oughtn't we to start by a recognition that our generation (yours & mine) was quite abnormally 'tickle o' the sere'³⁶⁶ (already the young people are less so). The strength of your case depends on the number of passages wh. *admit* a high-comedy reading: this is quite consistent with a tinge of dubiety about many of them individually. (Not of course about the farcical devils: there, we *know* there is a wide, unmistakable tradition). Don't give me the next set, I'll buy it. And *do* put in an essay on D. as 'poet' in the old, narrowest sense—his sheer poeticalness. Otherwise we shall have some ass saying that because you like so many other qualities, you are oblivious to that. A 1000 thanks. By the way, why 'matter of Brittany'?³⁶⁷ Why not 'Britain'

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JILL FREUD (T): TS
54/147.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
15th November 1954.

My dear June,

How very nice. Yes, of course we shall be delighted to see you here (College) for lunch on the 20th, as near 1 p.m. as you can make it. I am assuming that Miss Freud³⁶⁸ will not be of the party, but if she is coming, let me know. Warnie will pass on your warnings and hints about Susie³⁶⁹ to Paxford, but points out that the result will be very like talking into a disconnected telephone!

With love to all,
yours,

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Nov 17. 54

Dear Mary Willis

No time to write properly but just a line to thank you for two letters. There is no need to apologise for your joke about the French: its only fault, as a joke, is that it is a bit complicated! Neuralgia in the ear is an old friend of mine & I think it usually comes from a draught. All blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Nov 20/54

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for the magazine. I think your 'pome'³⁷⁰ gets the awe and rigidity of the Byzantine atmosphere very well. As for McCarthy³⁷¹ I never met anyone, American or English, who did not speak of him with horror. A very intelligent American pupil said 'He is our potential Hitler'.

In haste.

Yours

Jack

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Nov 22nd 54

Dear Dorothy

Oh, I'll fight to the death for your lighter & freer view of D.³⁷² against the outer world. I was only hinting, among ourselves, a faint doubt about the particular applications. If he'd meant to write one of the great Kinds,³⁷³ he wouldn't have called it a Comedy and used the vernacular in *qua et mulierculae etc*³⁷⁴ (How to translate that?).

Hell might be perpetual without being eternal: i.e. might really be what some suppose Heaven to be—endless succession. It is almost too horrid, tho', even for Hell.

The Inaugural is not till the 29th³⁷⁵ so I don't know how it went. That's the trouble about our kind of time!

Yours

Jack

TO DANIEL DAVIN (OUP):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Nov 22/54

Dear Davin

I am greatly obliged to you for the kind things you say and to Mr. Davis for taking more trouble about another man's book than I (apparently) have taken with my own.

I enclose a list wh. adopts nearly all his corrections and adds one of my own. I have tried hard to make the spaces fairly equal on p. 547.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

Eng. Lit. in the 16th Century Excluding Drama [376](#)

p. 24. | *For* changing *read* changeless
4 from
foot

p. 74. | *For* came *read* come
20

p. 81. | *For* Eneydon *read* Eneydos
para
31.2

p. 82. | *For* kaleyard *read* kailyard
11 from
foot

p. 122. | *For* the poem is its treatment of enemies. It *read* his poem is its
9. treatment of enemies. He

p. 123. *For* Horstman *read* Horstmann
l. 12

p. 124. *Hyphen between Church and yard*
footnote
l. 3 & 4

p. 128. *For* Passtime *read* Pastime
l. 27

p. 134. *For* Pelèrinage *read* Plèrinage
para 2. l
6

p. 140 *For* Ny *read* By
para 2.
l. 17

p. 193 *Delete* being used
footnote
l. 8–9

p. 357 *For* order do *read* order, do *For* 1579, *read* 1579

para 2 l.

2. last

line

p. 365 *For* form, be *read* form be

para 3 l.

3 from

foot

p. 386. *For* wordly *read* worldly

l. 12

p. 492 l. *For* delicious; *read* delicious:

13

p. 526. *For* 1562 *read* 1563?

para 2 l.

1

p. 547 *For* I do not think...Heroides.' *read* This piece need not have

ll. Ad been written after Drayton's Heroical Epistles: if with Donne's

ff. editor we call it 'heroical' we mean only that it is in the manner of
the Heroides.

p. 597 l. *Delete* first

8.

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

Magdalen College,

Oxford.

Nov. 23rd 1954

My dear Van Auken—

It is a long time since you wrote and told me of your wife's grave illness.³⁷⁷ You asked my prayers and of course have had them: not only daily, for I never wake in the night without remembering you both before God. I have sometimes tried, by sophisticated arguments, to persuade myself that your silence might somehow be interpreted as a good omen...but how could it?

If you can bear, will you tell me your news. If she has gone where we can feel no anxiety about her, then I must feel anxious about you. I liked

you both so well: never two young people more. And to like is to fear. Whatever has happened and in whatever state you are (I have horrid pictures in my mind) all blessings on you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

On 29 November 1954 Lewis gave his inaugural lecture, 'De Descriptione Temporum', as the new Professor of Medieval and Renaissance English, University of Cambridge.

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD): TS

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
30th November 1954.

Dear Ruth,
Will you please note that this will be my address from 1st January 1955.
Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W): TS

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
30th November 1954.

Dear Miss Sayers,
Will you please note that this will be my address from 1st January 1955.
Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis.

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W): TS

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry, Oxford.
30th November 1954.

Dear Starr,

Will you please note that this will be my address from 1st January 1955.
Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis³⁷⁸

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W): TS

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
30th November 1954.

Dear Mrs Shelburne,
Will you please note that this will be my address from 1st January 1955.
Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
30th November 1954.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,
Will you please note that this will be my address from 1st January 1955.
All good wishes for Xmas.
Yours sincerely,
C. S. LEWIS.³⁷⁹

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD): TS

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
30th November 1954.

Dear Mr Kinter,
Will you please note that this will be my address from 1st January 1955.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. LEWIS

TO CAROL JENKINS (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 30th 1954

Dear Miss Jenkins

Thank you for your very kind and also percipient letter and for the sonnet: which in its quite Wordsworthian way (unfashionable now) has, I think, distinct merit. Incidentally, it brought out for me a point about Predestination which is not often mentioned, namely that it is a doctrine shatteringly complimentary to Man. It makes each individual so important.

All good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):[380](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
30/11/54

- (1.) Congratulations[381](#)
- (2.) How cd. you?
- (3.) Can you look in about 11 on Mon morning (the 6th)?
- (4.) Rats! I don't believe a word of it.
C.S.L.

TO WALTER HOOPER (UNC):[382](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Nov 30th 1954

Dear Mr. Hooper

Thank you for your kind letter of the 23rd.[383](#) I am glad if I have been the instrument of Our Lord's help to you: in His hands almost any instrument will do, otherwise none.

We should, I believe, distrust states of mind which turn our attention upon ourselves. Even at our sins we should look no longer than is necessary to know and to repent them: and our virtues or progress (if any) are certainly a dangerous object of contemplation. When the sun is vertically above a man he casts no shadow: similarly when we have come to the Divine meridian our spiritual shadow (that is, our consciousness of self) will vanish. One will thus in a sense be almost nothing: a room to be filled by God and our blessed fellow creatures, who in their turn are rooms we help to fill. But how far one is from this at present!

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO J. B. PHILLIPS (BOD):³⁸⁴TS
54/528.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
3rd December 1954.

Dear Mr. Phillips,

No, I could'nt take on the job you suggest. My powers (whatever they were) as a speaker have declined, and I no longer do that kind of work. I also have a great deal of other kinds to do. Thanks for telling me so fairly how horrid it would have been if I *could* have gone.³⁸⁵ I can only wish you a speedy convalescence from the strain.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

On 4 December 1954 Warnie Lewis recorded in his diary: 'J finished his last tutorial at ten minutes to one today: after twenty nine years of it'.³⁸⁶

On the same day Lewis's friend Don Giovanni Calabria died in Verona.

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford,
Dec. 4th 54

My dear Arthur,

No: both were 'for keeps'. The J.A. article is from a periodical: the other article wh. you get a bit of is by someone else.³⁸⁷ What you have got is what they call an 'Off-print'.³⁸⁸ It's all rot to say that a man of your intelligence can't *understand* Barfield's book.³⁸⁹ Read it again.

Yes: the move looms large and black—all the things to 'see to' and all the decisions to make.

Blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W): TS

54/390.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
4th December 1954.

Dear Mrs. Douglas,

Thank you for your kind letter, and condolences on the accident. I shall be living in Magdalene* next term, and perhaps we can arrange to meet then?

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

* Cambridge

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

54/63.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
4th December 1954.

Dear Gibb,

Thanks very much for the reviews:³⁹⁰ the more welcome since we're not getting many in England. I wish I knew what 'the Thing' in the N. Y. Herald is a misprint for!

With all good wishes,
yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Dec 4th 1954

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

I was just wondering when I shd. hear from you again. There's no need to 'ration yourself': provided you will not be hurt or puzzled if replies are sometimes tardy or snappy!

By the way, others must eat the candies (wh. doesn't make me the less grateful). I'm getting terribly fat and have had to diet: almost no bread & potatoes, and of course no sweets. Not that I'm worried either about my appearance—I've long since given *it* up—but I can't afford to buy a new wardrobe every few months! But the dieting has already done wonders: trousers wh. were like Victorian corsets last August are now quite comfortable again. Courage!

The great merit of Nygren,³⁹¹ so far as I'm concerned, was that he gave one a new *tool of thought*: it is so v. convenient and illuminating to be able to talk (and therefore to think) about the two elements of love as *Eros* & *Agape*. You notice that I say 'elements'. That is because I think he drives his contrast too hard and even talks as if the one cd. not exist where the other was. But surely in any good friendship or good marriage, tho' *Eros* may have been the starting point, the two are always mixed and one slips out of one into the other a dozen times a day?³⁹²

I think I agree with all your notes except that I don't remember what Tertullian said, and I doubt whether even fallen man is *totally* incapable of *Agape*. It is prefigured even on the instinctive level. Maternal affection, even among animals, has the dawn of *Agape*. So, in a queer way, has even the sexual appetite, for each sex wants to give pleasure as well as to get it. So there is a soil even in nature for *A.* to strike roots in, or a trellis up wh. it can grow.

Your rector's story is tragic enough: but I can't help being glad he is going.

You know I am going as a Professor to Cambridge? My new college is Magdalene, Cambridge: a tiny little place compared with this, but a perfect gem architecturally and (I think) much more congenial socially & spiritually.

All blessings.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

Lewis did not know, when writing the following letter, that Don Giovanni Calabria had died on 4 December 1954.

TO DON GIOVANNI CALABRIA (V):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Dec V^o 1954

Heus, pater dilectissime, quantum inter nos silentium! Magnopere mihi cordi erit si iterum de te et rebus tuis rescripseris. Mihi quidem mox migrandum est ex Oxonia in Cantabriggiam in qua universitate electus sum Professor Anglarum Literarum Medii Aevi et Renascentiae. Coelestem patronam tamen non mutabo, nam apud Cantabriggienses adscribor Collegio Stae. M. Magdalenae. Orthographiâ vero discrepant (Oxonienses *Magdalen*, Cantabriggienses vero *Magdalene* scribunt) sed idem sonant, i.e. *Mōdlin*. Fides Christiana, ut puto, magis valet apud Cantabriggienses quam apud nostros; communistes rariores sunt et pestiferi philosophi quos logicales positivistas vocamus haud aequè pollent.

Sed tu quid agis? Valesne adhuc? Scito saltem me semper pro te orare, et nunc praesertim dum nos paramus ad suavissimum festum Sanctae Nativitatis. Congaudeamus, mi pater, quamvis loco divisi, spiritu tamen et caritate uniti, et ora semper pro C. S. Lewis

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Dec 5th 1954

Good Heavens, dearest Father, what a long silence there has been between us!

It will be a great delight to me if you write back to me again about yourself and your affairs.

As for me, I have soon to migrate from Oxford to Cambridge at which University I have been elected Professor of Medieval and Renaissance English Literature.

However, I shall not change my heavenly Patroness because at Cambridge I shall be a member of the College of St Mary Magdalene. In spelling they indeed differ (Oxford writes Magdalen, Cambridge on the other hand Magdalene) but they are pronounced the same, i.e. *Mōdlin*.

The Christian Faith, as I think, counts for more among Cambridge men than among us; Communists are rarer and those plaguey philosophers whom we call Logical Positivists are not so powerful.³⁹³

But what are you doing? Are you still in good health?

Know at least that I always pray for you, and especially at this time when we are preparing for that dearest of festivals, the Feast of the Holy Nativity.

Let us rejoice together, my Father: though divided in space, yet in spirit and charity we are united: and may you ever pray for C. S. Lewis

TO MARY MARGARET MCCASLIN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Dec 7th 1954

Dear Mrs. McCaslin

Thanks for 'Concerning Gifts'.³⁹⁴ I feel very strongly as you do about the hollowness of all this interminable 'Xmas' racket and the slightness of its connection with the real Christmas. A good little article. With all blessings & good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W): TS[395](#)

54/390.
Magdalen College
Oxford
9th December 1954.

Dear Mrs. Douglass,

If you care to call here at twelve noon on Wednesday 15th, I shall be pleased to see you.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Dec 10th 1954

Dear Evans

How v. kind of you to think of writing both about the book and the Chair. The latter (I am almost ashamed to say this to you who have just undergone something like the opposite process!) means rather more pay for—I trust—a good deal less work.

I believe I shall like Magdalene College, Cambridge, wh. is my new home, very well. Architecturally it is a perfect little gem: and the people seem extremely nice so far. Much more old-fashioned and less hardboiled than Magdalen Oxford.

You inflict, as well as suffering, the punishment of Tantalus in your description of your new job. I can't imagine what *sort* of books that library contains. Is it titles like *Seven Ways of Spoiling a Landscape*, *The War Against Agriculture*, *Amenities are Bunk* and *Liberty: Its Cause and Cure*? But I expect you wd. commit the sin of Tantalus if you told me.

The Horse gets good reviews in USA but few, and chilly, in England.
With all good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO DON LUIGI PEDROLLO (V):[396](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Dec. xvi. MCMLIV

Reverende Pater

Doleo et vobis condoleo de obitu dilectissimi amici. Ille quidem ex aerumnis hujus saeculi, quas gravissime sentire solebat in patriam feliciter migravit; vobis procul dubio acerbus luctus. Gratias ago pro photographia quam mittendo bene fecisti. Aspectus viri talis est qualem auguratus sum; senilis gravitas bene mixta et composita cum quadam juvenili alacritate. Semper et ipsius et congregationis vestrae memoriam in orationes habebō; et vos idem pro me facturos spero.

Vale
C. S. Lewis

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Dec. 16 1954

Reverend Father

I grieve and condole with you at the death of a most dearly loved friend. He, indeed, from the troubles of this world which he used to feel most heavily, has happily passed over into his own Country; to you without doubt the grief is keen.

I thank you for the photograph which it was good of you to send me. His appearance is such as I had imagined: the gravity of age well mixed and combined with a certain youthful vivacity. I shall always make remembrance of him and of your Congregation in my prayers and I hope that you will do the same for me.

Farewell
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Dec. 17th 1954

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

Thank you very much for your card and the splendid photo of the Tycoon: upon my word, he looks more like one than ever! I don't think you need worry about his being a late talker. The other late talker I knew talks alright now. The photo shows him to be bright and sturdy and not at all as if there were any trouble on the mental side. And, no doubt, he makes enough non-verbal noises to assure you that there is nothing wrong with the physical apparatus.

I suppose I must congratulate you, as you must thank God, about the divorce. But what things we are driven to be thankful for. I am most deeply sorry for all you have been through. I have seen so much of that sort of thing one way and another. Well, God bless you.

Wd. you believe it: an American schoolgirl has been expelled from her school for having in her possession a copy of my *Screwtape*! I asked my informant whether it was a Communist school, or a Fundamentalist school, or an R.C. school, and got the shattering answer 'No, it was a *select* school.' That puts a chap in his place, doesn't it!

We have had floods here: exquisitely beautiful from my windows—a great glassy lake in winter sunshine with trees rising out of it here and there.

I'm sorry my handwriting has got so bad. My brother joins me in all good wishes for Christmas and 1955.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO EDNA GREENE WATSON (W): TS

54/552.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
18th December 1954.

Dear Mrs. Watson,

How very kind of you to send me such a nice Christmas present; which too, arrives at a most suitable moment, for in a day or two I shall be entertaining a brace of schoolboys. Thank you so much. The gift would have been even more welcome if you had at the same time let me have some news of yourself.

This day fortnight I shall be leaving Oxford, after twenty nine years in this [these] rooms; a wrench in some ways, but I also look forward to the change. I take up a professorship at Cambridge in the New Year, and shall live in our sister College, Magdalene, when in residence; but we continue to keep on our house in the suburbs of Oxford for vacation purposes.

After the worst summer in living memory we have entered on a winter which looks like creating a record for *wetness*; we have had floods all over the country, sea walls breached, railway bridges carried away, and immense damage done everywhere. Not many miles below us on the Thames—which is a mere brook by American standards—there are riverside towns where the people go shopping by boat. Can there, one wonders, be any truth in the story that the atom bomb is slowly altering the climate of the world?

With renewed thanks, and all best wishes to you for 1955, Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS

54/96.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
20th December 1954.

My dear Edward,

Many thanks for your interesting letter. My brother knows more about General Fuller³⁹⁷ than I do—they wear the same ‘old school tie’—but I have at least heard of him. He was one of those soldiers whom one found in every army, who were quietly sidetracked in the late ’twenties and early ’thirties because he would insist in indulging in wild fantasies of the H. G. Wells sort: thought about tanks and dive bombers when all respectable old-fashioned war departments wanted to think in terms of hussars and dragoons. And he has nobly refrained ever since from saying ‘I told you so’. I am entirely in agreement with him, and so no doubt are you; war cannot be eliminated until original sin is eliminated.

Talking of books, have you come across *Visa for Moscow* by a French newspaper man called Gery?³⁹⁸ So far as one can judge very fair and objective in his account of life in Moscow and other big cities in 1950; but very depressing, for to talk to Russians is apparently like trying to make contact with intelligences from another planet. They *think* quite in a different manner to us. He is however clear (or was then) that the USSR does not want war, and is frankly very frightened of your country, which of course they have been educated to believe is working hard to get ready for a surprise attack on Russia. Because, believe it or not, you are jealous of Russia’s cultural superiority and *higher standard of living* and want to pull ’em down to your level.

This will be the last letter I shall be writing to you from the old address, and I think you have my new one? The Kilns, Kiln Lane, Headington Quarry, Oxford. On 12th January I take up my ‘Chair’ at Cambridge, but I shall not be giving up my house here; will in term-time go over to Cambridge every week from Monday to Saturday, and come back here for the week end. Our sister College, Magdalene, Cambridge is very kindly putting a set of three rooms at my disposal, so I shall be very comfortable. In many ways I am of course sorry to leave the old shop after twenty nine years, but I shall welcome the easier life of a Professor, which will let me devote much more time to my non-academic work.

With love and blessings to you and your mother, and good wishes for 1955, yours ever,

C. S. Lewis

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W): PC

[Magdalen College]

21/12/54

Both by J. R. R. Tolkien:

'Fairy Tales' in *Essays Presented to Charles Williams* ed. C. S. Lewis
(Oxford University Press, London) 2. *The Lord of the Rings*.

Pt. I. *The Fellowship of the Ring* 1954.

Pt. II *The Two Towers* 1954

Pt. III *The Return of the King* (to appear shortly) All by Allen & Unwin,
London. Booksellers will tell you it is a juvenile but this is untrue.

With all good wishes
C.S.L.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Dec 22nd 1954

Dear Gibb—

I never had a handsomer present³⁹⁹ (both in bibliophile's and in Mr Woodhouse's sense of the word *handsome*).⁴⁰⁰ Perhaps these two charming volumes will teach me at last to have for the bodies of my own books the same reverence I have for the bodies of all other books. For it is a curious fact that I never can regard them as being really *books*: the boards and print, in however mint a condition, remain a mere pretence behind which one sees the scratchy, inky old MS. You might do a little research to find out if it is so with all authors. Thank you so much. Who did them?

I am always glad to hear of anyone's taking up that Cinderella, *The Great Divorce*.

With renewed thanks and all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Dec 22nd 1954

My dear Evans—

Thank you very much for the card—as a logician, if for nothing else, I like them to have some connexion with Christmas!—and for the cheery book of verses. I think there is lots of room for light verse and shall regret it when the art decays: as perhaps it will, if the modern Gigadibs gets his way. Yours go with a swing. The opening 3 lines of *The Mummy's Ghost* are almost too good: one wants you to go on at that level. The sonnet to the *Conchy* is very right. (An undergraduate I knew, hearing, when himself already in the forces, that a friend's 'conscientious objection' had been allowed, said 'That is one of the things we are fighting for'). One of the best things in the book is *To the Reader*.

About the word 'hiking' my own objection wd. lie only against its abuse for something so simple as taking an ordinary 'walk': i.e. to the passion for making specialised & self-conscious stunts out of activities which have hitherto been as ordinary as shaving or playing with the kitten. Kipling's *Janeites*,⁴⁰¹ where he makes a sort of secret-society-ritual out of (of all things!) reading Jane Austen is a specimen. Or professionals on the BBC playing to an audience the same games we used to play for ourselves at children's parties. I expect any day to find a book written on how to swing your stick when you walk or a club (with badges) formed for Singers in the Bath.

There was a grain of seriousness in my rally against the Civil Service. I don't think you have worse taste or worse hearts than other men. But I do think that the State is increasingly tyrannical and you, inevitably, are among the instruments of that tyranny—

*The weight of Crichel Down upon your backs,
The blood of Mr. Pilgrim on your heads.*

This doesn't matter for you who did most of your service when the subject was still a freeman. For the rising generation it will become a real problem, at what point the policies you are ordered to carry out have

become so iniquitous that a decent man must seek some other profession. I expect you really feel at least as strongly as I do about it. All good wishes
Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):[402](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Dec 27th 1954

*Dear Dorothy, I'm puzzling hard
What underlies your cryptic card.
Are you the angel? and am I
The figure pointed at? Oh fie!
Or do you mean some timely warning
Well suited to Hangover morning?
If so, which allegorical sense
Am I expected to draw thence?
The lady with the mirror might
Be luxury and lewd Delight,
Or Venus rising from the foam,
Or (equally) the Church of Rome.
No matter, for I'm certain still
It comes to me with your good will;
Which, with my prayer, I send you back—
Madam, your humble servant, Jack*[403](#)

1955

TO HELMUT KUHN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Jan 6th 1955

Dear Herr Kuhn

I am delighted to hear that you are translating *The Great Divorce*. I had supposed (but perhaps it only betrays how bad my German is) that *Gesperst* (?) and *Seele* would do for 'ghost' and 'Spirit' respectively. *Geist* will certainly not help. These differences between languages even of the same family and at the same date are very surprising; they suggest how inadequate all our supposed equivalents for Greek words must be.

I am on the eve of my move to Cambridge (notice the name of my new college is spelled differently from that of my own—an *e* at the end) and all my books are packed, so I cannot go through the *G. D.* to find anything that needs comment. I might, however, explain that the *ye* (for *you*) in the mouth of George MacDonald¹ is a Scotticism, not an archaism and (if it is worth representing in your version at all, which I doubt) would best be rendered by some dialectal form. Certainly not by *du*.

I look forward to reading your article²—with a dictionary, as a schoolboy reads his Caesar! With cordial good wishes for the new year.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

*On 7 January 1955 Lewis took up residence in Magdalene College, Cambridge. He was given a beautiful set of rooms in the North Range of the fifteenth-century First Court, on the second floor of Staircase 3 above the Parlour and the Old Library.*³

TO VALERIE PITT (BOD):⁴

Magdalene

7/1/55

Dear Miss Pitt

Tears came into my eyes at the sound of an Oxonian voice! Yes, I'd very much like to come and lunch with Miss Burton and you. After that it sounds a little odd to suggest the furthest possible Sunday! i.e. March 5. But there is a very good reason. I have fish to fry (v. virtuous and even meritorious fish, I assure you) wh. will take me to Oxford every week-end and the last week-end (immediately compensated by my return for the Vac.) wd. obviously make least disturbance at the other end. So, unless you take measures to prevent it, I shall appear at Newnham at 1.0 p.m. on March 5. It will be a great pleasure to meet again. With many thanks to both, Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MRS JOHNSON (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

7/1/55

Dear Mrs. Johnson

Few presents can ever have arrived so opportunely as this notepaper of yours, for 'stationery' was at that moment one of the items on a shopping list, and a long list, too long, at any rate, for the sex which hates shopping (at least I suppose American men hate it as much as English ones). It was part of the general bustle of moving to be a professor at Cambridge.

You see that my new college still keeps me under the patronage of the same lady. It is pronounced just like my old one but spelled differently, with an *e* at the end. My rooms here are very beautiful, one panelled in old dark oak and the other in white, but, so far, very cold. We haven't your central heating, you know.

I am sorry you had such trouble deciphering my last letter and am really trying to write more clearly in this—though you might not know it (but then you must take the cold into account. And even now, I haven't even thanked you for your present (one thing leads so to another). Well now—Thank you very much.

This will be my first night in my new home and there is lots of work to do before I go to bed. The books are all on the shelves but not yet put into the right order: I can't bear to look at them till they are.

May God bless you in 1955 and continue the guidance and support which He has so clearly been giving you hitherto.

Yours very sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W):

Magdalene

14/1/55

Dear Miss Douglass

It is a curious and delightful experience to look at the rich summer opulence of your card and see the snow outside my windows. Thank you very much. I am sorry to hear that you haven't yet mended so much as you hoped, and trust that 'your native air' (a prescription on which our ancestors relied much) will do the trick. With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO PAUL PIEHLER (W):

Magdalene

Cambridge

15/1/55

Dear Piehler

Thanks for most interesting & amusing letter, but what the deuce is the good of asking me to write to a man if you don't give me his address? Full name, titles & address please: by cable if necessary.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

It is just the sort of thing I'd have done myself, I admit!

TO MARTIN KILMER (W):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge.

15/i/55

Dear Martin

Thanks for your nice card and letter. What would they call the last hurricanes if there were more of them than there are letters in the alphabet? I mean, after Xanthippe, Yolande, and Zena, who wd. come next?

I too have been busy moving to a new job and a new home. Notice that my new college, though pronounced like my old one (they are both called MAUDLIN) is spelled differently: with an E at the end. It is snowing here. Cambridge looks nice in snow. Love to all.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO VALERIE PITT (BOD): PC

Magdalene College
Cambridge

17/1/55

Good. Sunday the 6th (VIth; sixth) it is.

C.S.L.

TO BELLE ALLEN (W): TS

20/55.

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

17th January 1955.

Dear Mrs. Allen,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 21st December, and though I am too late to wish you a happy Christmas, my brother and I both send you and Edward our heartiest good wishes for 1955. I am distressed to hear that you have both been ill, and hope that you are now completely restored.

No, my change of address does not imply retirement—or at least retirement from academic life; what has happened is that Cambridge has given me a Professorship. In many ways I regretted leaving Magdalen, but after nearly thirty years of the tutorial grind, I shall appreciate the less strenuous life of a ‘Chair’ at Cambridge. I am now settling in there, and think I shall be happy: many of my colleagues are Christians, more than was the case in my old College; my rooms are comfortable, and Cambridge, unlike Oxford, is still a country town, with a farming atmosphere about it. I

plan to come back here at intervals during the term, and of course to stop here all the vacations. My brother will live here, so the break with the old life is not as violent as you have pictured it.

Yes, there is no escape from *anno domini*, is there? And as you say, one must resign oneself to taking things easier; no use in pretending to be able to live as one did twenty, or even ten years ago.

We are in the middle of what is, by our standards, a really hard winter; traffic jams everywhere, and temperature indoors this morning 29 degrees. You, with your American ideas of indoor comfort, will shudder at the mere idea.

The Quarry has not been worked for forty years or more, and nothing now remains of it except some deep pits with rugged stone walls;⁵ the brick kilns too, have been long abandoned, though two of them are still standing in this garden, and we use them for storing fuel and such-like.⁶

I am deeply thankful for your prayers, and you may be sure that you are not forgotten in mine.

With all blessings to you both, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO E. M. TREHERN (MC):⁷

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
19/1/55

Dear Sir

Absence from home, coinciding with the illness of my secretary, has played havoc with my correspondence. Forgive me for not answering you sooner.

It is certainly true that Chaucer's immediate successors valued his other works more than the *Tales*; and I dare say that even for the Elizabethans Speght has collected many references I have overlooked.⁸ But in major Elizabethan writers I certainly seem to have heard more of the *Tales*—especially of those which attacked the medieval Church and thus were welcome to Protestants. I think, too, that his comic work survived better than his serious—the doggerel which his metre becomes under their mistaken reading. But I may well be wrong.

Yours very truly
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
19/i/55

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

Yes: I wd. certainly agree with ‘the disfigured image of God’ to some degree disfigured in the best of us, but still an image in the worst. Nygren is surely wrong if he says that merited love is sinful. It can’t be wrong to love the hand that feeds one. How much more wisely Christ put it: ‘if you love only them that do good to you, do not the Gentiles [do] as much?’⁹ i.e. not that it is sin (indeed not to do it wd. be sin) but that it is no great matter, is elementary and merely natural. When we say to a boy of 17 ‘You ought to be ashamed of yourself, doing simple long division’ we don’t mean that there’s anything wrong with long division but that he ought by now to have got on to something more advanced. Is it by some such *confusion* N. has got where he is? Still his book was well worth reading: we both have the v. important idea of Eros and Agape now clearly in our minds, and can keep it after we have let all his exaggerations fade out of our minds.

In away I am *glad* about your rector’s true story. One finds pitiable human weakness where one had expected hard self-righteousness. It is almost a relief.

I am sorry Genia had a bad turn. She is always in my prayers. It makes me feel as if I had a daughter of my own!

I’ve had 10 days at Cambridge and am liking it v. much. Oh yes, I loved ‘my own little circle’ at Oxford alright: but there were a good many other intersecting and adjacent circles.

With all good wishes to both.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO COLIN ECCLESHARE (CAM):¹⁰

Magdalene College,
Cambridge

21/1/55

Dear Mr. Eccleshare

I should be obliged if you wd. send copies of my Inaugural to H. V. V. Dyson, Merton College, Oxford¹¹

J. R. R. Tolkien, (same address) J. Wain, the University, Reading The Librarian, Magdalene, Cambridge The Librarian, Magdalen, Oxford T. D. Weldon, Magdalen, Oxford¹²

A. O. Barfield, Danes Inn House, 265 Strand, W.C.2

G. Sayer, Hamewith, Alexandra Rd, Malvern Mrs Gresham, 14 Belsize Park, London N.W. 3.

Also 3 copies to myself. Please deduct the price from my royalties (if any).

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
23/1/55

Dear Mrs. Gebbert—

I am at the moment a worm and no man.¹³ I'm getting 'flu' and my brother is away so I'm doing all the letters he wd. ordinarily type and I can't go to bed till they're done. Lor bless you, it isn't *country* here. It *was* when we bought the house, but since then a huge area of workmen's houses has grown up all round us. But I can't write. I shall be writing gibberish in a minute if I do! God bless you.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
29/1/55

Dear Mary Willis

Yes, I've been treating you (and others) badly of late, but, I think, with some excuse. First there were visitors; then the preparations for the move; then the move itself (at which moment my brother got ill so that I had all the correspondence to tackle single handed); then the settling in at Cambridge *plus* various delights like burst water-pipes; repeated journeys to and fro—in fact a period during which life seemed to consist entirely of journeys and letter writing—the pen has become to me what the oar is to a galley slave: then (God be praised) influenza and long half-comatose days in bed.

Yesterday was my first day out. I hope to go back to work and Cambridge on Thursday next. So I was about as likely to ride in a steeplechase as to write a poem! But you have never been absent from my prayers. So try not to be hurt by my silence. And always remember that there is no time in the whole year when I am less willing to write than near Christmas, for it is then that my burden is heaviest. I suspect you have a v. false idea of what my days are like!

I am truly sorry about your 'physical difficulties' and hope the 'examination' (always a horrid thing, whether scholastic, medical, or police!) is now all *happily* over. And now, you really must forgive me: as you see, I can hardly form the letters legibly! God bless you.

Yours
Jack

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):¹⁴

Magdalene College,
Cambridge
2/2/55

Dear Father Milward—

Thank you very much for sending me your essay on Angels¹⁵ (which I look forward to reading) and also for your most kind letter. All teachers know that those who have needed our help least acknowledge it most fully, and I don't feel in your words the inadequacies of the medium which you lament.

I suppose (as God turns all His punishments into blessing) the loss of our original unambiguity of speech may have been *one* cause that drove us

into poetry? I love Dame Julian,¹⁶ and someone has borrowed my copy and never returned it.

Oremus pro invicem.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge
3/2/55

Dear Gibb

I am sorry your letter of the 18th has been so long neglected: I have been having flu' (and there have been other botherations). I'm normally here except on Sat. and Sunday and wd. v. much welcome a call any morning except Tue. & Friday, when I have to lecture at 12, and Monday when I'll be in the train from Oxford.

Next week is a bit cluttered. How wd. Wed 16 do? Come here & we'll go out & lunch somewhere at 1.

Thanks for the N.Z. journal.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN GILFEDDER (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
5/2/55

Dear Gilfedder—

As you see, rumour was right and I am installed here as first holder of the new Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English. My chief motive was that I have now been a practicing tutor, listening to pupils' essays all day, for 30 years, and the lure of increased leisure was strong. The great charm of this place is that, underneath the academic surface, it is still a country town—not the suburb of a manufacturing town as Oxford has now become. The opposition at Oxford never lost me an hour's sleep, I assure you.¹⁷

I look forward to seeing you in *The 20th Century. Perelandra* wd. never be filmed or acted because nudity is an essential element in it. Please

remember me to yr. wife and accept all my good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

*Sheldon Vanauken's wife, Jean, died on 17 January 1955. Vanauken wrote:*¹⁸

One of the letters I wrote the day after her death was to C. S. Lewis. I told him how she died and how I meant to scatter her ashes at St Stephen's,¹⁹ as she and I had planned. But we had also thought it might be fitting for a handful of those ashes to be scattered at little Binsey church near Oxford.²⁰ Would he—Lewis—do it? There was no reply to my letter, and I decided he must be away from Oxford. I, therefore, entrusted the tiny packet to my friend, Edmund Dews...But Lewis was not away: he was waiting for the ashes. His letter had been lost in the post. Now he heard from Edmund.

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
10/2/55

My dear Van Auken—

I heard from your friend about 2 days ago, and today I have got yr. letter of Feb. 5. I am most distressed to find that my answer to your previous letter has never reached you; particularly since its miscarriage has left you in doubt whether I wd. have accepted the v. sacred office of scattering the ashes. I wd. have liked to do [it] (if you can understand) for the v. reason that I wd. not have liked doing it, since a deep spiritual *gaucherie* makes [me] uneasy in any ceremonial act; and I wd. have wished in that way to be honoured with a share, however tiny, in this Cross. All you told me in your previous letter & all you tell me in this moves me deeply and it is a high privilege to be admitted to such a beautiful death, an *act* wh. consummates (not, as so often, an event wh. merely stops) the earthly life. And how you reassure me when, to describe your own state, you use the simple, obvious, yet now so rare, word *sad*. Neither more nor less nor other than *sad*. It

suggests a clean wound—much here for tears, but ‘nothing but good and fair.’

And I am sure it is never sadness—a proper, straight natural response to loss—that does people harm, but all the other things, all the resentment, dismay, doubt and self-pity with wh. it is usually complicated. I feel (indeed I tried to say something about it in that lost letter) v. strongly what you say about the ‘curious consolation’ that ‘nothing now can mar’ your joint lives. I sometimes wonder whether bereavement is not, at bottom, the easiest and least perilous of the ways in wh. men lose the happiness of youthful love. For I believe it must *always* be lost in some way: every merely natural love has to be crucified before it can achieve resurrection and the happy *old* couples have come through a difficult death and rebirth. But far more have missed the rebirth. Your MS, as you well say, has now gone safe to the Printer.

It is remarkable (I have experienced it), that sense that the dead person *is*. And also, I have felt, is active: can sometimes do more for you now than before—as if God gave them, as a kind of birthday present on arrival, some great blessing to the beloved they have left behind.

Be careful of your own bodily health. You must be, physically, v. tired, much more tired than you know. Above all, don’t yield to the feeling that such things ‘don’t matter *now*.’ You must remain, as she wishes, a good *instrument* for all heavenly impulses to work on, and the body is part of the instrument.

I shall be nervous about all letters now that one (and at such a moment) has gone astray. If this reaches you, a line in answer will reassure me.

You are always in my prayers, even whenever I wake in the night. Keep me in yours.

under the Omnipotence
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

As from Magdalene,
Cambridge
13/2/55

Dear Gibb

On Thursday 17th I have a lunch engagement at 1.15. But as all the days after that for a good while are impossible I think we had best

(regretfully) abandon the idea of our lunching together and make it a morning call (on Thurs 17th) instead. I shall be in my rooms all morning and may perhaps expect you not much later than 11.15?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge
13/2/55

Dear Mrs. Jessup

I was deeply shocked by the news in your letter of Feb. 7th. and can't tell you how much I sympathise with you. The one bright spot is that you are clearly suffering only from what we may call the 'clean pain' of loss, not complicated, as it wd. be in many women, with those pains of resentment and anger wh. are so much more likely to fester.

Now as to your problem. I am not quite clear (tho' you may well have told me long ago—I can't always remember things now) what 'religion' you are of. You have 'left the Episcopal church' and have been staying with Nuns.²¹ Does this mean you are a R.C.? If so, you have no need of *my* advice. Your own Church has clear & rigid rules on all these subjects and your Confessor will tell you exactly what you are, and are not, allowed to do. But this is so obvious that I don't think you can be a R.C. or you wouldn't have asked me.

What, then, is your allegiance? I doubt if I can give advice simply to a 'mere Christian' as such, for different Bodies have differently interpreted Our Lord's words. My own very tentative idea wd. be that you must always regard yourself as his wife, and therefore incapable of a second marriage while he lives: but that I'm not at all clear that this forbids you to 'divorce' him i.e. to give him *legal* freedom to make another marriage, tho' this other wd. not (in our eyes) be marriage in the full Christian sense. It might, however, prevent connections wh. wd. on *any* view be more sinful.

But I express my view with extreme reluctance. I am only an amateur: you must be guided by the experts (in whatever your own Communion is). I feel I am failing you—and also that I am writing in a dry, unfeeling way. Believe me, it doesn't represent my real reactions. You have never been out of my daily prayers, & you will be even more in them now. May God

continue to support you & keep your great sorrow as pure (so then it will heal) as it now clearly is.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

19/2/55

Dear Joan

I am so glad to hear that Loge is called after Loge in *The Ring*,²² for I am very fond of *The Ring* myself. It must be exciting to have a father who sings in it. Have you got it in book form with pictures by Arthur Rackham? Two lovely volumes. He does Mime specially well.²³

I hope *The Magic Spoon* will be a great success. I know what you mean about not being able to get the mountains right in the picture. I sometimes think that really imaginary things are better to write about than to draw or paint: but perhaps I think that only because I can write better than I draw.

You see I have changed my job and my address. Note the different spellings: *Magdalen* at Oxford and *Magdalene* at Cambridge. But they are both pronounced *Maudlin*. This is a lovely little college and looks nice today, all covered with snow.

With love.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

Shortly after Christmas 1954 Lewis informed Jocelyn Gibb that he had hired the literary agent, Spencer Curtis Brown of Curtis Brown Ltd, London, to represent him.²⁴ By this time Lewis was a very popular writer, and it was the intention of Curtis Brown Ltd to secure higher royalties for him than those hitherto given by Geoffrey Bles Ltd. Instead of Bles choosing American publishers for Lewis's books, Curtis Brown would take care of this. Altogether it meant Lewis would make far higher profits than he had made without a literary agent. Gibb was very disappointed.

*Gibb was unhappy, as well, over Lewis's decision to give the last two Narnian stories, *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Last Battle*, to John Lane*

The Bodley Head who, years before, had published Lewis's interplanetary trilogy. When Walter Hooper was assisting Lewis during the summer of 1963, Gibb told him he still could not understand why Lewis should have given them the first five stories, but not the last two. Hooper asked Lewis the reason for this, and was told: 'Bodley Head had been very good to me in the early years, and because the Narnian stories were proving so popular, it seemed morally right to share the success of those stories with them.'

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

As from Magdalene
20/2/55

Dear Gibb—

The expression 'that we shd. have disappointed you to the extent of your giving the new book to C.B.'²⁵ For (a) There wasn't from my point of view any particular *we* in existence. There was only an impersonal & indeterminate 'whatever arrangements C.B. may finally make'.

And (b) I was told by all my literary friends that I cd. probably do better. In the old days a servant or clerk who left his employer to 'better himself' was not necessarily expressing disappointment. Nor did the old employer feel aggrieved ('I'll never stand in the way of a young chap as wants to better himself').

Thinking it over, I saw less and less difficulty about Christian's burden. The overladen hiker with his shorts & monstrous pack is a typical modern figure. We have perhaps seen more burdened pedestrians than Bunyan even saw.²⁶

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):²⁷

As from Magdalene
Cambridge
20/2/55

My dear Van Auken—

I was v. glad to get your letter of Feb. 14. And here 'luck' worked the other way. It had come unstuck and the envelope was open, but the letter

inside, intact.

Your real or supposed change of luck since your conversion (whatever it may really mean) is an old story: read Jeremiah XLIV 15–18. And I have seen it laid down by a modern spiritual author (whose name I forget) that the experience is to be expected. You remember the vision of Our Lord that said to St. Theresa on some frightful occasion ‘This is how I always treat my friends.’ (I must not conceal her answer, ‘Then, Lord, it is not surprising that You have so few.’)²⁸

What you say about the total Jean being apprehensible since the moment-by-moment Jean has been withdrawn (backed by the v. good analogy of the novel page-by-page and the novel after you’ve read it) is most true and important. I see no reason why we shd. not regard it as what St. Paul calls an *arrabon* or earnest of the mode in wh. all can reveal themselves to all in heaven.²⁹

Oh, and thanks v. much for the photo, tho’ to me (you see it with other eyes) it appears not v. like, far from flattering.³⁰

Do you know Coventry Patmore’s *Angel in the House* and (still more, but the first is to be read as a prelude) *Love’s Victory*.³¹ They deal superbly with some of the experiences you are having.

About letters, someone told me that surface mail, tho’ slower, was safer than air & more reliable. Is this untrue? Yes, I have gone to a newly created Chair of Med. and Renaissance English at Cambridge. The atmosphere here is slightly more Christian and far more kindly and gentle & less hard boiled than at Oxford.

An R.C. tells me that they in general forbid cremation because, tho’ it by no means logically implies, yet in uneducated minds it tends to *go with*, disbelief in the resurrection of the body. But they allow it when there is any special reason—e.g. a plague.³² I don’t think, myself, it matters one way or the other. God bless you. Do drop the ‘Mr.’ before my name.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

As from Magdalene College, Cambridge

20/2/55

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for your letter of 14th. But why on earth didn't you write it a day later and tell me the result of the examination?

I don't think we ought to try to keep up our normal prayers when we are ill & over-tired. I would not say this to a beginner who still has the habit to form. But you are past that stage. One mustn't make the Christian life into a punctilious system of *law*, like the Jewish. Two reasons (1.) It raises scruples when we don't keep the routine (2.) It raises presumption when we do. Nothing gives one a more spuriously good conscience than keeping rules, even if there has been a total absence of all real charity & faith. And people who stay away from Mass with the approval of their director & at the bidding of their doctor are just as obedient as those who go. Check all these points with your confessor: I bet he'll say just the same.

And of course the presence of God is not the same as the *sense* of the presence of God. The latter may be due to imagination: the former may be attended with no 'sensible consolation'.³³ The Father was not *really* absent from the Son when He said 'Why hast thou forsaken me?'³⁴ You see God Himself, as man, submitted to man's sense of being abandoned. The real parallel on the natural level is one wh. seems odd for a bachelor to write to a lady, but too illuminating not to be used. The act wh. engenders a child ought to be, and usually is, attended by pleasure. But it is not the pleasure that produces the child. Where there is pleasure there may be sterility: where there is no pleasure the act may be fertile. And in the spiritual marriage of God & the soul it is the same. It is the actual presence, not the *sensation* of the presence, of the Holy Ghost wh. begets Christ in us. The *sense* of the presence is a super-added gift for wh. we give thanks when it comes, and that's all about it.

I am v. sorry you are so overworked. Thanks for the review of Griffiths' book³⁵ which I have of course read and enjoyed already. And I'm so pleased about the *Abolition of Man*, for it is almost my favourite among my books but in general has been almost totally ignored by the public. Give my love to Fanda:³⁶ I am v. 'cat-minded'. And always, let us pray for one another.

Yours
Jack

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):³⁷

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
22/2/55

Dear Fowler—

I've behaved abominably to you. Never even acknowledged the handsome and very out-of-the-way book you so surprisingly gave me (why on earth should you?). That is partly because I have not yet had time to study it: and partly because what with the move, and the temporary loss of secretarial help, mixed up with packing, moving and countless social engagements (this is a hospitable place) I've been fighting a losing battle with correspondence for months. Well (belatedly) many thanks.

My present pattern of life is to arrive at Oxford 1.15 on Sat. and leave by the 2.34 on Mon. These week-ends are almost wholly filled up and of course I no longer have a pied à terre in Magdalen. In fact I don't see how we can meet *in term*. But let's do so as soon as possible in the Vac. I long for more of *The Rest of Time*.³⁸ I hope your *pignora*³⁹ are both well.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
22/2/55

Dear Gibb

I fear C.B. is to handle the whole affair.⁴⁰

About Bunyan. The temptation to omit some v. technical theological dialogues etc. is strong. But one omission leads to another and the thing becomes like a ladder in a stocking. Also, the moment it ceases to be a complete and reliable text, surely you narrow your public. Don't you want a book which the religious and even the scholarly reader, as well as the people who are giving Christmas presents, wd. buy? In fact a book for the study as well as for the drawing room? Also, if you do omit, no one will agree that you have made the right omissions and some reviewers will spend the whole review discussing *that*.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARCIA BILLIARD (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
22/2/55

Dear Marcia Billiard

I am so glad you like the Narnian books. After *P. Caspian* came *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*: then *The Silver Chair*: then *The Horse and his Boy*. These have all been published. Next autumn will come *The Magician's Nephew*, and, the year after, *The Last Battle* (at least I think that will be the name, but I might change it) which will finish off the series. Peter gets back to Narnia in it. I am afraid Susan does not. Haven't you noticed in the two you have read that she is rather fond of being too grown-up? I am sorry to say that side of her got stronger and she forgot about Narnia.

No. I didn't start with four real children in mind: I just made them up.

It is fun writing stories, isn't it? Like you I used to write lots at your age.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARTYN SKINNER (BOD):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
27/2/55

Dear Skinner—

I've romped thro' it with unflagging interest: a good, stiff sea-breeze of a poem which fills the lungs and makes one hold one's hat on.⁴¹ (There: but hesitate for using it as a blurb. My blurb did Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*—wh. is glorious, I hope you've read it—more harm than good).⁴²

But d——n you for breaking off in the middle. Are minor corrections still possible. Because there are two things I cavil at. (1.) P. 36. We are introduced to 'Mr. Blaize'.⁴³ On p. 41 he becomes 'Blaise-Merlin'.⁴⁴ And so on till I began to wonder if I were going mad. Why on earth is M. sometimes called B? If he returned from the dead why shd. he call himself by the name of his old master? If Coleridge returned wd. he call himself

Boyer?⁴⁵ Or Spenser, Mulcaster?⁴⁶ What are you up to? And if I, who know the sources, am bewildered, what will ‘the general’⁴⁷ do?

(2.) I. 1 is not good enough for the opening stanza. ‘The last’ in l. 4⁴⁸ is too obviously for the sake of rhyme, and because you used ‘the past’ already, it creaks. It wouldn’t perhaps matter so much elsewhere: but on the v. threshold it trips one up.

Now a few details:

p. 10. Shanks’s Helicopter—good.⁴⁹

p. 12. Last couplet—good.⁵⁰

p. 15. Young wife’s tale—excellent.⁵¹

p. 17. Stanza 2—lovely.⁵²

p. 19. St. 11, l. 2 *For* or read *of*⁵³

p. 26. A brow of Girton—brilliant.⁵⁴

p. 48. Police-cock—good.⁵⁵

p. 34. woolly ocean—v. good:⁵⁶ also ‘tide of mutton’ in St. 22.⁵⁷

p. 37. St. 29. *They went...together.*⁵⁸ I shd. prefer ‘All four shd. go indoors. And’: clearer & more natural syntax. p. 38. St. 32. For Prendragon read Pendragon.⁵⁹

p. 45. 10. ‘The desert feeling when apart.’ This has never been better expressed.⁶⁰

p. 48. 22. Well imagined.⁶¹

p. 51. 32. All v. good.⁶²

p. 53. 40. Good.⁶³

p. 54. 45. l. 3 *For* is read *of*.⁶⁴

p. 55. 49.⁶⁵ Damnable false quantity. ((Măchîă))—‘to be (and these are far The strongest trump) *magus ex m.*’??

p. 59. All excellent. ‘A shore with seasons’ especially.⁶⁶

p. 61. 10. Good.⁶⁷

p. 63. 18. *For* Ulyses read Ulysses’⁶⁸

p. 65. 24. l. 5. *For* Ane read And⁶⁹

p. 66. 29. l. 3. *For* with read with the⁷⁰

p. 69. 43. Is this quite consistent with p. 53, St. 42?⁷¹

p. 73. 1. Good.⁷²

p. 74. 5. Do you approve ‘centre round’? A circle may circle round a centre, or centre *on* a point. What centres round what & how? The *cliché* belongs to the v. world you are attacking.⁷³

- p. 75. 11. Too true.⁷⁴
- p. 81. You're cutting your own throat, but it's tip-top.⁷⁵
- p. 83. 43. 'A mare's nest, not a cuckoo's.' Grand!⁷⁶
- p. 85. 1. Last line is a corker! So, nearly, last couplet of 2.⁷⁷
- p. 89. 16. l. 4. *For* spirited *read* spirited⁷⁸
- p. 93. 34. Needed saying.⁷⁹
- p. 101. 67. *to fight* for *mori* creaks a bit. Anything to be done with *dry* for *trite* in l. 2.⁸⁰
- p. 115. 51. l. 7. *For* a *read* an⁸¹
- p. 127. l. 2. 'Men and Russians.' Good.⁸²
- p. 134. 48 & 49. Good.⁸³
- p. 135. l. 7. *For* size *read* size.⁸⁴
- p. 136. 59. Good.⁸⁵
- p. 141. 4. l. 6. *For* Ane *read* and⁸⁶
- p. 157. 71. Good.⁸⁷
- p. 178. 2. Admirable.⁸⁸
- p. 187. 37. l. 3. *For* Remind *read* Reminded⁸⁹
- p. 193. 61. l. 3. *For* floorlit *read* floodlight⁹⁰
- p. 194. St. 65. l. 7. l'oe-il.⁹¹

I myself don't detect the borrowings from THS which your wife speaks of. Perhaps (let's hope not) we are both prophets, and seeing the future aright, must see the same!

Dom Bede dined with me in Cambridge last Friday. I know no one who has so steadily improved with years: he is a good advertisement for the monastic life.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

By the way, the character-drawing of Alban & Mrs Alban and the literary young man is v. convincing.⁹²

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
29/2/55

My dear George

The choice of Adams was inevitable on those dates. When I mentioned Goodridge I had wholly forgotten his 3rd.⁹³ The fact that I had forgotten it, however, shows the impression he made on me.

Poor Moira! Tell her *my* gland began a bout at breakfast 5 minutes ago. We must console ourselves with the reflection that Lent is obviously a good time for this particular ailment.

Redouble your prayers for Warnie. True, he is at present laid up not with drink but fibrositis, but he had already started on a bottle of gin before he went sick: after 48 hour's sobriety. Humphrey uses the ominous word 'deterioration': he has never had a year of such long debauches or so frequent as this.

Moira's words (that she will have learned to shut a door etc) are capable of a lurid interpretation and might defer my next visit till the Greek calends or to that age—

*When churchmen seek no dignitee
And wives no souvergnete⁹⁴*

Warn her (with my love) that I have no intention of waiting till the millennium.

Yours ever
Jack

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford, England
2/3/55

Dear Mrs Jessup

Thank you for your letter of March 25th. It has done me good. You are so clearly being supported and guided thro' this tribulation by the Holy Spirit: and, as so often is the case, unexpected helps spring up.

Oh what a rare blessing to have a Christian psychotherapist! I don't think yr. question whether these ones were brought into your life by 'a whimsical fate' or by God, need detain you long. Once one believes in God at all, surely the question is meaningless? Suppose that in a novel a

character gets killed in a railway accident. Is his death due to chance (e.g. the signals being wrong) or to the novelist? Well of course, both. The chance *is the way* the novelist removes the character at the exact moment his story requires. There's a good line in Spenser to quote to oneself: 'It chanced (almighty God that chance did guide)'

I don't think it my business to interfere between [you and] Dr. Appleyard about the re-marriage of the innocent party after a divorce.⁹⁵ My own opinion carries no authority. All I wd. say is that the matter shd. be decided once and for all *now* while the question of re-marriage is purely academic, so as to save you from painful indecisions later on, and also because your whole future attitude to your thoughts & feelings and indeed much of your social behaviour must be governed by it.

I will indeed pray for the other two: especially Kim. And thank you very much for *your* prayers.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MRS JOHNSON (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
2/3/55

Dear Mrs. Johnson—

Thanks for letter dated 'Sometime in March'. The day before it I got a letter from someone asking me if the *Silent Planet* was a true story. It's not the first I've had. So I'm beginning to think that some people (and if you don't look out I'll have to include you!) just don't understand what fiction is.

When you say what's untrue with the intention of making people believe it, that's lying. When you say it without such intention, that's fiction. But it may be perfectly serious in the sense that people often express their deepest thoughts, speculations, dreads, desires etc in a story. Of course it wd. have been wrong for R.⁹⁶ to talk about the land of the Pf.⁹⁷ when he hadn't really been there, as if he had: because *inside my book* R. is supposed (is pretended) to be telling his story as true. Surely we can have a

character in a story telling a lie, and distinguish it from what he ought to have said, although the v. things he is lying about are themselves (from *our* point of view, who live outside the story) imaginary?

As for writing 'stories about God', it wd. of course be rather tall to have a story strictly about God (Beginning 'One day God decided...'). But to imagine what God might be supposed to have done in other worlds does not seem to me wrong: and a story is only imagining out loud.

It is right and inevitable that we shd. be much concerned about the salvation of those we love. But we must be careful not to expect or demand that their salvation shd. conform to some ready-made pattern of our own. Some Protestant sects have gone v. wrong about this. They have a whole programme of 'conviction', 'conversion' etc marked out, the same for everyone, & will not believe that anyone can be saved who doesn't go through it 'just so'. But (see the last chapter of *Problem of P.*) God has His own unique way with each soul.

There is no evidence that St. John even underwent the same kind of 'conversion' as St Paul. It's not essential to believe in the devil: and I'm sure a man can get to Heaven without being accurate about Methuselah's age. Also, as MacDonald says, 'the time for *saying* comes seldom, the time for *being* is always there.'⁹⁸ What we practice, not (save at rare intervals) what we preach is usually our great contribution to the conversion of others.

What is a 'rumpus room'? *Rumpus* with us means a loud noise, or row, or 'shindy'. Do you have a special room for shouting in? (I've known houses where it wd. be convenient!) I'd love to be on intimate terms with a mocking bird. We must talk about Science Fiction some other time (most of it is atrocious). All blessings.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARTYN SKINNER (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

3/3/55

Dear Skinner

There's no reason why you shouldn't use 'Dm (or drat) you for leaving off in the middle' if you think it wise. If I were a prospective reader,

however, it might just possibly make me say ‘Oh well, if it is unfinished I’ll wait till the whole thing comes out and get it then.’

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

5/3/55

Dear Ruth

I await the marmalade with the sweet-sharp anticipation proper to it. Might it be Hesperian rather than Hyperborean?⁹⁹ The word comes thro’ Portuguese from *Meli-mela*, ‘honey-apples’ which was what the benighted Greeks called oranges, and oranges might be the golden apples of the Western Garden.

The maker of elder-flower wine is G. Sayer, Hamewith, Alexandra Rd., Malvern, a Roman Catholic, a master at Malvern, a former pupil of mine and the most unselfish man I have ever gone about with. Like Long John Silver he has ‘a face as large as a ham’.¹⁰⁰

It is lovely here (even tho’ I have had burst pipes four times this term): unlike Oxford, it still shows the country town just an inch beneath the academic surface. I am having an ‘impact’, whether ‘joyous’ or not. If you have seen the ‘Cambridge Number’ of *The XXth Century* you’ll see that the Orthodox Atheists are v. alarmed at this influx of Christians (Butterfield, Knowles, and C.S.L.).¹⁰¹ They don’t call themselves atheists, though, but ‘Humanists’, tho’ I doubt if they cd. write very good Latin and I am sure that E. M. Forster (who is the silliest of the lot: disappointing, for I liked his novels) wd. not really enjoy a meeting with Poggio or Scaliger.¹⁰²

Thanks for all the lovely things you say about my Great Fat Book¹⁰³ (always scribble, scribble, scribble, scribble, Mr Gibbon!).¹⁰⁴ It is glorious *not to be doing it* any longer.

Now after a poem or story one feels quite different, and even widowed, and doesn’t know quite what to do with oneself. My dearest duties to Miss O’Hara¹⁰⁵ and yourself.

Yours

Jack

TO P. H. NEWBY (BBC):[106](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
9/3/55

Dear Mr. Newby

If the Cambridge University Press agree (for I presume we need their permission) I shd. be happy to record my lecture for the Third Programme. I go to Oxford on Monday next, where my address will for several weeks be THE KILNS, HEADINGTON QUARRY, OXFORD.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO P. H. NEWBY (BBC):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
12/ii[i]/55

Dear Mr Newby

Almost any time in the next three weeks wd. suit me for the recording. Do I have to go to London, or do you now-a-days do it where one is?

About modifications: if you could let me have two copies, one marked with your idea of the proper deletions and the other clean, I will, on the basis of your suggestions, make my deletions (and perhaps a few, smaller, insertions, to avoid raw edges) on the clean one and return it to you.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS JOHNSON (P):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
16/3/55

Dear Mrs. Johnson—

I am afraid I am not going to be much help about all the religious bodies mentioned in your letter of March 2nd. I have always in my books been concerned simply to put forward ‘mere’ Christianity, and am no guide on these (most regrettable) ‘interdenominational’ questions. I do however

strongly object to the tyrannic and unscriptural insolence of anything that calls itself a Church and makes tee-totalism a condition of membership. Apart from the more serious objection (that Our Lord Himself turned water into wine and made wine the medium of the only rite He imposed on all His followers) it is so provincial (what I believe you people call 'small town'). Don't they realise that Christianity arose in the Mediterranean world where, then as now, wine was as much part of the normal diet as bread? It was the 17th Century Puritans who first made the universal into a rich man's luxury (just as Cromwell abolished tobacco-growing in England for fiscal reasons).

I think I can understand that feeling about a housewife's work being like that of Sisyphus (who was the stone rolling gentleman). But it is surely, in reality, the most important work in the world. What do ships, railways, mines, cars, government etc exist for except that people may be fed, warmed, and safe in their own homes? As Dr Johnson said, 'To be happy at home is the end of all human endeavour'.¹⁰⁷ (1st to be happy, to prepare for being happy in our own real Home hereafter: 2nd, in the meantime, to be happy in our houses.) We wage war in order to have peace, we work in order to have leisure, we produce food in order to eat it. So your job is the one for which all others exist.

I don't know that Oxford & Cambridge are related at all. They grew up independently. The main difference from my point of view is that Cambridge, under the academic surface, is still really a country town, whereas Lord Nuffield and his infernal motor-factory have largely ruined Oxford.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

Yes, I have many other correspondents: some, alas, lunatics!

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

10/55.

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
16th March 1955.

Dear Gibb,

The title is *Surprised by Joy*. The MSS are now in the hands of one or two literary friends, and how soon it can be in yours depends on how quickly they 'vet' it. The *nihil obstat* of one legal friend is essential: such a book easily blunders into libel.

The honey was excellent.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO P. H. NEWBY (BBC):[108](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
18/3/55

Dear Mr. Newby

I return one copy with my corrections which, as you see, embody most of yours. Strictly speaking, if we want to detach it as cleanly as possible from its original academic context, it ought to end with the end of the second para. on p. 17: but as the dinosaur has already achieved some popularity, you may want to keep the rest. I don't mind either way. The 'billing' (a new word to me in this sense: couldn't we have a cooing as well?) is alright so far as I am concerned. I have made a note of 2.30—at B.H. Fri. April 1st.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO HELMUT KUHN (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
18/3/55

Dear Kuhn—

A copy of *Wort* which arrived some days ago gives one the address of that periodical (naturally lacking on the off-print which you, I presume, kindly sent me) and therefore a means of writing to yourself.[109](#) I was

waiting for that in order to thank you for your most generous article on my work.

To be written about in the German language is, for an Englishman, a grave temptation to spiritual pride. The sentences are so massive and the words so long that, even if the content were less flattering than it is in your article, the subject can hardly resist the feeling that he must be a much weightier phenomenon than he had ever supposed!

To speak more seriously: no one can be a good judge of an essay about himself, but it certainly seems to me that your grasp of the whole situation in which I have written and of the relation of my ideas both to it and to each other, goes far beyond any criticism I have yet had. Your sole mistake is one in geography, which is really irrelevant: Arundel, far from being in Scotland, is on the south coast of England. Your treatment of *The Great Divorce* gave me especial pleasure, for it is the most unpopular of my books in this country.

I look forward to seeing you when you are next in England. I have left Oxford to take up the newly-created Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English at Cambridge, where I am a fellow of Magdalene College: but the Kilns address will find me in vacations.

With very many thanks and all good wishes.

Yours very sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
19/3/55

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

I hope you admire the lovely paper!¹¹⁰ It almost makes letter writing a pleasure: only I feel that I can't write well enough to live up to it. And the beautiful amplitude of the address! It reminds me of the address I used to put after my name in the fly-leaf of a new book when I was a very small boy, which ended up 'Ireland, the British Isles, Europe, Earth, the Universe'. Thank you v. much. You well divined that nice paper wd. be one

of those things which in a bachelor household is always desired and never got.

I feel strongly, with you, that there was something more than a physical pleasure in those youthful activities. Even now, at my age, do we often have a *purely* physical pleasure? Well, perhaps, a few of the more hopelessly prosaic ones: say, scratching or getting one's shoes off when one's feet are tired. I'm sure my meals are not a purely physical pleasure. All the associations of every other time one has had the same food (every rasher of bacon is now 56 years thick with me) come in: and with things like Bread, Wine, Honey, Apples, there are all the echoes of myth, fairy-tale, poetry, & scripture. So that the physical pleasure is also imaginative and even spiritual. Every meal can be a kind of lower sacrament. 'Devastating gratitude' is a good phrase: but my own experience is rather 'devastating desire'—desire for that-of-which-the-present-joy-is-a-Reminder. All my life nature and art have been *reminding* me of something I've never seen: saying 'Look! What does this—and this—remind you of?'¹¹¹

I am so glad that you are finding (as I do too) that life, far from getting dull and empty as one grows older, opens out. It is like being in a house where one keeps on discovering new rooms.

Yes, Jesus Himself, of course: the heart. Not only the God in Him but the historical Man. I don't know that I ever got much from reading things *about* Him. Perhaps, in a queer way, I got most from reading the Apocryphal Gospels (The whole Apocryphal N.T. is done in one vol. ed. M. R. James).¹¹² For there you find things attributed to Him that couldn't be true. You even find wise & beautiful sayings which nevertheless just don't ring true. And have you noticed—reading the true sayings in the real Gospels—how hardly one of them cd. have been guessed in advance?

Genia's theory about the physical cause of depression is probably right nine times out of ten. But the drugs are a matter for the doctor, I presume. She mustn't believe all the disguised-advertisement poppycock in the press! Blessings on you all, from both of us.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

The Kilns,

Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
19th March 1955.

Dear Gibb,
Many thanks for your letter of the 18th and for the cheque for £704-14-
5.
I'm so glad you like the book.
Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
19/3/55

Dear Ruth
I thought we should never finish the *old* jar of marmalade. For of course we have been too well brought up in thrift and continence to leave a little dribble at the bottom and rush on to yours. We know all about business before pleasure and finishing your brembutter (as Lamb spells it) before you get any cake.

So it was not till this morning that I flashed my teeth in your gold and amber gift. It is delicious: a proper gift from a poetess, to show that you can imprison sunlight in other snares than words. Indeed one might make a conscience of eating it in Lent, had not Jeremy Taylor (honest man) said 'if anything be given and prepared for you, you may eat it be it never so delicate.'

Being in the same line of business, you will have guessed that I had hoped to acknowledge it in a poem. But I find a man can't write about oranges after Marvell. Or anyway this man couldn't. It is a long time since I turned a verse. One aches a little, doesn't one? I should like to be 'with poem' again. I hope you both keep warm this cruel spring! My brother joins me in our loves and duties and gratitude.

Yours most sincerely
Jack

TO DANIEL DAVIN (OUP):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
19/3/55

Dear Davin

I enclose a formidable list of further corrections for OHEL. Will it stretch out to the crack of doom?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

Corrections–OHEL–CSL

P 90 l 11 For *Aenid* read *Aeneid*

12 For *Kunstprose* read *Kunstprosa*

129

28 For *terena* read *terrena*

217

27 For *servare* read *servire*

220

5 For *Leves* read *leves*

256

1 For ἀγεννησι read ἀγεννήσι

258

33 For Gomára's read Gómara's (So also on p. 571, year 1551, and p. 690 index)

307

381 35 For *Fifth* read *Sixth*

12 For *wordly* read *worldly*

386

28 For *Emmanual* read *Emmanuel*

429

17 For (1594) read 1584

481

Year 1540 *Delete* tr. of Eucolpius

567

1548 *Delete* Geo. Peele b.

568

1557 (1. 7) For *Tussen* read *Tusser*

573

1587 (col. 2 last line) For *Iia*. Read *II a*.

582

1591 (col. 1, 1. 12) For *Astracae* read *Astraeae*

587

615 11. 18 and 16 1. 16 Put *The Making of the Tudor Despotism* (1928), immediately after 1. 16, substituting; for, 1. 18 For (1944) read (1944),

19 For *J. R.* read *G.R.*

615

16 For *A.* read *H.*

618

3 For *Kristell* read *Kristeller*

619

619 13–14 For- *ατί/κης* read- *ατί/κῆς*

3d. 1. from foot For *1917* read *1927*

642

1 For *Life of More* read *Thomas More*

644

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
21/3/55

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for your letter of the 16th. I am indeed sorry to hear of all the shocking things that have been happening to you. The bright spot is the result of the physical examination: there is one thing off your mind for good.

I get the impression, not only from you but from many other correspondents, that in your country people are far too medically minded:

they read and think too much about health and go to doctors too often! It seems to me crazy ever to have an operation unless it is either a quite trivial one or quite clearly necessary. My own doctor, who happens to be also one of my most intimate friends (he's a R.C.) says that the vast majority of illnesses are either incurable or (which is fortunately the larger class) cure themselves in due course. I said 'But my cough *does* get better after I've been taking cough mixture for a day or two.' He replied 'Yes, because you don't start the mixture until the cough has become a real nuisance, which means until it was reaching its peak after which it wd. have gone away in about the same time whether you had taken the mixture or not.'

A good deal of your alarming story I didn't understand. Why is cutting off one's telephone a protection against assault? It sounds to me just as much a *non-sequitur* as going armed in the streets to protect oneself from telephone calls! But of course the thing itself is no joke and you must be badly shaken: I hope you feel better now.

We were talking about Cats & Dogs the other day & decided that both have consciences but the dog, being an honest, humble person, always has a bad one, but the Cat is a Pharisee and always has a good one. When he sits and stares you out of countenance he is thanking God that he is not as these dogs, or these humans, or even as these other Cats!

I'm sending this by Air Mail because you enclosed stamps. But the stamps are, you know, quite useless here, and in future I'll continue to send by surface mail. Postage is rather a serious item in my weekly budget. In great haste—I hope it is legible—and with all sympathy and blessings. *Oremus pro invicem* as you people say.

Yours
Jack

TO MR ALLCOCK (P):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
24/3/55

Dear Mr Allcock—

Thank you for your kind and encouraging letter. The doctrine of purgation after death is one of the many held by the Roman Church which I consider to be intrinsically probable but which, since it is not clearly stated

in Scripture, nor included in the early creeds, I do not think they have any warrant for enforcing. I repudiate their practice of defining and systematising and continually enumerating the list of things that *must* be accepted. But that is quite consistent with my believing, as private speculations, some of the things they accept as revealed certainties. For of course one may 'assert' (in the sense 'hold as private opinion') lots that one does not 'believe' in the sense of holding as faith. E.g. I personally on general historical grounds may 'believe' that our Lord could speak a certain amount of Greek...?

I'd be a wicked idiot if I went about putting this forward as an article of faith: nor wd. it make the slightest difference to my religious life if I found my opinion to be wrong. A similar distinction is quite familiar to us in another field. You accept certain statements (e.g. that water is H₂O) as scientific certainties: but you probably 'believe' a good many other things about the physical world you wd. admit to be only probable and, if you were a teacher, wd. not at all object to your pupil's denying.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
24/3/55

Dear Mary Willis

Just a line of sympathy and encouragement on the impending operation. Extra faith has been given to meet crises before, and I pray that it will be now. Be very much on your guard against the growth of a feeling that Fr. A. or anyone else 'Does not sound interested'. When we are in trouble we easily think this, don't we? And at all times, we v. easily misinterpret expressions of face & tones of voice. Often, too, the person we speak to is at that moment full of troubles we know nothing about.

Fr. D'Arcy and I were both members of the Dante Society at one time and I have also spoken on the same platform, so I know him pretty well. He

is a most interesting man and an excellent speaker.

My prayers always.

Yours

Jack

*Lewis had been toying with one of his favourite ideas—a reinterpretation of the story of Cupid and Psyche—since 1922. But as so often, his difficulty lay in finding a suitable form for what he had to say. Should it be a poem, or a play, or a novel? In a letter to William Gresham on 23 March 1955 Joy said that she and Lewis had ‘kicked a few ideas around till one came to light’¹¹³ and by the next day Lewis had written the first chapter of what was to become *Till We Have Faces*. In the following letter to Katharine Farrer Lewis mentioned the story as it was being written.*

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

2/4/55

Dear Katharine—

What a lovely letter. You make that Sicilian world very vivid to me.¹¹⁴ And set me wondering. How many of us who think we like the Classics (and especially high-minded old twaddlers like E. M. Forster) cd. face up to it if we really saw Paganism as it was? For I suppose the little shrines were just as tawdry then as now, and *vixere fortes ante Woolworth*¹¹⁵ (wh. will make the third line of an Alcaic tho’ not the second). What do these simple villagers think when rival villages talk each of ‘our Madonna’? I’ve some sympathy with Father X.

It wd. be perfectly splendid if you cd. sometimes get Big Brother¹¹⁶ to lunch with you in mid week. It wd. do him a world of good and give him a lot of pleasure if—here’s the snag—if you can only once get him to do it. He’s as evasive as Mr. Badger.¹¹⁷ His *first* thought on receiving any invitation is not whether he shd. accept or refuse but how he can most plausibly & politely refuse. This includes invitations from people he likes best as well as from the greatest bores. You’d have to use every sort of guile and even *modica coactio*.¹¹⁸ Why you should go to all that trouble I don’t know—it’s an angelic proposal.

I've given up the Phoenix story for the present, an old, 25 year old, idea having just started into imperative life. My version of Cupid & Psyche. Apuleius got it all wrong. The elder sister (I reduce her to one) couldn't see Psyche's palace when she visited her. She saw only rock & heather. When P. said she was giving her noble wine, the poor sister saw & tasted only spring water. Hence her dreadful problem: 'is P. mad or am I blind?' As you see, tho' I didn't start from that, it is the story of every nice, affectionate agnostic whose dearest one suddenly 'gets religion', or even every luke warm Christian whose dearest gets a Vocation. Never, I think, treated sympathetically by a Christian writer before. I do it all thro' the mouth of the elder sister. In a word, I'm v. much 'with book': *Juno Lucina fer opem*¹¹⁹

Yours
Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W): TS

27/55.

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
2nd April 1955.

Dear Mary Willis

In great haste. I hope your next letter will bring me news that the operation has gone swimmingly. Fear is horrid, but there's no reason to be ashamed of it. Our Lord was afraid (dreadfully so) in Gethsemane. I always cling to that as a very comforting fact. All blessings.

Yours,
Jack

TO JILL FREUD (T):

The Kilns,
Kilns Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
6/4/55

My dear June—

Here's a little Easter present. Your present, the crocks, are a great asset and give quite a new note of distinction to my breakfasts and teas at Magdalene. The still further distinction of yourself drinking out of them will, I trust, follow.

Thanks for the loan of *Tryfidds*¹²⁰ wh. I look forward to reading next week. At present I'm on Barbet's book on the Holy Shroud.¹²¹ Do you know it? There are things wh. I have felt, in previous Holy Weeks, that I was not thinking about enough: after an evening of Barbet the difficulty is to think of anything else. In fact one gets, not more than one needs, but a good deal more than one bargained for.

W. is well & sends his love. Susie, precocious creature is on heat. The people I'm sorry for are the local cats who, you remember, always used our garden as a club. Now they find their premises day & night invaded by dogs. One gave a barking serenade at about 3 a.m. this morning. Another barked at me in our own drive. 'I am sick of (canine) love.'¹²²

Cambridge is fun: such a country-town feeling.

Love to all three.

Yours ever

Jack

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
6/4/55

My dear Van Auken—

It was a strange experience to get a letter from Jean this morning. I return it. You will see that it deals with a problem on which you also wrote to me, probably at about the same time. Indeed her reason for not sending it might be the discovery that you had done, or were about to do, the same.

I can't now remember what I said in my lost letter about the 'Signs'. My general view is that, once we have accepted an omniscient & providential God, the distinction we used to draw between the significant and the fortuitous must either break down or be restated in some v. much subtler form. If an event coming about in the ordinary course of nature becomes to

me the occasion of hope and faith and love or increased efforts after virtue, do we suppose that this result was unforeseen by, or is indifferent to, God? Obviously not. What we should have called its fortuitous effects must have been present to Him for all eternity. And indeed, we can't suppose God saying (as a human artist might) 'That effect, though it has turned out rather well, was, I must admit, no part of my original design.' Then the total act of creation, including *our own* creation (wh. is going on all the time) meets us, doesn't it? in every event at every moment: the act of a Person dealing with persons and knowing what He does. Thus I wouldn't now be bothered by a man who said to me 'This, which you mistake for grace, is really the good functioning of your digestion.' Does my digestion fall outside God's act? He made and allowed to me my colon as much as my guardian angel.

I guess (I don't know) that Trevelyan is a temperamentally pious Agnostic-with-hopes of the best, old liberal kind.¹²³ He's certainly not a churchman; I have heard him say so.

I give no advice about the thesis, and I think you ought to be guided by ordinary academic considerations. Forgive me for suggesting that the form 'What Jean would have liked' cd. come to have its dangers. The real question is what she wills *now*; and you may be sure her will is now one with God's. A 'sovereignty in the pluperfect subjunctive' is often a snare. The danger is that of confusing your love for her (gradually—as the years pass) with your love for a period in your own past; and of trying to preserve the past in a way in wh. it can't be preserved. Death—corruption—resurrection is the true rhythm: not the pathetic, horrible practice of mummification. Sad you must be at present. You can't develop a false sense of a duty to cling to sadness if—or when, for *nature* will not preserve any psychological state forever—sadness begins to vanish? There is great good in bearing sorrow patiently: I don't know that there is any virtue in sorrow just as such. It is a Christian duty, as you know, for everyone to be as happy as he can. But you know all this already.

All love.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane

Headington Quarry
Oxford
6/4/55

Dear Dorothy—

You are always producing noble and joyous things and the Sayers–Wegner diptych is well up to standard.¹²⁴ I don't know how one wd. do that sort of *almost* purely factual verse: it has a sort of Middle English feeling about it. It and the letter come v. àpropos for I am, as always in Holy Week, re-reading *The Man Born to be King*.¹²⁵ It stands up to this v. particular kind of test extremely well.

I'm also at Barbet's book on the Holy Shroud. He's rather a nasty man—always bestowing little scratches of the kind my sex likes to call 'feminine' on everyone who disagrees with him—and some of his ancient history is a bit shaky. All the same, v. good reading for the season. Hitherto I have felt compunction at not thinking & feeling enough about the Passion: after an evening of this book one thinks and feels rather more than one had bargained for.

On business: I didn't think I had any authority to give or deny permission for the reprinting of things from *Essays Presented*.¹²⁶ I supposed it lay with the O.U.P. It was certainly from them, not from me, that my brother got leave to include an essay on the Galleys in his *Splendid Century*.¹²⁷ The royalties, as you know, go to Michal Williams, and I know nothing about them.¹²⁸ Meanwhile, like conditional baptism, if I am entitled to 'permit' you, of course I do. I am v. glad we are to have some more Dante papers from you—and of course our tongues are all hanging out for the *Purgatorio*.

It is so gratifying to my vanity to suppose that the mysterious haunter in that 'Cambridge' number is myself, that I can't resist it.¹²⁹ But it might not be. It was a cheering phenomenon, anyway. I never guessed they were feeling so uneasy. I'm disappointed, though, to find that E. M. Forster (whose novels I enjoy) is such an ass. What can he mean by saying that it's the duty of the individual to create other individuals?¹³⁰ And then, that about not calling himself an atheist because 'it sounds crude' nor an agnostic, because 'it sounds feeble'!¹³¹ We call Lucretius the one, and Huxley the other; who or what does E.M.F. suppose himself to be! Marry Gup!!¹³²

You lay your finger unerringly on Blake as the weak spot in my case, and no doubt I shall hear more of this from others.¹³³ But I suppose he is more in the same position as an obsolete satire or esoteric *vers de société*¹³⁴ wh. we can't understand because we lack knowledge wh. it answers. Of course the things assumed are not 'public', but then Blake thought they were in a sense: i.e. that they were revealed truth known to angels if not to men. Whereas the privities in *A Cooking Egg*¹³⁵ were, and were known by Eliot to be, the privities of a single, contingent, human life.¹³⁶

I send my spare copy of *The Month* with a sonnet by me in it.¹³⁷ Not that the sonnet is important (and anyway you probably get *The Month* already) but just to keep my end up.

I hope you've read Joy Davidman's *Smoke on the Mountain*¹³⁸ an ex-Communist, Jewess-by-race, convertite, on the X Commandments and, I think, really good.

My brother joins me in all good wishes for Easter. Shd. we someday form a Dinosaurs' Club (with an annual dinner in the Victoria & Albert)?

Yours
Jack

TO HARRY BLAMIRE (BOD):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
6/4/55

Dear Blamires—

Thank you very much for CWIH.¹³⁹ It marks a great advance. The opening (strange reading one's own book in a train) is brilliant. The remainder of that chapter and the whole of chapter 2 are, as I think you felt, the least successful part of the book. After that, it carried me along beautifully. All the Hellish literature is first-class. I especially enjoyed 'The Ante-Gestation Stage'. The Hellish sentimentalism about youth (pp. 132–133) a new idea to me, and v. penetrating. The 'modern' poetry (pp. 138 sq.) is v. well done. Also (and this is v. important) apart from its 'message' this whole book is a much better *story* than its predecessor. I hope there are

more to come and shall watch [for] them with great interest. All good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

P. S. p. 17. 'They'd be in the pub instead.' No they wouldn't, if evensong was at 6. Pubs don't open till 7 on Sundays.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

10/55.

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
11th April 1955.

Dear Gibb,

I shall send you the MS of *Surprised by Joy* as soon as I can get a big envelope: shops will be open tomorrow. Let's hope Forster was as clear in his own mind as he is in your gloss.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

10/55 The Kilns, Kiln Lane, Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
14th April 1955.

Dear Gibb,

I have written to Curtis Brown about Clause 16,¹⁴⁰ and you'll no doubt hear from him. It would'nt do in the case of academic books for which the O.U.P. or the C.U.P. would be the natural people, nor for my final fairy tales.

I don't think illustrations are at all desirable for *Surprised by Joy*; too much of a cruel kind of *Warheit* interfering with the *Dichtung*.¹⁴¹

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS (CAM):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
19/4/55

Dear Sirs

Will you please send me 3 more copies of my *De Descriptione Temporum* and deduct the price from my royalties?

Yours faithfully
C. S. Lewis

TO VALERIE PITT (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
20/4/55

Dear Miss Pitt—

It doesn't make me like the religion of Culture any better to know that [it] contains ascetics and even martyrs, as well as persecutors. We knew long ago that Baal's priests cut themselves with knives¹⁴² and the worshippers of Jaganath¹⁴³ lay down under the wheels of his chariot. *Askesis*¹⁴⁴ proves nothing for the cult in wh. it occurs. Nor of course anything against it. Riding or golf or even being a good judge of claret are not evil because they involve an *askesis*.

I suppose the real questions are whether the activity in question is (a) Good, bad, or fairly neutral in itself. (b) Worth the amount of time & effort devoted to it. (c) *Consistent* with that amount. The last seems to be the important one here. A game (say golf) can't be fully enjoyed without a certain degree of seriousness, but there is a further degree of seriousness wh. simply frustrates its whole game-nature, makes it cease to be recreational. Those who play it with that degree then have to go without recreation or seek their recreation elsewhere (like Mrs. Battle who worked at bridge & *relaxed* over a book).¹⁴⁵ Now I don't think literature is simply on a level with golf: I shd. put it more on a level with friendship or (legitimate) love making or liberal curiosity. All these I think have an upper limit of seriousness in their *askesis*, and when you go above that you lose the very thing they had it in them to give you. (The half is here greater than the whole).*

Of course contempt & cruelty to the outsiders in the culture-cult are no different from the same vices elsewhere. These are just (highly unoriginal) sins & there's no more to be learned about them.

I'm surprised you think the young not given to orthodoxies. Surely you are mistaken? Of course they don't *call* them orthodoxies. When the young begin with a simple 'I'm afraid you'll think me terribly unorthodox, but—' don't they usually produce precisely some slogans of their own set wh. we have heard from 100 similar young for the last five years?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

* Of course any of these will often involve considerations of charity, justice, veracity, humility and love (*agape*) wh. are as serious as anything can be. I meant that the mere practice of them, in itself, has its upper limit of seriousness.

TO VALERIE PITT (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
25/4/55

Dear Miss Pitt

It would give me great pleasure if you could come and dine with me here (in the library) at 7.45 on Wednesday, June 8th. (Men will be wearing dinner jackets).

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
28/4/55

Dear Miss Bodle—

Thanks for your letter of March 14th. Yes, here I am (tho' still, you see, under the same celestial patroness) translated into all the dignity and—what's very much more important—leisure of a professor.

I am liking Cambridge very much. For one thing, it is still, substantially, a country town, not ruined like poor Oxford by industrialisation.¹⁴⁶ In the university I am pleasantly surprised to find much more Christianity than at Oxford—at least so it seems, but of course it may be just I have fallen across more here by chance. This is a nice college: after the old Magdalen it is so small that I feel I'd like to take it to bed with me or have it swimming in my bath! But v. beautiful and gentle and unobtrusive.

It certainly seems v. hard that you shd. be told to arm the young against Venus without calling in Christ.¹⁴⁷ What do they want? I suppose the usual twaddle about bees and orchids (as if approaching a subject by that devious route wd. make any possible difference either good or bad). And indeed now that contraceptives have removed the most disastrous consequence for girls, and medicine has largely defeated the worst horrors of syphilis, what argument against promiscuity is there left wh. will influence the young unless one brings in the whole supernatural and sacramental view of man?

I quite agree that one can't help wondering why one is (so far) spared many temporal tribulations (better than wondering why one has *some!*). I think your answer is the safest if one is to attempt an answer at all: i.e. we're only third line troops. One is sometimes afraid when one reads the beatitudes—I suppose, at any rate, we must try to enter into other's sufferings more deeply than the less fortunate do. I don't know. We must believe that whatever our lot is it has been given us for the best. All blessings.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
30/4/55

My dear Fowler—

What a chap you are! A lovely book wh. will be just the thing for solitary breakfasts and teas. Very many thanks. But you must really stop this: I'm not used to it. What I really want is the *Rest of Time*. I'm afraid nature never meant me for a scholar: the *R of T* seems to me so v. much more important than silly old Wilson.¹⁴⁸ But this is 'direct Against the

canon laws of our foundation.' I've done my damndest to the Provost of Queen's, [149](#) and will stand by for the House.

I was taken to a pub in London in the Vac. where all S.F. writers congregate every Thursday night: a merry party. They're all v. young.

Re your daughter's language I suppose all division into words, like division of verse into feet, is a fairly late analysis. Does a journalist (to take a contemporary primitive type) really feel *diametrically* as a word, or only as a phonetic overture to *opposite*? Or *tissue of* before *falsehoods*? Can't advise you on criticising, or moralising, your young Croesus. The cynic's advice wd. be 'See that you make him less rich every time you meet him.'

Hope to see you in the Long. [150](#)

Yours

C. S. Lewis

The Magician's Nephew was published by The Bodley Head of London on 2 May 1955.

TO SISTER MADELEVA CSC (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

5/5/55

Dear Sister Madeleva

It was nice to hear from you again. I am very sorry to disoblige you, but I must refuse to be a 'sponsor'. This involves no distrust nor unfriendliness: the point is that I never feel free to make 'gestures' or undertake things that have no clear meaning. If sponsoring gave the impression that I was at all qualified to give an opinion about St. Mary's College (where I've never been, where I know no one but yourself), it wd. give a false impression. If it does not give that impression, surely it is quite meaningless? I do hope you will understand? It wd. be far easier to me to accept than to write this refusal.

Yours very sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO PHILINDA KRIEG (P): [151](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
6/5/55

Dear Mrs. Krieg

Tell Laurence from me, with my love: 1/Even if he was loving Aslan more than Jesus (I'll explain in a moment why he can't really be doing this) he would not be an idol-worshipper. If he was an idol-worshipper he'd be doing it on purpose, whereas he's now doing it because he can't help doing it, and trying hard not to do it. But God knows quite well how hard we find it to love Him more than anyone or anything else, and He won't be angry with us as long as we are trying. And He will help us.

2/But Laurence can't *really* love Aslan more than Jesus, even if he feels that's what he is doing. For the things he loves Aslan for doing or saying are simply the things Jesus really did and said. So that when Laurence thinks he is loving Aslan, he is really loving Jesus: and perhaps loving Him more than he ever did before. Of course there is one thing Aslan has that Jesus has not—I mean, the body of a lion. (But remember, if there are other worlds and they need to be saved and Christ were to save them as He would—He may really have taken all sorts of bodies in them which we don't know about.) Now if Laurence is bothered because he finds the lion-body seems nicer to him than the man-body, I don't think he *need* be bothered at all. God knows all about the way a little boy's imagination works (He made it, after all) and knows that at a certain age the idea of talking and friendly animals is very attractive. So I don't think He minds if Laurence likes the Lion-body. And anyway, Laurence will find as he grows older, that feeling (liking the lion-body better) will die away of itself, without his taking any trouble about it. So he needn't bother.

3/If I were Laurence I'd just say in my prayers something like this: 'Dear God, if the things I've been thinking and feeling about those books are things You don't like and are bad for me, please take away those feelings and thoughts. But if they are not bad, then please stop me from worrying about them. And help me every day to love you more in the way that really matters far more than any feelings or imaginations, by doing what you want and growing more like you.' That is the sort of thing I think Laurence should say for himself; but it would be kind and Christian-like if he then added, 'And if Mr. Lewis has worried any other children by his

books or done them any harm, then please forgive him and help him never to do it again.’

Will this help? I am terribly sorry to have caused such trouble, and would take it as a great favour if you would write again and tell me how Laurence goes on. I shall of course have him daily in my prayers. He must be a corker of a boy: I hope you are prepared for the possibility he might turn out a saint. I dare say the saints’ mothers have, in some ways, a rough time!

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELburnE (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
8/5/55

Dear Mary

I am extremely sorry (and at such a time too) to have left your letter of April 14th so long unanswered. But there was a chapter of obstacles. First, you put no address on the letter and the outside of the envelope had got damp so that the address was illegible. Second, I was in Cambridge (where your letter was forwarded) and your address in the files here. Thirdly, my brother was away ill, so that I couldn’t send mine to him to be addressed. Fourthly, there was a railway strike wh. prevented me coming home last week-end as I wd. normally have done. That brings us to yesterday!

I’m glad the operation is over, and sorry about the sinus headaches (an enemy of mine for some years now). But I prefer them to sick headaches all the same: they’re a ‘lean pain’ and don’t entail the same *general* malaise—what someone I knew called ‘the all-overish feeling’.

How nice all that is about the ‘efficient’ young woman you were able to help. I *think* I know what you mean by the ‘humiliation’ of finding everyone much nicer to one than seemed probable beforehand. It is a very gentle, pleasant kind, though, isn’t it? (There are others! By gum, aren’t there?).

I like the second stanza of *Easter* best. Between ourselves, as one rhymester to another, it’s a great pity that *world*, such a good important

word and often so emphatically demanding to come at the end of a line, has so few rhymes in English. *Furled, hurled, curled*—none of them v. serviceable—and what else is there. Let's invent a verb *to churl* (behave churlishly).

This is the coldest spring ever in England, and I have hardly heard the cuckoo at all till (when I didn't specially want him) 5 a.m. this morning.

You are always in my prayers: have me in yours.

Yours

Jack

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):[152](#)

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
8/5/55

My dear Van Auken—

Your letter is a wonderfully clear and beautiful expression of an experience often desired but not often achieved to the degree you and Jean achieved it. My reason for sending it back is my belief that if you reread it often, till you can look at it as if it were someone else's story, you will in the end think as I do (but of course far more deeply & fruitfully than I can, because it will cost you so much more) about a life so wholly (at first) devoted to US. Not only as I do, but as the whole 'sense' of the human family wd. on their various levels.

Begin at the bottom. What wd. the grosser Pagans think? They'd say there was excess in it, that it wd. provoke the Nemesis of the gods; they wd. 'see the red light.' Go up one: the finer Pagans wd. blame each withdrawal from the claims of common humanity as unmanly, uncitizenly, uxorious. If Stoics they wd. say that to try to wrest part of the Whole (US) into a self-sufficing Whole on its own was 'contrary to nature'.

Then come to Christians. They wd. of course agree that man & wife are 'one flesh':[153](#) they wd. perhaps admit that this was most admirably realised by Jean and you. But surely they wd. add that this One Flesh must not (and in the long run cannot) 'live to itself' any more than the single individual. It was not made, any more than he, to be its own End. It was made for God and (in Him) for its neighbours—first and foremost among them the children

it ought to have produced. (The idea behind your voluntary sterility, that an experience, e.g. maternity, wh. cannot be shared shd. on that account be avoided, is surely v. unsound. For *a.* (forgive me) the conjugal act itself depends on opposite & reciprocal and therefore unshare-able experiences. Did you want her to feel she had a *woman* in bed with her? *b.* The experience of a woman denied maternity is one you *did not & could not* share with her. To be denied paternity is different & trivial in comparison.) One way or another the thing had to die. Perpetual springtime is not allowed. You were not cutting the wood of life according to the grain. There are various possible ways in wh. it cd. have died tho' both the parties went on living. You have been treated with a severe mercy. You have been brought to see (how true & how v. frequent this is!) that you were jealous of God. And from *US* you have been led back to *US AND GOD*: it remains to go on to *GOD AND US*.

She was further on than you, and she can help you more where she now is than she could have done on earth. You must go on. That is one of the many reasons why suicide is out of the question. (Another is the absence of any ground for believing that death *by that route* wd. reunite you with her. Why should it? You might be digging an eternally unbridgeable chasm. Disobedience is not the way to get nearer to the obedient.) There's no other man, in such affliction as yours, to whom I'd dare write so plainly. And that, if you can believe me, is the strongest proof of my belief in you and love for you. To fools and weaklings one writes soft things. You spared her (v. wrongly) the pains of childbirth: do not evade your own, the travail you must undergo while Christ is being born in you. Do you imagine she herself can now have any greater care about you than that this spiritual maternity of yours shd. be patiently suffered & joyfully delivered?

God bless you. Pray for me.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS (CAM):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
10/5/55

Dear Sirs

Please send (and charge against royalties) one copy of my *De Descriptione Temporum* to each of the following: Miss Griggs, Tewsfeld, Headington Quarry, Oxford¹⁵⁴

Sister Penelope C.S.M.V., St. Michael's House, Wantage, Berks Yours faithfully

C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES*:¹⁵⁵

May 10, 1955

Sir,—

Sunday, May 15, will be the tenth anniversary of the death of Charles Williams. In his lifetime he became an outstanding figure in the world of English letters. Since his death, his reputation and influence have grown so much that there must be thousands who to-day acknowledge him as a formative influence in their thinking, whether literary or religious.

There can be little doubt that they will desire to honour his memory by some observance of this tenth anniversary of his death. Public meetings are being arranged in London, Oxford, and Cambridge. We venture to suggest that his disciples and students of his works elsewhere should take steps to pay tribute in some fashion wherever they may be.

Yours faithfully,

C. S. Lewis

Dorothy L. Sayers

Saint Anne's House, 57, Dean Street, W.1

TO MRS JOHNSON (P):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
14/5/55

Dear Mrs Johnson—

If I ever visit you (which doesn't seem v. likely) I shall certainly sample your coffee, and your tea. The great rule when travelling is always to have the local diet (wh. may be good) and never the local attempt at one's own home diet (wh. is always frightful). Always have tea, not coffee, in

England: coffee, not tea, in France, wine not beer in all Southern Europe: porridge nowhere except in Scotland & Ireland!

Far from having acquired a TV. set I've got rid of my wireless!

Clearly, from a passage in *Hebrews*,¹⁵⁶ there is something v. special about Melchisedech, but I don't know what it is. There's lots to find out, here and hereafter, isn't there?

My own view about Elisha and the bears¹⁵⁷ (not that I haven't known small boys who'd be much improved by the same treatment!) and other episodes is something like this. If you take the Bible as a whole, you see a process in which something which, in its earliest levels (those aren't necessarily the ones that come first in the Book as now arranged) was hardly moral at all, and was in some ways not unlike the Pagan religions, is gradually purged and enlightened till it becomes the religion of the great prophets and Our Lord Himself. That whole process is the greatest revelation of God's true nature. At first hardly anything comes through but mere power. Then (v. important) the truth that He is One and there is no other God. Then justice, then mercy, love, wisdom.

Of course Our Lord never drank *spirits* (they had no distilled liquors) but of course the wine of the Bible was real fermented wine and alcoholic. The repeated references to the sin of drunkenness in the Bible, from Noah's first discovery of wine¹⁵⁸ down to the warnings in St Paul's epistles,¹⁵⁹ make this perfectly plain. The other theory cd. be (honestly) held only by a v. ignorant person. One can understand the bitterness of some 'temperance' fanatics if one has ever lived with a drunkard: what one finds it harder to excuse is any educated person telling such lies about history.

I think myself that the point of the shocking reply to the Syrophenician woman¹⁶⁰ (it came alright in the end) is to remind all us Gentile Christians—who forget it easily enough & even flirt with anti-Semitism—that the Jews are spiritually *senior* to us, that God *did* entrust the descendants of Abraham with the first revelation of Himself. To 'put us in our place.'

It is still a terribly cold, backward spring and I never heard less of the cuckoo.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
14/5/55

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for yours of the 8th. I hope you now have a letter of mine, explaining my involuntary silence. Here's the lecture: a dull work, except for the special audience I had in view. I heard *Time* had been at me (Time, in another sense, always is!) but didn't see it.¹⁶¹ I'm glad you had such a nice birthday party; not that I'm fond of birthday parties myself. You don't say exactly how you are, but I hope no news is good news. All good wishes.

Yours in haste
Jack

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
15/5/55

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

Thank you for your letter of May 8th and the enclosure. I liked the article very much: just the right blend of atmosphere and factual information, each supporting the other. I would wish (the old tutor who has been marking essays for 30 years dies hard!) he had omitted the word 'romantic' before 'magnetism'. The business is to make *us*, the readers, say 'romantic', not to *tell* us it! But that's a trifle.

Of course I wish you every blessing in the Associates' Order.¹⁶² You have made the decision at the right speed and for the right reasons. And now 'all things work together for good'.¹⁶³ As one finds more nourishment he grows more aware of the other's needs, and a reading of the false gospels sends you back to the true ones.

I wonder do you put it quite accurately when you say that the first Christians 'abandoned the Law'. The Gentile converts couldn't abandon what they had never had: you can't leave a place you've never been at. And

did the Jewish Christians not continue to observe it? St. Paul circumcised Timothy¹⁶⁴ and ‘shore his head in Cenchrea, for he had a vow’.¹⁶⁵ But I admit I’m not sure of my facts. On the whole, however, I think the whole idea of a change from Law to Grace, of Love being the real fulfilment of the Law, etc., is too deeply embedded in the whole structure of Christianity to be gone back on.

I’m so pleased with what you say about Genia.

We’re having a bitterly cold spring and the cuckoo is heard only about once a day. He ought, in the ‘merry month of May’¹⁶⁶ to be on duty from sunrise to sunset. But Cambridge is looking lovely: more daffodils and apple blossom than at Oxford.

Yours ever

C. S. Lewis

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

19/5/55

My dear Fowler–

Rats! Academic work and imaginative writing are incompatible only in the same sense as playing the piano and taking hot baths: i.e. they can’t be done at the same time. More simply still, those of us who can’t live on private means (e.g. you and I) have to do our stories in the time left over from our jobs. And our job, all said and done, leaves more time over than most.

I’ll restore the yellow volume of S.F.¹⁶⁷ when we meet. I’ve read nothing of that sort for ages. The truth is that apart from Marcus Aurelius and Curtius’s *European Lit & Lat. M. Ages*¹⁶⁸ (a very over-rated book) I’ve read little of anything, being v. occupied with my Cupid & Psyche story.

If *World* = the universe as now known and conjectured by the scientists, wd. it include ‘heaven’?¹⁶⁹

My duty to your wife.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO PAULINE BAYNES (BOD):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
24/5/55

Dear Miss Baynes

Of course I haven't seen the new drawings yet.¹⁷⁰ Quite possibly they're far better than you think. I think we have both improved as the series went on: pity we can't do it all over again.

Tell your niece there are only two times at which you can stop a thing: one is before anyone is tired of it, and the other is after!

Thanks for portrait of one of Aslan's shadows.¹⁷¹

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
24/5/55

Dear Mrs. Gebbert—

Yes, correspondence has got into a disgraceful state, what between my brother having been ill and the upheaval of my move to Cambridge. (We did tell you I'd become a Cambridge professor? This is a step up, in the sense that it means rather more pay for a great deal less work: and I like my new college—you notice it has an e—at the end, unlike its Oxford counterpart—very much indeed: some ways, more than the old).

We got the Las Vegas letter alright.¹⁷² and thought that what between gambling (the most uninteresting of all vices: wine, women, & murder I can understand, but roulette—the vapidness of it!) and the glaring hideousness of the decorations and the surrounding desert and its neigh-bouring explosions, L.V. was about the nearest thing to nightmare we'd ever heard of! Did you *like* it?

Now for translation.¹⁷³ *Quid distat inter sottum et Scottum* won't go nicely into English for it all depends on the pun—*quid distat* meaning either 'What is the difference?' or 'What is the distance?' Perhaps 'What *divides* a

sot from a Scot?’ And John (sitting opposite his interlocutor) replies *Mensa tantum*—‘only a table’, i.e. you’re the sot and I the Scot’

Wm. Laud is complex too.¹⁷⁴ 1. *Laud (em)* is the Accusative of *Laus* = praise. 2. *Parva Laus* = small praise. Wm. was presumably both smaller than some other Laud and also sparing of his praises. But 3. I strongly suspect that *Laus* was in Frankish (as in Old Norse) the word for a *louse*. *Claude fenestras ut luceat domus* = shut the windows in order that the house may be filled with light. This wd. be a paradoxical statement of the old precept of the mystics ‘Close your outward senses, abstract yourself from external things, so that your soul may receive spiritual illumination.’

Amor Dei, lux animae = ‘The love of God is the light of the soul.’¹⁷⁵ I did a good deal of work on Henry More once: a beautiful man of whom it was said ‘He was often so drunk with happiness that he had much ado to keep himself from falling down & kissing the very stones on the path.’¹⁷⁶ He is also one of the earliest people to mention kindness to animals as a duty.

How does the Tycoon get on with the English Language now?

I wish I cd. write as legible a hand as yours. All the best.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
25/5/55

Dear Gibb

I think the Blurb will do v. nicely. I suppose the specimen page is to be taken as a specimen only of looks—it gives the text a new look indeed, even a nonsensical one! ‘The Noumenal & Phenomenal Bergson’ is a wondrous beast.¹⁷⁷ Has a page of MS. been lost or misplaced?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

1/6/55

Dear Gibb

Stupid of me about the specimen page. I don't think it matters whether the title suggests Wordsworth or not.¹⁷⁸ As to whether the words 'Conversion Story' shd. appear, I shd. have thought *not* on the spine but on the back (of wrapper). I hope [the] spine can have the title printed so as to be horizontal when the book is standing in a shelf. I think the other (increasingly common) method is ugly, besides needing a rubber-neck to read easily as you walk along a bookcase.

I look forward to seeing you and hearing.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

2/6/55

My dear Arthur

Thanks for your letter of the 27th May. The arrangements are fine, except that my berth from Belfast to L'pool is booked not for Sept 19 but for Sept 20th. Shall we stay a night longer at Rathmullan or will you book me a room at the C'Burn Inn for the night of the 19th? Which you please. I don't know why you shd. feel such a heavy sense of responsibility: everyone knows that a crust, a cup of cold water and a bed of straw, or even a rug shared with you on a summer seat is enough for me!

Yours

Jack

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

3/6/55

Dear Joan

Thanks for your letter. My college 'is out' (as you say: we should say 'goes down' at the universities and 'breaks up' at school) by the end of next week.

Yes, it has stopped snowing but this has been the latest and coldest spring I've ever known. It only began getting warm, and the cuckoo only began seriously cuckooing, about a week ago. Not that it is what you would call warm. The water in our river, the Cam. is only up to 62°. I shall go to Oxford when term is over (if I can get there. I don't drive a car—I'm no good at any sort of machine—and we're having a railway strike at the moment.) Talking about *The Ring*, there's a little old man who brings my breakfast every morning who is exactly like Mime.

I finished correcting the proofs of the last of all the Narnian books a few weeks ago, so I suppose it will be out in autumn.

With love & good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
5/6/55

My dear Van Auken—

I have your letter of May 20. My own hand is now so bad that it ill becomes me to blame yours; but cd. you make it a bit *larger*? I shall need a microscope else.

What you say about time is what I've long thought.¹⁷⁹ It is inadequate to, and partially transcended by, v. simple experiences. E.g. *when* do we hear a musical air? Until the last note is sounded it is incomplete; as soon as that sounds it's already over. And I'm pretty sure eternal life doesn't mean this width-less line of moments endlessly prolonged (as if by prolongation it cd. 'catch up with' that wh. it so obviously cd. never hold) but getting off that line onto its plane or even the solid. Read von Hügel's *Eternal Life & Boethius Consolation* (nice 16th. c. English version on the right hand page of the Loeb edn.) About the nature of the relation between spouses in eternity, I base my idea on S. Paul's dictum that 'he that is joined with a harlot is one flesh'.¹⁸⁰ If the lowest & most corrupt form of sexual union has some mystical 'oneness' involved in it (and by the way what an argument *against* 'casual practice'!) *a fortiori* the blessed & lawful form must have it *par excellence*. That is, I think the union between the risen

spouses will be as close as that between the soul and its own risen body. But (and this, as you see, is the snag) the risen body is the body that has died. ('If we share this death, we shall also share this resurrection').¹⁸¹ And so—as you say in one of your postscripts—your love for Jean must, in one sense, be 'killed' and 'God must do it.' You'd better read the *Paradiso* hadn't you? Note the moment at wh. Beatrice turns her eyes away from Dante 'to the eternal Fountain',¹⁸² and D. is quite content. But of course it's all in the text 'Seek ye first the Kingdom...and all these other things shall be added unto you.'¹⁸³ Infinite comfort in the second part: inexorable demand in the first. Hopeless if it were to be done by your own endeavours at some particular moment. But 'God must do it.'

Your part is what you are already doing: 'Take me—no conditions.' After that, through the daily duty, through the increasing effort after holiness—well, like the seed growing secretly. What you say about the *she* in you & the *he* in her certainly does *not* seem to me the plains of Gomorrah and *is* in some sense (*what* I don't well know) probably true. There might be an element of delusion in the form it took: I don't know. But it did occur to me when reading it that my doctor friend once rebuked me for the v. exact attempts at precision I made in describing a pain to him. He said 'All that about just how it felt, its unique quality, is generally useless & unreliable to us as doctors. Tell me where it is & how long you've had it. If I need anything more, I'll ask.' Possibly all those fine points wh. distinguish your loss from all the other losses suffered by other lovers are less important than they (v. naturally) seem to you.

These sonnets,¹⁸⁴ written about 10 years ago, are not in every way addressed to your condition, but they put some things perhaps a little better than I cd. put them here. I am in great trouble about my dear brother's dipsomania: pray for him and me. God bless you.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

P.S. Let me have the sonnets back sometime: but no hurry.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELburnE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

7/6/55

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for your letter of the 29th. The photo from *Time* was a useful mortification; good as a hair shirt. (What an exaggeration! As if one wouldn't rather look like the Ugly Duchess than wear even ordinary tickly underclothing for half a day!).

I think all your activities as fairy-godmother to a Chinese bride must be delightful, and you obviously find them so. It's a little alarming to hear that she doesn't want to marry anyone. But I daresay she'll feel differently when she's had a baby. But of course the whole Chinese set-up is quite different, isn't it? With them (I understand) parents are everything and one's husband (still more, one's wife) is nothing. I'm shocked to find that a shop wouldn't serve a Chinese. But I have long known that the talk about Brotherhood, wherever it occurs, in America or here, is hypocrisy. Or rather, the man who talks it means 'I have no superiors': he does *not* mean 'I have no inferiors.' How loathsome it all is!

The warm weather (what we call warm here) has begun at last and the cuckoo is at his work. I had my first bathe two days ago. Meanwhile the railway strike (there's Brotherhood and Democracy for you again) goes on. I'm going to try to travel to Oxford on Saturday, but it is a mere adventure. My whitening bones will probably be found by the wayside.

All good wishes and blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
14/6/55

My dear Cecil

(There's one point in favour of pronouncing it your way, namely, that *trestle* has really no other rhyme, whereas *thistle* already has *whistle*, *epistle*, *gristle*) Things are like this.

W, after a half year of debauches has agreed to go into a hygienic bastille at Dumfries, sentence 6 months, reducible to 3 for good conduct. He

is at present here with me, sober as a judge, and I hold myself ready to travel up with him as soon as they can take him & normal train services are restored. So I can make no plans of my own till that's settled. Later 1/2 of July and nearly all August will be free. Any good? Or will you be off lecturing in Cathay or Taprobane¹⁸⁵ or Crim Tartary?¹⁸⁶

You're right about a Ha-Ha at an angle. The *idea* caused Owen anguish enough: how cd. he support the reality. You and I must meet this Vac by hook or crook. You left 2 cigars behind. You'll never smoke them now.

Yours

Jack

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Tel. 6963
14/6/55

Home for the Vac, and when shall we meet. You don't drink,¹⁸⁷ and wd. never find this house, and I've no *pied à terre* in Oxford now, so I suggest the Union as a *rendez vous*, 11, any morning except Mondays.

Lots to say about the chapter.¹⁸⁸ The story is developing well: but the emotional reactions of the people are inadequate & perfunctory (and there are so *many* people! Supers¹⁸⁹ have to be paid, you know, so it's costly to have too many. But [more] of this when we meet. However, the book has a healthy constitution: good feeding, proper clothes, & soap & water will set all right.

C.S.L.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
15/6/55

Dear Gibb

I am really most moved by your cheque, but one can appreciate the Quixotic generosity all the better for not battenning on it. Why should you pay for my past gullibility (the proverb shd. run 'a fool and his copy are soon parted') or for poor old G.B.'s hard bargain?¹⁹⁰

Now, if you still feel you want to 'discharge your conscience', pray send a cheque for £50 to the Over Forty-Fives Association (217 A Kensington High St., W.8) and, for the other £50, like the squire in the song 'put it in the old oak chest'. Then we'll feel comfortable.

And don't (but thanks all the same: the offer gave me v. great pleasure) send me any royalties on G.M.¹⁹¹ I'll send you the copy back, and the proofs of *S by J.* in a day or two.

About the latter, note whether my corrections to the chapter motto on p. 59 are fool proof, and if not use your skill to make them so.¹⁹² Any copy of Herbert will of course give the right lineation.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
20/6/55

Dear Katharine

How professional of you—to be 'writing for the booksellers' with the printer's devil on the doorstep.

I thought Austin's article the brightest spot (perhaps the only bright spot) in the Oxford number of *The XXth Century*.¹⁹³

I would much like to meet you both. Actually Tea wd. suit me best, Mon. Tue, or Wed. next week. Wd. that suit you? (Memo, I'm streamlining myself and Tea now means only tea for me, so you need consult only your own taste and capacity in the way of crumpets, scones, & cakes. The streamlining succeeds marvellously: if only I'd begun it 6 months earlier I shd. not have needed to buy a new dress suit. *Si jeunesse savait!*¹⁹⁴

Yours sincerely

Jack

TO HERBERT PALMER (TEX):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
20/6/55

My dear Palmer

I shd. much like to meet Mrs. Hesketh and better still if she is accompanied by you, and to make you both acquainted with Mrs. Gresham (= Joy Davidman, whose *Smoke on the Mountain* I trust you have read). But you don't say what *time* on the 4th or 5th. My idea wd. be either 11.45 or 6.5 (better the morning, though) in the bar of the Eastgate Hotel. Can you let me know?

From what I see in the periodical I shd. say modern poetry is a little better: i.e. it is more intelligible & even (sometimes) more musical, tho' often at the cost of being insipid. I await your Infernal poem with interest.¹⁹⁵

Do come. By the way, we shall of course be delighted to meet Hesketh *filis* if he cares to join the party.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
21/6/55

Dear Mary Willis—

Thanks for the cutting. It does seem rum to be afraid of the Confessional and then send off your whole story to be printed in a newspaper! (You don't think some of these letters are really written in the editor's office: a pious fraud for instructional purposes?) I'm sorry about your two jealous colleagues. I suppose the only way with thorns in the flesh (until one can get them out) is not to press on the place where they are embedded: i.e. to stop one's thoughts (firmly but gently: no good snapping

at oneself, it only increases the fuss—read St. François de Sales’ chapter on Meekness towards oneself)¹⁹⁶ whenever one finds them moving towards the unpleasant people.

I’m so glad J. and J. are coming. I’m learning so much, not only from your letters, about domestic tyrannies in the States, that I wonder how you have the face to keep a statue of Liberty staring out over New York harbour. Or is the point that she looks seaward and turns her back on America? Or is there a subtle connection between public democracy and domestic despotism. You know what Dr Johnson said about Milton—‘He thought woman made only for obedience and man only for rebellion.’¹⁹⁷

The pen doesn’t lure me on as the typewriter, you say, lures you! So I must stop. All good wishes.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
23/6/55

Dear Gibb

Time for a late correction to *S by J*? In cap 2, verso of its first page, I think, did I correct ‘*steels* over me’ to *steals*? And I’m haunted by one other wh. I can’t now place. Your quickest way of getting it wd. be to write to Mrs. Gresham, 14 Belsize Park, N.W.3, and ask her to send you her copy of the proofs. All her other corrections have already been made, or rejected. The one I want is where the page is turned down, 2/3 of the way through the book. Or she can tell you which I mean.¹⁹⁸

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
25/6/55

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

Hurrah for the Tycoon! A very good opening sentence; objective, succinct, idiomatic.¹⁹⁹ Delightfully free from the mannerisms of Henry James or the over-emphasis of Whitman. How carefully you must have guarded him from bad influences!

I'm all for a planet without aches or pains or financial worries but I doubt if I'd care for one of pure intelligence.²⁰⁰ No senses (no relish of smells & tastes?), no affection, no Nonsense! I must have a little fooling. I want to tickle a cat's ears and sometimes have a slanging match with an impertinent squirrel. By the way, I hope the reference to aches, pains, and financial worries does not mean you are suffering from all three (or both, for there are only two here).

My brother, who sends warmest greetings, is very much better: indeed—if the English language had any way of saying it—much more better than any of us had dared hope he wd. be in the time. I said to the Doctor 'There are more things in heaven & earth than are dreamed of in your science,'²⁰¹ and he (he's a fine Christian) most seriously agreed with me. Thank God. And there the language betrays one again: those two monosyllables have so often been used to mean almost nothing that when one wants them to bear their full and glorious sense they are spoiled (all loose usages of words are like inflation and lower the value of the currency).

My lecture has proved a best seller and I've no copies left: if I can get some new ones (it's out of print at present) you shall have one. You've got it nearly right: the only error being that instead of saying the Great Divide came between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance,²⁰² I said at great length and very emphatically that it *didn't*. But of course *not* is a small word and one can't get every fine shade just right.

We're having some summer at last, after the poorest attempt at spring I ever remember.

We always enjoy your letters & you are much in our thoughts. All blessings.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
27/6/55

My dear George

Yes, hurrah! Seek me in the Smoking Room at Magdalen (I assume your arrival any time after 12) and we'll concert plans. I was on the point of writing to you about some more ambitious scheme, but of that when you come.

Yours
Jack

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (BOD):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
28/6/55

Dear Mr. Kinter—

Thanks for your letter of the 20th. I sympathise greatly with the row you have to hoe as a teacher. Fancy doing Boethius in Chaucer's version (by no means one of his better works) so that it inevitably becomes a Middle English lesson; it is a book of the first importance and shd be studied for what it says—if a modern version is not available, the 16th. c. one printed in the Loeb edtn. wd. be far better than Chaucer.

For Dante you now have Dorothy Sayers' *Inferno, Purgatorio* (and will in due course have *Paradiso* as well) in the Penguin series:²⁰³ a good translation and very good notes & introduction.

I know no more Spanish than you. *Don Quixote* is, I suppose, the obvious choice, and there are plenty of translations. I suppose someone has done Calderon too.²⁰⁴ Didn't Scott Moncrieff do a version of the *Chanson de Roland*?²⁰⁵ Don't know any English version of Tristan: but you can get *The High History of the Holy Grail* trans. by Sebastian Evans.²⁰⁶

My own forthcoming book is a truncated & specialised autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*.

My selection from Spenser²⁰⁷ seems to have pleased no one! I thought the teacher wd. supply the story. But, as you say, the whole diet of snippets is bad, whoever does the mince. Any *one* decent author studied direct wd. be far better.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
30/6/55

Dear Mary Willis

In great haste. It wasn't a battle I had: only a bathe—my bad writing again. About prides, superiorities, and affronts there's no book better than Law's *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*²⁰⁸ where you'll find all of us pinned like butterflies on cards—the cards being little stories of typical characters in the most sober, astringent 18th century prose. Now for my train—I have to go to London for two nights.

Yours

Jack

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG): TS

161/55.

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
4th July 1955.

My Dear Fowler,

A thousand congratulations, it's a very long time since I heard any news that pleased me better.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

When bale is at highest
Boot is nighest!²⁰⁹

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
4/7/55

Dear Father Milward

I have read your essay with great interest.²¹⁰ It seems to me well done (of course one is a bad judge of works about oneself) and I hope it will be printed. I thought the best way of making my few comments was to write footnotes, pencilling the reference numbers on the text lightly so that they can be easily erased. I enclose a copy of *M.C.* I hope my notes haven't the air of one correcting a pupil's exercise!—but I'm an old don and professional pedant, so you must expect that sort of thing.

Oremus pro invicem, Yours

C. S. Lewis

Notes

(1.) I don't.²¹¹ It's the publishers who insist on putting in 'author of the S. Letters.' (On my own view *Perelandra* is worth 20 Screwtapes) (2.) *His own*.²¹² Only in places. 'Universalising' makes hay of the autobiographical elements. A straight autobiographical account (*Surprised by Joy*) will come out some time this year.

(3.) I had no concern with public morale at all. I was writing purely as an apologist.²¹³

(4.) Now, with important corrections, in I vol. (*Mere Christianity*)²¹⁴

(5.) Do you like the word *ideal*? Surely we assert, say, the Incarnation, not as *ideal* but as *fact*?²¹⁵

(6.) But also several stories for children.²¹⁶

(7.) Does *instinct* not let in dangerous, or at least questionable, ideas? Perhaps *insight*, or *perception* wd. be safer?²¹⁷

(8.) Not quite true of Bergson. Matter, for him, is in some degree antithetical to the *élan vital*.²¹⁸

(9.) I'm afraid I made him a philologist chiefly to render his rapid mastery of Old Solar more plausible. His friends in THS are a literary critic (Dimble), a Doctor (Miss I.) an unspecified scientist (MacPhee), a scholar's wife, a charwoman, and a bear! It is v. important that there are 2 untainted scientists in the book (MacPhee & Hingest), and many of the Belbury group are not scientists at all.²¹⁹

(10.) *Instinct* again dangerous.²²⁰ Neither you nor I believe this gift to be a merely biological phenomenon.

(11.) Hardly 'the appointed means' surely?²²¹ *A means* or *part of the means*? Otherwise we'd make *mere* suffering, by itself, redemptive: wh. I'm sure you wouldn't accept, any more than I.

(12.) Will this sound as if you thought His Divine Nature was not fully personal.²²² *Absit!*²²³

(13.) For *him* read *each*?²²⁴ Otherwise only the small H shows that *him* does not mean Christ: and it's not enough and might be overlooked **TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):**

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
7/7/55

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

It has seemed odd to me that we should make such a point of fasting [before] Communion. The R.C.'s, you know, have now so far modified their rule as to allow liquid food—coffee, cocoa etc. I practice the fast myself and habit has made it easy as regards food: not as regards water for I'm a thirsty creature. But I never thought it important: nor do I understand on what authority some priests impose it.

Yes, I think I understand the bit in which you describe that 'variety of religious experience'. I never had it—I mean in that sudden way: but I think all of us find that one result of the Faith is an increasing awareness that what we once called 'ourselves' is only like the skin on the saucepan of boiled milk or the earth-crust on the fiery earth-depths. I fancy that all the

things the Freudians say are true, but that many things they don't say are equally true about that depth.

My brother, who sends his duty, has made a wonderful recovery and after further treatment this summer we hope the trouble will be finished forever Don't let anyone bully you into avoiding sentences with a preposition at the end! It's an arbitrary rule that most great writers took no notice of. The Authorised Version and E. Burke thought a preposition a very good word to end with. So there!

I *did* think Genia meant she was with child, but no harm done. God bless her and all of you.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

Katharine Farrer had now read the manuscript of Till We Have Faces and sent Lewis her criticism of the novel.

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):

The Kilns

9/7/55

Dear Katharine—

Very many thanks for all the trouble you have taken. No crocodile who is worth his scales ever bit a trochilus. The criticism of the dialogue style of the two sisters is an eye-opener, and that defect, if you are right (and I suspect you are) wd. have been fatal. Every correction I made in those passages was leading me further into this schoolgirlish gush: I was lured on by the desire to avoid what Owen Barfield calls 'the expository demon', my native tendency to be too argumentative and make people talk like a Platonic dialogue. But clearly I have fallen into Scylla while shunning Charybdis.

About Psyche herself your *diagnosis* is wrong, but that only shows I have failed to get across what I intended. Pin-up girl, nothing! The attempt was precisely to show the biddable ideal daughter, Maia's little pet (the ideal object for a devouring maternal love, the live doll) turning into the sometimes terrifying, sometimes maternal, Goddess. I'll try to emend it, but not, I think, in the directions you suggest. I think she must have the same deep voice as Orual: for 'you also are Psyche'. The whole thing is v. tricky,

though. The numinous breaking through the childish mustn't be made just like the mature breaking thro' the juvenile: the traits of eternal *youth* have to come in.

How *did* you find the house last night? Few do: but I hope you'll now both find it again. Oh, by the way, I'm now sure it *was* Wed. you asked me to tea. In this faith I mean to live & die.

With very many thanks.

Yours sincerely

Jack

TO WARFIELD M. FIROR (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
11/7/55

My Dear Firor—

I'd be a queer man if I ever forgot you. We all remember you (not *only* for hams!) and speak of you often, not without hope that some fresh piece of knight errantry will bring you into Europe and that you will pass our way.

I read Buber's book²²⁵ and have talked to Gabriel Marcel who came (independently) to much the same position. I thought Buber had grasped one most important truth: the immense depth of the *Thou* experience (firstly, of God, and secondly, of my neighbour) and the danger of letting it get submerged by the shallower *He* or, still shallower, *They* experiences. But I thought that he ignored (1.) The Incarnation. He is a Jew. Our Lord, besides being the divine *Thou* is also a historical character, who must be considered also as *He*. Indeed this is the essence of our faith. 'Crucified under Pontius Pilate'²²⁶—date, & signature of a civil servant & all, crude, historical event.

(2.) The *Ye* or *You* (Plural) experience. One's two best friends, or one's parents, or one's wife and daughter, at times are v. distinctly neither *Thou* nor *They* but 'You two'.

What I had not yet thought about was your objection, that he ignores the *Me*. You are probably right. He might even have said that just as the *Thou* is deeper than the *Me*, so the *I* is deeper than the *Me*. For I believe self

consciousness to be full of deception and that the object I call *me* and think about (both in my moments of pride and in my moments of humility) is v. different from the *I* who think about it.

I'm a Professor at Magdalene Cambridge (*Eng.* not *Mass!*) now. Still no chance of an American trip. I never had a more crowded summer than this is proving. It was a great pleasure to hear from you again. My brother joins me in heartiest greetings.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO HUGH KILMER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
20/7/55

Dear Hugh,

Thanks for your letter of June 14th. I am delighted to hear that you approve of *The M's N*:²²⁷ it would have been awkward if the one dedicated to you had turned out to be just the one of the whole series that you couldn't stand!

I am thrilled to hear that your street runs North as well as South, because in this country *all* streets (and even country roads) run in two directions at the same time. They are trained to change the moment you turn around. What is even cleverer of them they turn their right side into their left side at the same time. I've never known it fail.

Love to all.

Yours ever

C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W): PC

The Kilns
Fri. [22 July 1955]

If, as I presume, you reach Oxford about noon, you will find me (and perhaps some others) in The Eagle & Child, St. Giles's. We shall be dining in College on Mon. night, so if (*absit omen*) you can't arrive till after 6. p.m. seek me there, in the Smoking Room J.

TO CHRISTIAN HARDIE (P):

The Kilns,
31/7/55

Dear Christian

I've been away for a few days or I'd have written before. Thank you very much for reading the MS.²²⁸ About your question: the idea of re-writing the old myth, with the palace invisible, has been in my mind ever since I was an undergraduate and it's always involved writing through the mouth of the elder sister. I tried it in all sorts of verse-forms in the days when I still supposed myself to be a poet. So, tho' the version you have read was v. quickly written, you might say I've been at work on Orual for 35 years. Of course in my pre-Christian days she was to be in the right and the gods in the wrong.

I must consider carefully what you (and one other critic) say about Part II—though whether I can much mend it now is doubtful.

With very many thanks.

Yours

Jack

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
31/7/55

Dear Dorothy—

I'm afraid you will have given up all expectation of my ever acknowledging the kind gift of your *Purgatory*—unless (as I hope) you have guessed the reason. I did not want to acknowledge it before I'd read it (for we both know the sort of present one does *that* for!) and I couldn't read it, or not as it deserved, for a long time.

Now at last I am able to say my say. I am really *delighted* with it. Your *Inferno* was good, but this is even better. One wd. say the same to Dante about the originals, no doubt; but then he set the pace, and who would have dared to hope that you could rise with him? I had wondered how the muscular, often rough & colloquial, manner which you need for Hell would serve you on the Mountain! Innocent and faithless that I was—and of course

all the time you knew that it wouldn't do and had new modulations in store. Forgive me for not realising how many more cards you were holding than I supposed. By gum, it makes one hungry for your *Paradiso*. It was an especial pleasure to see the metrical licenses which had been so 'boisteous' in the *Inferno* here used to a different, and finer, purpose: XXV, 52 sq. trips deliciously.

One thing (though it now hinders me from writing as precisely about the work as I shd. like) will, I believe, please you—and Dante too. I set out with the intention of judging it as a translation: but in a few cantos I'd forgotten all about that and was thinking only of Dante. And then, a few cantos later, I forgot all about Dante and thought only about purgatory. In a word, the double mechanism worked and therefore made no noise. It is a novel form of praise to say, when asked about your share in the performance, 'I didn't notice it.' But I think it's perhaps the highest one can give a translation *Bene olet ubi nihil olet*.²²⁹

The apparatus is, as we all expected, first-class; and, tho' in fact so tightly bound up & so full of meat, gives no *sense* of crowding or laboriousness. The note on XXXI 60 is a masterpiece.

Thank you enormously for it all. And on top of it I must also thank you for defending me against a nit-wit in *The Spectator*.²³⁰ I wasn't surprised at the excellence of your note (I'm a fairly easy author to comment on after Dante!) but v. and delightfully surprised that you shd. have read these opuscles at all. I wouldn't have presumed...

I'm deep in Montaigne (for lecture purposes) at present. I hope you love him! Love—I didn't say approve or esteem.

With deep congratulations—*grante translateuse*.²³¹

Yours

Jack

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
5/8/55

Dear Ruth

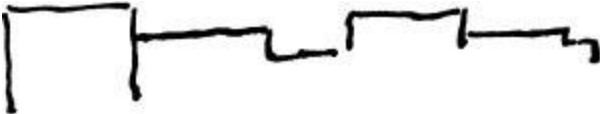
George and I were both very disappointed but the one miss out of a thousand days that wd. have been hits certainly suggests Providence Herself, moving in a more than usually mysterious way. But K.²³² was very kind to us.

I had never seen the Lady (in breeches, and trousers) and take her to be both a kinder and a sillier type than Miss Hardcastle.²³³

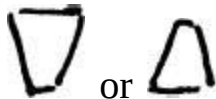
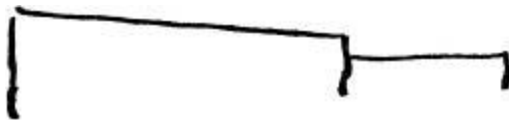
The only female trousers I can't bear are the modern American like this





—a truncated triangle being always a mean shape, and none the better for being inverted. Besides, the real *design* of the human leg consists of theme & theme repeated in minor key with slight variation (Buttock, upper leg, & recess at back of knee: then (minor key) calf, recess at back of heel. Breeches (with putters or the like on lower leg) are a permissible hyperbole of it: trousers simply obliterate it (wh. is no offence): the American kind substitutes an alien & inferior designs. As if you had a building like this



and rebuilt it like this



The  or  shape is indeed so ugly that even in a drawing of a straight road in perspective it offends one.

'Eggs of Ambivalence' is a good title for a modern book.²³⁴ Do write it under a pseudonym & have them all on.

Of course the reason I'm not a popper is that (dinosaur-like) I'm a legged, not a wheeled, beast.

You may be sure that when next George and his car are here, them experiment will be repeated. You know what Earle says of the Patient Man: 'He trieth the sea after many shipwrecks and beateth still at that door which he never found opened.'²³⁵ How they cd. write in the XVIIth. century. Loving duty to you both.

Yours
Jack

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
5/8/55

Dear Dorothy—

MacNeice and co.²³⁶ are doing to *terza rima*²³⁷ much what Alamanni²³⁸ did and Wyatt²³⁹ imitated, making it a metre *sermoni propior*²⁴⁰ and suitable for translating Horace's hexameters.²⁴¹ I don't remember your offending much in that way in the *Inferno*. Of course you and everyone else marches to certain death in translating the *Paradiso*: the best you can hope is to die swan-like.

In trying to give pupils an idea of D's final style I've often said 'You must imagine something wh. is at the v. same moment as massive as Milton and as airy as Shelley.' But even then it is better than either, beats each at his own game. And even then (again) I still haven't got the grave processional movement—that devout *canzone*-ish, demure stateliness,—nor the factual, first-person science-fiction narrative quality—oh, I wouldn't be in your shoes for anything! Your love is 'begotten of despair Upon Impossibilitie.'²⁴²

'Sir,' said Johnson, 'Goldsmith wd. no more have asked me to write such a letter from him than to feed him with a spoon or do anything else that argued his imbecility.'²⁴³ I shd. have said the same about your suggesting a preface by me, if you hadn't done it.²⁴⁴ Everybody knows I know less about D. than you do: and all my previous prefaces have been acts of giving a hand to young, unknown authors. You might as well put yourself in an all-piece woollen suit, pigtail, & 'gnome' cap & carry a doll as appear prefaced by me. Preface, indeed! I have of course written little papers on D. for the Dante Society, but all on particulars. They'd be no good.

The main trouble about Pauline B. is not her femininity but her total ignorance of animal anatomy.²⁴⁵ In the v. last book she has at last learned

how to draw a horse. I have always had serious reservations about her (this is *sub sigillo*).²⁴⁶ But she had merits (her botanical forms are lovely), she needed the work (old mother to support, I think), and worst of all she is such a timid creature, so 'easily put down' that criticism cd. only be hinted, & approval had, on a second shot, to be feigned. At any *real* reprimand she'd have thrown up the job; not in a huff but in sheer, downright, unresenting, pusillanimous dejection. She is quite a good artist on a certain formal-fantastic level (did Tolkien's *Farmer Giles* far better than my books) but has no interest in matter-how boats are rowed, or bows shot with, or feet planted, or fists clenched. Arabesque is really her vocation. Of course she is effeminate too. Don't like either the ultra feminine or the ultra masculine myself. I prefer *people*.

Isn't there a failure of rhyme just like your *away* in Shakespeare's sonnets somewhere, and clearly with the same history?

Yours
Jack

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
61/8/55

Dear Katharine

Here's the MS.²⁴⁷ I have not quite finished but since *my* criticisms on a detective plot are useless, I think it wd. be better in your hands at once. These are my reactions.

1. Manner (including, and especially, many *gnomai* & observations) is attractive and shows an advance. The opening is excellent: you are almost the Wordsworth of the suburban street.

2. Characterisation sometimes v. good. The two characters I wanted to see more of were the hound & Clandon. The peasant who reports about the drowned man is a lively little sketch. *But* (a) I can't believe that an elderly & experienced *fille de joie*²⁴⁸ wd. be taken in for a moment by an approach like that of Auguste.²⁴⁹ As well expect a professional conjurer to be deceived by a Mme. Blavatsky.²⁵⁰ Her *total* character is convincing in its

misery & futility (too painful for a tekky!) but surely is much more that of a retired & ‘respectable’ governess? (b.) I can’t make *any* character out of Jeannette. (Nor, *yet*, of Nigel, but perhaps that will all be cleared up in the *dénouement*).

3. As I warned you I’m no good on the specifically detective side. In so far as I never spot the criminal I might be regarded as the reader every tekky-writer prays for: but then I never really follow the plot either. Hence my fear that your plot is too complex is not, probably, worthy of much attention. Yet—for what it’s worth— 4. I do feel a tension between your real interests and powers and the *genre* you are writing. The comic & the pitiable seems to be what you have at command, & the puzzle element appears almost as an interruption. But, remember, it may be *my* bias wh. makes me think so.

‘Too full for sound or foam’ used (most happily) about the Hound, is repeated (less happily) about someone else later.

Sorry to be so horrid.

Yours

Jack

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W): TS

Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
August 9, 1955

Dear Dorothy,

No, I don’t think there’s any point in MacNeice’s handling of the metre.²⁵¹ We have blank verse to hand, which I suppose wouldn’t have done for Alamanni (too much associated with the classical epic of Trissino?)²⁵²

I see what you mean by calling P. B.’s Aslan being blasphemous.²⁵³ But if preposterous delineations of a certain Person incur that charge, ‘what hole in hell is hot enough to hold’²⁵⁴ many other religious artists?

Yours,

Jack

P. S. Joy Gresham, who is in the unhappy position of having borrowed my house and then finding that a change in my plans commits her to having me as a guest, sends her regards. She did all this typing.

P.P.S. by J.G.—I wouldn't precisely call it an unhappy position, would you?

A few days later Joy Gresham moved with her sons to Oxford and rented a house at 10 Old High Street, a mile or so from The Kilns.

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
August 9, 1955

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

Thank you for yours of the 5th. My brother is away in Scotland, and I am forwarding your letter to him.

I am delighted to hear that the Tycoon is now talking as much as he should; but I'm sure it is nothing like Basic English.

I couldn't agree with you more about children brought up in the way you describe. They won't enjoy the expensive luxuries any more than cheaper things (who ever heard of a child whose costliest toys were its favourites, except by accident?) and yet they would soon learn to miss them if they were withdrawn.

Of course we hope very much that you will sell your house to your satisfaction.²⁵⁵

We are having it cooler now after what ranks by English standards as a heat wave.

With all good wishes

Yours as always,

C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

The Kilns
16/8/55

Thank you for your letter. I await the *scholia* with interest. I agree about *gravitas* if not gravity—for both sexes. Even Caroline breeches are frivolous to the toga!

J

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
18/8/55

My dear Arthur

I arrive at Larne on the morning of Friday Sept 2nd and proceed at once to Crawfordsburn. My berth is booked for sailing from Belfast to Liverpool on the night of Tuesday Sept. 20th. Apparently I must have told you wrong, or made such a muddle that no one cd. understand me. I'm really very sorry. If the extra night's booking at Rathmullan can't be cancelled without expense, I will of course, in common fairness pay your share as well as my own. I am looking forward to our meeting v. much.

A nice, dull man from Eire (more W's friend than mine)²⁵⁶ is to spend the night of Tue.²⁵⁷ Sept. 2nd at the Inn C'Burn; so we can't do anything that evening. W. is not coming at all this year.

Sometime after Sept 15 a copy of my autobiography will arrive for you. (You can always sell it or give it as a Christmas present, you know!) Yours

Jack

TO AUDREY CLEOBURY (BOD): TS

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
August 20, 1955

Dear Miss Cleobury, Thank you for your kind and encouraging letter. I am so glad to find that you and your pupils enjoy the Narnian books.

With all good wishes, Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

Lewis was on holiday in Ireland with Arthur Greeves from about 2 to 13 September. While there he told Greeves of a problem he was facing. For reasons unknown, the Home Office had refused Joy Gresham permission to live and work in England. As she was keen to stay—and as Lewis wanted her to stay—one solution seemed to be a register office marriage which would provide Joy and her sons with British nationality. Lewis made it clear that he did not regard this as a true marriage.

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD): TS

83/55

The Kilns, Kiln Lane, Headington Quarry, Oxford.

14th September 1955

Dear Teensie,

(Since this is what you call yourself), heartiest congratulations on your First Prize; and how lucky you have been to have such a season of Opera. It must have been lovely. I don't understand your weather; does it get *cooler* in America when August comes? With us—when we have a summer, which is about once every seven years—it gets *hotter* in August.

I'm very sorry indeed to hear about your father's ill-health, but delighted to know that he has recovered; and please tell him so.

I'm just back from the mountains of Donegal, which are very beautiful, and where I had some grand walks and bathes.

With love,

yours,

C. S. Lewis²⁵⁸

TO WAYNE SHUMAKER (W):²⁵⁹ TS

186/55.

The Kilns, Kiln Lane, Headington Quarry, Oxford.
14th September 1955.

Dear Mr. Shumaker, Many thanks for your kindness in sending me the article which I have read with great interest.

With all best wishes, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE LISTENER*:²⁶⁰

Cambridge.

Sir:—

Mr. St. John Ervine of course knew W. B. Yeats far better than I, who met him only twice. But on the strength of even two meetings²⁶¹ I feel obliged to dissent from Mr. Ervine's view that Yeats had no humour.²⁶² I count him one of the funniest *raconteurs* I have ever heard; and in argument (his opponent was no 'gumph', but Fr Martindale)²⁶³ he had a wonderful—specially Irish—gift of combining his perfectly serious belief in magic with a mischievous audacity. An Englishman never knew where to have him; and the conclusion of the debate ('Father Martindale, ye are a sceptic') was excruciating.

Yours, etc.,
C. S. Lewis

Surprised by Joy: *The Shape of My Early Life* was published by Geoffrey Bles of London on 19 September 1955.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

Kilns etc.
Sept 22/55

Have just got back from Ireland & found yours of 8th awaiting me. Presumably the questions have now settled themselves?

C. S. Lewis

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
Sept 22/55.

Dear Fr. Milward—

I have only just got your letter of Aug 7th. By the way, I don't now remember your Viva at all, but I expect that particular question was of no such importance as you suppose in determining your class.

What Malory meant, I have no idea. I doubt if he had any clear intention. To use an image I have used before, I think his work is like one of our old English cathedrals to which many generations have contributed in many different styles, so that the total effect was foreseen by no-one and must be regarded as something midway between a work of art and a work of nature.²⁶⁴ I therefore give up asking what M. meant: we can ask only what his book in fact *means*. And to me it means primarily neither the Grail story nor the Lancelot story but precisely the tension and interlocking between the two.

I know v. little about the Albigensians (except that Denis de Rougemont talks manifest nonsense!).²⁶⁵ If I undertook a study of the Grail, I shd begin by making up (you perhaps know it already) the history—with a v. exact chronology—of the doctrine of Transubstantiation and of contemporary controversies and reactions. I suspect the story is closely connected with these.

It is certainly a remarkable fact (I hadn't noticed it before) that the post-medieval interest in Arthur has been almost exclusively Protestant. But one must beware of seeking causes too deep. Might it not be simply that the only nation wh. cd. regard Arthur as a *national* hero was a Protestant nation.

No, I never read St Ignatius.²⁶⁶ I must do so one of these days.

This is a short, dry letter, but not thro' lack of interest: I have nearly three weeks' mail to get through, having returned from Ireland today.

For yr. prayers, many thanks: you continue to have mine.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford.
Sept 22/55

Dear McCallum

I enclose photo.²⁶⁷ I think I can trust your people to cope with the proofs²⁶⁸—they can hardly be such bad proof-readers as I am myself. Watch the spelling: mine is atrocious. Addenda to the list of works: At the end of the *For Children* section: *The Magician's Nephew*

Separate section headed *Fiction: Out of the Silent Planet*

Perelandra

That Hideous Strength

Cupid & Psyche²⁶⁹ has been (provisionally) finished. Everyone says it's my best book.

All the best.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
25/9/55

Dear Arthur

I enclose cheque and hope you are now recovering from the fatigues of our journey. I arrived home with a 100 horse-power cold to find an empty house, W. having been drunk for a fortnight and now in his old nursing home. But it's a lovely autumn morning to day. Blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO GILBERT MURRAY (W):[270](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
26/9/55

Dear Professor Murray— Yes, opposite sides of the fence, but in your middle and my early life the country on both sides had something in common which distinguished it from the country on both sides now. Hence the agnosticism of that age²⁷¹ is in some ways more congenial to me than the Christianity of this, and you have changed in my mind only from *dolce maestro* to *dolce nemico*.²⁷²

I am particularly glad to have *Are our Pearls Real?*²⁷³ for I still have *Religio Grammatici*²⁷⁴ (or think I have. It is the little books, not the big, that are great evils, for they are invisible on a shelf and won't stand up and a man can never find them). This is a lovely lecture and I have enjoyed it very much. You certainly say nothing more than is just: perhaps less.

I wish you might feel inclined to give (and then print) a course of lectures on modern translations of the classics. For these are really a dark conspiracy, a concerted attempt (by men of whom some must know better) to convince the modern barbarian that the poetry of the past was, in its own day, just as mean, colloquial, and ugly as our own. C. Day Lewis really believes that 'invisibility was reduced to almost nil' is the modern equivalent of the manner of the *Aeneid*!²⁷⁵ Is Robt. Graves even honest when he translated Apuleius without a word in his text or preface to suggest that A. used anything but the current speech of his own day?²⁷⁶ It is time that someone whose qualifications can't be disputed stomped once for all on the increasingly popular lie that Homer wrote the language of the streets. Thanks to this lie, the present spate of translations is really cutting us from the civilised past more than any neglect could do; far better leave the ancients alone than to disguise them as sponsors for the fatal error wh. (I suppose) began with the Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*.²⁷⁷ Wd. this theme attract you? You cd. make a delightful short book out of it. And perhaps you ought to—*ne quid detrimenti*.²⁷⁸ With v. many thanks.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN GILFEDDER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford.
27/9/55

Dear Gilfedder—

Thanks for your letter of the 10th. It arrived in a curious condition, the first and last line of every page having been somehow cut off. This made it rather difficult to follow exactly what you are saying! I think there is both an Australian and an English *XXth Century*, quite unconnected, and presume that you are referring to the Australian one. I subscribe to neither and have not (to my recollection) seen an article in either on C.W.

I must read the *Taliessin* cycle again. I hope I shall still put it easily top of the only three modern long poems that I admire. The other two are Edith Sitwell's *Sleeping Beauty*²⁷⁹ and W. Penn Warren's (an American) *Brother to Dragons*. The Sitwell is v. fantastic and musical, the Warren grim and realistic. I agree that the *Listener* is a nasty bit of work. The best intentioned weekly now (but no v. brilliant talents write for it regularly) is *Time and Tide*.

I hope you are well and thriving—you say v. little about yourself. Remember me to your wife.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO CARL HENRY (W): [280](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
28/9/55

Dear Doctor Henry

Thank you for your letter of Sept 12th. I wish your project heartily well but can't write you articles. My thought and talent (such as they are) now flow in different, though I think not less Christian, channels, and I do not think I am at all likely to write more *directly* theological pieces. The last work of that sort which I attempted had to be abandoned.²⁸¹ If I am now good for anything it is for catching the reader unawares—thro' fiction and symbol. I have done what I could in the way of frontal attacks, but I now feel quite sure those days are over.

With many thanks.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
29/9/55

Your Marathoniad²⁸² has arrived and I much look forward to reading it as soon as I've finished the huge American novel which arrived before it. You have chosen a capital subject; and better too little archaeology than too much.

Have you read Golding's *The Inheritors* about Neanderthal Man?²⁸³ A good story but in a sense *too* well written—the style too packed with minor felicities. So glad you liked *S by J*.

C.S.L.

I'd have re-written this after spilling the ink, only it's my last P.C.!

TO JANET WISE (P):²⁸⁴

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
5/10/55

Dear Mrs. Wise

I am v. ill acquainted with modern theological literature, having seldom found it helpful. One book did a great deal for me: G. K. Chesterton's *The Everlasting Man*. But I can't give you such a list as you want. A pious and sensible man, who is necessarily knowing about books (Mr. Rogers, Bookseller, Newcastle-on-Tyne) wd. probably be able to advise.

My own position is not Fundamentalist, if Fundamentalism means accepting as a point of faith at the outset the proposition 'Every statement in the Bible is completely true in the literal, historical sense.' That wd. break down at once on the parables. All the same commonsense and general understanding of literary kinds wh. wd. forbid anyone to take the parables as historical statements, carried a v. little further, wd. force us to distinguish between (1.) Books like *Acts* or the account of David's reign,²⁸⁵ wh. are everywhere dovetailed into a known history, geography, & genealogies (2.)

Books like *Esther*, or *Jonah* or *Job* which deal with otherwise unknown characters living in unspecified periods, & pretty well *proclaim* themselves to be sacred fiction.

Such distinctions are not new. Calvin left the historicity of *Job* an open question²⁸⁶ and, from earlier, St Jerome said that the whole Mosaic account of creation was done ‘after the method of a popular poet’. Of course I believe the composition, presentation, & selection for inclusion in the Bible, of all the books to have been guided by the Holy Ghost. But I think He meant us to have sacred myth & sacred fiction as well as sacred history.

Mind you, I never think a story unhistorical *because* it is miraculous. I accept miracles. It’s almost the manner that distinguishes the fictions from the histories. Compare the ‘Once upon a time’ opening of *Job* with the accounts of David, St. Paul, or Our Lord Himself. The basis of our Faith is not the Bible taken by itself but the agreed affirmation of all Christendom: to wh. we owe the Bible itself.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.

5/10/55

Dear Mary Willis

I have just got your letter of Oct. 1st. I don't know quite what has happened, and it is possible a letter may have gone astray. I didn't think I was so far behindhand. (You have, you know, recently stepped up the pace of the correspondence! I can't play at that tempo, you know). I thought I had sent you a copy of my new book, *Surprised by Joy*. But that can be remedied when I'm back in Oxford this week end. I was there most of the vacation and then for a fortnight or so in Ireland:—Donegal, which is a most heavenly place. I found my brother ill when I got home and so lacked his usual secretarial help, so that for a while life seemed to consist almost entirely of letter writing—I wonder how many people besides you I have failed to answer! I am now, as you see, back in Cambridge, where the marvellous summer (I remember only one other so hot & dry in my life) is still going on, or only turning deliciously into still, misty, voluptuous autumn.

I am sorry you tell me so little about yourself in yr. letter, for even when I don't write I pray. Your oppressed daughter & granddaughter are much in my mind. You have no idea how many instances of domestic nastiness come before me in my mail: how deceptive the smooth surface of life is! The only 'ordinary' homes seem to be the ones we don't know much about, just as the only blue mountains are those 10 miles away. And now, I really *must* tackle the remaining letters. With all good wishes.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.

7/10/55

My dear George

When are you coming to spend the night here (these university contacts being so necessary to a man of your profession)? Suggest Mon. Nov. 14—run up to Oxford in morning, meet at B & B, & travel on here together in afternoon. The date is a mere shot at a venture: any other weekday (preferably a Monday) wd. do as well. Love to both.

Yours

Jack

I have a v. gracious letter from the HM.²⁸⁷

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

As from Magdalene College, Cambridge
9/10/55

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen— I have just got your letter of the 3rd. The news wh. it contained came like a thunderbolt—especially as the letter began (and it was rather wonderful that it did begin) on such a trivial subject as my book. And if that first sentence flattered my egoism, imagine how I was rebuked when I came to the next, and was suddenly brought up against the real great issues.

It is difficult to write because you must know by now what I do not yet know. I can't tell whether I am writing to one who is giving thanks for an escape (oh how I hope you are in that position) or to one who is right up against the Cross. Thank heaven it is *His* Cross and not merely ours. I was most struck by your saying 'It doesn't seem too bad: for *me*, that is.' So I am sure you are being supported. (What must such a situation be to those, who are the majority, who have no faith, who have never thought of death, and to whom all affliction is a mere meaningless, monstrous interruption of a worldly happiness to which they feel they have a *right*?).

God bless and keep you: and your husband too. You will indeed, indeed, be in my prayers. I once had a bad scare about cancer myself, so *that* part I can, I think, imagine.²⁸⁸ But of course it is now, for you, either better or worse than a scare. If the reality is worse. At any rate it must be different. (The Litany distinguishes 'thine agony & bloody sweat' from 'Thy cross & passion', the fear from the reality).²⁸⁹ You know how I shall await your next letter.

Yours always
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

As from Magdalene, Cambridge
9/10/55

Dear Mary Willis

I've just got your letter from the 3rd and am glad to find that the book has arrived: not least because it saves me doing one of the things which (in a small way) I dislike most in the world: putting up a Parcel. Thanks also for the almost scandalously munificent gift of stamps. But (seriously) never do it again. Stamps are money, and you have none to spare.

I envy your friends their 12 acre tract of woodland but shd. loathe a house that is nearly all glass. Not (I think) because I'm v. fond of throwing stones, but I like to feel in-doors when I'm in. The main charm of the view from a room is the fact that it is framed in, and unified by, the window. And I hate indoor sunlight. It makes shadows across the page of your book and turns the print green. All really open-air people (sailors, & farm labourers) like thick walls, small windows, and those *shut!* I couldn't agree with you more about Games: but—dare I confess it?—I feel just the same about furs. I like them *on* the beasts of course.

I am sorry the trials come so thick & fast, but glad you shd. be so supported by Our dear Lord. All blessings.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO BARBARA REYNOLDS (W):[290](#)

Magdalene College, Cambridge.

13/10/55

Dear Dr. Reynolds

The guest, I understand, is there merely to join in the conversation and perhaps to be interrogated, not to 'read a paper' or even 'open a discussion'![291](#) On that understanding, I shd. very much like to come: on Wed. Oct[292](#) 2. And many thanks.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

During the Michaelmas Term of 1955–6 Lewis lectured twice weekly on ‘Some Major Texts: Latin and Continental Vernacular’. In one lecture, entitled ‘Dante’s Statius’, he examined Dante’s reasons for placing the Latin poet Statius (c. AD 40–c. 96) in Purgatory. Besides the legend that Statius was a Christian, Lewis thought Dante would have found in Statius’s Thebaid, the story of the quarrel between the sons of Oedipus, ‘an attitude to the sexual life which he would not easily have found in any other ancient text’.²⁹³ Lewis supported this with two passages from the Thebaid, Book II (lines 232–4, 255–6), quoted in the letter that follows. He went on to say,

It may be that the resemblance between Statius and some medieval moralists at this point is a mere accident. He may be thinking of some purely ritual obligation to Diana and Pallas, and culpa and excusatio may carry no meaning which we should recognise as ethical. But Dante would inevitably have read his words in a different spirit. Statius would seem to him to have written as a medieval moral theologian of the more rigorous type.²⁹⁴

In the audience was Nan Dunbar, a Research Fellow and College Lecturer in Classics at Girton College, Cambridge. Dunbar, a native of Glasgow, might have stepped right out of the pages of Sir Walter Scott. She fired off a letter to tell Lewis that he was wrong, that maidens of the ancient world were expected to behave themselves as well as Christian ones. Thus began a lively battle between Lewis and the young classical scholar who became, not only a friend, but something of a daughter.²⁹⁵

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):²⁹⁶

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
14/10/55

Dear Miss Dunbar

Thank you for all the kind things you say. In II 230 sq.,²⁹⁷ of course *culpae* was for me the real point (*pudor*, I agree, is common form). I don't think *Met* 478²⁹⁸ supports you. *Velut crimen exosa*²⁹⁹ treats as a peculiar idea of Daphne's what Statius seems to imply as the true view. I agree that *culpa* is v. commonly a 'frailty' a 'slip' (especially in love); v. much like *σφάλλοι Κύπρις* (Eur *Andr* 223).³⁰⁰*σφάλλοι Κύπρις* Can you, though, find it used simply of a bridal night with approval of parents and all correct? Is it not generally used either of illicit loves or of infidelity to the precious lover or spouse? Dido, for all I can see, feels her nascent passion for Aeneas as a *culpa* because she thinks it an infidelity. She has already told us (*si mihi non...fefellit*. 15 sq.)³⁰¹ that she had made a resolve to remain a faithful widow. And *culpam* in IV 172³⁰² surely makes for my view rather than yours.

As for 255,³⁰³ I think I'm weaker here. Perhaps you can tell me more. One has heard of girls devoted, in a man-like way, to Artemis; was there a similar cult of Pallas?³⁰⁴

Notice also VIII 625,³⁰⁵ Ismene's extreme horror at herself for dreaming of her *fiancé*, tho', heaven knows, a *less* erotic dream cd. hardly be imagined; also (645) the *saevus pudor*³⁰⁶ she displays to him on his deathbed.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

Magdalene College, Cambridge
16/10/55

Dear Joan

Thanks for your letter of the 3rd. In this country we hardly ever have any snow worth talking about till January, or later. Once we had it at Easter after all the trees had their spring leaves on. So the snow could lie on the trees far heavier than if they had been bare, and there was great destruction in the way of broken branches.

We had our first frost last night—this morning the lawns are all grey, with a pale, bright sunshine on them: wonderfully beautiful. And somehow *exciting*. The first beginning of the winter always excites me: it makes me want adventures. I expect our autumn has gentler colours than your fall and it goes far slower. The trees, especially beeches, keep their leaves for weeks & weeks after they have begun to change colour, turning from yellow to gold & from gold to flame-colour.

I never knew a guinea-pig that took any notice of humans (they take plenty of one another). Of those small animals I think Hamsters are the most amusing—and, to tell you the truth, I'm still fond of mice. But the guinea pigs go well with your learning German. If they talked, I'm sure that is the language they'd speak.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):[307](#)

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
17/10/55

Dear Miss Dunbar

II 233. *Culpa* wd. not be merely an exaggeration of the *loc. com*³⁰⁸ about bridal coyness, but a move in a new direction.

II. Alright. *Excusare*³⁰⁹ may mean merely ‘to excuse to Pallas’. It needn’t. Choice between your view & mine must depend on what we think of the other passages.

VIII. 622 sq. Of course we all agree that Ismene’s honour was (reasonably) due to the ill-omened content of the dream. But *pudet heu*³¹⁰ is not an expression of horror at impending certainty. And now we differ on translating wh. is rash of me, for you’re a real classic and it’s years since I was.

a. I took *tractarem sensu*³¹¹ to mean ‘should be dealing with’ (in thought or emotion). For the senses I give to *tractare* and *sensus* are Lewis & Short.³¹² Can you convince me that *tractare sensu* cd. mean ‘to experience a fact’?

b. Even if they cd., what sense does it make for I. to say ‘She couldn’t be getting married even if there’d been no war’? That is surely the language of a modern girl who can choose for herself. I. wd. get married when she was told, wouldn’t she?

c. *Conubia*. Perhaps I’ve made a howler here. I took it to mean (meton.) the same as *sponsum* in the following line.³¹³ (cf λέχεια, Eur. *Electra*, 481.³¹⁴ Murray’s translation.) d. *Unde*.³¹⁵ I think your view & mine both possible.

Lavinia doesn’t help, does she?³¹⁶ The question is not whether shrinking brides are a *loc.com* (wh. I fully admit) but whether the Statius passages can, with security, be treated as simply instances of that *Loc. com*. Nor, of course, is the question whether the ancients thought dreams prophetic. You can’t have thought & denied that!

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MOIRA SAYER (W):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
18/10/55

Dear Moira

Stick a pin into George & make him answer letters! They say it's wonderful what the influence of a good woman can do. Set Schwanda on to claw him. In other words, did he get my letter & is he coming here? I hope you keep well and are progressing with the *Isle of the Undead*.

Yours ever

Jack

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
19/10/55

Dear George

Telepathy? If I reckon the times aright, Moira and Schwanda must have begun their operations before my letter arrived. I'm afraid it must be Nov 14 (28th no good). I'll look for you on the 14th at B&B from 11 onward.

All loves,

Jack

TO ALAN E. BOUCHER (BBC):[317](#)

Magdalene College, Cambridge.

19/10/55

Dear Mr. Boucher

I am afraid I have nothing I want to say at present on the subject you mention. But thank you for the offer.

With regards.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
19/10/55

Dear Evans—

I return the article which interested me very much, for I have lately written a paper on the same subject for an undergraduate society.³¹⁸ I can't send it, for it exists only in my own, almost illegible, MS. You seem to have dealt with the subject very well, and corrected some current errors.

I will certainly let you have a word about *Olympic Runner* when I have got round to reading it. You have no idea how little space for recreational reading there is in my life, and how long books have to stand in the *queue*.

All the best, and thanks
Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):³¹⁹

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
20/10/55

Dear Miss Dunbar

On Bk II, I stick to my guns about *culpa*³²⁰ and think your view ‘not proven’ about *excusare*.

I think my rendering of *tractarem sensu*³²¹ makes perfectly good sense. Even if her marriage had not been postponed because of the war, she’s not the sort of girl who wd. ever allow her mind to dwell on such things. Compare *Od.* VI.66³²² where Nausikaa, less of a prude and living in ‘deep peace’, has been thinking of marriage but αἶδετο . . . ἐξονομήναι.³²³

I don’t think that on my view (i.e. that *conubia* = *sponsum*) the repetition of *vidi* and *sopor attulit* is at all ‘intolerable’. Such repetitions, in varied words, of what is logically the same proposition are surely in the manner of Latin poetry? Cf *Aen* III. 1–3³²⁴ tell me 4 times that Troy had fallen? (Of course V’s variations are richer and do more work than Statius’. He’s a better poet). Not only Latin poetry either. The Psalms, and Anglo-Saxon poetry, are full of it. Cf also the *Cherry Tree Carol* where it is simpler and more unblushing—‘Joseph was an old man, and an old man was he.’

It’s sporting of you to give me Virgil’s *conjugium* = *conjugem* wh. seems to me just the parallel I wanted for my sense of *conubia*.

*Attulit*³²⁵ of course on any view implies presence in the same room. People don’t need to be in bed together for fire, or anything else, to fall between them: nor for a mother-in-law to rush in saying ‘give me back my boy’. The text of course is consistent with your interpretation—as it wd. be consistent with their wrestling, having tea together, or playing chess. But your certitude that they were in *actu veneris*³²⁶ seems to me, not perverse, but gratuitous. Unless you mean, ‘they must have been, to explain *pudet*’. But wd. that not be within measurable distance of a *petitio*?³²⁷

It may be, of course, that my view of the text is influenced by having read it so much in sort of pluperfect-subjunctive mood ‘how it wd. have appeared to a medieval reader’. I wonder wd. you come so far in my direction as to admit that it is a curious chance which has brought so many passages that invite such reading (on your view, such a mis-reading) together in one poem?

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
24/10/55

Dear Miss Dunbar

Honestly, till you raised the question, it had never occurred to me that *conubia* might mean anything but *sponsum*, i.e. even if I was quite wrong, I wasn't trying to twist anything. It seemed to me, I'm afraid, so like the way Latin poets talk, I was genuinely surprised when I found there weren't dozens of parallels in L&S.³²⁸

I agree of course words are to be interpreted by—or rather, their meanings are discovered by—their contexts. The *onus* then rests on me, and I agree I haven't proved my case. I fear the error goes deep: my whole general feeling as to what Latin is like must have been at fault. The same general feeling is strongly opposed to *conubia vidi* = I dreamed I was married. But one can't bring forward a general feeling in a debate. I can't prove my interpretation. Privately, I doubt if I can believe yours: but *vicisti*.³²⁹

The 'unhappy chance' wh. led me from the Middle Ages to Statius was of course determined by the fact that so many medieval poets were steeped in Statius—the same perversion that sometimes makes readers of Virgil look into Homer!

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO LAURENCE KRIEG (P):[330](#)

Magdalene College, Cambridge
24/10/55

My dear Laurence—

I was very glad to get a letter from your Mother to-day because now I can answer one you wrote me a long time ago. The reason I could not answer you before was that the corner of your letter got wet before it reached me and the address was all blotted out so that I could not read it: so I did not know where to send my answer to.

Now: I don't dislike Panthers at all, I think they are one of the loveliest animals there are. I don't remember that I have put any *bad* panthers in the books (there are some good ones fighting against Rabadash in *The Silver Chair*,[331](#) aren't there?) and even if I had that wouldn't mean that I thought all Panthers bad, any more than I think all men bad because of Uncle Andrew, or all boys bad because Edmund was once a traitor.

I'm sorry my handwriting is so hard: it was very nice until about 10 years ago, but now I have rheumatism in my wrist. Please thank your Mother for her nice letter: I enjoyed it very much. And now goodbye. Don't forget sometimes to put in a word for me when you say your prayers, and I'll do the same for you.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.

26/10/55

Dear Mary Willis

I have yr. letter of Oct. 21, and do feel the deepest sympathy for all your complication of troubles. Your dentist, I feel, ought to go to jail. I never heard (in modern times) of such an operation being done without anaesthetics. Here, you'd get it free. I didn't quite understand the bit about the hypodermic nor what is the suspected cause of the pains.

The anxiety about the future is, however, a thing we can all understand, and *very* hard to bear. You were almost miraculously supported in such anxiety before and I pray you may be now. And I think it is happening. Your faith is a support to me as well as to yourself. But how one even *ought* to feel—let alone, how one can succeed in feeling—about your unspeakable son-in-law, is a problem. It is very hard to believe that all one's indignation is simply bad: but I suppose one must stick to the text 'The wrath of *man* worketh not the righteousness of *God*'.³³² I suppose one must keep on remembering that there is always something deeply wrong inside with a man so bad as this. For yourself I can only hope—and passages in your letter confirm my hope—that through all this you are being brought closer to God than you wd. have been otherwise. And it is not forever (wouldn't it be ghastly to be *immortal* on earth, like the Wandering Jew?). It will all one day go away like a dream.

The only reason I'm *not* sick of all the stuff about the Princess is that I don't read it.³³³ I never read the papers. Why does anyone? They're nearly all lies, and one has to wade thru' such reams of verbiage and 'write up' to find out even what they're saying.

Well, must stop. Ten letters this morning and (one can't get breakfast till 8.30 here) it's now 11.25. Not a stroke of my own work done and all the cream of the day gone. God bless & keep you.

Yours

Jack

In November, in his lectures on 'Some Major Texts: Latin and Continental Vernacular', Lewis publicly admitted that his proof was wanting—he could not definitely say that Ismene's dream was an example of pagan prefigurement of Christian chastity. Although Nan Dunbar was in the audience, she and Lewis had still not met, and she may not have known he was referring to her when he said he had been 'convinced by a learned member of the audience, not that I was wrong, but that I cannot prove what I had said'.[334](#)

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
27/10/55

Dear Miss Dunbar

Thanks for the Justin.³³⁵ I expect it has countless derivatives in Latin and I was remembering one of those. You are a fortunate seeker. You don't happen to know (without re-reading the whole *Leviathan*) where Hobbes said 'Men are grieved at mischief not as mischief but as injury'?³³⁶—wh. I want as an illustration of the older & better meaning of *injury*. N.E.D. has only a far inferior specimen from Bp. Butler.³³⁷

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

As from Magdalene College, Cambridge.

30/10/55

My dear Arthur—

How nice to have a letter about a book from you again, even if it's only *my* book. (I mean, it wd. be even more like old times if it weren't mine. But of course it gives me a special, and different, pleasure that you shd. like *this* one.) W. has now resolved to live as a tee-totaller and is doing splendidly at present. I know you will not cease your prayers.

The other affair remains where it did.³³⁸ I don't feel the point about a 'false position'. Everyone whom it concerned wd. be told. The 'reality' wd. be, from my point of view, adultery and therefore mustn't happen. (An easy resolution when one doesn't in the least want it!).

God bless you. That was a famous holiday we had this year. We never exasperated each other less!

Yours

Jack

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.

1/10 [11]/55

Dear Miss Dunbar

Thanks very much. Your place in cap XV (tho' not the one I thought I was remembering) will do beautifully—he might have written it for the very purpose.

I'm afraid the search for *kerfuffle* will stagger even your ichneutic powers, for I can say only that all my Scots orthography is either from the Waverley Novels³³⁹ or those of Geo. MacDonald or those of John Gault. The Waverleys usually have a glossary of dialectal words, but it's a tiny taper in so huge a cavern, and I have wasted too much of your time already.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

As from Magdalene College, Cambridge
9/11/55

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen— It was a great relief to get your letter telling me the happy results of the medical examination. My prayers for you have been accompanied by thanks (By the way, it is important to *keep* on giving thanks. Otherwise, as one continues to pray for the others who have not yet been relieved, one simply fails to notice how many of one's intercessory prayers have been granted—never notices how the list of *Thank-you's* grows & perhaps outstrips the list of mere *Please's*).

And talking of thanks, thank *you* for a rich gift of stamps. (Things get mixed—but when are they not?—on my table and I embarrassingly wrote and thanked someone else! Hence my uncivil delay).

I don't know anything about syndromes. Presumably the suspicion of cancer arose from pain wh. has now turned out to be rheumatism or indigestion? If so, I can't see how a Thrift Shop (whatever that may be!) shd. cure them. Am I being v. stupid? Try to tell me it all in words of one syllable: remembering that I am both ignorant & sceptical about psychology, especially the amateur psychology of the patient's family. The ordinary hum-drum rules of spiritual and corporeal health—or else the professional doctor & the professional *directeur* seem to me the thing to rely on—and, of course, the recognition that as we grow older we shall have more ailments. But as you know I'm 'of the earth, earthy'.³⁴⁰

Meanwhile, you are surely rejoicing. 'Turn again to thy rest, oh my soul.'³⁴¹

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

148/55.

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry, Oxford.
9th November 1955.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert, Very nice to hear from you again, and we were both most interested by your account of the new home;³⁴² though my brother grumbles that he is so used to addressing to 510 N. Alpine Drive that he is sure to send a letter to you at Beverley Hills one of these days. It is particularly good news that not only do you like Carmel, but that it is a better climate for all three of you than Beverley; and we look forward to seeing the photos of what sounds a delightful house.

It surprises me greatly that you have open fires, a thing which I thought had not been known in America since Mark Twain's time, or even earlier. Certainly there is nothing which gives a room such a homey appearance, but they have their drawbacks; at least in this country, with its chronic coal shortage. And then they make a lot of dirt in the rooms we find. Judging from the leaflet which you enclose, Carmel must be lovely, and I envy you those great stretches of open sea beach; can you bathe there? Someone, I forgot who, once told me that all along the American Pacific coast there runs so cold a current that bathing is, if not impossible, at least very much of an ordeal; but perhaps this is merely a traveller's tale.

My brother's historical sense is outraged by the costume attributed to Don Gaspar de Portola in 1769 in the leaflet; 1569 yes, but not 1769. So you can 'call or write Stephen F. Williams' and tell him he has got it all wrong. If I were you I shouldn't roam where the wild boar do; they can be very unpleasant customers.

The naming of a house is always a difficult problem, and I think you got over the problem very sensibly. Here in our new building estates there is I notice a great craze for fancy and punning names; Bill marries May and they call their home Bilmay, and so on; or if Bill fancies himself as a wit, he will call it 'Sootsme' or something of that kind.

We are both very fit thanks, and life goes on much as usual; it is term time now, and my usual routine is to go over to Cambridge on Monday in the afternoon, returning to Oxford on Saturday morning, leaving my brother to guard the fort at Oxford. But another three weeks and I shall be in residence here for the vacation, which will of course be nicer for both of us.

I enclose a copy of the new book, and hope you will like it.

With best love to yourself, your mother, and the Tycoon, from us two,
yours ever,

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

As from Magdalene, Cambridge

9/11/55

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for yours of the 3rd and very kind review.³⁴³ Kind, but not *quite* accurate when you say I met 'Joy' in the 'whimsical creations of my boyish imagination'. Surely the book tells you very explicitly that I never met it *there*? But no matter. You give the core of it very well and with great economy and clarity: a good bit of work.

How it bucks one up to get a poem accepted! The children we are. I look forward to your article.

I agree: the only thing one can usually change in one's situation is oneself. And yet one can't change that either—only ask Our Lord to do so, keeping on meanwhile with one's sacraments, prayers, and ordinary rule of life. One mustn't fuss too much about one's state. Do you read St. Francis de Sales? He has good things to say on this subject.³⁴⁴ All good wishes.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

As from Magdalene, Cambridge.

10/11/55

Dear Dorothy—

You'll be thinking me rude by now. I put off answering your letter until I shd. have seen the review itself; and then, since I am neither a regular *T&T* reader nor a subscriber to any Press Cutting Agency, I missed the review³⁴⁵ when it appeared and got hold of the necessary back number only the other day. It's a boss review, and thank you very much.

And when I say 'boss' I mean not only nice to me but so good that I'm afraid it'll bring you into bad odour with the reviewers' Trade Union. What? All about the book and nothing about yourself? And you've really read the book all through? And really tell us exactly what it's about? Come, come: this is Blackleg work, this will never do.

For really it is astonishing how seldom any of these things are done. Don't you find you are much less pained by honest & accurate reviews that are unfavourable than by favourable ones from some ass who praises you for saying what you never said.

I've heard nothing but good of the *Purgatory* from those who've read it. The general feeling seems to be that it is better than the *Hell*; perhaps without a full recognition that the original is better too.

Yours ever

Jack

TO DELMAR BANNER (W): TS

225.55.

The Kilns, Kiln Lane, Headington Quarry, Oxford.
16th November 1955.

Dear Banner,

Many thanks for your kind and encouraging card of the 15th; it is a great pleasure to me to know that anything I have written should be of help to the School.³⁴⁶ Please give them all my best wishes.

I have never seen Chataway in the flesh, or even a profile photo of him, so can express no opinion of your portrait qua likeness; but even I, ignorant though I am on the subject, can admire the beauty and vigour of your drawing.³⁴⁷

I too hope that we may meet again.

With all best wishes.

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO HSIN-CHANG CHANG (BOD):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
17/11/55

Dear Mr. Chang

Thank you very much for the book, which is a most valuable present.³⁴⁸ It gives me a view of the subject I could not get anywhere else.

Could you come and lunch with me in Combination Room on Wed. Nov 23rd? If so, perhaps you would call in my rooms at 1 o'clock. It wd. give me great pleasure to meet again.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO HELMUT KUHN (W):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
17/11/55

Dear Kuhn—

It was pleasant to hear from you again, and of course (vanity is better than pride) none the less so because of the kind things you say about my work. Most unfortunately, though I by no means forgot, I mislaid your letter, and as I had of course not memorised the name Mander, I lost several days before I found it again. I have now written to the Senior Tutor at Trinity, leaving it to his choice either to answer me or to write directly to you. I shall be interested to know whether the *Δαιμόνιον*³⁴⁹ spoke the truth. I have no such guide myself and find my first impressions of people, whether favorable or the reverse, of no value at all: but I know that others have what I lack.

When shall we see you in this country again? Till then, cordial good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.
24/11/55

Dear Gibb

Good. Come to lunch on Wed 30th in Combination Room, [350](#) calling at my rooms at 1 o'clock. Unless of course it wd. suit you better to make lunch the epilogue rather than the prologue, in which case call as early before it as you please Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.

27/11/55

Dear Dorothy—

Your letters always contain so many points one wants to take up. I am relieved you liked my treatment of my Father: the neatest compliment it has yet received was Colin Hardie's 'not at all Ham-handed'.

There was a lot more about Fantasy<>Invention in the original text. Obviously everyone has experienced 1. and few have experienced 2. Those who haven't, picture it as being like 1, yet the distinction is fundamental. The only puzzling thing (for us who know both) is that large elements of 1 *can* enter into some works of art without destroying them—e.g. *Jane Eyre*. I had dimly realised that the old-fashioned way (my Father did it exquisitely) of talking to all young women was v. like an adult way of talking to small boys. It explains not only why some women grew up vapid but also why others grew up almost (if we may coin the word) *viricidal*. I don't remember if it was the scent of the flowering currant did it—or not: it does now of course.

Yours

Jack

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

Magdalene College, Cambridge.

3/12/55

Dear Chad—

I am glad to hear that neither ice, fog, tempest, shipwreck, mutiny, pirate, waterspout, maelstrom, sea-serpent, remora, kraken or siren kept you all from your natural shore. I haven't run across your friend Leary. *He* must take the initiative. It always looks patronising or avuncular for the older man to do so: also, one always has the suspicion that the youngster does not want the acquaintance nearly so much as his friends say!

Saul might be a v. good subject for a play. Good material, but I think (wh. really matters more) not too much nor too good already. I think it a great mistake to choose a theme which is so well done already in the original sources as to kill one's invention. Is it to be in verse or prose? I've often thought that if I wrote a play I'd do it in verse but type it as prose. In the present state of the human ear no publisher, manager, actor, or audience wd. recognise it, not even if it was in heroic couplets or the metre of *Hiawatha*. There'd then be a chance of it's being judged as a real working *play* for the theatre, not an 'interesting' bit of Culture.

I look forward to *Behold the Glory*.³⁵¹

Please remember me most warmly to your wife & daughter, Yours

Jack Lewis

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
5/12/55

Dear Mr Allen—

It was nice to hear from you again. With a year's hindsight (as you say) I now pronounce the move to Cambridge a great success. However it may be with my new university, my new college is a smaller, softer, more gracious place than my old. The mental and social atmosphere is like the sunny side of a wall in an old garden. The only danger is lest I grow too comfortable and over-ripe. The town, after Nuffield-ruined and industrialised Oxford, is delightfully small and I can get a real country walk whenever I want. All my friends say I look younger.

Oddly enough the week-end jounries are no trouble at all. I find myself perfectly content in a slow train that crawls thro' green fields stopping at every station. Just because the service is so slow and therefore, in most people's eyes, *bad*, these trains are almost empty and I have the compartment (you know the funny little boxes into which an English train is divided?) to myself, where I get through a lot of reading and sometimes say my prayers. A solitary railway journey is, I find, quite excellent for this purpose.

I've never been told the Landlord's plans for Rome!³⁵² And there are all sorts of things about her I dislike. But she has her terrific good points too. I think she can boast more martyrs in the mission field than most of us.

I hope, my dear friends, you will all have a very happy Christmas and a very good New Year. My brother joins me in warmest good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
5/12/55

My dear Arthur—

Home for the Vacation to-day and all *very* well here. Thanks for the review, [353](#) which I hadn't seen. The phrase 'eulogy of pederasty' is a trifle misleading I shd. say!

Sorry my handwriting is so awful. I do try! Of course I don't know anything about foreign schools: one gets the impression they are full of spies and informers (which is worse than pederasty) but I dare say one gets it wrongly.

I admired *The Mill on the F.* last time I read it. The one I can't go back to is *Adam B.* [354](#)

Happy Christmas.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry.

Oxford
6/12/55

Dear Mary Willis—

I was most distressed by the news in your letter of Dec. 2nd. It was touching the way you spent the first page telling me nice things about my own books and the two adorable polio-cases, and then disclosed your own great trouble at the end. And I can't help you, because under the modern laws I'm not allowed to send money to America. (What a barbarous system we live under. I knew a man who had to risk *prison* in order to smuggle a little money to his own sister, widowed in the U.S.A.). By the way, we mustn't be too sure there was any irony about your just having refused that other job. There may have been a snag about it which God knew and you didn't.

I feel it almost impossible to say anything (in my comfort and security—apparent security, for real security is in Heaven and thus earth affords only imitations) which wd. not sound horribly false and facile. Also, you know it all better than I do. I should in your place be (I *have* in similar places *been*) far more panic-stricken and even perhaps rebellious. For it is a dreadful truth that the state of (as you say) 'having to depend solely on God' is what we all dread most. And of course that just shows how very much, how almost exclusively, we have been depending on things. That trouble goes so far back in our lives and is now so deeply ingrained, we *will* not turn to Him as long as He leaves us anything else to turn to. I suppose all one can say is that it was bound to come. In the hour of death and the day of judgement, what else shall we have? Perhaps when those moments come, they will feel happiest who have been forced (however unwillingly) to begin practising it here on earth. It is good of Him to *force* us: but dear me, how hard to *feel* that it is good at the time.

The little Christmas poem was nice. I particularly liked 'The curtain spread By the simplicity around'—a v. precise idea economically expressed.

All's well—I'm half ashamed it should be—with me. God bless and keep you. You shall be constantly in my prayers by day & night.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):[355](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
7/12/55

Dear Miss Dunbar—

Optat ephippia bos piger.[356](#) I could sometimes wish to be a classic—all those nice, well-edited, clearly printed texts. And Herodotus: I re-read him the summer before last and wd. put no one above him. Nor, in a different way, above Tacitus. But Froissart,[357](#) Snorri,[358](#) Joinville[359](#) and your own Pitscottie[360](#) are nearly as good. (I feel no impulse to go back to Thucydides).

It was extremely kind of you to write, for it's 30 years since I lectured to so small an audience. Very good for my soul, I expect. I hope Douglas won't disappoint.[361](#) Miss Bradbrook[362](#) says I make books sound better than they really are.

The trouble, as you imply, is that one has so little time. Here's two of us who don't know a word of classical Persian—where, I gather, there's enough first-class poetry to last for a lifetime.

Many thanks, & all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
10/12/55

Dear Gibb

(1.) You *say* you enclose a copy of *The A. of M*³⁶³ but, believe me, it's no such thing! But don't. I can't find the marked copy and the single addition to the Appendix is of no importance. Get someone more reliable than me (hardly anyone is less) to look thro' it for scribal errors and then go ahead.

(2.) On the contrary, I shd. *very much* like an omnibus of the Children's Stories,³⁶⁴ as soon as the seventh and last is published, and I am not greatly enamoured of the illustrations (Faith, 'twould be easier to be enamoured of her that made them).³⁶⁵ I think I've already told Hegner what *order* they shd. come in. But of course if a better deal can be made, make it.

(3.) Thanks for reviews.

(4.) I've no objection to *Irish Digest* quoting a bit as long as this (wh. I return) but I don't wish to have a bit about my Father selected. Too like the sin of Ham.³⁶⁶ They won't know their Old Testament, but they can ask their instructors. So the answer (rê *this* passage) is No.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO HARRY BLAMIRES (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford.
12/12/55

My dear Blamires—

I have been disappointed at (what I partly saw) the cold reception of your trilogy. It deserved better: especially the last one, which is far the best.³⁶⁷

I have had some experience of such disappointments myself, first as an unpublished, and then as an unnoticed, author. It is like *bereavement* in this way, that one's thoughts, long deeply engaged in one object, continue (20 times an hour) to set out on a familiar, and once delightful, road only to come up each time against the same roadblock. This *sorh is geniwod*³⁶⁸ and it is not one blow but a recurrent hammering. I find the only way is to treat it frankly as a pretty serious tribulation and deal with it, before God, as one wd. deal with any other. If one in-direct result of this is to reduce it to its proportions, to make one feel how trivial it is compared with a real bereavement (or even a sound toothache!) so much the better. If not, all the more one must treat it on that level. But of course you know all this. The tide may yet turn, but I never thought that a good support: 'Hope is the fawning traitor of the heart.'³⁶⁹

yours
C. S. Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):[370](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
14/12/55

Dear Dorothy—

Don't forget there's some light in Tolkien's lecture on Fairy Tales in the C.W. volume to which we both contributed;[371](#) and a very interesting bit in Trollope's Autobiography.[372](#)

I think we have to distinguish (1.) The mere image-making faculty, the 'mind's eye' (also its nose, ear etc.) wh. ought to be called imagination if we literary meddlers hadn't spoiled that word for its plain sense. (2.) The *uses* (or abuses) of this (a) By the Holy Ghost in visions *proprement dites*.[373](#) (b.) By the body and the unconscious to produce dreams. (c.) By our (waking) starved wishes or suppressed fears to produce reverie in wish-fulfilment or fear fulfilment. (d.) By pathological agencies to produce hallucinations. (e.) By I-don't-know-what, call it the Muse, to produce (with or without our conscious volition) figments ('I *thought* of Mr. Pickwick').

Now distinct from all these we have the plastic, inventive, or constructive power, *homo faber*.[374](#) This wants to make things out of any plastic material, whether within the mind or without; stone, metals, clay, wood, cloth, memory, & imagination. It will take from imagination *any* of the material I've enumerated. In my own stories it usually takes chiefly 2e: pictures, arising I don't know how, are got hold of by invention which wants to connect them & build a *thing*.

Don't let's believe anything people like us tell one another about the new towns & dormitory suburbs.[375](#) When one really meets these traduced people one finds them far *less* confused about art & reality than most of the 'clerks'. I don't think they ever dream of applying to real life, mistaking for history or science, what they find in the films & the comics. Talk to an intelligent milkman about the v. improbable happy ending of a film, & he'll reply 'Oh well, they got to put that in to finish it off like.' He never dreamed of demanding the sort of realism that critics demand: there's his safeguard. No child, and no adult—except a 'clerk', wd. ask *what* the ring in

J.R.R.T's book *was*. That's an idol of the cave, not of the market place. I admit that people write me letters asking if I *really* know someone who has been to Mars & Venus, but I think that's because they are mentally disordered, not because they live in new towns, Yours

Jack

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
16/12/55

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen— About the psychological causes of illness I think I'm probably a bit more sceptical than you, but as we're both mere laymen I daresay this only means we're following different fashions. About 25 years ago when Coué's³⁷⁶ name was on everyone's lips the doctors were v. fond of finding all one's ills to be 'psychogenic': a reaction has now set in and since almost my greatest friend is a doctor I suppose I am influenced by it. But what do I know?

Well, I think I do know that any work for the POW,³⁷⁷ which is all (as the parable tells us)³⁷⁸ done really to Him, and especially if it is undertaken in the teeth of one's natural inclination, is a good thing. So the Gift Shop is a good thing. Whether it will cure headaches I've no idea: but I'm sure it's grand for the soul. But don't be sorry if you grow to like it. Surely that is what ought to happen? Isn't duty only a second-best to keep one going until one learns to *like* the thing, and then it is a duty no more? When love fulfils the Law, Law (as such) flies out of the window. Isn't that part of what St. Paul meant by being free from the Law?³⁷⁹ And of what St. Augustine meant by 'Have charity and do what you like'?³⁸⁰ Re-read Psalms 36, taking oneself as the wicked man in verses 1–4, and oneself under Grace as speaking for the rest of the Psalm (except that the 'foot of pride' and 'the ungodly' in 11, 12 are one's old self again, trying to come back).³⁸¹ Aren't 5 and 6 absolute corkers? And what unabashed Hedonism in 8!³⁸²

Pediatrician is a new word to me. I suppose it is someone who advised other people how to bring up their children! I hope this one has children of her own and that they are good advertisements for her skill? Otherwise one wd. be tempted to quote the Scotch proverb 'Maid's bairns are aye well guided'—old maids's children are always educated well. But now that I come to think of it, this has a lovely whimsical truth for us: for we know only one Maid that had a Bairn,³⁸³ and no doubt He was 'well guided'.

All good wishes to all. We are both well.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
17/12/55

Dear Father Milward— Thank you for yr letter of Nov. 17. The enclosed card was one of the v. few I have been pleased at getting. Christmas cards in general and the whole vast commercial drive called ‘Xmas’ are one of my pet abominations: I wish they could die away and leave the Christian feast unentangled. Not of course that even secular festivities are, on their own level, an evil: but the laboured and organised jollity of this—the spurious childlikeness—the half-hearted and sometimes rather profane attempts to keep up some superficial connection with the Nativity—are disgusting. But yr. card is most interesting as an application of Japanese style to a Christian subject: and, *me judice*,³⁸⁴ extremely successful.

Albigensianism, and ancient Celtic Paganism, are both increasingly popular ‘sources’ for medieval story: but, I fear, they are an *asylum ignorantiae*,³⁸⁵ chosen because we know so v. little about either. The facts I’d try to hold onto are (1.) The name Galahad (Gilead). (2.) The resemblance of the Grail to manna (see, I think, *Wisdom*:³⁸⁶ the reference is at Cambridge.) (3) The (I think proved) Cistercian *provenance*.

Enthusiasm is Ronny Knox’s worst book.³⁸⁷ And of course you won’t be misled by de Rougemont’s nonsense in *L’Amour et l’Occident*. (Not that the ethics of the last chapter—*l’amour cesse d’être un démon quand il cesse d’être un dieu*³⁸⁸—aren’t excellent; but the historical parts are wildly speculative.) One quite sees the *chivalric* idea in St Ignatius,³⁸⁹ but of course the chivalry of *Amadis*³⁹⁰ (an excellent romance, by the way) is pretty different from that of Arthuriana in general, let alone Sangrealiana in particular.

Oremus pro invicem: Give thanks for me, for a great family anxiety has been lifted and perhaps forever removed. No doubt you have found, like me, that if one regularly transfers people from one’s urgent-petition-list to one’s thanksgiving list, the mere statistics of the two lists are some

corroboration of faith. (Not of course that the efficacy of prayer cd. strictly be either proved or disproved by empirical evidence.) Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford

19/12/55

Dear Mrs. Gebbert— Elevation of fireplace, study of Tycoon, and view of house in landscape on some other planet, received with thanks. How that boy of yours grows! Do you now ever feel that a few minutes of the period when he didn't talk wd. be rather nice if they came back? We both purr at the nice things you say about our books. And by the same token, when are *you* going to write a story again?

The Latin is

*Without thy power
There is nothing in Man,
There is nothing unharmed...[391](#)*

I translate *numine* 'power' but no English word is exactly right: 'deity' or even 'sway' wd. do almost as well. If you wanted to say, quite vaguely, in a forest, 'I feel there is some great power brooding over this place' you'd use *numen*.

Of course our information about your beaches was all wrong. *All* information is. I only discovered the other day that *igloos* are not made of ice or snow: and I bet some one has told you that Magdalen-Oxford and Magdalene-Cambridge are pronounced differently.

And thank you, thank you (but you really shouldn't) for the beautiful sleek, shining bottle of good cheer. It's a feast even for the eyes; mouth shall have its share on Christmas day.

We both wish you and the Tycoon every blessing, and are both well ourselves.

yours ever
W. H. } Lewis
C. S. }

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns etc.
19/12/55

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for your letter of Dec. 15. I don't see anything wrong with the way in which you tell your story *St. Anthony's Feet*: wrong in the stylistic way, I mean. You have made it sound at one point as if Episcopalians didn't think suicide a sin! but no doubt that is unintentional. I think the narrative good.

I do hope you will get the nicer of those two jobs, which is certainly the one I also wd. prefer in your place. Not of course that one can be sure what either is like till one has got inside. Things turn out both so much [better] and so much worse than they look, don't they? Be sure you remain very much in my thoughts and prayers.

I seem to have been writing Christmas letters most of this day! I'm afraid I hate the weeks just before Christmas, and so much of the (v. commercialised & vulgarised) fuss has nothing to do with the Nativity at all. I wish we didn't live in a world where buying & selling things (especially selling) seems to have become almost more important than either producing or using them.

All blessings. 'Beneath are the everlasting arms'³⁹² even when it doesn't feel at all like it.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
22/12/55

Dear Dorothy—

Thanks for handsome (this is an Empsonian double meaning) card.³⁹³

Yes, there may be this new class, as much (but otherwise) educated as the clerks, and they may be as the clerks describe them. But have you actually met them? I at any rate am not prepared—till I have more evidence—to believe all the abundant evil which the clerks say about them. I more and more suspect that it is the clerks themselves who are the real disaster in modern society and a great deal of what they say about other groups is simply the vindictive rage of pseudo-artists who (deservedly) get no audience save each other. Deservedly, because the popular art they despise is superior to theirs as a live dog is to a dead lion: in so far as, aiming at mere entertainment, it does in fact entertain, while they don't actually 'work' at all.

I hadn't really thought about it before, but of course Tolkien's females are as you describe them.³⁹⁴ And one couldn't, from internal evidence, diagnose the cause, because so many causes are equally possible.

My brother joins me in all good wishes. May some tiny little island for the feast of the Nativity be left us amid all the horrors and tediums of 'Xmas' (with a plague upon it!) Yours

Jack

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
26/12/55

Dear Joan

Thanks very much for your gay card and lovely bookmark. And 100,000 good wishes. Can't write properly—there are dreadful mails at present—I write letters all day—it spoils Christmas completely. A fox has killed one of our geese.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO GUNDREDA FORREST (P):[395](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford.
27/12/55

My dear Gundred

Thanks very much for your letter. I am relieved to find that the Mountbracken part was acceptable,³⁹⁶ for writing about old friends is a tricky business. I hope you thought my attempt at K's profile was successful and saw what I meant? And I hope *she* didn't get merely the general impression that I said she was like a horse!³⁹⁷ I wish now I'd put in something about both Graham and Palmer, 'we shall not look upon their likes again.'³⁹⁸

No, I *don't* agree that the streamlined car is more useful than the large beautifully run house. One's in the car only at times: the house is affecting one all day and all night.

Warnie is in splendid health and form and has been for months: me too.

You don't say a word about Adrian, Primrose,³⁹⁹ or Kelsie, so I hope that means they're all well. Give Warnie's and my love to them all, and to Janie, and to yourself.

Your affectionate cousin Jack

I'm sorry my writing is so horrid: the harder I try, the more illegible it seems to get.

TO SARAH NEYLAN (T):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
27/12/55

My dear Sarah

Thank you very much for the wholly admirable mug, out of which I hope often to drink your very good health. And do you know, it reminded me that I'd completely ignored *all* my godchildren this year, which I don't think ever happened before. I *am* a Pig: *porcissimus*. Somehow the whole horrible business of 'Xmas' (which I distinguish sharply from *Christmas*), with the huge mails coming in every half hour, has quite got me down this year and I wasn't really in my right mind till yesterday evening. I now enclose a belated present.

When I last met your father and mother, *mice* were weighing rather heavily on their minds. I should think the population runs into millions by now.

Love to them (I mean your parents, tho' of course I don't mind—at a distance—including the mice too) and yourself and all good wishes for 1956.

Yours affectionately C. S. Lewis

1956

TO JILL FREUD (P): TS

56/29.

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
10th January 1956.

My dear June,

We are delighted to hear that you will be with us by lunch time on Saturday, and Warnie has given orders to have the sandwiches unpacked and dusted against your arrival. I note what you say about Nicola, and we will put you in the two downstairs rooms. Perhaps better not bring Polly, though we should like to renew our acquaintance,¹ but our small kitten, Mervyn, is terrified at the sight of Susie, and I think two of these strange monsters in the house might give him a nervous breakdown.

Yours ever,

Warnie & Jack

TO MURIEL BRADBROOK (W):²

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
20/1/56

Dear Miss Bradbrook

The devil's in it. I got your kind invitation and replied, accepting it, by return of post.³ I'm looking forward to it with high glee. I'm afraid this *contre-temps* must have put you to a good deal of trouble, but I remain adamant. Indulge no hope of my absence! I shall be there unless 'I be sickle outhur in prisoun.'⁴

Yours in bewildered sincerity
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):
56/63⁵

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
23/1/56

Dear Gibb

I suppose it comes too late for you to use, but someone has just pointed out a bad error in *S. by J.* On p. 203, line 3, for 'meditating it through' read 'mediating it through'.

Less important, but more mysterious, is p. 222, l. 16 'too blind'. For 'too' read 'so'.⁶

I've a feeling I ought to have answered some letter of yours but didn't: if so, apologies.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
26/1/56

My dear Chad—

Joy's address is 10, Old High Street, Headington, Oxford.

I've long thought that if I ever wrote a play in verse I shd. use the relaxed and subtler form of the *Hiawatha* metre. For when I heard *Peer Gynt*,⁷ in this metre, it seemed to work admirably. It is intolerable in Longfellow of course. But modern actors will always disguise metre as much as they can: this can't be wholly disguised: and therefore just the right amount comes through. I wd. strongly dissuade you from a relaxed form of the O.E.⁸ line. Once it is at all relaxed (and abandons the *quantitative* element in classical O.E. verse) it degenerates into a mere tumble. Even in *Gawain and the Green Knight* this danger is felt: in *Piers Plowman*⁹ it is sometimes disastrous. I agree that Blank Verse (whatever the reason may be) is now hopeless. Something might be done with rhymeless alexandrines with *no* medial break: lines like 'I think we hardly recognized him till he died'.

I look forward to B the G.¹⁰ My story will be collected by my agent this week end.

My brother joins me in all greetings. Remember me to your ladies (One usually says after a visit 'I was glad to see X again. It was a pity his wife had to come along.' With you it is 'I hope he'll come again *and bring his wife.*')
Yours

Jack

Muriel Bradbrook invited Lewis to a dinner at Girton College so he could meet Nan Dunbar. On being introduced to her Lewis said: ‘Ah! Miss Dunbar! I’m glad to find you actually exist—I’d thought perhaps you were only the personification of my conscience!’¹¹

Dunbar sat next to Lewis at dinner, and she passed on a remark by the Regius Professor of Greek, Sir Denys Page (1908–78), about a little-known poem by Aristotle, the ‘Ode to Arete’, which Page called frigid. ‘Frigid!’ exclaimed Lewis, ‘I find the poem quite moving in its imagery.’¹² Shortly afterwards Lewis defended this position in the letter that follows.

TO NAN DUNBAR (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
26/1/56

C. S. Lewis doctissimae Annae Dunbar, S[acrae]. T[heologiae].
D[ocor].

De loco Vergiliano omnes tenebras clarissimo luce dissipasti. De carmine Aristotelis longe, ut dicam quod sentio, aberras a veritate. De numeris non contendo, sed quantis luminibus ingenii illa prosopopoeia illustratur. Translaticium fuisset imaginem virtutis aut quasi amicam aut quasi laborem fingere, sed haec duo conjuncta quanto magis capiunt! Tunc, super hoc, imagine de pietate erga parentes sumpta, reducit illam Venerem eandemque Junonem labores imponentem, ad Lares et focum et pueriles annos. Nec hoc satis: deinde, quasi altius foderet, quasi formam virtutis etiam vegetabili nostrae animae insereret, ipsi somno praeponit. His versibus, multo divinius quam Menander, totam vitae imaginem expressit. Vale.

C. S. Lewis to the most learned Nan Dunbar, Doctor of Sacred Theology On the Virgil passage you have dissipated all the darkness with a very clear light. On the poem of Aristotle¹³ you are—to speak frankly—a long way from the truth. On the metre, I don’t argue; but with what great intellectual brilliance that personification is illustrated. It would have been conventional to imagine the image of Virtue either as a mistress or as a task, but these two

joined together—how much more flavour they have! Then, moreover, taking an image from duty to one's parents, he brings her in again, as Venus and at the same time as Juno imposing labour, to the heart and home and childhood years. Nor is this all; then, as if digging deeper, as if inserting the form of Virtue also into our physical nature, he has preferred her before sleep itself. In these verses, much more divinely than Menander,¹⁴ he has moulded an entire image of life. Farewell.¹⁵

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
27/1/56

Dear Gibb

Yes, that must have been it. How v. rude of me not to have thanked you for the elegantly bound copy of *S. by J.* I do so now: it was much appreciated.

I agree that *errata* slips are no good. I doubt if anyone looks at them. Seewald is excellent—indeed the whole volume is delightful.^{[16](#)}

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO PHILINDA KRIEG (P):¹⁷

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
28/1/56

Dear Mrs. Krieg

About an hour after posting my last letter to Laurence I realised that I had attributed to *The Silver Chair* what really comes in *The Horse*. I thought Laurence would enjoy catching me out on my own books and should have been much disappointed if he had not!

One is sorry the Sunday Schools should be so dull.¹⁸ Yet I wonder. In this all important subject, as in every other, the youngsters must meet, if not exactly the dull, at any rate the hard and the dry, sooner or later. The modern attempt is to keep it as late as possible: but does that do any good? They've got to cut their teeth. Aren't many parts of the Bible itself, read at home, quite simple enough and interesting enough to be a counterpoise to the dull teaching?

Anyway, there is no use trying to keep the first thrill. It will come to life again and again only on *one* condition: that we turn our backs on it and get to work and go through all the dullness. But I've said all this in the *P. of P.*, now I come to think of it.¹⁹

I don't think any book I could write wd. help. *You* can help: but in the main there is something at this stage which Laurence can (and need we doubt, he will) do for himself.

Love to both.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

Of course he must pray to God to keep his interest alive. He *knows* God is not really dull. He must still remember that and trust in Him even when God doesn't show him any of the interestingnesses. He is there alright behind the dull work.

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
31/1/56

Dear Ruth—

Never heard of Scott's 'Old Play'?²⁰ The passage is, so far as I know, my own invention, influenced, I think, by Coventry Patmore. I am not now sure that it is very relevant in its place.

And while we are on *Quellenforschung*,²¹ were you aware how closely you were reproducing Dr. Johnson's 'I find it does a man good to talk to his Sovereign. For in the first place—' and then, to our endless loss, someone interrupted him.²²

It's also amusing that a few nights before getting your letter²³ I dreamed that I was presented [to] the Queen, and found to my horror, half way through the audience, that I was wearing my hat. At the same moment a lady in waiting approached me from behind with the speed of a roller-skater and snatched it off my head with the words 'Don't be a fool.' I left the presence, pensive (as may be supposed) and on my way through a great gallery, finding, without surprise, a photograph of myself on an occasional table, tore it to pieces and went on. I've never had the dream of appearing in public insufficiently dressed: but I suppose too much means pretty well the same as too little. So you beat me both by the difference between reality and dream and that between success and failure. And Schweitzer too! Well, you deserve it all.

And have you read Mary Norton's *The Borrowers* and *The Borrowers Afield*?²⁴ And K.M. Brigg's *Hobberdy Dick*?²⁵—the latter good, but either Kipling or De la Mare, if they had had the idea, wd. have made a heavenly book of it, and hers is not quite good enough. And (now an old book) Margaret Kennedy's *The Feast*?²⁶ This is most remarkable: a wholly successful allegory on the Seven Deadly Sins.

Of course it will be a good spring. They all are. You are hoping it will be one of the great springs.

Warnie and I both send our loves to both. I shall come and beat up your quarters next Vacation, I trust.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns etc
5/2/56

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Thank you for your letter of Jan. 31st. I agree with you about the early Church and find the Acts one of the most exciting parts of the Bible. I don't know whether your 'harmony' is my 'joy'²⁷ or not, tho' I suspect they have in common at any rate one thing: that both are already 'shattered' when one first observes them. I suppose this is partly due to the nature of time—there being no real *present*, every moment already past however quickly you try to grab it. How rich we shall be when we get off this single railway-line into the rich green country left and right.

Yes, I think you would see through 'a mere fad'. But Coué-ism²⁸ was, wasn't it, simply the most popular form of something that was not a *mere* fad but, more subtly, an exaggerated truth. And probably the current reaction against it in medical circles here is an exaggeration in the opposite direction.

I am so glad you took to Psalm XXXVI. My other great favourite is XIX.²⁹ First, the mere glory of nature (between the Psalms and Wordsworth—a long gap in history—you get nothing equal to either on this theme). Then the disinfectant, inexorable sun beating down on the desert and 'nothing hid from the heat thereof'.³⁰ Then—implied, not stated—the imaginative identification of that heat and light with the 'undefiled' law, the 'clean' fear of the Lord, searching every cranny. Then the characteristically Jewish feeling that the Law is not only obligatory but beautiful, ravishing: delighting the heart, better than gold, sweeter than honey. Only after that, the (more Christian like) self examination and humble petition. Nearly all that could be said before the Incarnation is said in this Psalm. It is so much *better Paganism* than the real Pagans ever did! And in one way more glorious, more soaring and triumphant, than Christian poetry. For as God humbled Himself to become Man, so religion humbled itself to become Christianity.

All good wishes from us both—

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
8/2/56

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for your letter of the 2nd and for the *Time* cutting. My brother says the photo of me is the best ever, but another friend says it is unrecognisable. What's most impressive is the smoke from the match, which looks like the explosion of a miniature shell.³¹ The review is of course a tissue of muddles and direct falsehoods—I don't say 'lies' because the people who write such things are not really capable of lying. I mean, to lie = to say what you know to be untrue. But to know this, and to have the very ideas of truth & falsehood in your head, presupposes a clarity of mind wh. they haven't got. To call them liars wd. be as undeserved a compliment as to say that a dog was bad at arithmetic.

I am delighted to hear that the new job continues to give satisfaction. What a difference it makes to work with nice people and to do work that you can believe in.

We have just come through a spell of what we call hard frost. It would be nothing by American standards: but here all the pipes burst and electricity and gas go down to low pressure, so one is comfortless enough.

You are still always in my prayers.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
8/2/56

My dear Dom Bede—

I have just got yr. letter of Jan. 1st, wh. is full of interest. I am having a copy of the book³² sent you and wd. have done so long ago, but I had lost your address.

Yes, I do feel the old Magdalen years to have been a v. important period in both our lives. More generally, I feel the whole of one's youth to be immensely important and even of immense length. The gradual *reading* of one's own life, seeing the pattern emerge, is a great illumination at our age. And partly, I hope, getting *freed from* the past as past by apprehending it as structure. If ever I write a story about someone like *She*³³ or the Wandering Jew who lived for millenia, I shd. make a great point of this: he wd., after 10,000 years, still feel his first 50 years to be the biggest part of his life. I am glad you found a Chestertonian quality in the book. Actually, it seems to me that one can hardly say anything either bad enough or good enough about life.

The one picture that is utterly false is the supposedly realistic fiction of the XIX century where all the real horrors & heavens are excluded. The reality is a queer mixture of idyll, tragedy, farce, hymn, melodrama: and the characters (even the same characters) far better *and* worse than one ever imagined.

I wd. have preferred yr. book on Mysticism to be a Penguin, for I think they reach a larger audience than anything else. I look forward to it v. much. I think it is just the thing for you to do.³⁴

You are (as you well know) on dangerous ground about Hinduism, but someone must go to dangerous places. One often wonders how different the content of our faith will look when we see it in the total context. Might it be as if one were living on an infinite earth? Further knowledge wd. leave our map of, say, the Atlantic quite *correct*, but if it turned out to be the estuary of a great river—and the continent thro' wh. that river flowed turned out to be itself an island—off the shores of a still greater continent—and so on! You see

what I mean? Not one jot of Revelation will be proved false: but so many new truths might be added.

By the way, that business of having to look up the same word ten times in one evening is no proof of failing powers. You have simply forgotten that it was exactly like that when we began Latin or even French.

Your Hindus certainly sound delightful. But what do they *deny*? That's always been my trouble with Indians—to find any proposition they wd. pronounce false. But truth must surely involve exclusions?

I'm reading Runciman's Hist. of the Crusades:³⁵ a terrible revelation—the old civilisation of the E. Mediterranean destroyed by Turkish barbarians from the East & Frankish barbarians from the West.

Oremus pro invicem.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
9/2/56

Dear Evans

Good heavens, I've done a most frightful thing. I went on to your story (of course) before properly reading the letter—assumed it was spare galleys—and have *torn it up*. I never dreamed of anyone keeping galleys. I'm dreadfully sorry. I think the story will hit the audience you have in view v. well indeed. And I wonder why we have never heard of ice-meteorites before. Of course every particle of water that gets into space must become ice. There may be difficulties I don't see.

I think Verne worst when he is nearest to science-fiction. What is best & most amusing is the Frenchman's dream of the typical Englishman in *Round the World*.³⁶ I can never forgive him for showing us a Subterranean in the *Voyage to the Centre* and then not introducing us.³⁷ The opening of that book is the only one that has for me the authentic thrill.

I tried Fort,³⁸ I think, and couldn't read him.

Well, I'm v. penitent. My gas fire makes no ashes but I can order a little sackcloth.

Yours abjectly
C. S. Lewis

Warnie wrote to Jocelyn Gibb on 9 February 1956:[39](#)

56/101.

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
9th February 1956.

Dear Mr Gibb,
My brother asks me to ask you to send a copy of *Surprised by Joy*
to:—

Dom Bede Griffiths O.S.B.,
Nirmalashram,
Kengeri,
Bangalore, Dt.,
India

With all good wishes
yours sincerely,
W. H. Lewis
BROTHER MYCROFT.

On 8 February 1956 Lewis's literary agent, Spencer Curtis Brown, sent a copy of his new novel, which he was calling 'Bareface', to Jocelyn Gibb. Gibb found aspects of it difficult to understand, and he asked Milton Waldman, literary advisor to Collins Publishers, to read it. Waldman reported to Gibb on 13 February 1956:

I have now finished reading Bareface...and I agree with you that it is excellent. But much more important than this, the whole long episode of the heroine's love for Bardia seems to come as an irrelevant surprise. There is really nothing in the novel to prepare for it and it seems to me to lead to nothing in the latter stages. As a result of it, moreover, a character called Bardia's wife, Ansit, is introduced, and the interview

*between the two women I find of minor interest and an impediment to the story.*⁴⁰

On 15 February 1956 Gibb wrote to Lewis regarding his worries about the book:

First the title. This is a real teaser. 'Bareface' is good in that it puts the weight on the right character and does not give too much to Psyche. I imagine that is why you changed it from 'Psyche' but it's not a good selling title—'C. S. Lewis has now turned to Westerns. I wondered which way he would go and it was not far from children's stories to Red Indians' et cetera...

Secondly, the scene towards the end between Orual and Ansit, Bardia's widow, has been criticized as too much of an anti-climax. It certainly comes as a surprise, but maybe if the surprise were removed the suggestion of anti-climax might go too. I don't see how you can do that without suggesting earlier that the Queen had an earthly love for Bardia, even though unrealized at the time. This would mean too much rewriting. The scene definitely has its place in Orual's spiritual progress and it provides an essential prologue to the 'revelation' at the end. Perhaps it could be shorter...I think maybe the criticism, which was largely Waldman's was prompted by the slowing down of interest after Orual donned the crown.

*I should like to talk with you about the wrapper...What I had in mind was a sparse use of line as Seewald used it but in reverse, not back to front but with a background of colour and the lines coming through it in white and cream. Ungit with a skyline of the Grey Mountain behind?*⁴¹

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
16/2/56

Dear Gibb

Adamant on both points, I fear. I don't see why people (I mean, people who were interested in what I do next) wd. be deterred from buying it if they *did* think it a Western. Actually, I think the title cryptic enough to be intriguing. (The point, of course, is that O. after going literally bareface in her youth, is made really & spiritually bareface, to herself and all the dead, at the end).

As to the other point: am I to understand that you and/or Waldman got as far as O's scene with Bardia's widow without having yet realised that O was, in a most perfectly ordinary, jealous, ravenous, biological fashion, in love with Bardia? If so, you're the first readers to do so.

The fact (p. 138) that when lying back to back with B she had 'another thing'⁴² than Psyche to think of: her instant hatred of B's wife (pp. 153, 160):⁴³ her anger when the Fox belittles B, but not when B. belittles the Fox (pp. 153, 206):⁴⁴ para 2 on p. 193;⁴⁵ the bitter frustration when B. wishes she was a man (para 1, p. 207):⁴⁶ bottom of p. 219; and her tears when B. kisses her hand⁴⁷—did all this go for nothing? Well, if they did, cd. anyone in their senses read pp. 233–6 without seeing it?⁴⁸ And even if all that fails, you have the thing explicitly stated on pp. 243–4.⁴⁹

Did even Peggy W. not see?⁵⁰ Every woman reader so far has. Certainly no re-writing wd. help. If your reaction is that of most readers, we must tear the book up. Do, if you can spare the time, re-read the passages I have mentioned.

I'd approve some such jacket as you suggest, but wd. like to see a rough sketch first. Perhaps the shapeless Ungit stone (with faint suggestion of a horrible, old-woman's face in it) and beside it the new statue of Aphrodite (v. stiff & doll-like—like early Aeginetan sculpture)⁵¹ and mountain line in the back?

Tell Milton I'm ashamed of him!

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD FREDERICK YORKE (W): [52](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
16/2/56

Dear Mr. Yorke

And I too am sorry—sorry my dilatory habits as a correspondent made it seem I was waiting to have my postage paid!

I don't feel I can do a preface: [53](#) not because I disagree with what you say but because I have written too many prefaces, and of course they thus lose whatever value they might have had.

With many apologies.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO PHILINDA KRIEG (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
16/2/56

Dear Mrs. Krieg

You and Miss Wood seem to have the right idea!⁵⁴ I should even be surprised if the children themselves saw more difficulty in the second question about Isaiah than in the first. Probably they wrote down 'Because he was a man of unclean lips etc'.⁵⁵ After all, that is why he said he was undone. (V. likely some of them, having been scolded for not washing their teeth, think Isaiah was repenting the same sin? Which, in its simple situation, may be closer to certain aspects of O.T. conscience than all the comments of 'a bench of bishops').

What to do about adolescence, I've no idea: except a recurrent bachelor's wonder how any one has the nerve to produce and bring up a child at all—yet quite ordinary people seem to do it quite well. Perhaps the uneducated do it best v. often. I suppose they don't attempt to replace Providence as to the Destiny, but just carry on from day to day on ordinary principles of affection, justice, veracity, and humour.

By the way, my *Xtian Behaviour*, if suited for anyone (of which I'm no judge) is quite as suitable for 16 year-olds as for anyone else. Of course one does at that age believe anyone rather than one's parents. The hard thing is that (after childhood) parents seem usually to be most appreciated when they're dead. I find so many terms of expression etc of my father's coming out in me and *like* it now—I'd have fought against it as long as he was alive.

Give my love to Laurence.

Yours most sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalene,
Cambridge.
19/2/56

My dear Arthur—

‘Revelations’ about you in *S. by J.*! What if I’d made a few more?

I didn’t know Ramsay. I think the evidence for suicide pretty weak.⁵⁶ King’s Chapel is under repairs. He might easily have gone up to look at the work—squeezed half his body out thro’ that hole to see one particular place—lost his head—and slipped through. If one can get one’s shoulders thro’ an opening, the rest of one will follow easily.

W. was pleased with yr. remarks about his book.⁵⁷

Where you will, next summer. All love.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
21/2/56

Dear Gibb

I can't do it in 50 words but the enclosed (about 120) is exactly what I shd. like. Wd. it serve your purpose?⁵⁸

If Milton wants to look at the MS. again, let him. By the way, I suppose you have looked at the page-numbers to make sure you have the MS. complete? It occurred to me after writing my last letter that possibly a whole chapter was missing. (Bles was on the point of sending an incomplete MS. of *The Lion* to press when I detected the fact!) I suppose we are not committed to a title till we reach the page-proof stage? I might still think of one that wd. please us both Yours

C. S. Lewis

P.S. I hope Milton is not hurt by my last letter. The P.S.'s were only intended as badinage—but it struck me afterwards that perhaps they were too much in a *gout anglais*.⁵⁹ He's a man I greatly like and wouldn't for the world offend him.

In one sense the author has worked on this book most of his life, for this re-interpretation of an old story (readers need not know which when they begin) had lived with him and pestered him to make it ever since he was an undergraduate. Suddenly, last spring, the form presented itself. All came into focus, and had drawn into it many sympathies that had found no vehicle in earlier books—for the ugly woman, the barbarous idolater, the humane sceptic, and (above all) the friends and lovers of those who have a vocation or even a faith.

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
23/2/56

My dear Roger

On May 28th I'll be (D.V.) at B & B as usual about 11.30 and catch the 2.28 back to here. Can you accompany me back, lie here (after dining, of course!) and breakfast?

Bacchae at the Arts last night simply overwhelming. [60](#)

Yours

Jack

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
24/2/56

Dear McCallum

Thanks for the cuttings⁶¹—none v. sour, as you say, but some v. silly. Yes, thanks: continue sending. I'd better see them than not.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
28/2/56

My dear Chad

Behold the Glory is miles and away the best book you have yet given us. It both gave me pleasure and did me good.⁶² The bit I needed most (though not the best bit in itself) was the defence of politicians, carefully distinguished from their betters but acknowledged on their own day-to-day level.⁶³ I also thought, if I may say so without impertinence, that the actual writing showed a great advance in individuality, rhythm, and precision. I think you have come a long way since you wrote the book about me (though, to be sure, you now have a better subject!). You are, as always, kind to me in the note at the end:⁶⁴ I rejoice (not solely, I believe, thro' vanity) to have had a finger in the pie and to recognise also the finger of Buber and (am I right) Charles W. I like to feel we're all 'in a tale...'

Joy G. is very down on her luck at having just been given notice to quit her house: more depressed than I have ever known her—as a comparatively small knock does sometimes have a surprisingly severe effect when it comes after many harder ones and a period of what looked like being settled weather has intervened. You know the feeling. So a cheery letter wd. be a charitable act.

We are emerging (at least I hope we are) from the extreme discomforts wh. always arise when this country gets a taste of real winter. My brother is well and joins me in greetings. Remember me to your wife and the girls, and bring them all here again soon.

Why, bless me, the purpose of this letter was to thank you for the book, which I see I've quite forgotten to do. Well, thank you very much. I hope it will have a *succes fou*.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
29/2/56

Dear Fowler—

I couldn't understand *Park*⁶⁵—I don't mean the *Inhalt*⁶⁶ or anything so ambitious as that but simply what the characters were talking about from moment to moment nor (often) which of them was talking. I shan't be in Oxford till Sat-week, so if there is any hurry about *Islandia*⁶⁷ you'd better recover it.⁶⁸

Auden is a Christian and a Tolkienian,⁶⁹ and so far good; but he is rather a pansy. About his abilities as a lecturer I've no information. I didn't vote myself, not being v. attracted by any of the candidates. I wd. have been for Coghill if the Starkey hadn't v. cleverly forestalled that plan.⁷⁰

Is Research at Redbrick any worse than at Oxford? You don't mention (what I want to hear of most) your own story.⁷¹

I go to Edinburgh to-morrow to give the Scott oration.⁷²

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
29/2/56

Dear Gibb

One other possible title has occurred to me: *Till we have Faces*. (My heroine says in one passage 'How can the gods meet us face to face till we have faces').⁷³ I must, however, warn you that no one on whom I've tried it thinks it an improvement on *Bareface*.⁷⁴

What about having 'A Myth re-told' in the running headline? A page without one looks a little utilitarian & niggardly.

I'm not quite happy about that blurb of mine. Does it have to be 'firm' at once?

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

[Magdalene College,
Cambridge.]
29/2/56

Dear Gibb—

I think this is better than the form you have. Unless you strongly disagree, substitute it.⁷⁵

This re-interpretation of an old story has lived in the author's mind, thickening and hardening with the years, ever since he was an undergraduate. That way, he could be said to have worked at it most of his life. Last spring what seemed to be the right form presented itself and themes suddenly interlocked: the straight tale of barbarism, the mind of an ugly woman, dark idolatry and thin enlightenment at war with each other and with vision, and the havoc which a vocation, or even a faith, works on human life.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
4/3/56

Dear Mary Willis

I thought the boot was on the other foot and that I had in fact written to you since you wrote to me—congratulating you on the new job which seemed such an answer to your prayers and those of your friends.

Well, what is my news? A good deal of it is probably not interesting. I was v. excited by seeing a performance of the *Bacchae*, but Greek plays aren't up your street. I've just been in Edinburgh to speak at the annual dinner of the Walter Scott Club: but unless you happen to be a reader of Scott there's no point in telling you that the Provost of Edinburgh⁷⁶ (who sat next to me) was *exactly* like Bailie Nichol Jarvie out of *Rob Roy*. The Scotch run awfully true to type and never change. Edinburgh is a wonderful city, with a castle on a crag and mountains beyond it all visible from the main street. (I imagine Quebec being a bit like it, but I may be all wrong).

We've lived thro' 3 weeks (for us) v. severe frost, but to day is the first of spring: warm sunshine, pure blue sky, and all the birds singing like mad.

My new book went to press last week. It is the story of Cupid & Psyche told by one of the sisters—so that I believe I've done what no mere male author has done before, talked thro' the mouth of, & lived in the mind of, an *ugly* woman for a whole book. All female readers so far have approved the feminine psychology of it: i.e. no masculine note intrudes. I think that's about all that has happened to me. This is the eighth letter this (Sunday) morning. What Sabbath-breach!

I hope all continues to go well.

Yours sincerely

Jack Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
4/3/56

Dear Gibb

No, we won't put in *and clever*: reviewers might say they didn't see the cleverness. And we can't have *sophistry* because it isn't true. The Fox wasn't sophisticated. You can have pale instead of thin if you like: otherwise *stet*.

Oddly enough I believe I know the exact man for that BBC [job]⁷⁷—Goodridge (I've forgotten the initials) who was a pupil of mine at Magdalen.⁷⁸ (You can get his address from the College Office, Magdalen: tell them you mean the one who read English, for fear of homonyms). He was the very best secretary of the Socratic Club we ever had and the amount of work he put into it, arranging speakers and writing précis of papers for the Minutes (wh. were often far better than the papers themselves) was the reason why he got only a 4th in English. I'm not trying to sell you the man through friendship: it is simply that his whole undergraduate career was the unconscious preparation for exactly this job. Who's doing what in contemporary theology, the whole patchwork from RC's to Salvation Army, is the v. air he breathes. He may be a bit younger than your friend wants, but he is, and always was, as mature as the South Downs. Quite easy to get on with, but a massive man. Also, however little he may like his present job (I don't know what it is) you may be quite sure that he wouldn't accept this unless he thought it was a real vocation. There's not a grain of careerism about him.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO BARBARA HALPERN (BBC):[79](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
4/3/56

Dear Mrs Halpern

Thank you for the invitation but I can't contribute to 'Your Living Thoughts'. No doubt others have told you that the shorter the talk the longer and harder it is to prepare.

With regards.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):[80](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
7/3/56

Dear Miss Dunbar—

It is magnanimous of you to supply me with all the ammunition I lacked. I think we can now agree that the text is 'patient' both of your interpretation and of mine. We know from Dante that Statius got to heaven: if we ever get there we can ask him which he meant.[81](#) I hope my (till you intervened) untroubled certainty about my own view will now appear to you, not more justified but more natural & venial, as a result of coming to the passage *in situ* and already full of Statius, who, as you have taught me, is rather fond of the meton. use of this word. I might have been unconsciously influenced by the earlier instances.

I passed your eponymous town[82](#) on my way back from Edinburgh last week.

With very many thanks—your vigilance is just what I need.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

P.S. You cd. have had this sooner if I had not inadvertently addressed it to Oxford!—and got it back through the dead letter office on Saturday.

TO MRS JOHNSON (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
13/3/56

Dear Mrs Johnson—

You'll find my views about drinks in *Christian Behaviour*.⁸³ Our Lord wd. not have made miraculous wine at Cana⁸⁴ if the Lord meant us to be tee-totallers. See also Matt xi. 19.⁸⁵ Smoking is much harder to justify. I'd like to give it up but I'd find this v. hard, i.e. I *can* abstain, but I can't concentrate on anything else while abstaining—not-smoking is a whole time job.

Birth control I won't give a view on: I'm certainly not prepared to say that it is always wrong. The doctrines about the Blessed Virgin which you mention are R.C. doctrines aren't they? And as I'm not an R.C. I don't see that I need bother about them. But the habit (of various Protestant sects) of plastering the landscape with religious slogans about the Blood of the Lamb etc. is a different matter. There is no question here of doctrinal difference: we agree with the doctrines they are advertising. What we disagree with is their *taste*. Well, let's go on disagreeing but don't let's *judge*. What doesn't suit us may suit possible converts of a different type.

My model here is the behaviour of the congregation at a 'Russian Orthodox' service, where some sit, some stand, some kneel, some lie on their faces, some walk about, and *no one takes the slightest notice of what anyone else is doing*. That is good sense, good manners, and good Christianity. 'Mind one's own business' is a good rule in religion as in other things.

Don't bother sending me any reviews. I get them all. The photo of me lighting a pipe⁸⁶ is (as usual) said by some of my friends to be exactly like me, but by others to be wholly unrecognisable. The reason we don't heat our houses is that you can't get much fuel even if you can afford it. All your

news is v. good and I give thanks for you many times a day. Keep on, keep on: 'To him that overcometh I will give the Morning Star.'⁸⁷ All blessings.

Yours very sincerely
C. S. Lewis

The final Narnian story, The Last Battle: A Story for Children, was published by The Bodley Head of London on 19 March 1956.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
19/3/56

Dear Mary Willis

A line in haste about the bits underlined in your letter (wh. I enclose for reference). Don't be too easily convinced that God really wants you to do all sorts of work you needn't do. Each must do his duty 'in that state of life to which God has called him'. Remember that a belief in the virtues of doing for doing's sake is characteristically feminine, characteristically American, and characteristically modern: so that *three* veils may divide you from the correct view!

There can be intemperance in work just as in drink. What feels like zeal may be only fidgets or even the flattering of one's self-importance. As MacDonald says 'In holy things may be unholy greed.'⁸⁸ And by doing what 'one's station and its duties' does not demand, one can make oneself less fit for the duties it *does* demand, and so commit some injustice. Just you give Mary a little chance as well as Martha!

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
20/3/56

Dear Mary Willis

I don't know what 'high-hatting' means, but it is in this country a safe bet that 999 out of a 1000 people have no use for Scott:⁸⁹ and the more high-brow they are, the safer. He is despised by everyone (except a few old fogies like myself) in England.

I didn't say 'great plays', I said GREEK plays (this is the trouble about my handwriting).⁹⁰ It is not offensive to assume that a lady doesn't read Greek—not even in a University town! And I have no 'cultural activities'. I like the *Bacchae* because it's exciting, not because it is—loathsome word!—'cultured'. In fact, you misunderstood my letter.

All the best.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
22/3/56

Dear Gibb

I think you are clearly right in not centre-ing the headlines.⁹¹ The distinction between Roman on the left and italics⁹² on the right has one merit—it in some sort serves instead of the colon (which, I agree wd. have got tiresome) and prevents one from reading both headlines as a continuous phrase. But there's no doubt that on purely visual grounds italics for both might be better.

There is a third alternative: italics for both, no colon, and each on the outside of the page (too far apart to look like a phrase)—in which case of course you'd put page numbers at the bottom⁹³

I leave the final decision to you: but at the moment rather fancy this third suggestion.

I'll go through G.D.⁹⁴ and let you have it back in a few days.

Thanks for the Roger Lloyd article which I had not seen.⁹⁵

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns
24/3/56

Dear Gibb

The corrections are on the final end-leaf.

I share your growing dislike of BAREFACE in rom., but don't see any point in large italics. I may feel different when I see it, though.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
[March 1956]

Dear Chad—

Right. I'll do what I can about W. Lea.

I have an idea that *Nellie and the F.C.*⁹⁶ has not reached Joy yet, but I'll ask her when next we meet.

I shd. think your decision to begin *Saul* in prose is right. If an idea doesn't demand a particular metre—if the tune is not in one's head as soon as—or even before—the myth, is this not a sign one shd. use prose? For metre (as distinct from the perfecting of the given metre) 'cometh not by observation'.⁹⁷ I am glad to hear you contemplate another visit to England.

Love to all.

Yours

Jack

TO MARTIN KILMER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
26/3/56

Dear Martin Kilmer

It was nice to hear from you, and I know very well what it's like when there's always something to do! The funny thing is that I was far worse about writing letters when I had far fewer to write: now that I have such a lot to write I've just got to do them all at once, first thing every morning.

I *am* sorry for you having been bandaged all those months. Did it *itch* dreadfully under the bandage where one can't get at it? I know I did when I was bandaged for ages after my wound in the first war. But it's lovely when at last you do get it off: seeing your own skin again is almost like meeting an old friend!

I suppose your exam is all over by now. I hope you did v. well in it and that you will like the new school.

Give my love to all the others. We are all well. We're bringing up a (ginger) kitten at present and it behaves very like your Deborah.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Dear Owen

I now propose myself for lunch on Wed. April 4th, Athenaeum at 1 o'clock. Alright?

I enclose notes on your v. exciting book.⁹⁸ It is full (of course) of sap and strength, and v. much yours: no one else could have done it. The criticism I think you must fear is that you argue much more to prove the merely idolic nature of our 'world' as now envisaged than to prove that the unrepresented is what you claim it to be. It might not be all you say it isn't without being what you say it is. You will also see from the notes that in one place I want much more documentation.

But its worst fault is being clothed up in a ruddy great container wh. prevents me putting it in an envelope. Drat you! If you were a girl with her first book 'twould be pardonable.

Yours

Jack

*Scholia in lib. de Idololatria*⁹⁹

P. 6, para 3, l. 3 *creatures*. Why not *men* or *people*? Also *to...for whom* is rather clumsy.¹⁰⁰

P. 8. para 1, last l. but three. *willing*. Read *will*? P. 9 penult. l. *through the senses*¹⁰¹ Does this do justice to the account of ‘hearing a thrush sing’¹⁰² on p. 8?

P. 11, l. 6. *solidity*. One thinks of a jdgmt. like ‘This is solid ice now, so à *fortiori* it must have been solid 3 hours ago before the sun got on it.’ No doubt this can be coped with, but oughtn’t you to cope? perhaps in a footnote.¹⁰³

P. 14, para 2, l. 9. *metaphysics*. Hardly in the Aristotelian sense. Suggest *of some part of philosophy* or of epistemology PP. 15–17. Excellent.

P. 27, l. 2. But are we (except in β -thinking) conscious of contact thro’ the senses? I think I’m usually conscious simply of the representation (this pen). Cf. P. 33.¹⁰⁴

Para 3. l2 *begins*. Suggest it began before language. Do you mean this?

P. 25. para 2, l. 7. *thought*. Perhaps *being thought*.

P. 27. A v. helpful summary.

P. 30. end of para 2. You don’t seem to me to have said anything up to date wh. wd. give the words ‘faithful’ and ‘unfaithful’ any meaning as applied to the relation between the unrepresented and anyone’s experience. (And I begin to wonder whether the terminology is sound. Does a ‘representation’ represent anything? If so, what? If it represents τὰ ὄντα¹⁰⁵ why are they ‘unrepresented’.¹⁰⁶

P. 33 para 2, l.5. *We in our case*. Blush for shame and read *we*

P. 38. last line. *that is participated*. To make the syntax less ambiguous, read *i.e. participated*. (By the bye, there are far too many rhymes all over the place: often easily avoidable).¹⁰⁷

P. 39 l. 9 *the contrary view*. What is that? Are you identifying or contrasting ‘ancient Gk’ with ‘early a’? The whole para. is difficult & cd. bear re-writing.

P. 44, l. 12. *Glibly*. Provocative, *usé*, and bad tactics. [Delete]

P. 46, l. 6. *presumed*. A tricky word. It might be said that the ὑποθέσεις¹⁰⁸ were *pre-sumed* (for purposes of that inquiry) to be true. Wd 'not claimed' or 'not necessarily accepted' be clearer?

1. 10. Did A. mean participation, or just 'v. good a thinking'?

P. 47. You *may* be right but I don't know that you are, never having myself read any passage by a med. author wh. makes it clear that he regarded Ptolemaic astronomy as a mere hypothesis. (Of course Copernicus did so regard *his* theory). Nor do you advance any evidence.¹⁰⁹ Perhaps it's all in Duhem. If so, quote it. I mean quote his evidence, not merely his conclusion. We simply must have proof-texts here. Otherwise it might be the point at which a serious reader ceased reading.¹¹⁰

P. 51 para 1. penult l. *essential* Cd. we have some more illuminating adjective?

P. 54. l. 3 *et passim. Technology*. This usually means not the kind of knowledge Bacon sought but the operations & practical devices for operation based on that kind of knowledge. Your wider use cd. be justified, but does it promote clarity?¹¹¹

P. 55. para 2, l. 12. *nature*. The reader's mind will at once fly to the arch-idol. Tho' not logically obliged, you wd. be didactically well advised, to put '*nature*' and (a) perhaps add a footnote sending him back to earlier passages.¹¹²

P. 56. 2. l. 2. *foundation. character? bias? status? function?*

P. 62. l. 3. *which has...since*. Text wrong?

P. 63. l. 10. *the phenomenon*. Since asses use the word as a synonym for 'fact', someone will think you mean the 'phenomenon' (fact) just referred to. Cd. be avoided by writing *phenomena* and keeping the whole sentence thereafter in the plural.¹¹³

P. 65. V. good.

P. 74. l. 7. *it follows*. Does it? Ought you to help us a bit?

P. 76. para. 2. Only fair to add that most Med. people did *not* share Erigena's view on this (or on a lot of things)?¹¹⁴

P. 82. para. 2. This cd. be cavilled at. Bring in the IV contraries?¹¹⁵

P. 84. But Med. people *did* speak of the soul as imprisoned in the body, didn't they? (This whole chapter seems to me too slight and too little documented).

P. 86. l. 5. *cor: homo: homo: mundus*. Where do you get this from? Tellus can be the 'suburbs' of the cosmos. I v. much doubt if you're right.

P. 91. l. 11. *Summa*. An incomplete reference. *Quota pars?*¹¹⁶

P. 92. ll. 8–10. *but it...got them*. Omit. Will be used against you.

ll. 14–16. *After this...compounded*. Omit.

P. 94. l. 11. *strange Persephone*. Omit. Will rouse suspicions. Anyway, in many works N. is not made at all like Persephone.¹¹⁷ More like the Wyf of Bath!¹¹⁸

P. 95. l. 6. *this*. Which?

l. 13. *the allegorical*. But is not this name used both (a.) for all the non-literal senses (b.) and for *one* of them?

P. 96. penult. l. *Being*. Too vague in Eng. *Ens? Essentia? Substantia?*

P. 97. *actualises...the being of God*. But if God is *actus purus*¹¹⁹ how can creatures actualise Him?¹²⁰

End of para. 1. Has *species* 2 senses in Aquinas—a. *Medium genus*. b. Appearance (*species visibiles* etc). And is this the second?

P. 102. That's me, I warrant you.¹²¹

P. 109. So some can steal horses while others mayn't look over a gate.

P. 126. para 3. l. 2. *centred round*. Fie! *Centred on* or *revolving round*.

P. 147. l. 11. *high or even eschatological*. I suspect you cd. find some more informative adjectives.

P. 150. l. 5. *poets are*. Text right? I thought it was *poesie is*.¹²²

P. 153. (*et passim*) para. 2. l. 9. *directionally creator relation*.¹²³ And you used to be connected with S.P.A.!¹²⁴ Do find something less barbarous. (It is not even v. clear).

P. 157. V. good.

P. 165. para 2. l. 4. *not a...existence*. Perhaps this needs expansion. For of course your opponents wd. not claim there was any transition from not-being to being, and wd. (in their own sense) admit that whatever becomes actual was previously potential.¹²⁵

P. 168. l. 4. *earth*. From here onwards you begin to use *earth* in contexts where you have taught us to expect *nature*. This will arouse suspicion or at least bewilderment: and the wholly unexpected appearance of Sol (p. 210) will aggravate both. Is there any reason for the transition from *nature* to *earth*? If so, then...you must explain.

P. 169. By the way, ought it somewhere to be explained how it comes about that idolised phenomena *are* so useful in operation?

P. 174. para. 2. l. 7. *going forward*. In itself a legitimate synonym for *taking place, happening* etc. But here you're already talking about 'going

forward' (in time) and 'reverting', so it helps to muddle one.

P. 177. l. 16. Splendid definition of space!

P. 188. para. 2. Splendid. How beautifully you hold the balance.

Pp. 190–1. Good on Fundamentalism.

P. 191. 7 ll. After quotation. *that, to read that to.*

Tragedy of progress. V. good.

P. 209. para. 2, last l. [Delete] the! (looks childish or skittish). P. 212. Have you made sure of the dates? I rather think the Psalm may be later than the Isaiah passage (Of course it makes no difference to the argument, but one may as well get it right).

P. 222. para. 3. l. 3. *not turned off at the tap when.* You realise that all R.C.'s will reply 'That's just what we've been saying for centuries'?[126](#)

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
29/3/56

Dear George—

I have kept you waiting for a day or so, I'm afraid, trying to see if I cd. see how things wd. pan out. The truth is that I've a number of things to be done between now and term none of which can be quite definitely fixed yet, so I must deny myself the very great pleasure which you and Moira once more offer me. You're both inexhaustible in hospitality.

I hope to be available in certain parts of the Long. For next term—the only other guest I'm expecting will be on Mon. May 28th. So take your choice. Come on a Monto B&B and drive us to Cambridge, or better still come on a Sat, spend week end here, and *then* we'll go to C. on the Monday. (There shall be a new mattress for the spare bed—Joy Gresham told us the truth about it, which your courtesy concealed!) Don't bother posting the books, bring 'em when you come.

I wish you cd. have seen the *Bacchae* last term. *T & Cressida* was superbly done but is a rotten play—Shakespeare at his worst can defeat any actors and any producer.

Love to both—and Schwanda.

Yours

Jack

TO MRS R. E. HALVORSON (L, WHL):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
March 1956

Dear Mrs. Halvorson

I am glad to hear that you are still numbered among my enthusiastic readers. Concerning hymn singing and organ playing: if they have been helpful and edified anyone, then the fact that they set my teeth on edge is infinitely unimportant.

One must first distinguish the effect which music has on people like me who are musically illiterate and get only the emotional effect, and that which it has on real musical scholars who perceive the structure and get an intellectual satisfaction as well.

Either of these effects is, I think, ambivalent from the religious point of view: i.e. *each* can be a preparation for or even a medium for meeting God but can also be a distraction and impediment. In that respect music is not different from a good many other things, human relations, landscape, poetry, philosophy. The most relevant one is wine which can be used sacramentally or for getting drunk or neutrally.

I think every *natural* thing which is not in itself sinful can become the servant of the spiritual life, but none is automatically so. When it is not, it becomes either just trivial (as music is to millions of people) or a dangerous idol. The emotional effect of music may be not only a distraction (to some people at some times) but a delusion: i.e. feeling certain emotions in church they mistake them for religious emotions when they may be wholly natural. That means that even genuinely religious emotion is only a servant. No soul is saved by having it or damned by lacking it. The love we are commanded to have for God and our neighbour is a state of the *will*, not of the affections (though if they ever also play their part so much the better). So that the test of music or religion or even visions if one has them is always the same—do they make one more obedient, more God-centred, and neighbour-centred and *less self-centred*? ‘Though I speak with the tongues of Bach and Palestrina and have not charity etc.’!¹²⁷

TO JULIE HALVORSON (WHL):[128](#)

[March 1956]

Dear Julie Halvorson

Thank you for the most charming letter I have received in a long time. It made me very happy.

I am also glad that your class has been enjoying the Narnian stories. But especially am I happy that you know who Aslan is. Never forget Him.

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
2/4/56

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

Thanks for your letter of the 17th. I don't know that we do differ in principle about the connection between mental & bodily health. Everyone wd. admit it in general. Each particular case, however, must be taken on its own merits.

I am so glad that all goes well with Genia and her family. And I've no doubt she *will* send me a photo of the new baby. Sweet innocent!—no mother will ever understand that all babies look identical (and all hideous!) to an elderly bachelor. But don't tell her I said so.

Yes, certainly the thing is always to be seeking God's way—and I wish I lived up to this. As the author of the *Imitation* says 'If you seek Jesus in all things you will find Him in all things: and if you seek yourself in all things you will find yourself, to your undoing.'¹²⁹

I thought there was an influence from me (and from Charles Williams) in C. Walsh's last book,¹³⁰ but there was plenty of himself too. It is *much* his best so far, don't you think?

I'm a little, not unamusedly, surprised that my *S. by J.* causes you envy. I doubt if you wd. really have enjoyed my life much more than your own. And the whole modern world ludicrously over-values books and learning and what (I loathe the word) they call 'culture'. And of course 'culture' itself is the greatest sufferer by this error: for second things are always corrupted when they are put first.¹³¹ Never forget this: souls are immortal, and your children & grandchildren will still be alive when my books have, like the Galaxy and Nature herself, passed away.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MURIEL BRADBROOK (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
4th April 1956.

Dear Dr Bradbrook,

Would you (you certainly could) do anything for this ‘poor Indian’? Elizabethan tragedy etc is up your street, and not at all up mine. Of course he *has* no claim on me, and *makes* none on you, so if it is a bother, just return his letter. Oh Research, Research.

Mrs Madge¹³² writes some very good poetry, does’nt she?

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
9th April 1956.

Dear George,

Grand. I expect you on April the 28th, and then all as you say.

Yours,
Jack (pro per Warnie)

(I’ve taken steps to get a new mattress for the spare room! Love to you both.) **TO KATHLEEN RAINE (BOD):**¹³³

As from Magdalene College
11/4/56

Dear Mrs. Madge

I've been reading your poems.¹³⁴ They are like a combined bathe and drink (you know—all pores and mouth open at once) that I once had on a walk in the Highlands: cold, bright, and yet with a dash of the dark earth-taste in them. I congratulate you. Philosophically (as you will guess) I am in much disagreement, which I've twisted into the enclosed—an exercise in *asprezza*¹³⁵—you know, Della Scala in Thing-ummy's book on Milton's sonnets,¹³⁶ and all that.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

(LEWIS—my signature isn't usually so illegible. Perhaps I am drunk with the poems!)

*Who knows if the isolation, the compact, firm-shaped
Dividual selving and peculiar of blood and breath
(Oh skull-roofed thought, oh rib-caged love!) can be escaped
By such an old, simple expedient as death?*

*How if this were the arena, not the prison? If here,
Focus'd at last, hence conquerable, hand to hand
That Retiarius¹³⁷ meets us with his net and spear,
And now's our chance to kill him, on this hot, dry sand?*

*Here he takes form: elsewhere he's a pervasive poison,
Masses compete: each flower is militant: the trees,
Lacking eyes, cannot cool their souls on the horizon:
Sap is dark will that works and neither loves nor sees,*

*And the grave, though not a fine, is a most private, place;
Two bodies can't (all souls could) occupy all space.¹³⁸*

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
11/4/56

Dear Gibb—

Thanks for cheque (£378–11–6). Like you I dazzle at all the specimen pages and distrust my own judgement. Not surprisingly (for an old proverb says ‘The crow thinks her own chicks white’) I prefer F. And I’m afraid I like E least. But I’m no judge, so give me a vote (but no more) in your council.

I’m afraid both the wrapper designs are, from my point of view, fatal. I have great sympathy with the artist in such a predicament, for he is asked to express essentially literary or philosophical (not pictorial) ideas by authors ignorant of design. He might be a v. good artist and fail, or refuse. If so, let’s have no pictorial wrapper at all.

In both his draughts Ungit is shown with feet, hopping about, rather like a bear. But the text says she (or it) was a stone thrust up from underground—an outcropping. Immobility is essential.¹³⁹ And the Aphrodite doesn’t look nearly enough like a statue: and she is far too sexy and primitive to contrast with Ungit.

She ought to look like a v. glib, bright, doll-like stone image: inferior work in the late-ish Greek tradition. Very few curves: her rigidity must contrast with the billowy, bread-like curves of the Ungit stone. And fully draped, the drapery done in stiff, highly conventional folds—at most like flutings (it’s v. doubtful if the nude statues of goddesses were ever seen nude by anyone except their priestesses—don’t you remember a robe being presented to Pallas in the *Iliad*?)¹⁴⁰ If it’s not too costly a *colour* (or at least tone) contrast wd. help—the Ungit-stone dark, the statue white or off-white, perhaps with a doll-like blob of red on each cheek. Oh if only I cd. draw! But I send my idea. The hands & forearms held out as if carrying an invisible tray (palms upward) do occur in Aeginetan statues¹⁴¹—but I don’t insist on them. Do you begin to see what I’m after?

I suppose Biggs isn’t a Classic by any chance?¹⁴² If he is, tell him he is being asked to do contrasted portraits of ΠΕΡΟΑΣ¹⁴³ and τὸ ἄπειρον.¹⁴⁴ Anyway, here are the qualities (and dash it, they *are* plastic as well as literary)—

The Stone

Billowy
Indefinite

The Statue

Rigid
Definite

Ugly	Pretty-pretty
Suggestive of life	Dead as a Dutch doll
Dark	Light
Sexy	Only in the sense of trying to be pretty
Old	New
Barbarous	Thinks itself v. civilised and up-to-date
Rising out of the Earth	On a pedestal
Living rock.	Cut stone.

Finally couldn't we—oh, please, couldn't we—have the letters *across* the spine so that you don't have to rubber-neck to read it when it is standing in a shelf? I know you'll say there isn't room, but there always was room on the thinnest book till a few years ago and this new horror is only a fashion—
Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO A LADY (P): [145](#)

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
13/4/56

Dear Madam

I have read your thesis and (so far as the subject of it can judge) it seems to me a very good piece of work indeed. You understand the books better than anyone else who has written about them. I have pencilled a few things in the margin. Some of them corrections of your (rare and minor) slips in English, which, in general, you write very well. The curious, recurrent *intimates*, where you must mean *initiates* is probably the typist's error.

You wisely avoid 'sources' and 'influences'. But, for your own pleasure, I hope you will read the novels of Charles Williams, J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, and Geo. MacDonald's fantasies and fairy tales.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
15/4/56

A visit this morning, quotha, and term to begin next week! I am not, as you are, Retired Leisure taking his pleasure in Trim Gardens.¹⁴⁶ Less easy sits the rump that holds a Chair.¹⁴⁷

But I should have told you this at once instead of waiting ten days. Last week was a blaze of small jobs: all the engagements that ought to have been distributed over the Vac. crowded into the last week—and a letter, once put aside masquerades as being ‘a day or two’ old till you sit down to answer it and are astonished at its date. Apologies to both, and commend me heartily to your good Lady. I hope to see you and Owen at Magdalene this term. Perhaps by then Spring will no longer exist only to the eye *Nicholas Nicholby*¹⁴⁸ really is the most frightful nonsense—but I’m enjoying it at the moment.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
15/4/56

Dear Mary Willis

Thank you for your letter of the 31st and for the enclosed poem, which I enjoyed. I think it brings all the threads together well. The complexity—the close texture—of all the great events in the Christian year impresses me more and more. Each is a window opening on the total mystery.

I sympathise with you for the unnamed shock you speak of, without the least inquisitiveness as to its nature: being sure your own decision (not to tell it) was right. Except when speaking to one's Confessor, Doctor, or Lawyer (where the opposite holds) I suppose the rule is 'When in doubt, don't tell.' At least I have nearly always regretted doing the opposite and never once regretted holding my tongue. (Talking too much is one of my vices, by the way).

About prayer (for others) and suffering for others there's a lot scattered through 2d Corinthians which is well worth meditation.

The reviews of *S. by J* (Don't bother sending them—I get them) *are* funny. The sheer errors of fact—not to go into misunderstandings—*wd.* ruin a candidate in the most elementary exam I know!

The spring *looks* lovely thru' windows here but remains bitterly cold. I go back to Cambridge the day after to-morrow.

All blessings.

Yours

Jack

Lewis began the Easter Term of 1956 with a series of twice-weekly lectures entitled 'Some Difficult Words'. His first lecture on 19 April was on the word 'Nature', and during the rest of the 1956 term and the Easter Terms of the next three years he covered the words 'Sad', 'Wit', 'Free', 'Sense', 'Simple', 'Conscious' and 'Conscience'. It seems to have been his intention almost from the first to publish the lectures, and they eventually came out under the title Studies in Words.

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):[149](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
20/4/56

Dear Miss Dunbar—

I think you'll find *χρύσω χρυσοτέρω* in Sappho alright.[150](#) The people who wonder if *φύσις* [151](#) is really from *φύω* [152](#) are worried about the quantity of the? I believe. I mentioned the *sens. obsc.* [153](#) of the English word 'nature', and said that *γένος* [154](#) was the (ordinary) Gk. for sex. I don't think this contradicts any of the things you have told me. So whisht with your clavers—

*Nan est doctior omnibus puellis,
Formidabilior fera Camilla,
Xanthippe magis impotens loquela
Audax, garrula, pertinax, proterva,
Trux, torva, Eumenidum comes sororum,
Momi filia Zoilique mater,
Scribens horrida, κάρδαμα βλέπουσα,
Per quam non licet esse negligentem.*

*[Nan is more learned than all the girls,
More formidable than fierce Camilla;[155](#)
More unable to shut up than Xanthippe,[156](#)
Bold, garrulous, obstinate, aggressive,
Fierce, grim comrade of the sister Furies,[157](#)*

*Momus's daughter,^{[158](#)} Zoilus' mother,^{[159](#)}
Writing alarmingly, with watercress-sharp glare,
She does not allow you to be careless.]^{[160](#)}*

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
20/4/56

Dear Gibb

Yes, this is much better but I agree that Ungit does not stand out enough. I don't want her to be white, though. Wd. it increase costs to give her a *lurid red* outline with perhaps a lop-sided patch of red on her top and dribbles of blood running down from it? That wd. be ideal. But if that is too expensive—*either*

a. White outline, but no white surface *or*

b. Simply soft-pedal (even, if necessary, delete) the mountain background and make the lines—by whatever means—*bolder*

I still feel no objection to *Bareface*. But McCallum liked (you don't) *Till We Have Faces*. Settle it between you. All I insist is that the book must have the same title in England & America.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO NAN DUNBAR (P): PC

Magdalene
23/4/56

I will certainly come—did you think I was *afraid*.¹⁶¹ Will Fri. May 4th
suit you? Don't bother replying if it *will*. About 4 o'clock. And many
thanks—^Ω was a plain howler.

C.S.L.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
23/4/56

Dear Gibb

Something v. queer in the textual history of *The Great Divorce*. In my copy (Bles, 1945) p. 9, l. 6 read (correctly) FOUND.¹⁶² What text reads ROUND? You can't be working from the American edn? Anyway FOUND is right. But all the Shakespearian scholars in the world have never faced so mysterious a *crux* as this.¹⁶³

Yes. Certainly *A Myth Re-told* as sub-title whichever title you fix on.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

Your letter did find me at Oxford, but as the *G.D.* is here, not there, no time was gained.

The Home Office continued to refuse Joy Gresham permission to live and work in England. After talking it over with George Sayer and Warnie, Lewis decided on a register office marriage, after which he would continue to live in his house and she in hers. Lewis and Joy were married in the register office, St Giles, Oxford, on 23 April 1956. Dr Robert 'Humphrey' Havard and Dr Austin Farrer were present as witnesses.

TO KATHRYN STILLWELL (P):[164](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

24/4/56

Dear Mr. (or Miss? or Mrs?) Stillwell How nice to hear anyone who still believes in adjectives and calls them the 'Narnian' not the 'Narnia' series.

For most of July I shall be at the Kilns, Headington Quarry,* Oxford, and happy to arrange a meeting if you are there.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

* THE KILNS, HEADINGTON QUARRY.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
26/4/56

Dear Mary Willis

I am most sorry to hear about your recent experiences. Though I am not doctor enough nor psychologist enough to understand them, I can see that they must have been very unpleasant indeed. You may be very sure of my continued, and increased, prayers. One of the many reasons for wishing to be a better Christian is that, if one were, one's prayers for others might be more effectual. Things do come all together and so quickly in life, don't they?

Of course we have all been taught what to do with suffering—offer it in Christ to God as our little, little share of Christ's sufferings—but it is so hard to do. I am afraid I can better imagine, than *really* enter into, this. I suppose that if one loves a person enough one would actually wish to share every part of his life: and I suppose the great saints thus really *want* to share the divine sufferings and that is how they can actually desire pain. But this is far beyond me. To grin and bear it and (in some feeble, desperate way) to *trust* is the utmost most of us can manage. One tries to take a lesson not only from the saints but from the beasts: how well a sick dog trusts one if one has to do things that hurt it! And this, I know, in some measure you will be able to do.

Well, I hope your next news will be better. Meanwhile, may Our Lord support you as only He can.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
26/4/56

Dear Gibb—

Thanks for 2 letters and copy of *G.D.* etc. A skilled bibliographer to whom I mentioned the found-ound-round crux had already, à priori, suggested something v. like the actual history.

I'm delighted to hear that jolly old Ungit is to have a spot of rouge. I note that *Till We Have Faces* has won.¹⁶⁵ I believe it is more in the prevailing mode and a better selling title for the man i.s.¹⁶⁶ (tho' Bareface was better per se).

Hebraists are so few that you are unlikely to find one for that job, but I'll keep my ears open.¹⁶⁷

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO LAURENCE KRIEG (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
27/4/56

Dear Laurence

Thanks for your nice letter and the photograph. I am so glad you like *The Last Battle*. As to whether they knew their Creed, I suppose Professor Kirke and the Lady Polly and the Pevensies did, but probably Eustace and Pole, who had been brought up at that rotten school did *not*.¹⁶⁸

Your mother tells me you have all been having chicken pox. I had it long after I was grown up and it's much worse if you are a man for of course you can't shave with the spots on your face. So I grew a beard and though my hair is black the beard was half yellow and half red! You should have seen me.

Yes, people do find it hard to keep on feeling as if you believed in the next life: but then it is just as hard to keep on feeling as if you believed you were going to be nothing after death. I know this because in the old days before I was a Christian I used to try.

Last night a young thrush flew into my sitting room and spent the whole night there. I didn't know what to do, but in the morning one of the college servants very cleverly caught it and put it out without hurting it. Its mother was waiting for it outside and was very glad to meet it again. (By the way, I always forget which birds you have in America. Have you thrushes? They have lovely songs and speckled chests).

Good-bye for the present and love to you all.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
27/4/56

Dear Gibb

McCallum wanted an appenditical note on the original story.¹⁶⁹ As I have no English address for him I am sending it to you. Will you kindly convey it to him? And if you wd. like it to go in the English edn. too (a point on which I have no views either way) of course take a copy and use it. Either for the American edn. or for yours it *must* come at the end, not (like a preface) at the beginning.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MISS WILSON (P):

As from Magdalene College

Cambridge
28/4/56

Dear Miss Wilson

Thank you for cheque (£656–15–10) received to-day. I doubt whether you will see any more children's stories from me: I took the form up because it seemed suited to something I had to say, and having said that, I lay it down. But of course it is nice to be pressed!

I could find time to read *Prisoners of the Ring*, but the real question is whether it is 'up my street'. If it is 'of faerie', if it plays on awe and wonder and beauty, let me see it. But if it is juvenile science-fiction, or straight adventures, or about machines or ponies, or mainly comic, or about *real* child-life, don't. My verdict wd., in that case, be of no value to you.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry
Oxford, England
29/4/56

Dear Evans

Thanks for the cutting. I have been noticed in *Fantasy & S.F.* before now but never, I think, in *Galaxy*. It is always nice to be praised: but even more interesting that the S.F. public so clearly overlaps with the public which reads fantasies of another kind.

I had often wondered about Verne's names. Passepartout and Nemo,^{[170](#)} and possibly Pertinax,^{[171](#)} were fairly obvious. I never thought of trying them in the Erewhonian way!^{[172](#)}

I hope all goes well with you.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF *ESSAYS IN CRITICISM*:[173](#)

Magdalene College,

Cambridge

One passage in Mr. Maud's kind review (*Essays in Criticism*, October 1955)¹⁷⁴ of my inaugural suggests, if I am not misunderstanding him, that he has misunderstood me. He describes my words 'If we sit down to Rainoldus for a whole morning' as 'good fun' meaning, I take it, that I jokingly pretended to regard a morning with Rainoldus as a natural entertainment for any educated reader. In reality, I was assuming, seriously, that at least a morning's reading was the minimal, preliminary experiment for those who wanted to get an idea of Rainoldus's style. No translation can give an author's style with perfect fidelity. No reading of very short extracts from the original can do it justice; for style depends not only on the occurrence of this or that feature but on its frequency. If we are to talk of Rainoldus's style at all, what, then, can we do but begin by reading a good many pages of him?

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
2/5/56

Dear Gibb

Thanks for cheque (£821-13-7) received to-day. I leave it entirely to your judgement where the quotation 'Love is too young'¹⁷⁵ shd. come, provided (a point that has only just occurred to me) it comes as far as possible from the dedication.¹⁷⁶ Otherwise, though the lady would not, the public might, think they had some highly embarrassing relation to each other!

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge
9/5/56

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

You shall indeed, as always, have my prayers. I can't quite imagine anyone preferring an apartment in New York to a house in California, but then, as I know nothing about either, that is not v. important.¹⁷⁷ Don't get rid of more books than you must. I've hardly ever sold a book in my life without finding in the next few weeks that I needed it v. badly and that a new copy (if obtainable at all) cost thrice as much as the old one—and 50 times as much as I sold the old one for.

I am sorry you have had a grim time this last winter. Ours was mild (in weather till February) and pretty kind as regards our private fortunes. My brother is now not well, and away from home, but I think he will soon be restored.

The Tycoon may count himself lucky to have got chickenpox before he reaches the age of shaving brushes and razors. I had it in my late 20's and grew a beard wh. was part yellow and part red though my hair is black—a v. striking colour scheme. Apart from that, though, I think it a v. good sort of illness on the whole. A nice long quarantine wh. by sentencing one to solitary confinement secures one against pupils, committees etc. But no doubt it had no such charms for you.

All very good wishes (even to the frog) Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
9/5/56

Dear Father Milward—

You need not be afraid of telling me 'only what I know already' about the Grail legend, for indeed I know v. little. If you think otherwise, you are perhaps confusing my interest in C.W. with C.W.'s interest in the legend.

For my own part, I am v. puzzled as to what exactly we are doing when we study—not this or that work of art—but a myth in abstract. Supposing (*positionis causa*)¹⁷⁸ that what people mean when they say 'The Grail is the Caldron of the Dead' is true, *what* do they mean? More briefly, what does *is* mean in such a sentence? It is not the *is* of equality (2 x 6 is 3 x 4) nor of

classification (a horse is a mammal) nor of allegory (this Rock is Christ). How can an imagined object in one story 'be' an imagined object in another story?

About my Inaugural—aren't you rather forgetting that I was trying to fix merely the *cultural* change? From my angle even the original conversion of Europe, you remember, had to be ranked as a minor change. After that, you cd. hardly expect the Reformation to be v. prominent. To be sure, if my point of view had been different, it wd. have become fundamental and you and I wd. of course differ v. widely about its character.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
13/5/56

My dear Arthur—

After 9 months of perfect tee-totalism (we flattered ourselves it was a real cure) W. has started drinking again and the elaborate joint holidays he had planned for us in the summer will probably have to be cancelled.

But I want to make *your* and my jaunt sure. May we leave C'burn on Monday Sept 3rd and return to B'fast (I to the boat) on Mon. Sept 17th? If all goes *wrong* with W., I shall be arriving at the Inn on Fri. Aug 31: if by any chance he should be well enough to carry out the original plan (or, more probably, *think* himself well enough to drag me thro' that hell) then it will be different, to the extent that I shan't reach C'burn till Aug 1st. But this won't affect *our* (your and my) dates.

You always say (truly enough) that I'm a bad proof-reader. I may be getting proofs of my new Cupid & Psyche story in June. If there's time to send you one copy wd. you care to do me a kindness by going through it? Don't, if it is in the least a bother. You'd have about 10 days probably to do it in, and the book is a little longer than *S. by J.*

My Doctor friend says that the latter leaves out too much and he is going to supplement it by a book called Suppressed by Jack! God bless you. A chat with you wd. cheer me up no end this minute Yours Jack

TO MARTIN KILMER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
14/5/56

Dear Martin

How fine you must be feeling. Bandage off and scholarship won! Hearty congratulations on both. I hope the scholarship will be only the first of many successes.

I should jolly well think Mervin (the young cat) *has* grown up: he chases quite large dogs out of the garden now.

Thanks for photo and love to all Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
14/5/56

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

(Despite your prohibition I must explain my adherence to the old style. I am against the modern spread of the Christian name habit on purely practical grounds, as a nuisance. Christian names are far less numerous than surnames and therefore in fact much *less* distinctive: even less personal. I may be introduced to half a dozen Marias at a sherry party without ever finding out who they are or whose daughters or wives or sisters they are. It becomes like that Chinese Emperor who, having 50 sons, named them all Huang ‘to avoid confusion’).

Almost exactly the same thing that happened to you about the Incarnation happened to me a few years ago about the Forgiveness of Sins. Like you, I had *assented* to the doctrine years earlier and would have said I believed it. Then, one blessed day, it suddenly became real to me and made what I had previously called ‘belief’ look absolutely unreal. It is a wonderful thing. But not, on inferior matters, so v. uncommon. We all in one sense ‘believe’ we are mortal: but until one’s forties does one *really* believe one is going to die? On the edge of a cliff can’t one believe, and yet not really believe, that there’s no danger? But certainly this real belief in the truths of our religion is a great gift from God. When in Hebrews ‘faith’ is defined as ‘the substance of things hoped for’,¹⁷⁹ I wd. translate ‘substance’ as ‘substantialness’ or ‘solidity’ or (almost) ‘palpableness’.

Thanks for photos and cutting—I’m not sure that I really understand the latter. There’s obviously a big and rather tangled context behind it. And I *did* get the photo of Judy and (to tell you the truth) I still *do* think all babies are indistinguishable. My brother has not been well and is away at present. It sounds as if you were going to have a lovely holiday. Lobsters are lovely!

Envy (*invidia*) certainly did mean ‘grief at another’s good’¹⁸⁰ but as the word is now used I don’t think it means anything at all wrong. If I say I envy you those lobsters I hardly mean more than ‘congratulations’.

Yours very sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
17/5/56

My dear Arthur—

The crucial date, from your point of view, is Sept. 3d (third, IIIId). My arrival at the inn will, as you say, depend on circumstances. Our letters crossed. Thanks for yours of the 15th. Yes, Bro. Lawrence¹⁸¹ is of course right.

Yours

Jack

TO VALERIE PITT (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
17/5/56

Dear Valerie

A great deal of what you say is v. helpful. I fully agree that ‘Thy will be done’¹⁸² should *principally* be taken in the sense ‘God’s will has blank well got to be done even if I have to go and do it myself’: I doubt if the submissive aspect of it can be entirely extruded. It sometimes is ‘nasty’, and may in a sense be so to God Himself–i.e. what He wills in the situations sin has created is not what He wd. will *simpliciter*¹⁸³ (‘I *would have* gathered you as a hen gathers her chicks–but now’).¹⁸⁴

Whether the invocation of saints helps one’s devotions or not (it wouldn’t, I believe, help mine) I don’t see how it helps the theoretical problem.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
18/5/56

My dear A—

I was so busy with a big mail yesterday that I forgot to thank you for saying you'd vet. my proofs. Scrawl your notes (in pencil if you like) on their margins.

Yours

Jack

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
18/5/56

My dear Roger

Meet B&B circ 11.30 a.m. Mon May 28th & dine & lie at Magdalene.
Right. All booked.

I don't think I cd. manage June 2nd, much as I'd like to. The situation on the Home Front is too ticklish. Love to both.

Yours

Jack

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
19/5/56

Dear McCallum

No, no, *Love is too Young* wd. not have done at all.¹⁸⁵ People wd. have expected a v. different book for such a title. Thanks for the reviews.¹⁸⁶ It was nice to see you again.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Whitsunday [20 May]1956

Dear K—

In st. 2 ‘pollen-golden’ must be retained at all costs.¹⁸⁷ I’m not sure whether ‘Quick’ is the word you want. But the real trouble is the two last lines, which don’t do very much. You’ll probably have to find a new set of rhymes. St. 6. Can we now use ‘conceit’ to mean (in any sense) ‘conception’? And what does ‘from your prime’ etc. mean. (a.) ‘They were conceived when *I* was in the prime *you* now enjoy’? or (b.) ‘Your prime each year is the father of my crystal brood’? Or am I being stupid. The last line of this stanza is good. Otherwise I don’t see anything wrong, and like the poem v. much.

I’ve just been wildly excited by the preface to Austin’s *Short Bible*.¹⁸⁸ I don’t know that I ever got so much from so few pages before: deepest problems disarmed with a turn of the wrist. If only real theologians like him had started doing *oeuvres de vulgarisation*¹⁸⁹ a little earlier, the world wd. have been spared C.S.L.

Yours

Jack

‘Summer’s Term’

by

Katharine Farrer

*Summer comes, and comes farewell
Hard upon the cuckoo's cry.
Brown the lawn, and dumb the bell;
Here I sit, nor change, nor die.*

*Quick, be gone, my summer-dears!
Pollen-golden girls and boys
Come with fresher mirth and tears,
New-year pains and new-year toys,*

*Till the cuckoo's broken tune
Breaks the timeless holiday,
And the last elapsing June
Changes all their gold to grey.*

*Saplings callous into trees,
Flowers fall to ripen seed,
Youth wears out to have increase:
Here I sit, nor wear, nor breed.*

*While your lusty flesh and blood
Toils and spoils and drops to earth,
Here I nurse a crystal brood
Heart-conceived of tears and mirth.*

*Pricking from conceit to birth
Those unkindly children come
From your prime of tears and mirth;
Fret the heart and cheat the womb.*

*Quick then! Change your gold for grey.
Leave me in my crystal cave.
Feet that wear the soil, they say,
Lie more quiet in the grave.*

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge
21/5/56

Dear Mary Willis

What a horrid adventure. To meet unrestrained anger in any human being is in itself always very shocking. I think the effect may be partly physical. Have you noticed how *one* angry man bursts out (say, in a crowded 'bus) and a tension comes over everyone? Indeed one nearly becomes equally angry oneself. When one gets this shock along with injustice of course there is a compound reaction.

It is at first sight so easy to forgive (especially when one knows that the anger was pathological) but then one sort of wakes up five minutes later and finds one hasn't really forgiven at all—the resentment is still tingling thro' one's veins. And how one has to watch that 'feeling hurt'—so seldom (as one wd. like to believe) mere sorrow, so nearly always mixed with wounded pride, self-justification, fright, even (hiding in the corners) desire for retaliation. But obviously you know all this and have fought your best.

But there remains the quite separate trouble of having lost your job. Oh dear. I *am* sorry. Surely all these Church people will find some way to provide for you. I will indeed pray—oh, what a business life is. Well, both you and I have most of it behind, not ahead. There will come a moment that will change all this. Nightmares don't last.

Yours

Jack

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
24/5/56

My dear Roger

No, this is not to cancel our tryst (which I look forward to with much pleasure) but to ask you to do me a service. Say freely if it is an intolerable nuisance.

I wrote to the Belfast Boat (Coastlines Ltd., Landing Stage, L'pool) well over a week ago but have had no reply. Could you, next time you have to go over to L'pool extract from them—

1 saloon passage ticket
1 reserved single-berth stateroom } for L'pool to Belfast Aug 30th

and—

1 saloon passage ticket
1 reserved single-berth stateroom } for Belfast to L'pool Sept. 17th

and send me these, telling me how much I owe you? They'll make you pay cash, no doubt. I'd be v. greatly obliged. It seems odd to book so far in advance but *single* berth rooms get v. quickly into short supply. Love to all.

Yours

Jack

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

24/5/56

Dear George—

I've only just got your Whitsunday letter. Good. Call for me at the Kilns 12.30 next Sunday. No chance of W., I fear.

Yours

Jack

TO JOHN CROW (P):[190](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
28/5/56

Dear Mr. Crow

I return Miss Adam's list with a few *addenda*.[191](#) I can't remember anything else which she has omitted, and if I don't, it's not likely anyone else will. If the lady really thinks it worth her while to come & see an author who is no v. accurate scholar in his own works, of course she is welcome to do so. I shall be here till June 8th, after that at The Kilns, Headington Quarry, Oxford.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO DABNEY ADAMS (P): [192](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
1/6/56

Dear Miss Adams

I think it wd. be more use to come here, for it is here that I have two fat envelopes full of old articles etc. which you cd. go through to see if you've missed anything (wh. you most likely have *not*). I have two sitting rooms, so you can have one to yourself and do the job in peace and comfort. Wednesday wd. be the best day. Shall I expect you at about 2 o'clock?

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO KEITH MASSON (W): [193](#)

As from Magdalene College,

Cambridge
3/6/56

Dear Mr Masson—

There is, first, a difference of approach. You rather take the line that a traditional moral principle must produce a proof of its validity before it is accepted: I rather, that it must be accepted until someone produces a conclusive refutation of it.

But apart from that:—I agree that the stuff about ‘wastage of vital fluids’ is rubbish. For me the real evil of masturbation wd. be that it takes an appetite which, in lawful use, leads the individual out of himself to complete (and correct) his own personality in that of another (and finally in children and even grandchildren) and turns it back: sends the man back into the prison of himself, there to keep a harem of imaginary brides. And this harem, once admitted, works against his *ever* getting out and really uniting with a real woman. For the harem is always accessible, always subservient, calls for no sacrifices or adjustments, and can be endowed with erotic and psychological attractions which no real woman can rival. Among those shadowy brides he is always adored, always the perfect lover: no demand is made on his unselfishness, no mortification ever imposed on his vanity. In the end, they become merely the medium through which he increasingly adores himself. Do read Charles Williams’ *Descent into Hell*¹⁹⁴ and study the character of Mr. Wentworth. And it is not only the faculty of love which is thus sterilized, forced back on itself, but also the faculty of imagination.

The true exercise of imagination, in my view, is (a) To help us to understand other people (b) To respond to, and, some of us, to produce, art. But it has also a bad use: to provide for us, in shadowy form, a substitute for virtues, successes, distinctions etc. which ought to be sought *outside* in the real world—e.g. picturing all I’d do if I were rich instead of earning and saving. Masturbation involves this abuse of imagination in erotic matters (which I think bad in itself) and thereby encourages a similar abuse of it in all spheres. After all, almost the *main* work of life is to *come out* of our selves, out of the little, dark prison we are all born in. Masturbation is to be avoided as *all* things are to be avoided wh. retard this process. The danger is that of coming to *love* the prison.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
5/6/56

Dear George & Moira

May I come on Aug Wed 8th and leave on Sat 11th? Tell me at once if any neighbouring dates are more suitable. It was nice, v. nice, to see you both. I hope you found, Moira, the promise of the earlier chapters of *The Phoenix*¹⁹⁵ was kept?

W. is much better and (I dare to hope) *more* soberly purposed and *less* airily confident than on previous occasions. *Orate pro nobis.*

Yours

Jack

TO MRS HAROLD STEED (P): [196](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
6/6/56

Dear Mrs. Steed

The most generally useful of G.M.'s work is the 3 vols of *Unspoken Sermons*.¹⁹⁷ I fear it is long out of print. A good second-hand bookseller (say, Rogers of Newcastle on Tyne) might be able to get you a copy. Another good one (in verse) is *The Diary of an Old Soul*. These for works of direct teaching.

The imaginative works, which were of immense use to me, might not be so for all readers. The ones I wd. most recommend are *Phantastes*, *Lilith*,¹⁹⁸ *Curdy and the Goblins*, *The Princess and Curdy*, and *The Wise Woman*.¹⁹⁹

'Bookseller Newcastle on Tyne' wd. be a sufficient address for Rogers.

Thanks for the kind things you say about my own books.

Yours most sincerely C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W): PC

Eire

6/6/56

Letters, but not parcels, are being forwarded to me on my holiday, so I have not seen the *Anthology* yet. I look forward to doing so, with many thanks.

Now I wonder *cd.* Prospero create a living organism?²⁰⁰ And *cd.* an isle 'peopled with Calibans'²⁰¹ (even if Miranda were not their mother) have been *v.* pleasant? But I agree one is sorry for the poor fellow—as for many people in Shakespeare. He had a hard heart.

C.S.L.

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge.

7/6/56

Dear Miss Dunbar

I've kept this an unconscionable time, I'm afraid.²⁰² Thank you very much for the loan—it is an excellent work.

All good wishes for the vacation.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
14/6/56

Dear Mary Willis

I have your letter of the 11th—along with a letter from another lady in almost exactly the same position. Oh dear, what a hard, frightening world it is! And yet not wholly: I am rejoiced to hear that you have some true friends who will not let you sink. And why should there be any (let alone ‘too much’) ‘cringing inside’? We are all members of one another and must all learn to receive as well as to give. I am only sorry that the laws prevent me from giving you any lessons in the art.²⁰³ Isn’t the spiritual value of having to accept money just this, that it makes palpable the total dependence in which we always live anyway? For if you were what is called ‘independent’ (i.e. living on inherited wealth) every bit you put into your mouth and every stitch on your back wd. still be coming from the sweat and skill of others while you (as a person) wd. not really be doing anything in return. It took me a long time to see this—tho’, heaven knows, with the Cross before our eyes we have little excuse to forget our insolvency.

The great thing with unhappy times is to take them bit by bit, hour by hour, like an illness. It is seldom the *present*, the exact present, that is unbearable.

I shall pray for you whenever I wake in the night, and hope for better news.

Yours
Jack Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns
Oxford
18/6/56

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

Thanks for your letter of the 13th. I don’t envy you the flight to New York but I do envy you those lobsters—clams I don’t know. My brother is

back and v. well and we are both busy and happy, he on a new book and I on lectures. We'd be happier still if there were any summer, but this year is England at its worst: temperature 48° and skies so dark that one breakfasts by electric light. And the cuckoo (who usually at this time of year makes his own remark every third minute all day long) is almost silent.

I envy you not having to think any more about Christian apologetics. My correspondents force the subject on me again and again. It is very wearing, and not v. good for one's own faith. A Christian doctrine never seems less real to me than when I have just (even if successfully) been defending it. It is particularly tormenting when those who were converted by my books begin to relapse and raise new difficulties. I know you pray for me: bear all these harrassings in mind.

I had a short, nice note from Genia protesting (oh you peached, you betrayed me!—wicked woman) that babies are not hideous. Tell her to forgive me for not answering. Also that I meant, of course, all babies except hers.

It is the decay of my handwriting that chiefly irks me in letter-writing. I used to have a nice hand and I can't bear to be making strokes like this, yet I can't help it.

With all blessings.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

The Kilns etc.

19/6/56

Parcel of proofs²⁰⁴ reached me only yesterday, by an afternoon post! So you can't possibly have them back in 2 weeks from the 11th which is when you sent them. But I'll push on.

C.S.L.

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
19/6/56

My dear Arthur–

Here's the proof. I'd like it back in 10 days, but don't on any account let it be a nuisance to you. If you can't finish it without pressing yourself, just send it back unfinished, but put a X at the bottom of the last page you *have* done.

Yours
Jack

TO HSIN-CHANG CHANG (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
22/6/56

Dear Mr. Chang

It was pleasant to hear from you again.²⁰⁵ I am amused at the theory that philosophy thrives on mist: what foggy places ancient Athens and medieval Paris must have been if that were so, and how much philosophy ought to have emanated from the Western Highlands of Scotland!

It is refreshing to know any man who, like myself, cannot drive a car.

To teach English to such a very heterogeneous class must be extremely difficult, for the problems of each student are, no doubt, determined by the nature of his own language. But for the same reason it is, I suppose, highly interesting. You have more opportunities than most of us for becoming aware of the nature of Language simply as such. I feel that I lose much by knowing no languages that are not closely related to one another.

Make my compliments to your family and believe me

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
25/5[6]/56

Dear Gibb,

Proofs herewith. The TS. will go either by this or the next post.

The quotation²⁰⁶ would, I agree, look better on a page to itself, but (what is more important) I am very strongly opposed to the idea of dividing it. I agree that it 'looks wrong as it is' but I think it will look equally [wrong] with any division whatever. I do not see why it need be printed 'absurdly small' to fit in as one line: unless I am mistaken it is exactly the same (counting letters and spaces) length as l. 2 of para. 2 on p. 13. Now a line of that length on a page to itself wd. I believe, look ugly if it came anywhere near the middle of a page—because it wd. then seem to divide the page into two halves. But would it not look quite nice if put near the top? It wd. then have the properties of a frieze or dado with plain wall under it. And we may perfectly well omit the word 'Shakespeare' if we think that makes a better design. But I'd prefer even a bad design to a division of the verse.

Yes: on pp. 119 and 191, *stet*. On p. 129 I've changed the word altogether, and also on p. 293, feeling *tiring* a touch too archaic—the critics suffer from *archaiophobia* at present and I am throughout as near the edge as one dares go. (Damn their chronological prudery: they wd. banish every meaty or sappy word from the language).

Yes, *of course*, 'till' on p. 305.²⁰⁷ I had meant to make this change from the moment we fixed the present title.

I certainly hope to have a proof of the 'Note' for the American edn. Jog Mc C. about this when forwarding the proof of the text if you think there's any danger of his neglecting it.

My own last thoughts, tho' more numerous than usual, are not the sole, nor perhaps the chief, cause of heavier corrections than in *S. by J.* There were more literals than usual as well.

About BBC and *LWW*.²⁰⁸ Provided I can vet and veto the script I can of course have no objection to their attempting a dramatised version. But I believe they wd. do, and always do do, better with this or any other narrative work, by simply reading aloud and dramatised dialogue than by full dramatisation.

Sorry I missed you in Magdalene.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
26/6/56

Dear Joan—

Thanks for your letter of the 3rd. You describe your Wonderful Night v. well. That is, you describe the place & the people and the night and the feeling of it all, very well—but not the *thing* itself—the setting but not the jewel. And no wonder! Wordsworth often does just the same. His *Prelude* (you're bound to read it about ten years' hence. Don't try it now, or you'll only spoil it for later reading) is full of moments in which everything except the *thing* itself is described. If you become a writer you'll be trying to describe the *thing* all your life: and lucky if, out of dozens of books, one or two sentences, just for a moment, come near to getting it across.

About *amn't I*, *aren't I*, and *am I not*, of course there are no right and wrong answers about language in the sense in which there are right and wrong answers in Arithmetic. 'Good English' is whatever educated people talk: so that what is good in one place or time wd. not be so in another. *Amn't* was good fifty years ago in the North of Ireland where I was brought up, but bad in Southern England. *Aren't I* wd. have been hideously bad in Ireland but was good in England. And of course I just don't know which (if either) is good in modern Florida. Don't take any notice of teachers and text-books on such matters. Nor of logic. It is good to say 'More than one passenger was hurt' although *more than one* equals at least two and therefore logically the verb ought to be plural *were* not singular *was*! What really matters is:— 1. Always try to use the language so as to make quite clear what you mean and make sure yr. sentence couldn't mean anything else.

2. Always prefer the plain direct word to the long, vague one. Don't *implement* promises, but *keep* them.

3. Never use abstract nouns when concrete ones will do. If you mean 'more people died' don't say 'mortality rose'

4. In writing. Don't use adjectives which merely tell us how you want us to *feel* about the thing you are describing. I mean, instead of telling us a thing was 'terrible', describe it so that we'll be terrified. Don't say it was 'delightful': make *us* say 'delightful' when we've read the description. You

see, all those words, (horrifying, wonderful, hideous, exquisite) are only like saying to your readers 'Please will you do my job for me.'

5. Don't use words too big for the subject. Don't say 'infinitely' when you mean 'very': otherwise you'll have no word left when you want to talk about something *really* infinite.

Thanks for the photos. You and Aslan both look v. well. I hope you like your new home.

With love.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns

29/6/56

Dear Gibb

Here are some late corrections just sent in by my Irish reader. Any chance to use them even now?

The ones in brackets are those I *think* I did correct, but am not sure.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD): PC

[The Kilns]

29/6/56

Can't be helped—and it was v. uncertain on my side too. I'm afraid I'd better cry off any later engagements as—'my hasting days fly on with full career'²⁰⁹ and I'll have my work cut out to finish my lectures by next term.

Love

J.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

5/7/56

Dear Mary Willis—

Thank you for your letter of June 30th. Yes, what your Franciscan author says is very true. As some one says ‘The Devil used to try to prevent people from doing good works, but he has now learned a trick worth two of that: he *organises* ’em instead.’

I am very, very glad that God has sent you good friends who won’t let you sink, and that you have turned the corner about that bad feeling that one must not take help even when one needs it. If it were really true that to receive money or money’s worth degraded the recipient, then every act of alms we have done in our lives wd. be wicked! Dives was quite right to leave Lazarus lying at his gate!²¹⁰ Or else (which might be even worse) we shd. have to hold that to receive was good enough for those we call ‘the poor’ but not for our precious selves however poor we become!

How difficult it is to avoid having a special standard for oneself! De Quincey says somewhere that probably no murderer mentally describes his own act by the word *murder*:²¹¹ and how many people in the whole world believe themselves to be snobs, prigs, bores, bullies or tale-bearers? Talking of murder, do you see we’re abolishing capital punishment in this country? Do you think we’re wise or foolish?²¹²

There’s one phrase in your letter I don’t understand: when you speak of Johnny ‘feeling his oats’.²¹³ What *do* you mean? Unfortunately I understand only too well most of what you say about Lorraine and her life. How horrid it all is! We have no resources but our prayers.

I’m very busy with preparing lectures. This is the most sunless summer I ever remember.

Yours
Jack

TO RUTH PITTEr (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
9/7/56

Dear Ruth

Thank you for the *Voyage*²¹⁴ returned. I felt pretty sure you couldn’t think it vulgar once you read it: diabolical, mad, childishly ill-written in places—almost anything you like rather than vulgar.

Do you play croquet with the Queen on Thursday.²¹⁵ (Croquet is not mentioned in the invitation but I am well-read enough to know that a royal garden party will involve hedgehogs, flamingos, soldiers, Heads-man, and the grin of a Cheshire cat).²¹⁶ If so are you coming via Oxford? I was thinking of going up by 1.58 and returning by the 6.45 or 7.35 on either of which we cd. dine. You are an experienced courtier and it would give me great moral support to arrive in your company!

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns etc.
13/7/56

Dear Gibb—

Here are the proofs for H.B. with a letter for McCallum. I don't resent their marginalia but thought it a bit Gilbertian²¹⁷ that where the printer has spaced things too wide the author shd. be asked if he'd like to interpolate a word or so to make it look cosier!

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
13/7/56

Dear Mac—

I return the proofs.²¹⁸ I'm afraid my scrawled rejection of many proposals made by your corrector may (*to the eye*) have a contemptuous look, but that doesn't represent my attitude. I liked some of his readings quite well, even if I liked my own better! There is some little wavering between American and English spelling, but I don't give a fig for that myself. I leave you the final decision about the bit wh. I meant for a Blurb and you print as a preface.²¹⁹ There's no real need to have it as either, if you prefer not.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO KATHRYN STILLWELL (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
13/7/56

Dear Miss Stillwell

Friday 20th is the only day that is possible. Will you meet me for tea at the Royal Oxford Hotel (just outside the railway station) at 4 o'clock? I do not ask you to this house because you wd. never be able to find it, or, even if you did, it is so far out that most of your time wd. be taken up *en route*.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
14/7/56

Dear Ruth

You were well out of it. I learn from the papers that I was one of 8000 guests and also that the Queen was present, a fact of which I had no evidence from my own experience. One could not even get a cup of tea for the crowd round the refreshment tables was reminiscent of Liverpool Street station on an August bank holiday. Most people didn't know one another. One saw many married couples pathetically keeping up between themselves a dialogue which was obviously wearing very thin. If I hadn't run across Archbishop Matthew²²⁰ I'd have been in a vast solitude. There *are* flamingoes: *metal silhouettes* of them round the lake—a tasteful device which we perhaps owe to Prince Albert. In a word, it was simply ghastly. Two pints at the little pub on Praed St. were necessary afterwards.

I am thrilled to hear that you were lecturing on my trilogy.

Is there any day (not next week) in which you wd. both be at all likely to come into Oxford? If so it would be a great delight if you would both come and lunch with me somewhere in Oxford.

Yours in all duty
Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
19/7/56

My dear A—

I have a letter from Kelsie saying she had heard from Janie that I am going to Donegal in Sept and that she (K.) is also going there in Sept. with her nephew Adrian *and* (heaven help us) my cousin John Hamilton²²¹ and heaven knows who else and hopes we shall meet.

I have replied that I go with you and that we shall not be in one place all the time and that you know all the dates and addresses and that she'd better find them out from you. Don't swear at me too much! I can't remember the addresses & if I'd settled anything with K. on my own I might have done against your wishes. Her destination seems to be Port Noo.²²² I think we shall have to sacrifice one day to going to see her (by the way, Cherrie Robins²²³ is in the party too but hope there will be no trouble beyond that. Incidentally I shd. *like* to see Cherrie. John is, I think, a bore). It will be v. like old times: most of our holidays will be spent in dodging! I can already hear our conversations!

Some day, when you're not rushed, you might write me the Inver and Rathmullan addresses and dates on a P.C.

W. still well, thank God.

Yours

J.

TO MARTIN KILMER (W): TS

56/159 The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
23rd July 1956.

Dear Martin

Thank you for your letter of the 18th, it was nice to hear all your news. I hope Nicky and Noelie will enjoy Canada. We have been bringing up a new kitten (marmalade coloured) and he seems to be starting in life well; at least he has already chased a strange dog out of the garden. It has been a rotten summer here so far—temperatures down to 50, and so dark it might be December.

Love and good wishes to all.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO FRANCIS KNIGHT (P):[224](#)

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
26/7/56

Dear Knight

I have now finished *Uranie*[225](#) which I return with many thanks. By Jove, what a book this would have been to have met at a certain age! I can well understand how it would have bowled me over. One does not often meet a real Astronomer who feels like that about the stars. It is also interesting historically. He has obviously read Anastatius Kircher's *Iter Exstaticum*[226](#) and helps to fill in the gap between it and H. G. Wells. And I enjoy that unabashed French eloquence.

Of course there is much that a Christian regrets: for one thing his simple assumption that immortality is reserved for intellectuals. Well, he knows better now. Let's hope he has got through the gate where all depends on becoming like a little child, not on being a *savant*...but he must have had some shocks.

It was very nice meeting you again, and I much enjoyed our talk. My brother joins me in kindest regards.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO CHRISTOPHER DERRICK (L):[227](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
2/8/56

Dear Derrick,

(I'd sooner you called me Lewis *tout court*, both for old acquaintance sake and because, as Brightman—was he before your time?—used to say, 'When I was a young man no one was *called* professor except conjurors.')

All universities are now N.I.C.E.s²²⁹ when it comes to buildings: tho' I met a civilised American don once who claimed that his own university (I forgot which) had got over that malady and, looking at the Parks with their new laboratories...observed, 'I see you are still in the Stone Age'.

You ought to have been spending (if you haven't already done so) on Tolkien's 3 vol. *Lord of the Rings* the time you spent on OHEL. *The Lord* is the book we have all been waiting for. And it shows too, which cheers, that there are thousands left in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Leavis...
[230](#)

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
3/8/56

Dear Mary Willis

I have your letter of July 30th and am very sorry to hear that you are still in difficulties. Your 'pleasures' (i.e. social engagements) seem to be almost as much of an affliction as anything else!—but I can understand that. About Lorraine, I think what one has to remember when people 'hurt' one is that in 99 cases out of 100 they intended to hurt v. much less, or not at all, and are often quite unconscious of the whole thing. I've learned this from the cases in which I was the 'hurter'. When I have been really wicked & angry, and meant to be nasty, the other party never cared or even didn't notice. On the other hand, when I have found out afterwards that I had deeply hurt someone, it had nearly always been quite unconscious on my part. (I *loathe* 'sensitive' people who are 'easily hurt' by the way, don't you? They are a social pest. Vanity is usually the real trouble).

I read *Don Camillo* some years ago, but can't imagine how it could be made into a film.²³¹ I suppose they will drag some love story into it? (But then I'm, as you know, rather allergic to films).

I have known nice (and nasty) Hindoos. I should have thought the nice ones were precisely 'Pagans', if one uses *Pagan* not in the popular modern sense—which means pretty nearly 'irreligious',—but strictly. I.e., I think all that extreme refinement and that spirituality which takes the form of despising matter, is v. like Pythagoras and Plato and Marcus Aurelius. Poor dears: they don't know about the Sacraments nor the resurrection of the body.

Yes, I know how terrible that doubt is 'Perhaps He will not.' But it is so seldom the present & the actual that is intolerable. Remember one is given strength to bear what happens to one, but not the 100 and 1 different things that *might* happen. And don't say God has proved that *He can make you fear* poverty, illness, etc. I am sure God never teaches us the fear of anything but Himself. As the only two good lines in one of our bad hymns says 'Fear Him ye saints and you will then have nothing else to fear.'²³² (Racine, no doubt independently has the same thing in *Athalie—je crains Dieu et n'ai pas d'autre crainte*).²³³ Not all the things you fear can happen to you: the one (if any) that does will perhaps turn out v. different from what you think. Of course I know this is easier to say to another than to realise oneself. And always remember that poverty & every other ill, lovingly accepted, has all the spiritual value of voluntary poverty or penance. God bless you: you are always in my prayers.

Yours
Jack

TO CHRISTOPHER DERRICK (WHL):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
4/8/56

Dear Derrick...You are far too profound about S.F. I think. The adventure story and wonder story are perennial and anyone could have foreseen that as our own planet got too fully explored they would be pushed off it into space in order to find the unknown (and therefore plastic) which a

medieval author cd. find in the next forest, Defoe in Juan Fernandez,²³⁴ and R. Haggard in unexplored Africa and Tibet—like a man moving further and further out as the town spreads...

TO MRS FRANK JONES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
4/8/56

Dear Mrs. Jones

I don't know when or where you are, for your letter which arrived this morning has (like many of mine) neither date nor address. But I'm glad you are having a nice holiday, swimming and 'burning', i.e. sun-burning yourselves, I trust, not a general campaign of arson. Since I've got bald I take a low view of sun burning, for it burns the top of my head and then when I draw a comb across it in the morning, I scream. We are having, after an unusually cold & late spring, what seems by English standards an intense and prolonged heatwave. You wd. probably find it quite cool.

My brother is away at present but I will forward your information about O. Prescott. We are all v. interested in your space-footballs and wondering what the results will be. It is funny how quickly things get exaggerated: a man told me the other day that they were to go *millions* of miles into space.

I quite agree with you about *Time* which I always thought a rather horrid paper: but then most papers, in all countries, *are* rather horrid. The comfort is that they are mostly not true!

Please remember me to your husband. If my brother were here, he wd. join me in blessings to both.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS JOHNSON (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
7/8/56

Dear Mrs. Johnson—

Would you believe it!—I had recently felt anxious as to how you were getting on and in praying for you (as of course I do for all who correspond with me on religious matters) I had added a prayer that I might soon hear some good news of you. And all at once your letter of (hullo! you forgot to date it) arrived.

All you tell me is good and very good. Your Mother in Law has done good to the whole circle by the way she died. And where she has gone I don't doubt she will do you more still. For I believe that what was true of Our Lord Himself ('It is expedient for you that I go, for then the Comforter will come to you')²³⁵ is true in its degree (of course, an infinitesimal degree in comparison, but still true) of all His followers. I think they do something for us by dying and shortly after they have died which they couldn't do before—and sometimes one can almost *feel* it happening. (You are right by the way: there *is* a lot to be said for dying—and being born—at home).

No, I don't wish I knew Heaven was like the picture in my *Great Divorce*, because, if we knew that, we should know it was no better. The good things even of this world are far too good ever to be reached by imagination. Even the common orange, you know: no one cd. have imagined it before he tasted it. How much less Heaven.

I go on my holidays to Ireland to-morrow. God bless you all again and again.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
8/8/56

My dear George

What train may I expect you by on Mon. 14th? I'll bring a 'powerful auto' to meet it. Wot larx!²³⁶

Yours
Jack

TO MRS BEEBEE (P): TS

56/339

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
8th August 1956.

Dear Mrs Beebee,
Many thanks for your most kind and encouraging letter of the 5th. With
all good wishes, yours sincerely, C. S. Lewis²³⁷

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
11/8/56

Dear McCallum
I don't mind much about *interpretation* or *re-interpretation*, but the
latter wd. be slightly better.²³⁸ A good many people between me and
Apuleius have told the story and I have very drastically altered the accepted
motivation. But I don't insist.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN LANE PUBLISHERS (P): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
11/8/56

Dutch contract for OSP²³⁹ received with thanks. C. S. Lewis **TO**
MOIRA SAYER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford
14/8/56

Dear Moira
Oh dear! Have I done it again?—and according to one of the poets it is
the worst offence (almost) a guest can commit. Freud however says it
shows a sub-conscious wish to return. Not that this much mends matters. A

sub-conscious wish (repressed along with all one's patricidal and other unspeakable wishes) wd. be no great compliment. Anyway, my wish to return is fully conscious. Days at Hamewith are always gold. Thanks for all, and for putting up a parcel too.

We're off to Ireland to-day. Love to both and to His Eminence.

Yours

Jack

Jack and Warnie left on 14 August for a stay in the Republic of Ireland. Jack later joined Arthur Greeves for a holiday in County Donegal, returning to Oxford on 17 September.

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Golden Arrow [Cottage]?²⁴⁰

Annagassan,
Co. Louth, Eire
Aug. 17/56

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

Yr. letter of Aug. 2 followed me to this place of unearthly beauty. I hear the waves breaking on the beach as I write and look across the bay at the most fairy-tale mountains you cd. ask for—almost 'Smoky' mountains at the moment, for the last thunderstorm is just packing away beyond them.

I cd. never make much of Existentialism. The book that helped me most was *Encounter with Nothingness* (or some such title) by a German-American called Kuhn.²⁴¹ But even it did not help v. much. I understood (I think) Sartre's *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*, but didn't think it true.²⁴² Perhaps, with Christianity, we shall be able to get along even if we don't know about Existentialism!

Do you think one's vocation wh. looks so cryptic as a whole, is usually fairly clear from day to day and moment to moment? One usually has an idea what to do *next*. Need one know any more? It wd. be a pity if when *He* came He found me thinking about my vocation at a moment when I wd. have been better employed writing a letter, making a bed, entertaining a bore—or something quite dull and obvious.

Tell me something about the Smoky Mountains—the v. sound is a romance.

My brother joins me in warm greetings to you all.
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Somewhere in Eire
18/8/56

Dear Mary Willis—

It's no good giving you an address for I am moving about. Your letter of Aug. 12th reached me today. I am delighted to hear about the job. It sounds exactly the thing, sent by God, at your most need. I will never laugh at anyone for grieving over a loved beast.²⁴³ I think God wants us to love Him *more*, not to love creatures (even animals) *less*. We love everything *in one way* too much (i.e. at the expense of our love for Him) but in another way we love everything too little.

No person, animal, flower, or even pebble, has ever been loved too much—i.e. more than every one of God's works deserves. But you need not feel 'like a murderer'. Rather rejoice that God's law allows you to extend to Fanda that last mercy which (no doubt, quite rightly) we are forbidden to extend to suffering humans. You'll get over this. I will rejoice in the job.

I'm writing on a dressing table in a small, dark hotel bedroom, v. sleepy, so I'll close. God bless you—and Fanda!

Yours
Jack Lewis

TO STEPHEN SCHOFIELD (W):²⁴⁴

On Tour in Eire
Aug 23/56

Dear Mr. Schofield—

One must distinguish 'approving absolutely' from 'approving as the lesser evil under certain conditions.' All war, like all lawsuits, results from greed, selfishness, or ill faith on one side or both. Therefore God disapproves of them. But granted that someone's greed, selfishness or ill faith, has started the thing, does God think the work of a good soldier or a good lawyer a less evil than letting the aggressor have his way?

From the fact that neither St. John the Baptist nor Christ disapproved of soldiers as such, I conclude the answer is Yes. By the Christian ideal of the Christian at arms in a just cause I mean *the Knight* as he is pictured in all the romances of the Middle Ages.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

From a momentary address in Eire
Aug 25/56

My dear Evans—

Thanks for the cutting wh. I return. I haven't read the story and am, indeed, growing sick of modern science-fiction!

Before leaving home I saw the film of *The Forbidden Planet*, a post-civilisation version of the *Tempest*²⁴⁵ with a Robot for Caliban, a bitch for Miranda, and all sympathy for Alonso against Prospero. The contrast between the magnificent technical power and the deplorable level of ethics and imagination in the story was what struck me most. But the modern 'serious fiction'—E. Waugh²⁴⁶ and all that—seems to me equally deplorable. I am so glad you liked the *Last Battle*. And so, good bye to Narnia.

Vaughan-Wilkins' *Valley Beyond Time* is good, though.²⁴⁷ Very good, tho' not faultless.

All the best.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

As from The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Aug 27/56

My dear Van Auken

I am v. glad to hear of the righted wrong and still more to hear that you are re-visiting England. We must have some good & long talks together and perhaps we shall both get high.

At the moment the really important thing seems to be that you were brought to realise the impossibility (strict sense) of rejecting Christ.²⁴⁸ Of course He must often seem to us to be playing fast and loose with us. The adult must seem to mislead the child, and the master the dog. They misread the signs. Their ignorance and their wishes twist everything. You are so sure you know what the promise promised! And the danger is that when what He means by 'Win' appears you will ignore it because it is not what you thought it wd. be—as He Himself was rejected because He was not like the Messiah the Jews had in mind. But I am, I fancy, repeating things I said before. I look forward very much to our meeting again. God bless you.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO J. A. CHAPMAN (BOD):

Golden Arrow,
Annagassen,
Co. Louth,
Eire
Aug 29th/56

Dear Chapman—

Your letter followed me to this lonely place where I look across Dundalk Bay at the Carlingford Mts and, beyond them, the Mourne and strange nocturnal birds ἦσιν τε θαλάσσια ἔργα μεμήλαιν²⁴⁹ lament under the eye of baleful Mars—v. visible these nights.

I have *not* heard about your brother and am alarmed & distressed by your cryptic words about him.²⁵⁰ I must try to find out when I get back.

Thank you v. much for *Critical Papers*.²⁵¹ They have themselves some of the sunshine quality they describe. They are sappy, full of relish: a relief after so much modern criticism, in which the Muses seem to be confused with the Furies. I am re-reading both the *Odyssey* and *The Lord of the Rings*. I can hardly pay your essays a higher compliment than to say that they 'fitted in', could appear in such company without making one feel that the words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

Drumbeg Hotel,
Inver,
Co. Donegal
Eire
8th Sept/56

Dear Chad

By all means use me as a reference if you can't find anyone better. I don't really know anything about you either as a historical theologian (I'm none myself) nor as a historian of art, so I'll be reduced to generalities. You'd much better get someone who knows something about the subject or about you in connection with them. But of course I'll play if I'm wanted.

Remember me to your wife. Both Joy and my brother wd. send messages if they were here, but, you see, they ain't!

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Drumbeg Hotel,
Inver,
Co. Donegal
Sept. 8/56

Dear Mary Willis—

I can't quite understand all the affair about the Bank, being intensely stupid about everything that might be called Business—but perhaps for that very reason all the more able to enter into your dismay. All that side of life is to me simply a terrifying mystery. But I hope I am right in thinking that it all turned out well in the end. It certainly looks as if God were looking after you financially. I expect that the instruments He uses are kind human beings: and all the better if so, for then it is good for them as well as for you.

How charming about your young friend and her present!

I used to meet Fr. D'Arcy pretty often when he was Master of Campion Hall, for we were both members of the Dante Society. Remember me to him if you happen to meet him.

I think what I must have said about Hindus (but can I write it any more legibly *this* time?) was that, if you use *Pagan* in the proper sense, i.e. to mean Polytheist, then they are Pagans, but not of course if you use that word in the journalists' sense, to mean 'irreligious' or even 'debauched' (that journalists can be saved is a doctrine, if not contrary to, yet certainly above, reason!).

I am glad you liked my stories. They are the part of my work I like best.

It continues cold (you wd. think it Arctic) here and wet, but with lovely gleams at times in which far-off mountains show three times their real height and with a radiance that suggests Bunyan's 'delectable mountains'.²⁵²

I hope your health will soon improve.

Yours

Jack Lewis

P.S.—I doubt if you'll find any Leprechauns in Eire now. The Radio has driven them away.

Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold *was published by Geoffrey Bles of London on 10 September 1956.*

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

Fort Royal Hotel,
Rathmullan,
Co. Donegal,
Eire

11/9/56

Thanks for your letter of 6th wh. followed me here this morning, and still more for the v. handsome 'compliment' of 16 free copies. Wd. that all compliments were so solid! Atticus *would* defend—and anyone cd. attack—his description, the word *novel* being so equivocal.²⁵³

Well, here's to us both (but one does, in this land) get sick of always stout or whisky but never Beer.

C.S.L.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W): PC

Royal Port Hotel,
Rathmullan
Co. Donegal,

EIRE

Sept. 14 [1956]

Thanks for cutting containing yourself & Sister Mary Frances and Mr. Birch on me: both interesting. Problem: why are nuns nicer than monks and schoolgirls nicer than schoolboys, when women are not in general nicer than men? But perhaps you deny all three statements!

All blessings.

J

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

56/357.

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

14th Sept. 1956.

Dear Mr Gibb

On the 17th November 1945 one Dr Martin S. Allwood of Marston Hill, Mullsjo, Sweden—but then so far as I can make out, of Goteborg—apparently secured the agreement of Bles and my brother to the publication of his Swedish translation of *The Abolition of Man* free of royalty.

After the infuriating manner of his kind, he has now lost the authorization and wants 'a brief word to the publisher'. According to my secretarial records the whole thing is bona fide, but I thought that I had better consult you before taking any steps.

I have not only survived my summer holiday, but have escaped from it with nothing worse than a bad cold.

Yours sincerely
pro per C.S.L.

Brother Mycroft

WHL

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Sept 19th 1956

Dear Gibb

Thanks for letter (to Mycroft) of Sept 17. The Swedish publisher is Natur & Kultur, Torsgatan 31, Stockholm.²⁵⁴ Why the heck I ever agreed to such a procedure I can't now conceive.

I had, like you, a glorious holiday and am finding, like you, that leisure is an addiction drug which one's system aches at discontinuing!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO CHRISTOPHER DERRICK (WHL):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Sept 21/56

Dear Derrick

No, not a word wrong—and the only review I've yet seen (but I've seen only one) that really gets the point. Thanks very much. Speaking, not as the author of the book, but as a critic of the review, I should say that the reference to 'Pilgrim's Regress' might be deleted as that book is very little known and might only make your meaning darker...²⁵⁵

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Sept 22/56

Dear Father Milward—

Tolkien's book is not an allegory²⁵⁶—a form he dislikes.²⁵⁷ You'll get nearest to his mind on such subjects by studying his essay on Fairy Tales in the *Essays presented to Charles Williams*. His root idea of narrative art is 'sub-creation'—the making of a secondary world. What you wd. call 'a pleasant story for the children' wd. be to him *more serious* than an allegory. But for *his* views, read the essay, wh. is indispensable. My view wd. be that a good myth (i.e. a story out of which ever varying meanings will grow for different readers and in different ages) is a higher thing than an allegory (into which one meaning has been put). Into an allegory a man can put only what he already knows: in a myth he puts what he does not yet know and cd. not come to know in any other way.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns
Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Sept 23/56

My dear Roger—

I have to thank you both for a *Book of Nonsense* and for *R. Hood*.²⁵⁸ The former is a most valuable collection and contains lots that I couldn't easily find anywhere else. With poor Robin I think you have done the best that cd. be done, and the dovetailing seems a success. You and I both feel, I think, an aggressive heartiness in the legend wh. nothing will disguise. Friar Tuck is the epitome of all humour I dislike. But you've wrestled like a man. When shall I see the *Land Beyond the North*?²⁵⁹ I am so pleased with what you say about *Till we have Faces*—no reviews yet that show much understanding.

Can we lunch together on Sat. Oct 6th? Unless I hear to the contrary I'll call at 12 Ship St.²⁶⁰ at 12 noon and then, if fine, we cd. go to the Trout.²⁶¹ Love to June & the infants.

Yours

Jack

TO JOHN LAWLOR (P):[262](#) TS

56/383

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
1st October 1956.

Dear John,

Hang it, I've about shot my bolt on Milton and don't really want to deal with the recent critics. My finger grows weary of hornet's nests. Also I'm trying to learn a little about the Middle Ages. There are so many things one handed over to the Language people at Oxford which I have to talk about at Cambridge.

My brother joins me in good wishes. Letters between you and I have crossed, have'nt they?

Yours,
Jack

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Oct 1/56

Dear Mac,

I return the list. I query the three entries that I've put a ring round on the ground that they are all contained in *Mere Christianity*.[263](#) If anyone is led by this list to buy one of them when he already has it, he'll say (with some reason) that he has been stung, and both your house and I may 'lose face'. If no one does, then the inclusion of these titles is a waste of time.

Chronologically (if that matters) *Mere C.* should come just before *S. by J.*

The new (and last) children's book may be illegible on that horrid paper! It is THE LAST BATTLE All the best.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Oct 3/56

Dear Miss Bodle—

It was nice to hear from you again and (of course) to hear that you liked the book.²⁶⁴

I do most emphatically agree with what you say about the field-mouse and the sound of streams:²⁶⁵ especially those invisible streams that one hears tinkling far beneath the turf. The real trouble about motoring, however, is not that you don't see little things close up. You do: and too many. Nature allows us to see either a few things close up (when we walk) or many things far off (when we look down from a hill-top). But trains and cars give you many things, each close up in its turn and therefore each soliciting the attention wh. the speed does not allow you to give. I believe that may be why a drive thro' even the loveliest country soon leaves one both satiated and frustrated. Like bolting ones food. Or like walking in a crowd where you see face after face: which as someone said is like being forced to read the first page, and no more, of 100 books in rapid succession.

I am most interested in what you tell me about your work in general and about Judy.²⁶⁶ It is nice to be engaged on what is so indisputably worth doing. I admit I've been lucky, in another way, by always having people to discuss with, and I don't wonder you feel the lack of it.

I've been in Ireland this summer—but I don't expect I shall persuade you that Donegal is a better country than Devon! With all good wishes, and blessings.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO J. B. PHILLIPS (P): TS²⁶⁷

56/359

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
3rd October 1956.

Dear Mr Phillips,

Many thanks for your kind and encouraging letter. It gives me much pleasure to hear that Mrs Phillips and you have enjoyed my books.

With all good wishes, yours sincerely, C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN LAWLOR (P):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Oct 4/56

Dear John—

Thanks very much. The Thos. A. passage is a gem of purest ray. I haven't the sermons: I meet them in the spare room of a house I sometimes stay at.²⁶⁸

By the way, my medieval mission at Cambridge is, so far, a *flop d'estime*.²⁶⁹ A few dons come to my lectures but far fewer undergrads. I've never had such small audiences before. Must be frightfully good for me.

But your problem about texts is already under weigh—see the enclosed. Brewer, as you probably know, was a Magdalen man (much junior to you).²⁷⁰ My brother joins me in greetings and in thanks for your almost Homeric offer²⁷¹ of hospitality. Can we bring dog, cat, secretary, chaplain, concubines, two valets, and a gentleman usher? (Of course you have adequate stabling for the horses?) But do come to Magdalene.

Yours

Jack

TO KATHLEEN RAINE (BOD):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Oct 5th 1956

Dear Miss Raine—

What a nice letter, and how well you understand what I was up to. I think what makes Orual different from the 'warrior maiden' Archtype is that she is *ugly*, represents virginity not [in] its high poetic state but as mere misfortune, and of course, masculine activities as the *pis aller*, the thing she

is driven into because nothing else is left her. (A bit of ambivalence too. Bardia's attempt to treat her as man is agony, yet also to be as much of a man as possible and share his masculine activities is the only thing that links her with him at all and is, in that way, precious to her). Even so, she does feel on killing her first man that she has somehow been debauched.

As for the others, Camilla, Penthesileia,²⁷² Bradamante²⁷³ and Clorinda²⁷⁴ (and I hear there's a fine one in the *Shah Nameh*—don't you wish you knew Persian? There seems to be about 1/5 of all the best poetry in the world locked up there), the figure is too recurrent to be anything but true Archtype. I haven't fathomed it, though. The veil comes in—they are all cryptic in their armour. Is it that *enemy* and *bride* are somehow very close together? Both ways (a.) My bride will devour me: *all* wives are, so far, spiders! (b.) The foe I kill in battle is recognized at the moment of my killing as (souls are all feminine) 'my sister my spouse'?²⁷⁵ One *can't* give up the story of Achilles weeping over Penthesileia when he has killed her and being laughed at for it by Thersites.²⁷⁶

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Oct 8/56

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

The cards make me 'envy' you your Smoky Mts—tho' I daresay they wd. be too warm for me. I'm a Polar Bear, you know.

About Envy, the question (as so often) is one of language. In modern English 'I envy you' is used to mean 'I'd like to be doing what you're doing' or even 'I congratulate you.' What the moral Theologians meant by the 'sin of Envy' (*Invidia*) was *grudging* the other things one hadn't got oneself and hating the others for having them—wanting to scratch another girl's face because she was prettier than you, hoping another man's business wd. crash because he was richer than you—and so forth.

One is almost relieved to hear that your poor ex-Rector was not (as he seemed) wicked but only desperately ill. We know so little: 'judge not.'²⁷⁷

My brother joins me in all greetings.
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN HOOTON (BOD):[278](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 9th. 1956

Dear Mr. Hooton
Thanks for your most kind and encouraging letter. It will be a pleasure to meet whenever you are in Cambridge.
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO STEPHEN SCHOFIELD (W): TS
56/128

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
10th October 1956.

Dear Schofield,
Thanks for your letter of the 7th, which did not reach me until this morning. Sorry to have missed you, but Cambridge term began yesterday, so I fear there is no chance of a meeting. Congratulations on your marriage, and with best wishes for your happiness, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN HOOTON (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 13th 1956

Dear Mr Hooton
3.45 on Tue Oct 23 wd. do me v. well.
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge
Oct 18th. 1956

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

I was greatly pleased to hear that your move, with all its nuisance and anxiety, is over—and now you can start living again!²⁷⁹ I've never lived in a flat. I shouldn't mind the smallness, but I shd. hate to be a long way from mother earth. But I suppose you may get fine roofscapes and views of the sky.

My brother and I were together in Ireland for a time in a bungalow divided from the sea only by a cart-track and the sound of the waves all night.²⁸⁰ Also a magnificent view of mountains across the bay. After that, I was with a friend in Donegal which is a v. fine, wild country with green mountains, rich secretive valleys, and Atlantic breakers on innumerable desolate sands. But alas!, they get less desolate every year and it will soon be just a holiday resort like so many other places. (One always disapproves of all holiday-makers except oneself!) My brother, who wd. join me in greetings if he were here, is busy on a new book. I've written nothing but lectures this summer.

After a v. wet July and August (cold, too) we are now enjoying what they call in England (do you?) a 'St. Luke's summer': which means autumn at its very best—warm, coloured days, but cold nights, and usually misty mornings, every cobweb on the hedge turned into a necklace by the heavy dew.

How is the Tycoon?

With all blessings,

Yours very sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

For some time Joy Gresham had been troubled with pains in her left leg which were diagnosed by the doctor as rheumatism and fibrositis, an inflammation of the tissues surrounding the muscles. On the evening of 18 October she was in her house at 10 Old High Street when Katharine Farrer, in Trinity College, suddenly knew something was wrong with her. 'I must ring her!' she said to her husband. Katharine dialled the number, but before

it could ring Joy tripped over the wire of her telephone, bringing the telephone down as she fell on the floor. The fall caused her left femur to snap like a twig. Accompanying the pain was Farrer's voice, asking if she could help. Joy was admitted later that evening to the Wingfield-Morris Orthopaedic Hospital, where X-rays showed that the femur, broken when she fell, was almost eaten through by cancer. Examination also revealed a malignant tumour in her left breast, as well as secondary sites in her right leg and shoulder. In the following month she underwent three operations.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
20 Oct/56

Dear Mary Willis—

I can't answer yours of the 14th as it deserves for it comes to me on a day when I am all embroiled with affairs arising out of a friend's sudden illness, and v. much distressed. Alas, troubles everywhere.

I think 'brain washed' is a real inspiration of L's²⁸¹ behaviour. And the fact that she talked next time as if she had forgotten it all confirmed that view—as if she had 'said the lesson' and got it off her chest.

I am very, very sorry to hear about your health. 'Hives on the eyes' must be horrid and go all through one's head. And the anxiety too. May God comfort you. I'm thankful He has at any rate given you some good friends.

In great haste.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Oct 20/56

Dear Gibb

Thanks for cheque. Glad to hear TWHF sells: we don't get much help from the reviewers! I shan't be in Cambridge on Mon 19 till after 6 p.m. Will you be there in the evening? I'd like to see you if so.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MICHAEL EDWARDS (BOD):[282](#)

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Oct 20/56

Dear Mr. Edwards—

Most of your questions about unfallen man can't, as you see, be answered. I suppose there are 3 conditions: unfallen, fallen, & redeemed. The third is not usually thought to be a mere reproduction of the first. In it the whole travail produced by the Fall will be turned to account and many things that wd. not have been without the Fall will be *redeemed*, become the occasions of good. The Cross itself is the supreme instance.

Our job is not to try to recover the unfallen stage but to go on to the redeemed one. In our use of the various things that have come in since the Fall, hadn't we better be guided by the solitary plain moral rules—namely, kindness, courage, chastity etc—rather than by speculation?

Of course enjoying equipment or motoring is not a sin. The point I wanted to make is that excessive excitement about gadgetry and the belief (Weston's belief) that the possession of, say, wireless & aeroplanes, somehow makes one superior to those who lack them & even justifies one in conquering such people, is bosh. My motto wd. be 'Have your toys, have your conveniences, but for heaven's sake don't start talking as if those things really mattered as, say, charity matters.'

As for 'giving up' things—well, when we've given up all our *sins* (the things everyone knows to be sins), we can think again! The problem will not be immediate. The devil is fond of distracting us from our plain daily duties by suggesting vague & rather faddy ones, you know.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 24th 1956

Dear Gibb

Will you please send one copy of TWHF to Sir Ernest Barker, 17 Cranmer Rd., Cambridge?²⁸³ By the way, I shall *not* be free on Monday evening next. I suppose Tue. morning is no good? Not *very* good for me, since I lecture at 12.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 25/56

Dear Gibb

I look forward to seeing you if we can find a date. Yes—the modern German books are beautifully done.²⁸⁴ With thanks.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

P.S. Please send a copy of TWHF to Mrs. Hough, 7 Chesterton Hall Crescent, Cambridge.²⁸⁵

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 25th 1956

Dear K.—

*Fervet opus!*²⁸⁶ and just the sort of opus I am so very incompetent at and dislike so much.²⁸⁷ ‘Ever-more thanks, the exchequer of the poor.’²⁸⁸ I’m so glad W. is playing up. Make free use of our excellent Paxford (if you have *time* to hear his replies!).

I suppose Joy told you that one of the bookcases is hers, not Mrs. Geddes's? I'm glad to hear the budgaries²⁸⁹ are quartered. By the way, Joy thought it wd. be as well if Colin and Christian knew our innocent little secret, so pass it on to them at some convenient time.²⁹⁰ The cat problem is acute. And two-fold. There's Joy's own lawful cat, black Sambo, and also the volunteer cat, Marmaduke. Since the former has practically deserted No. 10 already, and the latter must have arrived there after deserting somewhere else, I believe each is in fact quite able to face the world—but the RSPCA²⁹¹ cd. never understand that!

Bless you both again and again. I am *votre homme*, sworn vassal, forever.

Yours
Jack

TO BASIL WILLEY (BOD):²⁹²

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct. 26th 1956

My dear Willey

No.²⁹³ It would never do. People so often deny their own capacity for business either through mock-modesty or through laziness that when the denial happens to be merely true, it is difficult to make it convincing. But I have been tried at this kind of job; and none of those who experienced me in office ever wanted to repeat the experiment. I am both meddlesome and forgetful. Quite objectively, I'd be a disaster. But thank you for your suggestion.

My own thoughts hover between the (certainly safe) Hough²⁹⁴ and the wild idea of Leavis. Is it just possible that if his nose were once rubbed in the actual working of the Faculty, if he were once the target of criticism instead of the critic, he might be cured? Of course we should suffer: but then we suffer already. I know it's risky: but 'malecontents' have before now been tamed by office. What do you think?

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 31st 1956

Dear Allen (We might both drop the honorifics, mightn't we?)–

I'm partly horrified and partly amused to find myself supplying 'great thoughts' to a Ladies Journal! (I'm pretty sure the Johnson quotation is inaccurate).

Lor' bless you, I'm no pacifist. A really modern weapon, a machine which a skill-less man can work by pressing a button, to the destruction of thousands, himself in safety, is disgusting. But a bow or pistol or sword, a thing used face to face—that is a different matter. Indeed I have a respect not unmixed with envy for people who can hit anything. (The only man I ever had a pot shot [at] in the first war didn't appear to know he was being fired on at all) It was the ancient Persians, as Herodotus tells us, who taught their boys to ride, to shoot, and to tell the truth.²⁹⁵ Those horrid Turks did not appear in Asia Minor till the time of the Crusades. An ancient, respectable, comparatively harmless on-and-off war between the civilised Emperor of Byzantium and the civilised Caliph of Baghdad was all messed up when Norman barbarians came to the one side and Turkish barbarians on the other. That was what finally smashed up the immemorial civilisation of the near East and made it the mess it has been ever since.

I hope you do succeed in coming to England. My friends wd. tell you, with some warmth, that silences are the last thing to be feared. They say Monologue is the real danger.

Tools is the point. A tool is a thing a man uses with his own skill and loves. *Machines*, wh. work themselves, are quite different. Compare a pickaxe (the lovely stroke, the significant shape) with the stinking, thudding road drill, wh. finally shatters the whole nervous & muscular system of the operator. All good wishes to your mother and yourself.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO WALTER HOOPER (UNC):²⁹⁶

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 2nd 1956

Dear Friends

Thank you for so kindly writing to tell me you like the Narnian books. Of course I didn't mind you dramatising one, and I only wish I could have seen it.

I would never allow a public commercial performance because you know what theatrical managers are like! They'd make it awful. I am sure yours was quite different.

With all good wishes.

Yours ever

C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 9th. 56

Dear Chad

Yes. I have heard from the Guggenheim people and done my darndest in reply.²⁹⁷ I have had news of Joy. What had been supposed to be rheumatism became so bad that she had to go into hospital and it has now been diagnosed as cancer. She has still 'a fighting chance' and fights very bravely. I'm sure a letter from you wd. be a support. (Address: Mayfair Ward, Wingfield Morris Hospital, Headington, Oxford).

So the private world is for me as dark as the public world is at the moment for us all.²⁹⁸ Give us your prayers. All love & blessings to your wife and yourself
Yours Jack

TO MARY NEYLAN (T):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 14th 1956

Dear Mary

Thanks for letting me see Sophie's poem.²⁹⁹ A remarkable production for her age! And she is beginning at the right end, with invention and sound metre. That's the first step I wish you and Dan wd. pray hard for a lady called Joy Gresham and me—I am likely v. shortly to be both a bridegroom and a widower, for she has cancer. You needn't mention this till the marriage (wh. will be at a hospital bedside if it occurs) is announced. I'll

tell you the whole story someday. Love to Sarah. I'm not much in the way of visiting anyone at present Yours Jack Lewis

TO ELSIE CHAMBERLAIN (BBC):[300](#)

04/R/EDC

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 15/56

Dear Mrs Chamberlain

No, I'm afraid not. I should only be repeating myself, and that, however new it may be to most of the audience, deprives me of all power.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY MARGARET MCCASLIN (W):[301](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Nov. 15th 1956 Dear Mrs. McCaslin

Thank you for your letter of Nov. 9th. I will indeed pray for you: I did so already, but will do so more. You have made a great sacrifice for conscience' sake. Such things, we may be sure, enrich one: but God knows it doesn't *feel* like it at the time. It did not, even for Our Lord Himself, in Gethsemane. I always try to remember what MacDonald said 'The Son of God died not that we might not suffer but that our sufferings might become like His.'[302](#) But of course the real difficulty is not in rising to this point of view but in *staying* there. One does it—and ten minutes later it all has to be done over again. And one gets so *tired*, doesn't one? Well, thousands of others are going through the same: one might be a Hungarian.[303](#)

May God strengthen you, as only He can.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO CHARLES A. BRADY (W):[304](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Nov 16th 1956

Dear Mr. Brady

I must thank you for your most kind article on my Narnian books in the copy of *America* which someone has sent me.³⁰⁵ Naturally, I of all people can least judge whether you are right: but it is certainly fine work in the sense that you express exactly what you think, and I hope the books are like.

I get lovely, and often most moving, letters from my child readers. I had expected that they wd. get the theology more or less unconsciously, but the truth is that they all see it perfectly clearly, bless 'em, and much more clearly than some grown-ups.

It might amuse you that the whole thing took its rise from *nightmares* about lions which I suddenly started having.

Let us meet if you are ever in England.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 16/56

Dear Mary Willis

Very sorry to hear all your bad news: the only cheering bit being that your hitting back at Lorraine has obviously done good not harm. It is much better for both her and you that she should 'break your heart' with her own sorrows than with anger and insult. Children ought to take these troubles to their mothers. It hurts you, but surely with a better kind of pain.

You may as well know (but don't talk of it, for all is still uncertain) that I may soon be, in rapid succession, a bridegroom and a widower. There may, in fact, be a deathbed marriage. I can hardly describe to you the state of mind I live in at present—except that all emotion, with me, is periodically drowned in sheer tiredness, deep lakes of stupor. Perhaps a v. heavy cold in the head helps this. So you won't expect me to write long or many letters. Let us always pray for one another.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 16. 56

Dear Gibb

Please send 1 copy of my *Miracles* to Dr. Hans J. Madera, Facharzt für Nervenkrankheiten, Innsbruck, Kirschentalgasse, Austria.

Did you finally fix on any day for your Cambridge jaunt? I don't seem to have anything noted.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN GILFEDDER (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Nov 18/56

Dear Gilfedder

It is always nice to get a letter from you and it is always nice to get a letter in praise of one's last book.³⁰⁶ The combination is irresistible: especially since that book has had a worse reception from the English reviewers than any I ever wrote. I don't however, despair. The children's stories were very ill received at first and now begin to worm themselves into favour: better that than to be the rage for 12 months and then forgotten forever.

You kindly talk so much about me in your letter that you find room to tell me very little about yourself. But what you do tell is all good. Give my blessings to the children and my duty to your wife. It will be a great pleasure to see you in England whenever you can come. With all good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry

Oxford
Nov 18/56

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

I don't think it is altogether a bad thing for Paul to be a nuisance at school and good at home. At least it wd. be far worse, for him and you and as a symptom, if it were the other way round. Perhaps it only means that he has a good home and a bad school!

It was nice of you to write about *Till We Have Faces* (I originally called it *Bareface*, but the publishers vetoed that because they said people would think it was a 'Western'!), and a most needed encouragement to me, for it has so far had a more hostile reception from the critics than any book I ever wrote. Not that critics really matter very much. The real question is how the book goes 10 or 15 years after publication.

I met Dom Gregory only at a meeting of some society—a fine, old man and very highly thought of by those who are entitled to have an opinion on his subject (I'm not). I haven't read *The Shape*:³⁰⁷ when you have finished your arduous, but obviously pleasant, reconnaissance, you must give me a report on it.

Yes: *The Last Battle* ends Narnia—very much 'ends' as you will see.

I have a hope we shall get away without World War III this time. I fancy Russia wd. be more likely to make a second Spanish Civil War out of Suez than to strike openly in the West. But who knows.³⁰⁸

My brother, who is well, joins me in all greetings.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 19/1956

Dear Gibb

I shall be free (and here) on Tue. 27th almost any time between lunch and dinner. Let me know your probable hour?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P): TS

56/33

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
19th November 1956.

Dear Mac,

Thanks for your letters of November 12th, with enclosure, and of the 14th. The brutes gave me no proof, and have foisted a gross error of fact about Tolkien onto me! [309](#)

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

Magdalene
Nov 22 [1956]

Frightfully sorry but they have put on a Committee on Nov 27 which I can't possibly skip. I'd probably (almost certainly) be free by 5 p.m.

C.S.L.

TO J. O. REED (P):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Nov. 24/56

Dear Reed

I think less of this island for not having found you a job good enough to keep you from trying barbarous lands, but all my hearty good wishes go with you to Rhodesia. Of course you were thrice welcome to the little I have been able to do.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,

Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Nov. 25th 1956

My dear Arthur—

Joy is in hospital, suffering from cancer. The prospects are 1. A tiny 100th chance of ultimate cure. 2. A reasonable probability of some years more of (tolerable) life. 3. A real danger that she may die in a few months.

It will be a great tragedy for me to lose her. In the meantime, if she gets over this bout and emerges from hospital she will no longer be fit to live alone so she must come and live here. That means (in order to avoid scandal) that our marriage must shortly be published. W. has written to Janie and the Ewarts to tell them I am getting married, and I didn't want the news to take you by surprise. I know you will pray for her and for me: and for W., to whom also, the loss if we lose her, will be great.

Yours ever
Jack

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 27th 1956

Dear Evans

Your cheering letter about Orual came very *à propos*, for that book has had a worse reception from the critics than any I ever wrote. I am delighted that you, at any rate, like it. Brady's article³¹⁰ contains as much jam as the greediest author could demand: and good quality jam too.

I think the World History is just the thing for you and you will do it very well.³¹¹ It is also eminently worth doing. It might easily be your best work, and I'm glad the idea came to you. With v. many thanks.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 30/56

Dear Gibb

I have squeezed the stuff into the cardboard Tube (for so I emend cube, the MS. reading) and will post it this morning.³¹² Many thanks. The reviews *en masse* were much less depressing than the chance selection I had seen.

The honey is perhaps the best I've ever eaten. Tell the bees I said so.

Yours sticky but grateful

C. S. Lewis

TO KENNETH RECKFORD (BOD):³¹³

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Dec 3/56

Dear Mr. Reckford

It was most kind of you to write and tell me that you liked the Narnian stories. I felt some sadness in ending that world myself: but those old enough to read the books are also old enough to be told that all countries, except Aslan's country, are transitory With warm regards to Mrs. Reckford and yourself.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MRS JOHNSON (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Dec 3/1956

Dear Mrs. Johnson

I *am* glad you've got onto *Lilith* and I quite agree with what you say about it. The only thing I don't like is the baby-language of the children. The best short fairy tale is *The Golden Key*.³¹⁴ Your mountains (how lovely to live in a country that still has beavers! We lost ours about 700 years ago) sound heavenly. I doubt if my namesake C. D. Lewis does write tekkies.³¹⁵ In great haste.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Dec. 3rd 1956

My dear Gibb

Will you please ask them to send 1 copy of *Problem of Pain* and 1 of *Mere Christianity* 'with compliments from Mrs. Gresham' to Mrs. Croxford, Mayfair I, Wingfield Hospital, Headington, Oxford?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MR LUCAS (L):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Dec. 6th 1956

Dear Mr Lucas

(1) I think there may be *some* humour.³¹⁶ Matt. IX.12³¹⁷ (People who are well don't need doctors) could well be said in a way that wd be v. funny to everyone present except the Pharisees. So might Matt. XVII. 25.³¹⁸ And in Mark X.30—quickly slipping in 'tribulations' among all the assets—that cd. be funny too.³¹⁹ And of course the Parable of the Unjust Steward³²⁰ (its comic element is well brought out in Dorothy Sayers' excellent *Man born to be King*).

(2) If there were more humour, should we (modern Occidentals) *see* it? I've been much struck in conversation with a Jewess³²¹ by the extent to which Jews see humour in the O.T. where we don't. Humour varies so much from culture to culture.

(3) How much wd. be recorded? We know (John XXI. 25)³²² that we have only a tiny fraction of what Our Lord said. Wd. the Evangelists, anxious to get across what was vitally necessary, *include* it? They told us nothing about His appearance, clothes, physical habits—none of what a modern biographer would put in.

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry
Oxford
Dec 10th 1956

Dear Father Milward

Thanks for your letter of Nov 5. One *historical* point first. There cd. not have been an allegory about the atomic bomb when Tolkien began his romance for he did so before it was invented.³²³ That, however, has little to do with the theoretical question: tho' it has much to do with the extreme danger, in individual cases, of applying allegorical interpretations. We shd. probably find that many particular allegories critics read into Langland or Spenser are impossible for just that sort of reason, if we knew all the facts. I am also convinced that the wit of man *cannot* devise a story in wh. the wit of some other man cannot find an allegory.

For the rest, I wd. agree that the word can be used in wider or narrower senses. Indeed, in so far as the things unseen are manifested by the things seen, one might from one point of view call the whole material universe an allegory. The truth is it's one of those words which needs defining in each context where one uses it. It wd. be disastrous if anyone took your statement that the Nativity is the greatest of all allegories to mean that the physical event was merely *feigned!*³²⁴

Who is the man on your stamp? Looks like a tough to me.³²⁵ Thanks for pleasant card, and all good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Dec 10th 1956

Dear Mrs. Gebbert—

Oh I'm sure you do the Tycoon a grave injustice in saying his *oeuvre* (it seems the latest thing to put this word in the singular) makes as much sense as Picasso's. No more than that? If it's really true you must have him analyzed. But I'll not believe it.

Your present had the charm of being quite unguessable from the shape of the parcel. Even when I'd got down to the cardboard box I still had no idea...(It can't be a box of *soldiers*?) Well, the ties are resplendent. We'll have to get new clothes to wear with them. A thousand thanks. But look: you must stop. We never send any one any presents, so why shd. we get any. Our real name is Scrooge. We've contracted out of all that. So for this time, very real thanks; but no more.

My brother is away for a day or two. I got back for my Cambridge term to-day—a great College feast last night with all the good wines and good foods in the world, and no hang-over this morning. Never is if you stick to what you drink at table: it's that silly messing about with spirits afterwards that does the trouble. I had a nice term. I continue slimming. There's no sun in our sky but it's very warm. Hot and dark like you-know-where! Very best wishes to you and the Tycoon. God bless you.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Dec. 12th 1956

Dear Mary Willis

I am sorry to hear that your news is still no better: but I don't somehow think that all your friends will leave you in the lurch if things come to the worst.

Why shd. I make a mystery of my own affairs? (but don't mention it till it becomes public). I am likely to be in the near future, both a husband and a widower. That is, I am marrying a very sick, and perhaps a dying, woman. That's all.

We will keep one another in our prayers.

Yours

Jack

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry
Oxford
Dec 13th 1956

Dear Cecil

(1.) I assumed that all Laurence's terms wd. be paid out of Agapony. Will you just write to Owen and he'll send you a cheque. And in the name of all reason don't come down on John (who's at the beginning of life and founding a family and all) for anything my fund can supply. It was devised for such purposes and the money in it is no longer mine: and if it were, isn't that part of what Godparents are for?

(2.) I couldn't get away this Vac—I am, you know, a daily visitant at a hospital and also have two schoolboy stepsons in the house! I like them both. No doubt I'll have had enough of 'fresh, young life' before their holidays are over. But anything (almost) is better than the dark solitude during W's frequent absences. But I'd like to have met the Ζώγραθος if only in order to address him as ὦ θαυμάσιε [326](#) Still more, to have been with you and Marguerite. [327](#) Love to both, and all.

Yours
Jack

From suicide to book collecting is a huge step up for poor Eric. [328](#) Dare one hope this is a real beginning of any permanent improvement?

The following announcement appeared in The Times on 24 December 1956, p. 8: 'A marriage has taken place between Professor C. S. Lewis, of Magdalene College, Cambridge, and Mrs Joy Gresham, now a patient in the Churchill Hospital, Oxford. It is requested that no letters be sent.'

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Dec 24th 1956

Dear Dorothy

Thanks for your kind card. You may see in the *Times* a notice of my marriage to Joy Gresham. She is in hospital (cancer) and not likely to live; but if she gets over this she must be given a home here. You will not think that anything wrong is going to happen. Certain problems do not arise between a dying woman and an elderly man. What I am mainly acquiring is two (nice) stepsons. Pray for us all, and God bless you.

Yours
Jack

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Dec 28th 1956

Dear Joan

Thank you very much for your beautiful picture. Unfortunately that sentence (the one I've just written) is what I should have had to say, out of politeness, even if it had been a horrid picture! That's the worst (even of 'white') lies; when you *really* mean that a present is beautiful, there is nothing left to say. But this picture really *is* very good; the design good and the colour even better. What is it done in? It doesn't look either like oils or like water colours. The effect is wonderfully deep, rich, and attractive.

We have had a snowy Christmas here, which is unusual in England, but to-day it is all washed away by rain; horrid under-foot.

All good wishes for the New Year.
Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO SARAH NEYLAN (T):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Dec 30th 1956

My dear Sarah

Thank you for the beautiful little jar. I am trying to think of some treasure choice enough to put in it. I am also v. ashamed of not having sent

you a word this Christmas. But I've been really snowed under. All domestic help was away for its holidays. I have a sick (v. sick) wife to visit daily in hospital. At home I had to look after a sick* brother, 2 schoolboy stepsons, one dog, one cat, four geese, umpteen hens, two stoves, three pipes in danger of freezing: so I was pretty busy and pretty tired. Well, all good wishes to all of you and here's a new-year's gift.

With Love
C. S. Lewis

* SICK. It looks like RICH (he isn't!)

TO WILLIAM GRESHAM (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Dec. 30/56

Dear Bill

Thanks for your kind letter. Joy is in plaster now (the blasted growth had nearly eaten thro' her thigh-bone, so she is really a fracture case at present), much better than she was 10 days ago.

The boys are of course with me and I'm learning a lot! They're a nice pair and easy to get on with—if only they got on better with one another: but of course they are v. different types and have no tastes or interests in common. According to school reports both have brains (David more) and are both disinclined to work hard. (Who isn't?) All the best.

Yours

Jack

I'd write more and better only the Christmas period with all domestic help away for its holidays, the boys to look after, Warnie ill upstairs, and a daily visit to poor Joy, and dog & cat & geese & hens, and eternal, merciless letter-writing, have left me tired—almost like front-line tiredness.

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

56/89

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,

Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
31st December 1956.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

Many thanks for your long and interesting letter of the 28th. (Surely not? Even by jet plane I don't see how it could have reached me this morning!)

I'm so glad that you liked the books³²⁹ as much as we did the ties; yes, it seems odd they should be cheap, unless the explanation is that they are an *English* export, and thus would naturally undersell the native article. It is naughty, but kind of you to promise some more, and we shall go about the town mighty fine in consequence.

This is bad news about the Tycoon; flu is unpleasant, but flu plus bronchitis is intolerable; to say nothing of missing his Xmas, which means so much at his age. I hope by the time that this reaches you, you will both be as giants refreshed.³³⁰ My own Christmas was hardly more pleasant; I had my brother in bed, two boys in the house, no domestic help, all the chores to do in fact for four people, four geese, ten hens, a cat, and a dog. Whew, but it has left me tired! My overriding feeling is profound gratitude that next Xmas is 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ months away.

I am much intrigued by the news of the novel,³³¹ of which the theme sounds most promising; it is the sort of book which should go down well over here, where all American novels are booming; and your own country is so big that there must be an enormous number of people to whom the life of Carmel, Cal. is as alien as it would be to us. Do peg away at it, and good luck to the venture. Apropos of books, my brother has one which he describes as 'the mixture as before' which Harcourt, Brace are bringing out in the spring; and wants to warn you not to buy it, as your name tops his list for complimentary copies when the time comes.

You tell us little or nothing about your milieu. How does New York as a home strike a Californian? How will you like the extremes of heat and cold? Whenever the American weather makes the news in our papers, I notice that New York is either immobilized by a blizzard, or else the shade temperature is away up in the hundreds. Personally, having been reared in the North of Ireland, I feel that nearly all this planet has far too much 'weather'. What I like is unnoticeable weather—neither hot nor cold nor

windy nor calm or wet or dry. But this luxury I have'nt had since I was a boy.

My brother joins me in sending you (and the Tycoon) our warmest good wishes for 1957.

Yours affectionately,

C. S. Lewis

1957

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
3/1/57

Dear Mac

Thanks for yours of the 29th with enclosures. You are certainly doing me proud in the way of advertisement. Mr. Highet really ought to be congratulated:¹ he has understood the book better than any critic on either side of the Atlantic and writes so that others can understand *him*. There are few of his kind about!

All the best.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
4/1/57

Dear Mary Willis

Thank you for your letter of the 28th with enclosures. I must try not to let my own present unhappiness harden my heart against the woes of others! You too are going through a dreadful time. Ah well, it will not last forever. There will come a day for all of us when 'it is finished'.² God help us all.

Yours sincerely

Jack

TO CHARLES A. BRADY (W):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
Jan 5th 1957

Dear Brady

(We may both drop the honorific now, mayn't we?) It's cheek for any one with such a hand as mine to complain that yours is not v. legible! but as the revised proverb says 'A pot is none the less black because a kettle calls it so.'³ Mine is partly due to neuritis, so I can't answer you at the length your letter deserves.

I have to thank you for many kind and (what is even rarer) perceptive reviews. I don't keep reviews, whether friendly or hostile they are not a diet good for the soul—so I can't now talk about them in detail.⁴

Lor' bless you, those dear friends were never 'my school'.⁵ They were all older than I. Miss Sayers was an established author before I was heard of. Charles influenced me, not I him. And as for anyone influencing Tolkien, you might as well (to adapt the White King) try to influence a bandersnatch.⁶

I very much wish we may someday meet. With good wishes to you and all yours.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
Jan 5th 1957

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Thank you for your letter of Jan 1. I have a touch of neuritis which makes writing difficult, so I'll do little more than ask your prayers.

I have just married a lady who is very ill, too probably dying, and acquired two schoolboy stepsons. We are none of us, as you may guess, very happy and need all the help our friends can give us.

All blessings, in wh. my brother joins me.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO DAVID GRESHAM (BOD):⁷

[The Kilns
10? January 1957]

Dear David—

I am sorry you feel you have had a raw deal in being sent off to Malvern without being consulted.⁸ But, you see, we were dreadfully worried as to how the arrangements in the house would work—I never dared to hope they would go as well as they are going—and felt that any chance of lightening work for the ‘Staff’ must be seized. And of course we could not foresee how amazingly you have grown up during the last term, and therefore could not foresee that you would be such a help.

Also, it seemed unfair to you that you should spend the whole holidays in a house of sickness.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
17/1/57

Dear Mary Willis

I've got such an attack of rheumatism in my right arm I can hardly write.

I have married a lady suffering from cancer. I think she will weather it this time: after that, life under the sword of Damocles. Very little chance (not exactly *none*) of a permanent escape. I acquire two schoolboy stepsons. My brother and I have been coping with them for their Christmas holidays. Nice boys, but gruelling work for 2 old bachelors! I'm dead tired now.

Yours very sincerely

Jack Lewis

TO MARTIN KILMER (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
22/1/57

Dear Martin

The books don't tell us what happened to Susan.⁹ She is left alive in this world at the end, having by then turned into a rather silly, conceited young woman. But there is plenty of time for her to mend, and perhaps she will get to Aslan's country in the end—in her own way. I think that whatever she had seen in Narnia she *could* (if she was the sort that wanted to) persuade herself, as she grew up, that it was 'all nonsense'.

Congratulations on your good marks. I wish I was good at Maths! Love to all.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

Magdalene,

Cambridge
23/1/57

My dear Chad—

We were both moved by your letter of Jan. 15! Joy's silence (with paper) has no medical significance except this: the enemy had almost eaten through her thigh bone, so that she is now in the position of a patient with a broken leg—i.e. in plaster wh. keeps her almost flat on her back and thus makes *writing* mechanically difficult. I think, please God, we'll get her on her feet again—till when? For our highest hope is, after all, but that of living under the sword of Damocles. (I bet he read everything that came out about the strength of *hair*).

We both send our dear loves to both you. All who were ever dear to us seem somehow dearer now. Pray for us.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
24/1/57

Dear Master—

It occurred to me when Dennis¹⁰ and Ralph¹¹ were putting the cases of their pupils to-day that perhaps I might usefully tell you that I am one of the two trustees of a fund which exists for making gifts to individuals (that's its idea—not hospitals or organised charities) who need help: whether help with the education (like undergraduates) or eleemosynary¹² help (as it might be disabled College servants or their widows).¹³ This fund is in a fairly flourishing condition at the moment, and sums of from £25 to £100 cd. be given not too infrequently. If, therefore, you ever feel that someone needs and deserves a sum which College could not well give, a private letter from you to me stating the case (such a letter as cd. be forwarded to the other trustee) wd. probably elicit a response. Of course such a transaction need not, and should not, come before the Governing Body, and my name need not be mentioned at any stage. The cheque would reach the recipient through my solicitor and 'from an unknown donor'. Don't bother answering until a case in point arises.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY CORNISH (T):[14](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
26/1/57

Dear Mary Cornish

One of the first things Caspian did after he became King was to re-build Cair Paravel. He had said he would restore 'Old Narnia' and *of course* that meant having the court at C.P. If we had been ruled by the Germans for a long time and then at last got free and had a King of our own again, wouldn't he probably re-build Windsor? I am so glad you like the books, and I hope *My Adventures in Those Two Strange Lands* will go well. It's fun writing stories, isn't it?

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge
29/1/57

Dear Mrs. Jessup—

But of course I remember your previous letters, for ‘John, Kim, and Mrs. Jessup’ have been in my prayers this long time. Your news is very good and I thank God for it. How little we know what the result of any event is going to be! A diseased limb of your family has been amputated and now that the pain of the operation is over, the whole body feels better.

I want your prayers now. I have lately married a very ill, probably a dying, woman. My world is not bleak or meaningless, but it is tragic.

If there is more pity and depth in my last book than in its predecessors, perhaps my own recent life has something to do with it. I am very glad you liked it: It has had a less favourable reception not only from critics but from most friends than any I ever wrote.

All blessings.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN HOOTON (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
5/2/57

Dear Mr. Hooton

Thursday week (Feb 14th.) looks pretty good. Call on me about 6? I
look forward to seeing you.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD): PC

Kilns
5/2/57

I'll try to make the B & B but can do nothing else. All my spare hours are devoted to the Wingfield, where my wife lies ill—indeed, almost certainly dying. Pray for us

J

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W):¹⁵

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
10/2/57

Dear Professor Kilby–

An author doesn't necessarily understand the meaning of his own story better than anyone else, so I give you *my* account of the TWHF simply for what it's worth. The 'levels' I am conscious of are these.

1. A work of (supposed) *historical* imagination. A guess at what it might have been like in a little barbarous state on the borders of the Hellenistic world with Greek culture just beginning to affect it. Hence the change from the old priest (of a very normal fertility mother-goddess) to Arnom: Stoic allegorisations of the myths standing to the original cult rather as Modernism to Christianity (but this is a parallel, not an allegory). Much that you take as allegory was intended solely as realistic detail. The Wagon men are Nomads from the steppes. The children made mud pies not for symbolic purposes but because children do. The Pillar Room is simply a room. The Fox is such an educated Greek slave as you might find at a barbarous court—and so on.

2. Psyche is an instance of the *anima naturaliter Christiana*¹⁶ making the best of the Pagan religion she is brought up in and thus being guided (but always 'under the cloud', always in terms of her own imagination or that of her people) towards the true God. She is in some ways like Christ not because she is a symbol of Him but because every good man or woman is like Christ. What else could they be like? But of course my interest is primarily in Orual.

3. Orual is (not a symbol but) an instance, a 'case', of human affection in its natural condition: true, tender, suffering, but in the long run, tyrannically possessive and ready to turn to hatred when the beloved ceases to be its possession. What such love particularly cannot stand is to see the beloved passing into a sphere where it cannot follow. All this, I hoped, would stand as a mere story in its own right. But– 4. Of course I had always in mind its close parallel to what is probably at this moment going on in at least 5 families in your own town. Someone becomes a Christian, or, in a family nominally Christian already, does something like becoming a

missionary or entering a religious order. The others suffer a sense of outrage. What they love is being taken from them! The boy must be mad! And the conceit of him! Or is there something in it after all? Let's hope it is only a phase! If only he'd listen to his natural advisers! Oh come back, come back, be sensible, be the dear son we used to know.

Now I, as a Christian, have a good deal of sympathy with these jealous, puzzled, suffering people (for they do suffer and out of their suffering much of the bitterness against religion arises). I believe the thing is common. There is very nearly a touch of it in Luke II, 48, 'Son, *why hast thou so dealt with us?*' And is the reply easy for a loving heart to bear?¹⁷

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
11/2/57

Dear Mac

I'm afraid I was never less likely to come to America than now. Between ourselves (I don't want a spate of correspondence) I am newly married to a lady who is v. ill, indeed probably dying. No time for trips.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER SHARROCK (P):[18](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
11/2/57

Dear Sharrock

Alas, I am 'retained' for another candidate. I could of course referee for both, but I don't think that does much good to either. I am most sorry to have to disappoint you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
13/2/57

Dear Chad

After a severe attack on her morale and even her faith Joy has made a marvellous psychological and (please God) spiritual rally. During my two last week-ends in Oxford she has been in wonderful peace and even in high spirits. Physically, while the doctors hold out almost no long-term hope, she is, to a layman's eye, improving: sitting up for a while daily, going out in a wheeled chair, eating and sleeping well. You wd. hardly believe how much happiness, not to say *gaiety*, we have together—a honeymoon on a sinking ship. Love to both.

Yours

Jack

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
13/2/57

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

Thanks for your letter of the 7th. I belong to a generation in which the idea of sending children under 12 to school was unheard of, so therefore I perhaps fail to see the Tycoon's retirement into private life quite as you do.¹⁹ But of course in those days there were cooks and housemaids and Nannies and governesses. I don't remember wanting the grown-ups to amuse me: one was always trying to avoid their interferences with one's own amusements!

I say, I wonder are you wise about that novel of yours? I mean, are you likely to delight or interest others with what nauseates and bores yourself? I know people say it can be done—at least I've heard of high-brow authors affecting to care nothing about the successful thrillers they've written in their spare time. But I suspect them of hypocrisy: they really enjoy their own thrillers like anything, don't you think? I don't think there will be any more 'juveniles' for me. Seven is a good crop off an old field!

We have had almost no winter here and wonder whether we are going to escape without it or get it hideously late. No one can claim that our climate is dull!

With all good wishes to both of you. yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN HOOTON (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
15/2/57

Dear Hooton

Thanks, I got your message alright. Wd. Tue March 5th do? I'm quite free that evg. and, if it suited you, we might dine together in some hotel,

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
17/2/57

Dear Mary Willis

There is no great mystery about my marriage. I have known the lady a long time: no one can mark the exact moment at which friendship becomes love. You can well understand how illness—the fact that she was facing pain and death and anxiety about the future of her children—would be an *extra* reason for marrying her or a reason for marrying her sooner.

If I write very shortly it is not because I am reticent but because I am tired and busy. My brother is also ill and causes a good deal of anxiety, and of course I lose his secretarial help: so that I have not only much to bear but much to *do*. I can't type: you could hardly conceive what hundreds of hours a year I spend coaxing a rheumatic wrist to drive this pen across paper.

What a divine mercy about the last moment money for the rent! Clearly He who feeds the sparrows has you in His care. Never suppose that the amount 'on my own plate' shuts up my sympathy for the great troubles you are undergoing. I pray for you every day. Ah well, we shall all be out of it in a comparatively few years.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO MRS D. JESSUP (W):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge
19/2/57

Dear Mrs. Jessup

Thank you for your most kind letter. For your prayers we shall be most grateful. There is nothing else you can do. The disease, as you have guessed, is cancer, diagnosed too late in its secondary stage. The little primary growth from which all started had been shown to several doctors on both sides of the Atlantic (my wife is an American) and pooh-poohed by them all.

Perhaps you have read my wife's book on the Commandments, published under the name Joy Davidman, *Smoke on the Mountain*?

All you say, and more, is true. She is in no pain, her faith unimpaired, her mind at peace, and her spirits good. You could hardly believe what happiness, even gaiety, there is between us.

The cold reception of the book, ²⁰ far from being the last straw, is hardly even a straw. You need waste no sympathy for me on that score, Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY MARGARET MCCASLIN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
19/2/57

Dear Mrs. McCaslin

Thank you for sending me your friend's letter, which I return. With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY MARGARET MCCASLIN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
25/2/57

Dear Mrs. McCaslin

Of course I didn't mean you to *pay* for the book:²¹ it was a
'complimentary copy.' So glad you liked it.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO DEBORAH FRASER (P):

As from Magdalene College,

Cambridge
28/2/57

Dear Deborah Fraser

I am so glad you like my Narnian stories, and it was nice of you to write and tell me. I don't feel I can do any more of them. After all there are seven of them and they cover the history of Narnia from its creation to the end!

Thank your father very much for his nice article. Tell him I am extra-specially glad he likes *Till We Have Faces*, because it is so far the most unpopular of my books. We have a hamster and a white rat and there's a little wood full of owls in our garden.

All good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MURIEL BRADBROOK (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
1/3/57

Dear Muriel

(If after so many years I may take this liberty. People call me Jack) I enclose a first draft of the Chaucer paper.²² Hack freely. I am not used to this B and C decision but have tried to make a distinction. The B questions are supposed to call for knowledge and close argument: the C ones for critical power. You are far busier than I, so I don't expect it back quickly. My address, from the end of Full Term, will be THE KILNS, HEADINGTON QUARRY, OXFORD.

Yours
Jack (Lewis)

TO SISTER PENELOPE CSMV (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Ash Wednesday [6 March 1957]

Dear Sister Penelope

Yes, it is true. I married (knowingly) a very sick, save by near-miracle a dying, woman. She is the Joy Davidman whose *Smoke on the Mountain* I think you read. She is in the Wingfield Morris Hospital at Headington. When I see her each week end she is, to a layman's eyes (but not to a doctor's knowledge) in full convalescence, better every week. The disease is of course cancer: by which I lost my mother, my father, and my favourite aunt. She knows her own state of course: I wd. allow no lies to be told to a grown-up and a Christian. As you can imagine new beauty and new tragedy have entered my life. You wd. be surprised (or perhaps you would not?) to know how much of a strange sort of happiness and even gaiety there is between us.

I look forward to the Pocket Book²³—our equivalent, I suppose, of *Encheiridion*.²⁴ All good wishes for your work on 'eschatology hot, strong, and unmitigated'. I've heard a lot about *The Third Eye*²⁵ but it has not yet met me.

I don't doubt that Joy and I (and David & Douglas, the two boys) will have your prayers. Douglas is an absolute charmer (11 1/2). David, at first sight less engaging, is at any rate a comically appropriate stepson for me (13), being almost exactly what I was—bookworm, pedant, and a bit of a prig.

Yours very sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO KATHRYN STILLWELL (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
6/3/57

Dear Miss Stillwell

Thank you for your kind letter enclosing *His* and for the article which I was vain enough to enjoy.²⁶

You were quite right about the Studies for Grierson.²⁷ I was simply one of the contributors and had nothing else to do with it.

You cannot be more in the dark than I am as to what (or when, or where) my next book will be.

You'd be much wiser to get my books in the American edition as these now have larger print and better paper than our own.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
7/3/57

Dear Van Auken

Yes, I have married (knowingly) a woman desperately ill, almost certainly dying: Joy Davidman whose *Smoke on the Mountain* you have probably read. She is in the Wingfield and of course I spend all of the week end I possibly can at her bedside.

If you cd. meet the 1.15 from Bletchley on Sat. we cd. lunch together at the Royal Oxford before I catch the bus for the hospital. [28](#)

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
7/3/57

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

One goes on somehow—a queer, incredible life—sometimes, at Joy's bedside, we have more happiness and even gaiety than I wd. have thought possible. Other times, great misery. I value your prayers and know we shall continue to have them.

I can't write much.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
10/3/57

Dear Father Milward

Thank you for your letter and the MS.,²⁹ which I return. The poem seems to me well conceived and perhaps well imagined: but to be frank, I cannot at all reconcile my ear to the rhythm. It is not weak: but its strength seems to have a hard monotony suggestive of the sound of machines. Of course this is only one man's subjective impression—and one man whose troubles and distractions at the moment do not leave him much critical power. Continue to pray for me.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
14/3/57

Dear Mary

I can't really write today but just send a line to thank you for your kind letter of March 8th. I am v. glad to hear about the job or jobs. All much the same at this end.

Yours

Jack

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD): [30](#)

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
15/3/57

Dear Miss Dunbar

Thanks for your letter and especially for the very kind words at the end. We shall indeed be most grateful for your prayers. If I cd. have found them I shd. have written on the cover of the off-print³¹ one of those bits where Thucydides says 'Both having erected a trophy'³²—for you see I have partly yielded to your points and partly held my ground! All those in your letter I must defer to another time, for I have not the texts here. All luck with Aristophanes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

About the time Joy was admitted to hospital with cancer, Lewis discovered that William Gresham had been legally married before his marriage to Joy, and that his first wife had been alive at the time of this second marriage. Lewis took the view of the Catholic Church that his second marriage was therefore invalid, leaving Joy free to marry again. On 17 November 1956 he met the Bishop of Oxford, the Rt. Rev. Harry Carpenter, and asked if he would permit one of his priests to marry them. The rule in the Church of England being that all legal marriages are valid, Bishop Carpenter refused.³³

Shortly before this Lewis had heard of what he believed was a miracle performed by his friend, the Rev. Peter Bide of the Diocese of Chichester.³⁴ In the spring of 1954 there was a polio epidemic in Sussex where Bide had his parish, and numerous sufferers were moved to the ‘fever hospital’ where he was chaplain. A young lad, Michael Gallagher, seriously ill of cerebral meningitis, was believed to be dying. Bide laid his hands on the boy and prayed for his recovery. Michael recovered, and Lewis was one of those who believed a miracle had been worked.

Hoping the same might happen to Joy, Lewis wrote to Bide asking if he would come up and lay his hands on her. Bide arrived in Oxford on 20 March 1957, and later gave this account of the visit:

Shortly after my arrival at The Kilns [Lewis] said to me, ‘Peter, I know this isn’t fair, but do you think you could marry us? I asked the Bishop; I’ve asked my parish priest; I’ve asked all my friends on the Faculty; and they’ve said no. Joy is dying and she wants the Sacrament before she dies.’...I had myself for some time found the Church’s attitude to remarriage in church after divorce difficult...I asked Jack to leave me alone for a while and I considered the matter. In the end there seemed only one Court of Appeal. I asked myself what He would have done and that somehow finished the argument.³⁵

At 11 a.m. on 21 March 1957 Lewis and Joy were married in the Wingfield-Morris Hospital by Bide, who also laid his hands on Joy praying that she be healed. Warnie was there as a witness, and he left the following account of the wedding in his diary:

Sentence of death has been passed on Joy, and the end is only a matter of time. But today she had one little gleam of happiness...at 11 a.m. we all gathered in Joy's room at the Wingfield-Bide, J, Sister, and myself, communicated, and the marriage was celebrated. I found it heartrending, and especially Joy's eagerness for the pitiable consolation of dying under the same roof as J: though to feel pity for anyone so magnificently brave as Joy is almost an insult.

*She is to be moved here next week, and will sleep in the common-room, with a resident hospital nurse installed in Vera's room. There seems little hope but that there may be no pain at the end.*³⁶

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
5/4/57

My dear Arthur—

I was meaning to write to you anyway when I got your letter of the 2nd—if only to tell you that there will be no likelihood of an Irish holiday for me this year. Next year, almost certainly, I shall be (in the sense I least desire it) ‘free’. Joy has now been sent home from hospital, not because she is better but because they can do nothing for her. She is completely bed-ridden—has to be lifted even onto the bed pan—and we have a resident nurse. I know you continue to pray for us. W. is being wonderful. God bless you.

Jack

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
5/4/57

Dear Chad—

Joy is now back from hospital, completely bed-ridden. She is very brave, but increasingly worn out with pains, discomforts, and weariness. We are entering on a period in wh. we must expect every day to be worse than yesterday and better than tomorrow. We need all your prayers. All send their love.

Yours

Jack

TO WILLIAM GRESHAM (W):

The Kilns

Kiln Lane

Headington Quarry

Oxford
6/4/57

Dear Bill

I have your letter of April 2nd and you, I think, will have received one from me before you get this. Of course I cannot judge between your account and Joy's account of your married life; nor is it perhaps the chief point. What you and I have to think of is the happiness of the boys. I don't remember that Joy ever denied your *intention* to support them: she doubted, and doubts, your *power* to do so. That you have done all you *can* is important to any one who is making a judgement on your character (which of course I am not); but if what you can is so little, the practical results will be the same for the boys, won't they?

There is no question of your resigning yourself to 'never seeing them again.' Why should there not be a real, unconfused, reconciliation between you and them when they are grown up? But by forcing them back at a moment when their hearts are breaking you will not facilitate this but render it permanently impossible. The boys remember you as a man who fired rifles thro' ceilings to relieve his temper, broke up chairs, wept in public, and broke a bottle over Douglas's head. David knew, and resented, the fact that you were living with your present wife while still married to his mother. Children have indelible memories of such things and they are (let us admit) self-righteous.

Whose happiness wd. you foster by forcing them back to you now? Not your own. The most patient man on earth wdn't be happy with two resentful boys who regard themselves as prisoners in his house. Not your wife! You bring her two extra mouths to feed, both mouths belonging to boys who do not like her. And certainly not the boys!

Wait, Bill, *wait*. Not now. A bone that breaks in a second takes long to heal. The relation between you and your sons has been broken. Give it time to mend. Forcible surgery (without anaesthetics) such as you are proposing is not the way.

Yours

Jack

TO WILLIAM GRESHAM (W): TS

80/57

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
6th April 1957.

Dear Bill,

Joy is far too ill to write and has asked me to answer yours of the 2nd. This is a ticklish job. If through clumsiness, in the effort to put things strongly, I sound like one who writes with animosity, believe me this is not so. I think there has never been any ill-feeling between you and me, and I very much hope there never will be.

Your letter reached Joy after a day of agony. The effect was devastating. She felt that the only earthly hope she now has had been taken away. You have tortured one who was already on the rack; heaped extra weights on one who is being pressed to death. There is nothing she dreads so much as a return of the boys to your charge. You perhaps do not understand that certain scenes (when you were not yourself) came early enough in their lives to make you a figure of terror to them. Their return to the U.S.A. when their education is finished is of course quite a different matter. Now, bitterly against their will, coming on top of the most appalling tragedy that can happen to childhood (I went through it and know), tearing them from all that has already become familiar and shattering all sense of security that remains to them, it would be disastrous. If you realized the cruelty of what you are proposing to do, I am sure you would not do it.

If you do not relent, I shall of course be obliged to place every legal obstacle in your way. Joy has, legally, a case. Her (documented) desire for naturalization (which there may still be time to carry out), and the boys' horror of going back, will be strong points. What is certain is that a good deal of your money and mine will go into the lawyers' hands. You have a chance to soothe, instead of aggravating, the miseries of a woman you once loved. You have a chance of recovering at some future date, instead of alienating for ever, the love and respect of your children. For God's sake take it and yield to the deep wishes of everyone concerned except yourself.

You may suspect that a letter you will get from David was ‘inspired’ by Joy or me. In reality, it was expurgated, i.e. the letter he meant to send was much stronger, and Joy made him tone it down. Douglas burst into tears on hearing your plans. I assure you that they have never heard a word against you from me. No *propaganda* at all has ever gone on.

Yours,

Jack

TO MABEL DREW (BOD):³⁷

153/57

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
10th April 1957.

Dear Mrs Drew,

I am no scholar about the period involved,³⁸ but my colleague Professor Driver (one of the greatest authorities) sees nothing in the least alarming to Christians in the Scrolls. The book published on them,³⁹ he says, is ignorant and tendentious. Many of the things they regard as impairing Our Lord's uniqueness were already known to most of us to be quotations from the Old Testament; an enormous amount of what Jesus said was. He came to 'fulfil' the Law and the Prophets.⁴⁰ It is His Person and Office that are unique—not some supposed 'originality'.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO PENELOPE BERNERS-PRICE (W): TS

114/57

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
13th April 1957.

My dear Penny,

Thanks for your letter and the pictures. You draw donkeys better than Pauline Baynes does. I am so glad you like the book. Please give my greetings and deep thanks to your father and mother. They will understand that I have hardly time to live at present, let alone write a decent letter.

With love, yours,

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELburnE (W): TS

64/6[5]7

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

13th April 1957.

Dear Mary Willis,

My wife is now home, bed-ridden, and dying. We have two nurses. You really must not expect more than notes from me. I lead the life of a hospital orderly, and have hardly time to say my prayers or eat my meals.

Thanks for the Easter poem, and congratulations on the job.

Yours
Jack⁴¹

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
15/4/57

Dear Ruth

How can I thank you? Not, anyway, by accepting your offered kindness.⁴² There's a good deal in the kitty still. But thank you again and again. Joy is home, doomed, and totally bed ridden. We have two nurses and much of my day is spent on the duties of a hospital orderly. But she is, thank God, without pain and wonderfully cheerful: at times even happy. I know we have your prayers. God bless you.

Yours

Jack

TO LAURENCE KRIEG (P):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
April 21st 57

Dear Laurence

I think I agree with your order for reading the books more than with your mother's.⁴³ The series was not planned beforehand as she thinks. When I wrote *The Lion* I did not know I was going to write any more. Then I wrote *P. Caspian* as a sequel and still didn't think there would be any more, and when I had done the *Voyage* I felt quite sure it would be the last. But I found I was wrong. So perhaps it does not matter very much in which order anyone reads them. I'm not even sure that all the others were written in the same order in which they were published. I never keep notes of that sort of thing and never remember dates.

Well, I can't say I have had a happy Easter, for I have lately got married and my wife is very, very ill. I am sure Aslan knows best and whether He leaves her with me or takes her to His own country, He will do what is right. But of course it makes me very sad. I am sure you and your mother will pray for us.

All good wishes to you both.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

179/57

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
25th April 1957.

Dear Joan,

Very nice to hear from you again after this long time. No, I've never had the chance to go to Bayreuth,⁴⁴ though of course I've heard the Ring at Covent Garden;⁴⁵ but I'm sure that is not at all the same thing, and I envy you your good luck; and as for the Flying Dutchman,⁴⁶ my hearing of it has been limited to gramophone records. My German is of the kindergarten variety I'm afraid; I don't speak it, and can only read it with a dictionary at my elbow; I wish I did, for not to know German well is a considerable handicap I find.

I understand quite well what you mean by being 'outside' yourself, and it is not, I think, a common experience; the ordinary person probably never sees the world except from inside outwards, i.e. is not able to see him or herself objectively.

Our spring over here is a wonderful one; so hot by our standards—every day temperatures of 58–66. And the flowers and the bird music are a treat.

Best of luck with the Latin,

yours,
C.S.L.⁴⁷

TO MR PILGRIM (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
3/5/57

Dear Mr. Pilgrim

I'm not sure than I can make anything of the conception 'biologically independent'. Independent of what? And poets wd. join with psychologists,

I'd have thought, in repudiating the idea that we are specially independent when we fall in love. The verb *fall* may itself be significant of this: when is one so little one's own as while falling down a flight of stairs?

I don't think the idea of the State of Nature (wh. is theological and juristic as well as literary) originated in anything like Dryden's Noble Savage.⁴⁸ Neither Stoicism nor Christendom represented it as savagery. After the conquest of America this idea creeps in, I fancy, because the explorers mistook for a normally isolated & monastic life the life of the savages they meant [met]: not knowing about the tightly compacted tribal structure—which indeed they themselves had largely shattered by their arrival.

From my own point of view (partly a theological one) *independence* (just like that) is impossible to a finite being. I am dependent on God, on my physical organism, on my unconscious, on my ancestry, on all the books I read, on food etc., on those who pay me, and on society. (And in varying degrees on different parts of that society. I don't depend on the film industry or aviation as much as on miners and shipping). What I hope I have, within a certain tiny area, is some choice between the degree & kind of these various dependences at a given moment.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO PAULINE BAYNES (BOD): TS

183/57

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
4th May 1957.

Dear Miss Baynes,

Very nice to hear from you again, and thanks for sending on the book, which I have returned to Lane. Thanks for your congratulations on the Carnegie, but is it not rather 'our' Medal?⁴⁹ I'm sure the illustrations were taken into consideration as well as the text.

I am well, and as happy as a man can be whose wife is desperately ill.

With all best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
7/5/57

Dear Gibb

Thanks for cheque (£1340 total) received to-day. All the best.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
8 May '57

My dear Roger

Oh, I wish you'd written even a fortnight earlier. Too late now: I am up to my quota of night-guests for this term already. This is a sorrow to me. Can we nevertheless meet at the B&B?

Joy is home—alas—only because hospital can do no more for her—completely bed-ridden. But thank God, no pain, sleeping well, and often in good spirits.

I look forward to *M. at M.*⁵⁰ It is a pity about *The Land*.⁵¹ Making a book 'more exciting' is a most dangerous operation, I shd. think.

Love to both.

Yours

Jack

TO BICE CRICHTON-MILLER (BOD): [52](#)

Magdalene College
Cambridge.
14 May 1957

Dear Miss Crichton Miller

I am afraid my preaching days are past.⁵³ I did a lot—too much—of that sort of thing for several years and I now find I can't. This happens to many public speakers: they don't all stop speaking when it does. You know too well what the result is like, for you have often sat through it! Tell the young ladies they shd. be very grateful to me for *not* coming.

To sit listening to the creak of the pump-handle is not exhilarating. With regret.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN HOOTON (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
May 14th 1957

Dear Hooton

Could you come to our guest night on Wed. May 20th? Dinner jackets and meet in my room at, say, 6.45? Do.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):[54](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
May 16th [1957]

Dear Miss Dunbar

It isn't a question of time, and certainly not of any disinclination for a discussion of *Beowulf* and *The Birds*.⁵⁵ But I'm dreadfully un-limber. I've hurt a muscle over the hip and I walk, kneel, & lie—in fact everything but sit—with painful caution. Any chance of your coming to drink a glass of sherry *here* some morning at about 11.30 or some evening about 6 o'clock? My last lecture will be next Tuesday and after that any day except Mondays, Sats, or Sundays wd. do. Wd. you suggest one?

Thanks for your prayers,

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
May 17/57

My dear Roger

Yes, June 20–24 is the obvious time. Will you lunch with me in Magdalen*[56](#) and let me take you home to meet Joy for tea afterwards? And we can presumably meet at B & B on the Monday. Till then (with love to all) Yours

Jack

* On Fri. June 21.

TO OWEN BARFIELD (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
May 20/57

My dear Owen

The book is a stunner.⁵⁷ It rapt me out of myself at a time when I needed nothing more & expected nothing less. Colin Hardie says it is 'exciting'. I'll write again—still the last few chapters to read. Affects presence. The Scholarship-for-Africans one can obviously lie still & 'thump approving tail'.⁵⁸

Yours

Jack

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
May 21 [1957]

Dear Miss Dunbar

Right. I shall expect you about 6. to-morrow. I can guess what your 'simple questions' about *Beowulf* will be like! A gruelling *viva*!

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO P. H. NEWBY (BBC):⁵⁹ TS
199/57

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
22nd May 1957

Dear Mr Newby,

Many thanks for the kind invitation in your 04/HT/PHN of 20th. But I'm afraid I must refuse; to say nothing of pressure of work, serious illness in my home makes it impossible for me to do any outside jobs for a long time to come.

With regret. yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO BASIL WILLEY (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
May 23rd 1957

Dear Willey

I must apologise at once for skipping both Frost's lecture and your party.⁶⁰ I have got a 'slipped disc' or something and a morning of examinations, 'deep heat', X-rays, and massage has left me in a state in which I can't face either sitting through a lecture or standing at a sherry party. A jostle wd. elicit a scream! I am most disappointed. He is one of the few living poets for whom I feel something like reverence.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS JOHNSON (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
May 25/57

Dear Mrs. Johnson—

It was nice to hear from you again. I can't remember how up to date you are with my news. Did I tell you that a new element of both beauty and tragedy had entered my life? I am newly married, and to a dying woman (She was the Joy Davidman whose *Smoke on the Mountain*, a lively modern treatment of the Ten Commandments, you may have read. An American). She is, and I try to be, very brave. I acquired two schoolboy stepsons. I myself am, not dangerously, but painfully and disablingly, ill with a slipped disc. So life is rather full.

Numinor is Atlantis and Tolkien (I don't know what the J. stands for, but he's usually called Ronald) has still published little about it.⁶¹ But you must read the really great sequel to *The Hobbit*. It embodied a fragment only of his mythology, adapted for children. The later book is the genuine article, heroic romance for adults. It is *The Lord of the Rings* in 3 vols., published separately. 1. *The Fellowship of the Ring*. 2. *The Two Towers*. 3. *The Return of the King*. It has had a wonderful success here even among the most unlikely readers.

Thanks for the photo. They both look absolute charmers. Of course Heaven is leisure ('there remaineth a *rest* for the people of God');⁶² but I picture it pretty vigorous too as our best leisure really is. Man was created 'to glorify God and *enjoy* Him forever.'⁶³ Whether that is best pictured as being in love, or like being one of an orchestra who are playing a great work with perfect success, or like surf bathing, or like endlessly exploring a wonderful country or endlessly reading a glorious story—who knows? Dante says Heaven 'grew drunken with its universal laughter.'⁶⁴

Pray for us both.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN HOOTON (BOD):

Magdalene College.
Cambridge.
27 May 57

Dear Hooton

(Do drop the honorifics!) I hope v. much we can renew our beano next term, but I'm under the weather with a slipped disc at present: early hours, and evenings on sofas. Write early next term. Meantime, all the best,

Yours
C. S. Lewis

*Joy was moved from the Wingfield-Morris Hospital to The Kilns on 2 April 1957. Although she was still bedridden, recent tests showed that her cancer was arrested, at least temporarily. As Lewis had hurt his back and Joy wanted something to do, it was decided that she would answer the occasional letter. This letter to Mrs Jessup was probably the first she wrote on behalf of her husband:*⁶⁵

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
May 27, 1957

Dear Mrs. Jessup,

I'm venturing to answer your last letter to my husband—partly because he, poor soul, has strained his back lifting me and is very busy just now getting massage, heat therapy, and what not; there isn't much I can do to repay his loving care of me, but I can write letters. But mostly because I want to answer it. You and I seem to have much shared experience, and I'm grateful for the fellow feeling you express—as well as for the nice things you say about my book!

My husband's sore back is not, so far as we know, anything to worry about, and he's otherwise in the best of health. So am I—except for a permanently crippled and useless leg which makes it impossible for me to get out of bed. My cancer has been arrested for the time being—may become active again tomorrow or not for a couple of years. Meanwhile, I try to make the best of things. There is some faint hope that my damaged thigh-bone may knit enough to let me walk in a caliper—which is all I ask for my last years; it's waiting for death when you're full of energy and feel perfectly well!

What you say about Mr. Appleyard interests both of us, and we should be delighted to have him call on us here during July. (Of course, it will depend on whether my health holds out.) I think he'd better telephone us when he's here; the number is Oxford 6963.

One thing I'd like to say since you mention that you've been threatened with cancer. Before I had it, I had all the usual fear and horror of it; but

since then I've found that it's possible to live with your cancer and still get a great deal of happiness out of life. The pain, perhaps, is usually exaggerated. I've had three operations, a frightful time with deep X-rays, three months encased almost completely in plaster and the complication of a broken leg—and all this had involved a great deal of pain at times; but the pain came more from the treatments than from the disease, and was on the whole less than I would have expected. At the moment I've no pain at all! I'm not going to play Pollyanna about the blasted disease—it's just that, bad as it is, one can take it without complete disintegration.

God bless you.

Yours sincerely

Joy Lewis

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
June 12/57

Dear Mr. Kilby

I am completely immobilised by the grave illness of my wife and by a slipped disc of my own, so I shall be speaking nowhere and doing nothing I can help this summer.

If you happen to be in Oxford and care to risk a call, it may be one of our good days and, if it is, I should be happy to meet you.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

Joy wrote again to Mrs Jessup on 12 June:[66](#)

The Kilns, Kiln Lane
Headington Quarry
Oxford
June 12 [1957]

Dear Mrs Jessup,

Just a hurried and flurried note, I fear—I've got one boy coming home for his half-term holidays this afternoon and another in bed with German measles! and some American friends visiting with three as yet uninfected young daughters...not to mention repairs and redecoration going on indoors and out, bills to pay, and two articles of my husband's I promised to type for him and have sinfully neglected for a week. If this letter gets a trifle incoherent, do forgive me!

The Appleyards must have made a mistake in telephoning, or else our line was out of order; for at the time they were home I never got out at all. But I'm much better now—almost normal. I can walk quite a long way, go for drives, scramble about in the woods, even do bits of light housework; and I've plunged into running the house and getting it all done over from top to bottom. The place hadn't been touched in twenty-five years, and you can imagine how much was needed! And the woods were overcome with trespassers; we had to put up a barbed-wire fence, and I've been patrolling the boundaries with the dogs to warn people off.

So you can see I don't feel useless any more! Quite the contrary—there's so much to do, and to catch up with, that I feel like butter which is spread too thin over too much bread—But it's wonderful to be able to do all this. I take a positive pleasure in making beds and clearing tables. Though quite lame, I'm very active and my bones showed up solid and healthy on my last X-ray; the doctors are calling my recovery miraculous.

I believe there is a Reading for the Blind foundation here, or something of the sort; at all events, I know some women in Oxford who regularly read to blind students. I don't think they use recordings, but as each student's work is individual, tapes might not be so much use. It's a wonderful idea and of course we will pray for its success and expansion. I must suggest

recordings to people here; now I come to think of it, there are certainly standard texts which could be done.

We're often asked to come to the States, but my husband's job at Cambridge and my health both make it doubtful whether we'll ever be able to. Still, I hope to make it some day!

It is good to read of your happiness. We too are far happier now than we've ever been before—Two vans have just drawn up at the door; I must fly—God bless you.

Yours

Joy Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
June 18th 1957

Dear Mary Willis

We go on. Joy is to all appearance (blessedly or heart-breakingly) well and anyone but a doctor would feel sure she was recovering. My brother is well and very helpful. I have had and have some trouble in my back (perhaps I told you this before?) which produced a few muscle spasms and screams from me but is now only a wearisome ache. We have a heat wave. I heard from some one who knows you the other day—all about a rumour of my own death! I trust all goes well with you.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Oxford
June 25th 1957

Dear Dorothy—

You must by now have wondered whether I am dead, or in a furious temper, or disliked the book so much that I daren't say, or am simply too rude or lazy to write. But all your hypotheses were wrong. While I was home for the last week-end of term a strain in my back which had seemed to be improving developed muscle spasms that made me roar much less like a sucking dove than a lion. Much as I wd. wish to spread myself on the theme of my sufferings ('horrors portioned to a giant nerve'⁶⁷—*spem vultu simulat, premit altum corde dolorem*)⁶⁸ the relevant point is that return to Cambridge became, and is still, impossible.

And at Cambridge is your book,⁶⁹ with all the lines in the margin, and ticks which mean *euge*⁷⁰ or *grande sophos*,⁷¹ and some queries—all prepared for the 'very judicious letter' (see *Biog. Lit.*)⁷² I was going to write you. I have only slowly come to admit that manners is more than judiciousness and that I'd better write a note even without my apparatus.

Well, I think this book even better than the first series.⁷³ Such wise play—the dialogue between Dante and Jeans (or was it Eddington?)⁷⁴ which might so easily have been merely the old Geo. Morrow Punch joke,⁷⁵ but is really the quickest and clearest way of instructing your readers—and the trick you play about the lives of Milton and Dante,⁷⁶ which is also so seriously to the point. I bet the critics will call both these 'cheap'. If they went to acquire such wares for their own using they'd find the price higher than they thought. The one on the ?th (Dante also at Cambridge) Cornice⁷⁷ was also very good. But there were dozens of good and really illuminating things which I can't remember. I'd like to go through the whole thing with you. You've never done better work in this kind: and the scraps of translation bode well for your *Paradiso*. Thank you very much indeed.

I ought to tell you my own news. On examination it turned out that Joy's previous marriage, made in her pre-Christian days, was no marriage: the man had a wife still living. The Bishop of Oxford said it was not the present policy to approve re-marriage in such cases, but that his view did not bind the conscience of any individual priest. Then dear Father Bide (do you know him?) who had come to lay his hands on Joy—for he has on his record what looks v. like one miracle—without being asked and merely on

being told the situation at once said he wd. marry us. So we had a bedside marriage with a nuptial Mass.

When I last wrote to you I would not have wished this: you will gather (and may say 'guessed as much') that my feelings had changed. They say a rival often turns a friend into a lover. Thanatos,⁷⁸ certainly (they say) approaching but at an uncertain speed, is a most efficient rival for this purpose. We soon learn to love what we know we must lose.

I hope you give us your blessing: I know you'll give us your prayers. She is home now, not because she is better (tho' in fact she *seems* amazingly better) but because they can do no more for her at the Wingfield: totally bed-ridden but—you'd be surprised—we have much gaiety and even some happiness. Indeed, the situation is not easy to describe. My heart is breaking and I was never so happy before: at any rate there is more in life than I knew about. My own physical pains lately (which were among the severest I've known) had an odd element of relief in them.

With thanks again and all good wishes,

Yours

Jack

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
[June? 1957]

Dear McCallum

Thanks for kind note. I forget how much of my news you know. I am latterly married (to a dying woman) and I myself have a rather painful disease of the bones. Oddly enough, this situation is not quite so bad as it sounds. I have indeed more unhappiness, but also more happiness, than I ever had before. I also have the hell of a mail to answer this morning, so—
Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
July 1/57

Dear Dorothy—

Funny: I always thought that admirable formula for acknowledging a book (no doubt, you suffer, like me, from a plague of such gifts, which one is ashamed to throw away and equally ashamed to have on one's shelves) was Lewis Carroll's not Dizzy's.

I know v. well how the audience moulds, and indeed ought to mould, the lecture. One discovers it sharply when the audience turns out to be quite unlike what one expected. I once did a paper for a society which, I supposed, wd. consist of High Brows, on Kipling:⁷⁹ allowing everything that cd. be said against him in the hope of extorting a reluctant admission that there was after all something to be said for him. The room however turned out to be full of general's widows, retired admirals, and tweedy women who had obviously born 7 heroic sons each in the intervals of organising Conservative Clubs and riding to hounds. And they knew Kipling inside out too...But your book seems to me to suffer as little as possible from its lectorial origins.

I remember now one point I did want to make: on Astrology in the dialogue. I'm sure the statement (in a sense true) that the medieval Church discountenanced Astrology often gives a false impression. So far as I have been able to find out she discountenanced A. Total stellar determinism which wd. exclude free will. B. Practices wh. suggested *Planetolatry*. C. The lucrative imposture of prediction. But she never denied the general doctrine of planetary influences in natural objects, historical events, and human psychology.⁸⁰

No, sister Dinosaur, under the influence of Rosamund Tuve⁸¹ all the v. best youngest people have stopped using 'rhetoric' as a term of abuse. They'll talk about the technique of Rhetoric till the cows come home. You are (bear it well) now in the vanguard of fashion on this point.

Joy and I both enjoyed your letter v. much and thought it full of sweetness & light (Hugo of S. Victor coupled *lumen et dulcedo*⁸² long before Swift, by the way)⁸³—and she felt the air from the Spanish Cloister coming in before I did.

I'll think of osteopaths.

My brother is still with us. Between you and me, he had been for years a periodical dipsomaniac. The blessed & unexpected result of my marriage

and the consequent disorganisation of his life (You know what a house with a Nurse in it is like) and the responsibilities wh. inevitably rest on him when I'm at Cambridge, has been to keep him absolutely sober and angelically helpful for months. It is wonderful. He was almost as much a friend of Joy's as I when I was only a friend and they have French history in common. In fact if the medical were as good as the domestic situation I'd be the most fortunate man in England. Even the Nurse, tho' she can't help making work (and her conversation has a desperately *narrative* turn) is rather a dear, and the servants all love Joy and (apparently) me and (what is rarest of all) one another.⁸⁴ The house ripples with laughter and esoteric jokes.*

I have bad spasms both of body and soul, but they all go on amidst a sort of ballet of agape, storge, and eros.

Apart from my brother's old infirmity, none of my history is secret. So tell it to anyone you meet who is likely to be interested,

Yours

Jack

* The Bed-Pan is Caliban and the 'fish-tailed female invalid urinal' is Miranda. We have a family of pet mice (my stepsons') growing up—absolute beauties. And, wd. you believe it, the Nurse is an expert mouse-fancier and inveterate murophil (myrophil?)⁸⁵—'Who, going thro' the vale of misery, use it for a well, and the pools are full of water.'⁸⁶ O God, if there were no such thing as the Future!

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns etc.
July 3/57

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for letter. I fear I must be very brief. I am sorry to hear of your renewed troubles. Yes, my wife was Joy Davidman: I hope you've read her *Smoke on the Mountain*.

What on earth is the trouble about there being a rumour of my death? There's nothing discreditable in dying: I've known the most respectable people do it! Joy is in no pain and in wonderful (apparent) health and spirits.

All good wishes.

Yours

Jack

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

The Kilns
July 4th 57

Dear Dorothy–

No, I don't remember anything about Planetolatry in Dante. I get that from Albertus.⁸⁷ The orthodox position, as you know, is summed up in *sapiens dominabitur astris*:⁸⁸ i.e. just as we shd. say about physical, economic, or psychological causes for behaviour 'Yes, these are operative but they always leave room for free will. They dispose but do not determine.' Hence Aquinas (I think–my books aren't here) Astrological predictions often in fact come true because most men don't use their free will but obey the natural pre-dispositions.⁸⁹ The great exponent of *total* determinism was Pomponazzi.⁹⁰ You're right in thinking it flourished more in the Renaissance than in the Middle Ages: but don't let us replace the old habit of attributing anything nice to the Renaissance by the new one of attributing everything nasty to Protestantism.* Pomponazzi was of course an Italian: and the two greatest (theoretical) exponents of Magic were Popish Pico⁹¹ and Protestant Paracelsus.⁹² Thanks for admirable sonnet and the only true history of the Hare & Tortoise, Yours

Jack

* Tawney has done much harm.⁹³ And tho' I'm no Calvinist I wish people who write about Calvin wd. read the *Institutio* first.⁹⁴

TO MRS JOHNSON (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
July 9th 57

Dear Mrs Johnson—

Thanks for your most kind letter of the 2nd. Joy is now home, home from hospital, completely bed-ridden. The cancer is ‘arrested’, which means, I fear, hardly any hope for the long term issue, but for the moment, apparently perfect health, no pain, eating & sleeping like a child, spirits usually excellent, able to beat me always at Scrabble and sometimes in argument. She runs the whole house from her bed and keeps a pack of women not only loving her but (what’s rarer) one another. We are crazily in love.

My back turns out to be not slipped disc but osteoporosis—a spongy condition of the bones that is common in men of 75 but almost unknown at my age (58). After full investigation by a great Professor of Pathology the cause remains quite obscure.⁹⁵ It has passed the stage of spasms and screams (each was rather like having a tooth out with no anaesthetic and you never knew when they were coming!), but I still ache a good deal and need sleeping draughts.

Can you realise the good side? Poor Joy, after being the sole object of pity & anxiety can now perform the truly wifely function of fussing over me—I’m in pain and sit it out—and of course the psychological effect is extremely good. It banishes all that wearisome sense of being no use. You see, I’m v. willing to have osteoporosis at this price.

The younger stepson is an outdoor, cheerful boy, everyone’s friend, just the right amount of mischief, and certain to fall on his feet anywhere. The elder is our problem child. V. like what I was at his age. V. studious, a bit of a pedant, perhaps a bit of a prig, lots of brains, but inclined to use them in every subject except his school work (tries to teach himself Hebrew and neglects his Latin!), a bad mixer, can be spiteful and feels his mother’s situation (poor little devil—I was thro’ all that at about his age) dreadfully. He’ll either be a great scholar or a total waster. No one can tell.

I am so glad to hear of your own happiness—I understand it so much better now. Golly!, how little I knew about life a year ago!

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO H. A. SCHULZE (P):[96](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
July 9th 1957

Dear Mr. Schulz

My wife and I are both ill, so I hope you will not think me churlish if I say I can see no visitors. My respect and gratitude are none the less.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN KILMER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
July 10th 57

Dear Martin

It was nice to hear from you again. The *eldila*⁹⁷ are meant to be angels, not fairies. Haven't you noticed that they are always about Maledil's⁹⁸ business? I admit I made the birth-rates of the Hrossa a bit *too* low: but of course you must remember I was picturing a world in its extreme old age—like an old man tranquilly and happily proceeding to his end.⁹⁹ I hope you are all well. That is splendid about Anne's poetry prize: give her my heartiest congratulations.

I've been rather ill with a bad back but it is slowly mending. We've been having what we call a heat wave, though you Virginians wd. probably call it cool enough.

Love to all.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

On 11 July 1957 Jocelyn Gibb wrote to Lewis:

We are producing...an occasional journal...called FIFTY-TWO – Books and People...I wondered if you would mind if we had a pen portrait of you done by someone like Milton...

Sales are not too happy at the moment. I think everybody must be away at the seaside and not bothering about buying books. Your older books are falling off in sales which I suppose is bound to happen after some of them have been out for such a long time. TILL WE HAVE FACES goes along slowly but has lingered for some time around the 10,000 mark. On the other hand SURPRISED BY JOY still goes along briskly.[100](#)

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
July 11th 1957

Dear Gibb

Thanks for the Dutch version.¹⁰¹ A pen portrait of oneself by Milton, when one remembers *Smectymnuus* and *Colasterion*, is sufficiently alarming.¹⁰² Has he learned charity since those days? Or is he in a place where he is likely to learn just the opposite. But one dare not, *ob verecundiam*,¹⁰³ refuse such a man. I'll stand firm.

As I am now married, and my wife ill, and two stepsons to educate, and an illness of my own, the news about sales is just what I shd. have expected!

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns
July 16th 57

My dear Roger

Oh, they've been cruel to you in *Mystery at M*. Whenever you escape into the v. slightly heroic and at any rate simpler style proper to the theme it goes well. But no doubt you were told—or knew in advance that you would be told—to keep it ruthlessly modern, even slangy. The effect is almost vulgar at times, almost as if Odysseus smoked a pipe. But it's a good well-knit yarn.

What I really wanted to write about, though, is your article on Anstey in English.¹⁰⁴ This seems to me to mark a great advance in your critical style: a precision, economy, & absence of *cliché*, a firmness wh. you hadn't, or hadn't enough, before. V. hearty congratulations.

Joy continues apparently well & happy.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):[105](#)

The Kilns etc
July 17/57

Dear Gibb

A flash of stupidity—if it does flash—somehow put Milton W. quite out of my mind as the Milton you meant. Yes, by all means.

Troubles wouldn't stop me writing if I were 'with book'—but only tympanies, false pregnancies, occur: save in the academic (severely) direction, where I am writing hard. You couldn't find a duller, less saleable, more erudite, work.¹⁰⁶ Thus the influence of a Chair spreads upwards.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
July 18/57

Dear Joan

They tell me that one shd. never try to learn Spanish and Italian at the same time. The fact that they are so alike of course helps one a bit over the meanings of words (but Latin wd. help you almost equally for both) but it makes a confusion in one's mind about grammar and idioms—in the end one makes a horrid soup out of both. I don't know Spanish, but I know there are lovely things in Italian to read. You'll like Boiardo,¹⁰⁷ Ariosto, and Tasso.¹⁰⁸ By the way good easy Latin reading to keep one's Latin up with is the New Testament in Latin. Any Roman Catholic bookshop will have one: say you want a copy of the 'Vulgate (VULGATE) New Testament'. *Acts* goes specially well in Latin.

I don't think being good *always* goes with having fun: a martyr being tortured by Nero, or a resistance movement man refusing to give away his friends when tortured by the Germans, were being good but not having fun. And even in ordinary life there are things that wd. be fun to me but I mustn't do them because they wd. spoil other people's fun.

But *of course* you are quite right if you mean that giving up fun for no reason except that you think it's 'good' to give it up, is all nonsense. Don't the ordinary old rules about telling the truth and doing as you'd be done by tell one pretty well which kinds of fun one may have and which not? But provided the thing is in itself right, the more one likes it and the less one has to 'try to be good', the better. A *perfect* man wd. never act from sense of duty; he'd always *want* the right thing more than the wrong one. Duty is only a substitute for love (of God and of other people)—like a crutch, which is a substitute for a leg. Most of us need the crutch at times: but of course it's idiotic to use the crutch when our own legs (our own loves, tastes, habits etc) can do the journey on their own!

With love,

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford, England
July 26/57

Dear Father Milward

Thanks for your letter. There's not meant to be *any* position—even negative—about the Church, in my romances. But I am in no fit state for a discussion. I think I told you before that I am newly married and my wife is dying: I am now myself also suffering from a painful disease. So I need all the help your prayers can give me. I will continue mine for you.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS
184/57

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
1st August 1957.

Dear Gibb,

The *Sunday Times* does'nt often ask me to review books, and I'm 'up to the neck' at present with my wife's illness and my own. I look forward to reading Armstrong's little book.[109](#)

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO ANNE AND MARTIN KILMER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Aug 7th 1957

Dear Anne and Martin

The view that angels have no bodies of any kind has not always been held among Christians. The older idea (early Middle Ages) was that they had bodies of aether as we have bodies of gross matter. The opposite view (your one)¹¹⁰ was that of the great scholastics—Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas etc.¹¹¹ The old one was temporarily revived at the Renaissance by Italians like Ficino.¹¹² Of course I just took, for purposes of a story, the one that seemed most imaginable. I have no scruples about this because, religiously, the question seems to me of no importance. And anyway what do we mean by ‘matter’?

I am so glad you both like TWHF. I think it much my best book but not many people agree.

Hearty congratulations to Martin on his successes in Latin. Keep it up. To be able to read Latin easily (i.e. without having to translate it mentally as you go along) is an enormous advantage later on. Practice on the Latin *New Testament* where you know the story already and the style is very simple. *Acts* goes especially well in St. Jerome’s Latin.

The dragon in *Beowulf* certainly has wings. Shooting stars were often called fire-dragons in the Middle Ages and no one wd. have called them that unless he thought dragons flew. There might be a wingless variety as well, no doubt.

Why do I not care for Plutarch,¹¹³ I wonder? I’ve tried him many times, but I somehow don’t get on.

I think, Anne, the 3 sisters¹¹⁴ are not v. like goddesses. They’re just human souls. Psyche has a vocation and becomes a saint. Orual lives the practical life and is, after many sins, saved. As for Redival—well, we’ll all hope the best for everyone!

My bones feel a bit better now that I’ve got what they call a ‘surgical belt’. It’s really like your grandmother’s corsets. It gives me a wonderful schoolboy figure!

Love to all.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MICHAEL PAFFARD (P):[115](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Aug 9th 1957

Dear Mr. Paffard

I found your essay¹¹⁶ most interesting and think it perfectly suitable for publication—tho' I don't know the modern periodicals well enough to say where you would have the best chance. Whether I *agree* with you matters v. little. I think Rowse and Forrest Reid are describing an experience like mine,¹¹⁷ while K. Clarke¹¹⁸ seems far away. But who knows? I may be simply suffering from the illusion (but, again, is *that* an illusion?) which leads so many pairs of lovers to think that their love is quite unlike all loves there ever were before!

May I suggest that in the first sentence of para 5, p. 6, there is a confused construction. Surely you shd. delete *For* and (in the next line) change *these* to *their* and delete *they*? Otherwise, if I may say so, it seems to me v. lucidly and agreeably written.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Aug 12th 1957

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for your kind letter of Aug. 8th. Of course I showed it to Joy who got great pleasure from it and sends you her love. I enclose both our autographs.

She continues (apparently) to mend—in fact (o irony!) her face now is that of a woman in better health than in the photo you have seen: much less drawn and intense and far livelier. (But of course no man ever approves the photos of the woman he loves!) My *osteoporosis* doesn't seem to get much better, but at least it has never been so bad again as it was when it began. I'm wearing a Surgical Belt—v. like one's grandmother's corsets. It gives me a wonderfully youthful figure.

Both my stepsons are now home from school for the summer holidays. They are well and seem happy enough.

Even *our* heat wave was trying: *yours* must have been ghastly. I sympathise with you for that and all your other afflictions.

Yours

Jack

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Aug 17/57

My dear Roger—

What a horrible accident for June, and how lightly (considering) she got off.¹¹⁹ Please give her my love. My rage against the Bodley Head reader is unbounded.¹²⁰ Yes, I hope we can manage a drink if you are both here in early September. Whatever change there is here is slightly for the better. In haste.

Yours

Jack

TO W. K. SCUDAMORE (T):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Aug 19th 1957

Dear Mr. Scudamore

Yes, yes, of course identifications have been made of people in F.Q.¹²¹ with contemporary real characters. That Elizabeth 'is' both Gloriana and Belphoebe, S. himself has told us in his prefatory letter to Raleigh, q.v.¹²² The identification of Duessa with Mary Q. of Scots is as old as James I. After these, conjecture begins. American learned periodicals pour out articles on new identifications all the time. The trouble is not that parallels between F.Q. and the history of the time are hard, but that they are too easy, to find. There is a waiting list of identifications for many episodes! This makes me a bit sceptical about any one in particular. Memo: it is impossible for the wit of man to devise a story in which the wit of another man cannot find, and quite plausibly, an allegory.

Your relation is as good a candidate as most, and if you contributed an article on him, as the origin of the Scudamour in F.Q.¹²³ to, say, the *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* it wd. probably be accepted. The case against him wd., for me, rest precisely on the identity of names. This surely makes your view not more, but less, probable: it wd. be v. odd to have all the other characters in masquerade and one under his real name—as odd as meeting a Giant Jeffreys in Bunyan.¹²⁴ But odd or not, it does occur over Burbon in Book V.¹²⁵ You will have to make the most of this.

I can quite sympathise with your interest—if I had any chance of finding a relation of my own in F.Q. I'd probably fight for him tooth and nail. In general, however, as one who loves F.Q. I regard the historical allegory as a regrettable error of Spenser's, and take no interest in the attempts to unravel it. I fancy they are chiefly made by those who find the poem itself a bore—we begin thinking about the private life of the actors when the play ceases to grip us.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

[The Kilns]
Aug. 21 [1957]

My dear Arthur,

They did give me Deep Heat alright as long as the trouble was supposed to be a slipped disc or anything rheumatic. But as soon as the x-rays showed osteoporosis they dropped Deep Heat at once. And I do sleep with [a] board under my mattress.

This disease is, I fancy, quite different from what you had: the cure, if there is one, depends on getting the system to turn into bone more of the calcium one's ordinary food contains—a question of blood & metabolism. But enough of this.

Telephone call from Eire to say that W. was dead drunk and they were trying to get him into the Lourdes Hospital. Then, a day or two later, letter from W., not in Lourdes Hospital, to say he has been diagnosed as having a heart complaint wh. will kill him in a year. It *may* be true—he says anything in his alcoholic spasms—and I've written to the Rev. Mother asking for the facts.¹²⁶ It's weary waiting for an answer. It always *might* be true this time.

But perhaps it is a good thing that troubles never come singly. Any *one* of my present woes (Joy, W., myself) wd. possibly affect me more if it was the only one. At any rate, when life gets *very* bad (do you find?) a sort of anaesthesia sets in. There is at least a mercy in being always tired: it takes the edge off things.

Sun this morning for the first time after many days. I hope the view from your house is bathed in it too—I'd love to see it this moment. You must have had a tough time when you and Esther¹²⁷ were both laid up. Did Peter¹²⁸ make a good nurse?

Yours

Jack

TO JANE GASKELL (BOD):[129](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Sept 2/57

Dear Miss Gaskell—

My wife and I have just been reading your book¹³⁰ and I want to tell you that I think it a quite amazing achievement—incomparably beyond anything I could have done at that age. The story runs, on the whole, very well and there is some real imagination in it. The idea of the gigantic spoiled brat (had you a horrid baby brother once?) is really excellent: perhaps even profound.¹³¹ Unlike most modern fantasies your book also has a firm core of civilised ethics. On all these grounds, hearty congratulations.

On the other hand there is no reason at all why your next book should not be at least twice as good. I hope you will not think it impertinent if I mention (this is only one man's opinion of course) some mistakes you can avoid in future.

1. In all stories which take one to another world, the difficulty (as you and I know) is to make something happen when we've got there. In fact, one needs 'filling'. Yours is quite sufficient in *quantity* (almost too much) but not quite, I think, of the right sort. Aren't all these economic problems and religious differences too like the politics of our own world? Why go to faerie for what we already have? Surely the wars of faerie should be high, reckless, heroic, romantic wars—concerned with the possession of a beautiful queen or an enchanted treasure? Surely the diplomatic phase of them should be represented not by conferences (which, on your own showing, are as dull as ours) but by ringing words of gay taunt, stern defiance, or Quixotic generosity, interchanged by great warriors with sword in hand before the battle joins?

2. This is closely connected with the preceding. In a fantasy every precaution must be taken never to break the spell, to do nothing which will wake the reader and bring him back with a bump to the common earth. But this is what you sometimes do. The moving bar on which they travel is a dull invention at best, because we can't help conceiving it as mechanical. But when you add upholstered seats, lavatories, and restaurants, I can't go on believing in faerie for a moment. It has all turned into commonplace technological luxury!¹³² Similarly even a half-fairy ought not climb a fairyhill carrying a suitcase full of new nighties. All magic dies at this touch of the commonplace. (Notice, too, the disenchanting implication that the

fairies can't make for themselves lingerie as good as they can get—not even in Paris, which wd. be bad enough—but, of all places, in London.)¹³³

3. Never use adjectives or adverbs which are mere appeals to the reader to feel as you want him to feel. He won't do it just because you ask him: you've got to *make* him. No good *telling* us a battle was 'exciting'. If you succeeded in exciting us the adjective will be unnecessary: if you don't, it will be useless. Don't tell us the jewels had an 'emotional' glitter; make us feel the emotion.¹³⁴ I can hardly tell you how important this is.

4. You are too fond of long adverbs like 'dignifiedly', which are not nice to pronounce. I hope, by the way, you always write by ear not by eye. Every sentence shd. be tested on the tongue, to make sure that the sound of it has the hardness or softness, the swiftness or languor, which the meaning of it calls for.

5. Far less about clothes, please! I mean, ordinary clothes. If you had given your fairies strange and beautiful clothes and described *them*, there might be something in it. But your heroine's tangerine skirt!¹³⁵ For whom do you write? No *man* wants to hear how she was dressed, and the sort of woman who does seldom reads fantasy: if she reads anything it is more likely to be the Women's Magazines.

By the way, these are a baneful influence on your mind and imagination. Beware! they may kill your talent. If you *can't* keep off them, at least, after each debauch, give your imagination a good mouth-wash by a reading (or wd. it be a re-reading) of the *Odyssey*, Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, E. R. Eddison's *The Worm Ouroboros*, the romances of James Stephens, and all the early mythical plays of W. B. Yeats. Perhaps a touch of Lord Dunsany too.

6. Names not too good. They ought to be beautiful and suggestive as well as strange: not merely odd like *Enaj* (wh. sounds as if it came out of Butler's *Erewhon*).

I hope all this does not enrage you. You'll get so much bad advice that I felt I must give you some of what I think good.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

[The Kilns]
Sept. 5/57

My dear Arthur—

I've now got the *real* news about W., wh. is much less alarming. The heart trouble is slight & curable: it was a bye-product of acute alcoholism and pneumonia.

Sorry about Peter's operation and your wrist. Yes, yes, I've been examined for a whole morning by the biggest pathologist here, had instruments shoved up my bottom and specimens sucked out of my marrow, & x-ray photos and all.

God bless.

Yours

Jack

TO LUCY MATTHEWS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Sept 14th 1957

Dear Lucy Matthews

I am so glad you like the Narnian stories and it was nice of you to write and tell me. I love E. Nesbit too and I think I have learned a lot from her about how to write stories of this kind. Do you know Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*? I think you wd. like it. I am also bad at Maths and it is a continual nuisance to me—I get muddled over my change in shops. I hope you'll have better luck and get over the difficulty! It makes life a lot easier.

It makes me, I think, more humble than proud to know that Aslan has allowed me to be the means of making Him more real to you.

Because He could have used anyone—as He made a donkey preach a good sermon to Balaam.¹³⁶ Perhaps, in return, you will sometimes say a prayer for me?

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Sept 18/57

My dear Roger—

This is bad luck for you but perfectly alright for us. We'll have Douglas booted & spurred and waiting on Tue 24 at 10. a.m.¹³⁷ I wish we cd. have asked June and you to spend the night—but you know we are a rabbit warren! Love to all.

Yours

Jack

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):

The Kilns,

Headington Quarry

Oxford
Sept 21/57

My dear Cecil—

I am very much better. But I no longer take each period of pain for a permanent deterioration nor each free period for permanent recovery. They are both indirect results of the bone disease and of v. little *symptomatic* importance.

I mustn't *travel* any more than I can help but shall be delighted to see you both (discuss with Owen) next term.

You needn't pity me too much. The private side (farewell indefinitely, perhaps finally, to walks and bathes) never worries me at all. Pain or even discomfort puts mere loss of pleasure quite out of account. What one can't do one soon ceases to want to do.

Wof was the most completely lovable man, I admit, I ever knew. I am so glad to have known him, that it almost obliterates the loss. [138](#)

My wife has made wonderful progress, quite unexpected by the doctor. Can it be?—dare one hope? I suppose not. But we are often a great deal happier, merrier, delighted, than you wd. think possible. We are at present being accorded all the privileges of shorn lambs!

Love to both.

Yours

Jack Your letter warmed my heart.

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
Sept 24th. 57

My dear Dom Bede—

Thanks for your letter of the 15th. My wife's condition, contrary to the expectation of the doctors, has improved, if not miraculously (but who knows?) at any rate wonderfully. (How wd. one say that in Latin?). No one, least of all herself, encourages me to dream of a permanent recovery, but this is a wonderful reprieve. Tho' she is still a cripple, her *general* health is better than I have ever seen it, and she says she has never been happier.

It is nice to have arrived at all this by something which began in Agape, proceeded to Philia, then became Pity, and only after that, Eros. As if the highest of these, Agape, had successfully undergone the sweet humiliation of an incarnation.

My own trouble, after one terrible fortnight, has taken a turn for the better. No one suggests that the disease is *either* curable *or* fatal. It normally accompanies that fatal disease we call Senility! but no one knows why I have got it so early (comparatively) in life.

Of course when *you* write about the young man, I can say that *you* are a man of sense and honesty. Some at Magdalene have pleasant memories of your one visit there.

There is lots more to say but my days are very full. God bless you and all your hopes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

Thank you v. much for your prayers: you are always in mine

The following was to be Lewis's last letter to Dorothy L. Sayers, who died suddenly on 17 December 1957.

TO DOROTHY L. SAYERS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Sept 29th 1957

Dear Dorothy—

Thank you very much for a copy of *Roland*.¹³⁹ I devoured the introduction which seemed to me a masterpiece of popular, but not too popular exposition. Your demonstration of the poem's unity, which I take to be wholly new, is entirely convincing.

On the translation itself I'd be able to speak better if my text of the original weren't at Cambridge: and also if I knew as much Old French as you. But it certainly gets over the hurdle which matters more than all the other hurdles put together: it is a good, swinging, readable story. I must confess it is in places too slangy for my own taste. But then I've no way of knowing how the original sounded to contemporary ears. Do you think anything in it belonged for them to the level where, for us, 'You've got us in this mess' belongs?¹⁴⁰ Perhaps it did, and certainly your opinion on that point is worth more than mine.

Let me hasten to add that what I cd. remember of the O. French soon made me realise you were tackling an insoluble problem—far *harder*, really, than Dante sets you. The unadorned is the least translatable style in the world. For instance the exclamation *Dieus!* One is sure it wasn't at all like *God!* as now used in conversation: but what else to do with it? *Lord!* is no better, *my God!* (apart from its being two syllables) is worse. It is unlikely that anyone wd. have got out of the scrape as well as you. I've seen no reviews. The critics, whether scholarly or on the R. Mortimer level,¹⁴¹ will, I bet, not realise that there is a scrape at all.

My wife continues to defeat all the doctors' predictions most gloriously and my own little trouble is much eased.

Thanks and blessings,

Yours

Jack

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
Sept 31 [30]/57

Dear Evans—

If you have a copy of your world history¹⁴²—thus you succeed Orosius,¹⁴³ Raleigh,¹⁴⁴ and Wells¹⁴⁵—absolutely eating its head off, of course we'd like to see it. But I know how quickly one's free copies fade away and I'd advise you to plant it where it might be some use to you: or else give it to some young, impecunious chap whose empty shelves ache for books. I cd. do the book no *good*¹⁴⁶ (no one'd listen to me on such a topic) and my problem is to find room for books! So put me last on your list of possible recipients. Thanks all the same.

I wd. have loved a book about Astronomy as a boy and cd. have endured one about Geology. But lives of astronomers—and scrambled with those of geologists—seems absolutely crazy!¹⁴⁷ But I suppose if science is to be run as a kind of religion they feel it must have saints' lives.

Yes, I read *Sinister Barrier*:¹⁴⁸ as good a story of its kind as I know.
With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ALAN HINDLE (BOD):[149](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Oct. 7th 1957

Dear Mr. Hindle,

It is nice to find people still reading that book! I can't now remember why (if I had a reason) I said nothing about the *Song of Songs*.¹⁵⁰ Next time I re-read the latter I must consider it from the point of view you suggest. Speaking from memory, I shd. say the thing that brings it closest to Courtly Love is 'terrible as an army with banners'.¹⁵¹ The description of the beloved's body cd. of course come in medieval poetry, but cd. it not equally come in any love poetry at any period when the contemporary canon of decorum did not exclude it? Whether the orthodox allegorical interpretation about Christ and the Church cd. make an influence on courtly love more probable or less, I can't make up my mind. It might work either way, mightn't it?

As you see, I'm in no position to 'put you right' on the matter. For many years I have not thought much about Courtly Love and I am, so to speak, 'out of training'. You are quite as likely to be right as I.

With good wishes,

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 15/57

Dear Gibb

Thanks for cheque. I enclose receipt. No, I much prefer Miss Baynes.¹⁵² These have their wit but they belong to a school which thinks (a.) That whatever is meant for children must be comic. (b.) That the right way to be comic for children is to parody their own attempts at drawing. All a bit of patronising grown-up facetiousness.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 16th 57

Dear Gibb

Wd. you please send one copy each of

Mere Christianity

Miracles
Lion, W. and W.

Till We have Faces

to
Stefano Barragato, Sociedad de Hermanos
Primavera,
Alto Paraguay,
Sth. America.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Oct 20th 1957

Dear Mary Willis

We are shocked and distressed at the news in your letter of the 15th. I think I see from what you say that God is already giving you new spiritual strength with which to meet this terrible affliction—just as He did to us in Joy’s worst times. But pain is pain. I wish I could relieve any of it for you—one is so ineffective. The great thing, as you have obviously seen, (both as regards pain and financial worries) is to live from day to day and hour to hour not adding the past or future to the present. As one lived in the Front Line ‘They’re not shelling us at the moment, and it’s not raining, and the rations have come up, so let’s enjoy ourselves.’ In fact, as Our Lord said, ‘Sufficient unto the day’.¹⁵³ You may be sure you will be v. much in our prayers. All my news is good, very good up-to-date, tho’ of course we live always under the sword of Damocles. God bless and keep you, dear friend. It’ll be nice when we all wake up from this life which has indeed something like nightmare about it.

Yours

Jack

During the autumn of 1957, while continuing to work on Studies in Words, Lewis wrote Reflections on the Psalms. He asked Austin Farrer, the theologian, to look it over while it was still in manuscript. The book was being typed when he wrote the following letter to Katharine Farrer.

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):

The Kilns
Oct 22/57

Dear K—

We both still have flu'. I had no pupil called HEWART: you probably mean Dick HEWITT.¹⁵⁴ I know nothing about him in relation to women. In every other context he is one of the straightest, most rigidly conscientious men I know. Very pious, tho' not always in the ways we'd like—he *was* (is no longer) in Moral Rearmament. All things are possible: but I'd bet on his integrity and kindness as soon as on anybody's.

I hope all four of us will soon be better & able to meet. The stuff about the Psalms is still with the typist. Thank Austin very much.

Yours

Jack

TO MURIEL BRADBROOK (W): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Oct 24/57

Thanks! How v. nice of you to let me know. I hope to be back on Monday. Salute all on my behalf.

Jack

TO MARTIN HOOTON (BOD):

As from Magdalene,

Cambridge
Oct 24/57

It turned out to be not a slipped disk but a disease (*neither* dangerous *nor* curable) called osteoporosis. At the moment I'm having flu' at Oxford but hope to be back at College next week. After that, if all's well, any week-day you like (let's dine at Ely or the like) except Nov 12 and 13. Will you suggest?

C.S.L.

TO KATHRYN STILLWELL (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 29th 1957

Dear Miss Stillwell—

Your thesis arrived yesterday and I read it at once.¹⁵⁵ You are in the centre of the target everywhere.

For one thing, you know my work better than anyone else I've met: certainly better than I do myself. (I've no recollection whatever of *The World's Last Night* and can't imagine what it was about!).¹⁵⁶

But secondly, you (alone of the critics I've met) realise the connection, or even the unity, of all the books—scholarly, fantastic, theological—and make me appear a single author not a man who impersonates half a dozen authors, which is what I seem to most. This wins really very high marks indeed.

There is one place (pp. 93, 94) where, tho' I am sure you are *not* misunderstanding, you express yourself in a way wh. might make it seem to the reader that you were. It sounds as if you thought I was talking primarily about animals in that poem, whereas you know I'm using the animals to suggest crusty humans like Johnson & Cobbett.¹⁵⁷

Of course it *involves* sympathy for the animals, wh. is your point. But most readers will misunderstand if you give them the slightest chance. (It's like driving cattle: if there's an open gateway anywhere on the road, they'll go into it!).

If you understand me so well, you will understand other authors too. I hope that we shall have some really useful critical works from your hand.

With thanks and good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN HOOTON (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 29/57

Dear Hooton

Good. I shall expect you from 6 to 6.15 on Thurs 7th. November,

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

As from Magdalene College,

Cambridge
Nov 3d 1957

Dear Mary Willis

Oh what bad luck! Tooth troubles on top of all the rest. The financial side of it is probably really the least formidable. As our ancestors used to say, you have 'lived at God's charges' so far, and no doubt He will continue to foot the bill. Nor do I think you are in the least danger of getting 'queer'—except that we're all queer. We've been having influenza and the few days in bed seem (so odd is my complaint) to have done my bones harm—i.e. they're not so good as they were three weeks ago, but they're not so bad as they were 6 weeks ago. Joy continues to make progress. All blessings & sympathy.

Yours

Jack

TO KATHLEEN RAINE (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 7th 1957

Dear Mrs. Madge

This is an absolute stunner:¹⁵⁸ one of the most important discoveries (of that kind) made in our times. What it doesn't explain, and no *Quellenforschung* ever will explain, is how what ought to be an intolerable metre and what seems the flattest of language make such an enchanting poem. Still, the first step is to know what it is about and you have got us up that.

Pre-existence, by the way, however condemned, could be dabbled in during the Middle Ages (see Bernardus Silvester *De Mundi Universitate*, II, Prosa 3):¹⁵⁹ and of course came back with the Renaissance Platonists. But there's no reason why you shd. take any notice of that.

I haven't lost or forgotten *One Foot in Eden*¹⁶⁰ but am still hoping to find myself in the right mood for it. You know how tricky these things are.

With very many thanks,

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

184/57

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
9th November 1957.

Dear Gibb,

Thanks for the Dutch *Silver Chair*, which as you say, has been well done.¹⁶¹ I have corrected the Psalms typescript this week, and hope you will like the book.

Yes, thanks, I am really much better, in spite of having followed the fashion of having Asian 'flu.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
12th November 1957.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

We were both very pleased to hear from you again, and in such a nice long interesting letter—and glad that you have at last disposed of your Californian White Elephant. We too know something of the 'hope deferred which maketh the heart sick'¹⁶² in the matter of house property; having still vivid recollections of disposing of our old home after our father's death in 1929.

You will I'm sure rejoice with me when I tell you that the improvement in my wife's condition is, in the proper use of the word, miraculous; now not only is there no pain, but she is *walking*. She can now get about the ground floor of the house alone, with of course, a stick and a special shoe for the leg which is permanently shortened; and here of course there is no hope of any improvement; but when I see her state now, and contrast it with

that in which she was six months ago, I realize what deep cause for gratitude we both have.

As regards myself, I'm glad to say that the osteoporosis makes progress, and I am feeling much better; though I am still something of an invalid, and miss the walking exercise to which I have always been accustomed. But here again, I should rather be grateful for the improvement than resentful that it is not rapider and more complete.

If we can accept as true what our papers tell us, the Queen's trip has been a real success, and I was amused at your account of the part played in it by you and the Tycoon.¹⁶³ I don't suppose royalty feels the same embarrassment at these kinds of reception as we luckier mortals would in their place. After all, they have been in the limelight since they could walk almost. Look at Princess Anne and Prince Charles—still very young children, and I suppose they would find it odd if they were *not* photographed when they went out!

I don't feel that 'Sputnik' in itself is anything very dangerous, but one does'nt like the underlying implication, i.e. that its existence proves that Russia is far ahead of your country in inter-continental missiles.¹⁶⁴ But what has alarmed me much more than Sputnik is an article on the behaviour of the American troops in Korea which appeared in a recent *New Yorker*. It is by an American doctor who was out there, and contains some shocking facts; for instance that in the prison camp the Americans threw their own sick comrades out to die in the snow. Let us hope that it is much exaggerated.

We are both busy here; I have a little book on the Psalms coming out, and my brother has one of his French History things due to be published next March¹⁶⁵—also another accepted for a later date. So you will see that Lewis Bros. factory Inc. is in full employment and production! I think my brother has already told you that your name is down for a copy of his book when it comes out.

I should think you are wise in moving out of New York; my wife, a former resident of that city, does not speak well of it as a place to live, more especially in the summer months; and I understand it can be bitter cold in the winter. I don't know anything about Virginia except that I'm told it is where the Virginia tobacco does *not* come from. We shall both be interested to hear how your plans go.

With love to you all from us all, yours ever,

C. S. Lewis

P. S. I'd already written this before I noticed that you say it should be held up until we have your new address. But I'm sending it all the same in the hope that it will reach you.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

As from Magdalene
Nov 16th 57

Dear Gibb

No one but a fool *reads* an advertisement with belief, but when I reflect (as I believe I may) that dear Milton believed this as he *wrote*, I don't know whether to purr or blush or...weep. The bit about the Martyr's Memorial will carry its full ambivalence only to those who know it as the ugliest thing in Oxford. Well, use it, and thanks to M. W. [166](#)

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO HERBERT PALMER (TEX):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov. 17th 1957

My dear Palmer—

I am flattered that you should think me worth consulting.¹⁶⁷ I have not had the solitude or leisure to read it as carefully as I shd. have wished. Not without keeping you waiting too long. I felt a deep sympathy with your point of view throughout. I enjoyed many things—the snowing stars on p. 17,¹⁶⁸ the Earth marrying the Moon and rolling a withered eye on p. 21,¹⁶⁹ the three concluding lines on p. 22. I'm not sure that I understand everything. *Wrist for altering* (p. 20, l. 5)¹⁷⁰ conveys nothing to me—has 'altering' a slang or technical sense (other than the vet's = castrating)? The best thing in the whole sequence (as you probably know) is the 'Ride' itself.¹⁷¹ There is an excitement like that of a literal gallop here, v. well combined with the unearthly circumstance. The one, to be honest, which I don't like at all is 'Song of Spirit and Soul'. I wonder have *you* some art of reading it aloud which makes it good and do you thus fail to anticipate what a ruthless jig it will become on most other lips? (I know Blake can make heavenly music out of the most seemingly intolerable metres, but who can bend Ulysses' bow?) I am cheered at your appreciation of *Till We Have Faces*, and needed some cheering: for, to judge by reviews and sales, it is my biggest failure yet. I've had a funny bone-disease most of this year. It is now much better but, I believe, will never be quite so. I hope you wear better than I. If you are ever in Cambridge it wd. be a great pleasure to meet again. Good hunting!

Yours
C. S. Lewis

P.S. I spotted no literals—but then I never do.

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Nov 17th 1957

My dear Roger—

It was nice to see us appearing together in to-day's *Sunday Times*¹⁷² and nice, too, to read a reasonable review of *M. at M.* in the T.L.S.¹⁷³

But nicest of all was getting your new book,¹⁷⁴ which I should still be reading if Joy, after the manner of wives (how I have 'dwindled into a husband'!)¹⁷⁵ had not taken it out of my hands. What a lot there is in it, and how much I didn't know! The Lunar Hoax interested me especially, not principally as a hoax, tho' that is good fun too, but because some of it is really the best invention and description of extra-terrestrial landscape (the animals are less good) before *First Men in the Moon*.¹⁷⁶

I think you are hard on Wells. Obviously, he touches off something in you which he didn't in me. I still think that a v. good book indeed and don't dislike the Selenites themselves so much as you do. Bedford is of course a cad.¹⁷⁷

I'm with you about the 'ghastly materialistic' tenacity of Stapledon's humans.¹⁷⁸ And of course I enjoyed the kind things you say about myself: as also the moving inscription in my copy.¹⁷⁹

By the way Douglas, when home for half term, quite unmotivated, produced a testimonial to Shirard whom he described as 'very popular' and then (oh the delicious superiority of small fry over smaller) 'one of the most promising New-Boys he had known'. So strike the stars with your sublime head,¹⁸⁰ for this, you know, is 'beyond all Greek, beyond all Roman fame'.¹⁸¹ We both send our love to June and you.

Yours

Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov. 27th 57

My dear Arthur

Our news is all very good. Joy's improvement has gone beyond anything we dared to hope and she can now (limping, of course, and with a stick) get about the house and into the garden. My osteoporosis is also very much better. I have no pain worth talking about now: wake up a bit sore in the mornings but that wears off by the time I'm shaved and bath'd. I don't think I'll ever be able to take a real walk again nor to leave off my surgical belt; but I cd. hardly have believed, if it had been foretold me, how little either of these prospects bothers me. I began to get better about 4 weeks before term began. I have to hire a car at the beginning and end of term for the journey because I can't handle the luggage, but I go to & fro by train on week ends quite comfortably. Indeed a corner-seat in a railway carriage is one of my best positions.

I've been writing nothing but academic work except for a very unambitious little work on the Psalms, wh. is now finished and ought to come out next spring.

I like Cambridge better all the time: also my new job—or rather my new leisure for I've never been so under-worked since I first went to school.

Please congratulate Peter on his successful operation. You say nothing about yourself: I hope this means there is nothing but good to say? Give my love to Janie and the Glenmachonians: and give God thanks on my behalf for all His mercies. Bless you.

Yours

Jack

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 27th 1957

My dear Van Auken—

It hardly seems a quarter of a year since you were such a welcome visitor in Oxford.

I note what you say, that you are now in your second bereavement: that which bereaves one of the bereavement itself.¹⁸² And, as you unflinchingly see, it is 'according to the Law'.¹⁸³ I feel you are probably right in thinking that the fading of the beloved as-she-was is a necessary condition of the trans-mortal and eternal relation. May we not conjecture (am I repeating myself?) that when Our Lord said 'It is expedient that I go away'¹⁸⁴ he stated something true *par excellence* of Himself, but also true, in their degree, of all his followers?

My own news continues better than we ever dared to hope. The cancerous bones have rebuilt themselves in a way quite unusual and Joy can now walk: on a stick and with a limp, it is true, but it is a walk—and far less than a year ago it took 3 people to move her in bed and we often hurt her. Her general health, and spirits, seem excellent. Of course the sword of Damocles hangs over us. Or shd. I say that circumstances have opened our eyes to see the sword which really hangs always over everyone.

I forget if I had begun my own bone disease (*osteoporosis*) when you were with us. Anyway, it is much better now and I am no longer in pain. I wear a surgical belt and shall probably never be able to take a real walk again, but it doesn't somehow worry me. The intriguing thing is that while I (for no discoverable reason) was losing the calcium from my bones, Joy, who needed it much more, was gaining it in hers. One dreams of a Charles Williams substitution! Well, never was a gift more gladly given: but one must not be fanciful.

It is nice being in love with Hellas, I expect. My brother is well. Write from time to time. *Of course* you are in my prayers as I am in yours.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

As from Magdalene College,

Cambridge
Nov. 30th 1957

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for your letter of Nov. 22d. Yes: moves are desolating things.¹⁸⁵ The wind of Time blows cold at these corners, doesn't it?—and one's belongings have a sort of squalid pathos about them once they are packed. But one often feels better afterwards and I hope you will find this. Of course the new home is a tiring nuisance until the new ways which it demands have become habits. After that, it may begin to have a certain rejuvenating quality. You don't mention the heart-trouble: I hope that means you are feeling a great deal better.

All goes wonderfully well with Joy: we are very blessed at present. My own bone disease (osteoporosis) will, I gather, be always with me, but I am not in a painful condition now. I'll never be able to take real walks again—field-paths and little woods and wonderful inns in remote villages, farewell!—but it's wonderful how mercifully the desire goes when the power goes.

With all good wishes.

Yours

Jack

TO WALTER HOOPER (UNC):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Dec 2nd 1957

Dear Mr. Hooper,

Thank you for most interesting and cheering letter of Nov. 28th.

Of course I shall be happy to meet you whenever you come to this country.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO R. W. CHAPMAN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Dec 3, 1957

My dear Chapman—

Thank you for your most kind letter. My wife's improvement is almost miraculous. My own ailment was a prematurely senile condition of the bones, v. painful at first but now no worse than mild rheumatism. So far as I can gather it is neither mortal nor curable. I wear corsets!

If I can possibly manage the journey I will certainly try to come and see you next Vacation. Yes—in your situation even a small thing like flu' wd. be a nuisance. It's like crossing the Atlantic in a 15-tonner: alright till *one* of the crew of two breaks his arm or something.

Aren't you sick of modern biographies? I don't want in the least to know about anyone's *vie in time*.[186](#)

Please remember me most kindly to your wife.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS FRANK JONES (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Dec 9th 1957

Dear Mrs. Jones—

I am most sorry to hear of your disc. You don't *say* much about the pain, but knowing from my own experience what muscles do when bones are wrong even without touching that horrible sciatic nerve, I expect it is excruciating. I do hope it will soon be better.

I am very much better: no pain worth talking about now. So is my brother. My wife incredibly better: almost a miracle. We shall be sorry if you can't accompany your husband to England: but we hope very much to see him even if he is alone.

Yes, I'm afraid *close* does rhyme with *Dose* (of medicine). Strictly it means a square of buildings with only one break in it, so that you have to come out the same way you went in. But it is generally used of any square in the centre of which a cathedral stands. The buildings which surround it wd. usually be the Deanery, houses of canons, with perhaps a cathedral school and (if you are lucky) a bit of an old monastery and castle. And there'd be rooks cawing overhead and some trees and possibly cobbled stones under-foot and little or no wheeled traffic.

With all good wishes and sympathy, in which my brother joins.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Dec 10. '57

My dear Roger—

Yes, I hope to beat the B&B on Mon Dec. 16.¹⁸⁷ Congratulations on *Land of the LHT*.¹⁸⁸ Joy is now walking: with a stick and a limp, to be sure, but we never dreamed of getting so far. Love to June and yourself.

I suppose it will not fit in with your programme to come and see us both here on Sat. or Sun. afternoon? You wd. of course be most welcome if you had the time on your hands: but I expect you have not.

Yours

Jack

TO LAURENCE HARWOOD (BOD):[189](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Dec 12th 1957

My dear Lawrence—

Thanks for your most interesting letter. I envy you your hills and gillies and shepherds. I am surprised at your finding the Scotch (why shd. I not call them Scotch even if they don't call themselves so? I call the *Français* 'French', don't I?) less bookish, class for class, than the English. I had always thought, and have sometimes found, them more so.

Pipes, in the open air, give me a strange pleasure, though not perhaps a strictly musical one. More an affair of the nerves: they are the only thing that make me feel martial ardour.

All my news is good. My wife has made an almost miraculous, certainly an unexpected, recovery. I myself am quite free from pain again now. I have to wear a surgical belt, though: a thing like my mother's, or your grandmother's corsets! It's surprising how one gets used to the contraption—except when one wants to *scratch* some part which it covers.

I enclose an offering. With love & good wishes.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO BELLE AND EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS

57/57

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
13th December 1957.

My dear Allens,

How very kind of you both to remember us at this season, and how very grateful my wife and I are for your prayers—prayers which have indeed been answered, for my wife is almost miraculously better.

She will, alas, always be an invalid, but X Ray photos show beyond any shadow of doubt that the diseased bone is healing; and now she can walk about the house, and even in the garden, with the aid of a stick. When I remember that this time last year she was under sentence of death, I have indeed much to be thankful for. She even plans to begin literary work again, and does now sit up at the table and type her own letters without any discomfort.

The boys are something of a problem for a couple of old men who have had no dealings with the species since their own childhood—and the two differ remarkably. The elder is I'm afraid a problem child, intelligent, but moody and spiteful; the younger is just plain boy, with all the appeal (and infuriating qualities) of twelve years of age. We hope all will go well for both of them.

I wish your own news was more cheerful, but at least it is something to learn that the slack period has not affected Ed personally—and I pray that it may not. I am very ignorant of the ways of 'big business' and you give me no hint—perhaps do not know yourself—if this is merely a temporary setback in U.S. prosperity, or the beginning of that bogey 'recession' which I often hear mentioned. We are as frightened of it as you, for apparently—for reasons I can't follow—a recession in America will automatically reproduce the same conditions over here.

How right Mrs Allen is about the folly of this competition in satellites; I see that the last American attempt cost over thirty nine million pounds—

money just thrown away in one big bang. And even supposing the rocket *had* become a satellite, who would have been a penny the better off for it?

I could not agree more with Mrs Allen's letter to the Press, but surely it is not only women who hate the very idea of war? I have yet to meet any one who wants World War III, civilian or soldier. Indeed my brother often remarks that the only real pacifists he has ever met are professional soldiers—they know too much about the game to be fire-eaters.

With all love and good wishes to you both for a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year,

yours ever,
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

312/57

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
16th December 1957.

Dear Gibb,

Would you please send one copy each of PROBLEM OF PAIN and MERE CHRISTIANITY to:—

Hjalmar Jagerstrom,
Sidsjons Sjukhus,
Sundsvall,
Sweden.

And charge to my account. All best wishes for a happy Christmas.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Dec. 16th 1957

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

Thank you for your bright card and cheery letter. We are delighted to hear that you have escaped 'the asphalt jungle' (how horrid all great cities are for more than a fortnight!) and can almost share your enjoyment of trees, squirrel, and common grass.¹⁹⁰ One might add even the sky—the wide unframed sky of the country.

My wife's recovery has been almost a miracle, at any rate a surprise for the doctors. My brother is also well and, as usual, busy. I am much better myself and quite—or as near as makes no matter—free from pain. Whether I shall ever take a 'real walk' again is doubtful. You'd think this would be dreadful, but it isn't. With the power, nature kindly removes most of the desire. If I were merely forbidden (say by police order) to go more than a mile from this house on foot, no doubt I'd find it intolerable. But as I can't, I find I don't mind. *Quaere*:¹⁹¹ is it on the same principle more humane (in a house with no cats of course) to pinion a bird and let it hop everywhere than to put it un mutilated even in the largest cage? In the light of my own experience I suspect that it is.

There are faint springtide stirrings that suggest my wife (you may have read her, as Joy Davidman) may soon begin to write again. Then all three of us will be at it and I'll put up a plate at the door reading Lewis, Lewis, and Lewis Inc., Book Factory.

We all join in every good wish.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

On 17 December Dorothy L. Sayers went to London from her home at Witham in Essex to do some Christmas shopping. As Barbara Reynolds, editor of Sayers' letters and her goddaughter, explains:

The expedition tired her and after calling in at a gallery where she looked for a time at the portrait of herself by Sir William Hutchison¹⁹² she caught a train home to Witham. Her taxi-driver, Jack, met her at the station and drove her to her door. On entering she went upstairs, put her hat and coat on her bed and went downstairs to feed three hungry cats. They remained hungry: their mistress fell forward at the foot of the stairs and died of a coronary thrombosis. Her body was found the following morning by Bradford the gardener.¹⁹³

TO LAURENCE KRIEG (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Dec 23rd 1957

Dear Laurence

It is lovely to hear that you still enjoy the Narnian stories. I hope you are well. I forget how much of my news you and your mother know. It is wonderful. Last year I married, at her bedside in hospital, a woman who seemed to be dying: so you can imagine it was a sad wedding. But Aslan has done great things for us and she is now walking about again, showing the doctors how wrong they were, and making me very happy. I was also ill myself but am now better. Good wishes to you all.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
Christmas Day 1957

Dear Gibb—

Your parcel, as it happened, was opened before your letter, so you had a good joke *in absentia*. We did wonder a little whether there were any core or whether we were peeling an onion. But the golden treasure surpassed the wrappings in value more than they surpassed it in bulk:¹⁹⁴ I had a stanza of this edible poem for breakfast to-day with much enjoyment. Thank you very much.

Marry gup! The hymn, which you miscall a psalm, truly hath in that place ‘to pay the price of sinne’ which paying the price of sinne I do suppose to be all one with redeeming.¹⁹⁵ Go to. You lie at the catch, neighbour.¹⁹⁶ Nor is it unfit that I admonish printers concerning printing and publishers concerning publishing, the which if I now were to handle I might chance to recall that old saw *ex sutore medicus*¹⁹⁷ and snibbe the ultracrepidations of cobblers.¹⁹⁸ With what stomach, think you, would Tullie¹⁹⁹ have borne the sosii²⁰⁰ going about to mende his periods?

Mid-day dinner with a generous burgundy is perhaps a mistake—*Vinum locutum est*.²⁰¹ I wish you a merry Christmas retrospectively.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

1958

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
2/1/58

Dear Gibb—

(1.) If my book dies soon the memory of Pilgrim will outlive it and [no] note will be needed:¹ if, on t'other hand, it prove *aere perennius*,² school edtns. will explain him and we shall have done our bit towards eternising the infamy of his persecutors.

(3.)³ Do Arabic if you like. But the Psalm number must be in different type from the verse number. Otherwise it is hard to distinguish III, 3 from '3,3' in some Psalms mentioned a few lines before. But I hope the difference will not be achieved by making the Psalm number heavier (i.e. blacker). That looks so dreadfully text-booky. Different sizes wd. be better: or the traditional '5 3–6'.⁴

(4.) Yes, we can have a list of Psalms mentioned and pp. on which they're mentioned: and we can have the Latin first words as well as the English: and we can have one or two Psalms (certainly xix) printed in full. Of course I can't do this for you till we're in page-proof.

Your words imply that I ate the whole pot of honey at one breakfast! This is erroneous.

You still haven't got the hymn right!⁵ 'Pay the price of sin' = 'redeem': *not* 'pay the price of redemption'!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

My wife goes on wonderfully.

TO DON LUIGI PEDROLLO (V):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Jan. 8 MCML VIII

Dilectissime Pater

Grato animo accepi salutationes vestras. Vos, si placuerit, intra orationes quas pro me ex caritate vestra facitis, nunc pro me gratias agite; facit enim mihi magna qui potens est. Ante x menses uxorem duxi, ut omnes tunc augurabantur, moribundam. Matrimonium junctum est et missa nuptialis celebrata juxta lectum. Nullam spem medici praetendebant; nam os femoris fere totum atrocissimo morbo consumptum.

Attamen, contra omnia omina, sanatum et (ut ita dicam) reaedificatum est. Jam convalescit mulier; immo ambulat, claudicans sane, sed ambulat. Sive hoc (certe mirabile) miraculum fuerit, nescio; non enim sine orationibus Ecclesiae et sancti sacerdotis manuum impositione evenit. Quid dicam nisi Unde hoc mihi, qui nil tale merui?

Quotidie orationem fundo pro anima Patris Johannis Calabria et Congregatione. Valete.

C. S. Lewis

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Jan. 8 1958

Dearest Father

Thank you for your greetings. If you will, in the prayers which you say for me out of charity, now give thanks to the Lord; for He that is mighty does to me great things.⁶ Ten months ago I married a woman who, everybody then thought, was about to die. The marriage rite and service were held next to her bed. The doctors did not give us the illusion of any hope; the thigh-bone was in fact almost totally devastated by a most atrocious disease.

Yet, against all odds, it was cured and (so to say) rebuilt. My wife is now convalescent, or better, she walks—she limps, but walks. I do not know if this (clearly extraordinary) fact was a miracle; in any event, it was not without the prayers of the Church and the imposition of the hands of a holy priest that it took place. What can I say unless Whence is this to me,⁷ who did not deserve anything of this sort?

I pray every day for the soul of Father Giovanni Calabria and for the Congregation. Farewell C. S. Lewis

TO KATHRYN STILLWELL (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
14/1/58

Dear Miss Stillwell

No. The story about my coming to teach at Cornell is quite untrue.

Yes, I read *Animal Farm*.⁸ I can't understand why so few mention it while everyone talks about *1984*—surely a far inferior work.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
14/1/58

Dear Mary Willis

Your letter reached me before I left home this morning on my way back to college, this being the first day of term. I came by car (hired) and Joy came with me for the drive & went home after lunch. It sounds a small thing, but it would have been incredible even a month ago.

I am sorry you have been having trouble with your cat. We (have) had a rather 'animallic' time for our old bitch (we thought she knew better) made us an unexpected Christmas present of 10 puppies! We are tired of hearing neighbours say 'Oh, thank you—we'd love a puppy, but—'

The worst of all economies is on necessary medicines, tho' I quite understand how you are tempted to it. What a pity you haven't got our National Health system in America. I wish I could help. I can only continue my prayers. My bones, by the way, are quite quiescent, so I don't need to be pitied. God has been wonderfully good to us in every way.

Forgive my awful hand and short letters—both have the same cause. This is the 8th letter (all by hand) and the end is not yet! God bless you, and guard you from all danger.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

After the death of Dorothy L. Sayers, Lewis was invited to compose a panegyric to be read at her memorial service, to be held at St Margaret's Church, London, on 15 January 1958. Lewis was unable to attend, but his composition was read by the Lord Bishop of Chichester, George Bell. Shortly afterwards, Sayers' son, Anthony Fleming,⁹ wrote to thank him for the panegyric.¹⁰ The following is Lewis's reply.

TO ANTHONY FLEMING (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
21/1/58

Dear Mr. Fleming

Thank you for your most kind letter. I am relieved to find that the little speech has pleased those whose approval at such a time matters most—it is so easy to go wrong in a thing of that kind and so to give offence.

I am perfectly willing that it should be printed, but please ask whoever sees to it to be sure and let me see a proof. Even if printers made no mistakes, my villainous writing nearly always leads to some.

'Affliction' is too strong a word for my bone trouble. 'Nuisance' is about all I can claim for it. Your loss is a real affliction, on which I offer my sympathy, Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
24/1/58

Dear Gibb

The number of Psalms I shall want listed (with opening words both Latin and English as you suggested) is 65.¹¹

I don't think that bunching them under 'chapters where mentioned' is a good plan. For (a) several are mentioned in more than one chapter, so that there wd. have to be either repetitions or misleading omissions. (b.) When

I'm reading a book where notes are bunched by chapters I find I always look up the notes before I've mentally noted the number or title of the chapter I'm in and then have to turn back to find it. (So do you, you know) The Psalms I shd. like reproduced in full are Numbers 8, 19, 45, 104, and 110. (104 is long but the book will look thin enough at 12/6 anyway!) In the Blurb the sentence I have underlined is hardly true.¹² I say precious little here (I said lots in my OHEL vol.) about the time of Coverdale.¹³ Cd. you say* –'He relates the Psalms to this triple background: to the ancient Judaic religion which produced them, to the age of Christ when they took on new meanings, and to our own daily experience in the modern world'

I think your latest idea about typography (for Psalm and verse-number) is probably the right one.

Your P.C. suggested a glorious holiday.¹⁴

Yours

C. S. Lewis

* If you do, the 'simple approach' (wh. I don't greatly fancy in any case!) must go out.

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

As from Magdalene
25/1/58

My dear Roger–

Joy and I are both overwhelmed at your shocking news. Poor, poor boy—but I'm sorrier for you and June. If the worst happens, he, when grown up, will never know his loss. I am particularly sorry you had first the minor blow & then, when you thought you knew the worst, the major. It seems a refinement to suffering.¹⁵

I suppose we nearly all have our turn of tragedy, like troops going into the line to be blooded. It is not a consolation to think thus. It may be a stiffener—'*this* also is one of the things man is born to'. You will all be much in my prayers and thoughts.

I'm sorry about Monday. A 2.15 meeting at Cambridge forced me for once to take the morning train and I quite forgot to notify you of the change. Oh hell—it's a trifle, but I could wish I had not chosen this of all moments at which to inflict on you even so small a frustration. (Little things, I know,

can add even to great ones: makes you feel ‘Even this is taken from me.’) I think May 19th will be alright. If so, I’ll book it when I get back to College.

God comfort you.

Yours

Jack We are both well.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
6/2/58

Dear Gibb

‘Let the field be joyful etc’ is xcvi, 12.

I don’t think the abridgement of Miracles is too bad. Various annexes and substituted passages which I want are now in the typist’s hands. As soon as they are done I will write to you.¹⁶

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

As from Magdalene College
Cambridge
Feb 9th 1958

Dear Joan

Thank you for the poems. I thought them very nice and quite agree with what they say. I liked the one called *Hope* best.

I shall be glad when people begin talking about other things than Sputniks, won’t you? One gets quite sick of the whole subject. The pity is that some cosmic rays didn’t produce a mutation in the dog which would have made it super-rational: then it might have found its way back alive and started taking revenge on the humans!¹⁷

Happy New Year.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MERVYN PEAKE (UCL):¹⁸

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
10. 2. 58

Dear Sir,

May I make so free as to tell you what a profound impression your *Titus Groan* and *Gormenghast*¹⁹ are making on me. 'Are making', because thank goodness, I have not yet finished the second: *Titus* is just playing marbles in the Lichen Fort at the moment.²⁰

I suppose they must have been talked about a good deal (they wouldn't otherwise have reached me who, for all I know about what's going on, might as well be always asleep among the Bright Images)²¹ but I can see they are not rated at their true worth. People now all seem to want 'a slice of life' (the flaccid, tepid, grey-to-brown shapeless object is a better image than they know) or a 'comment on life'. To me those who merely comment on experience seem far less valuable than those who *add* to it, who make me experience what I never experienced before.

I would not for anything have missed *Gormenghast*. It has the hallmark of a true myth: i.e. you have seen nothing like it before you read the book, but after that you see things like it everywhere. What one may call 'the Gormenghastly' has given me a New Universal: particulars to put inside it are never in short supply. That is why fools (I bet) tried to 'interpret' it as an allegory. They see one of the innumerable 'meanings' which are always *coming out of it* (because it is alive and fertile) and conclude that you began and ended by *putting in* that, and no more.

If they tell you it's deuced leisurely, and the story takes a long time to develop, don't listen to them. It ought to be, and must be, slow. That endless, tragic, farcical, unnecessary, ineluctable sorrow can't be abridged. I love the length. I like things long—drinks, love-passages, walks, silences, and, above all, books. Give me a good square meal like *The Faerie Queene* or *The Lord of the Rings*. *The Odyssey* is a mere lunch, after all. (If only one knew classical Persian! I'm told Firdausi is a good cut-and-come-again poet.) Thank you for adding to a class of literature in which the attempts are few and the successes very few indeed.

Yours truly,
C. S. Lewis

TO MR PITMAN (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
13/2/58

Dear Mr. Pitman

I am not quite clear whether you are talking of this problem as it applies to the married or the unmarried.²² The idea of permanent sexual abstinence within marriage (if that is what you mean at one point in your letter) wd. seem to be vetoed by St Paul's advice, or even command, in I Cor vii, 5–6.²³

The metamorphosis of the lizard into the stallion was meant to symbolise perfect sublimation, after painful struggle and agonising surrender, not by ordinary psychological law but by supernatural Grace.²⁴ The evidence seems to be that God sometimes works such a complete metamorphosis and sometimes not. We don't know why: God forbid we shd. presume it went by merit.

He never in my unmarried days did it for me. He gave me—at least and after many ups and downs, the power to resist the temptation so far as the *act* was concerned. He never stopped the recurrent temptations, nor was I guarded from the sin of *mental* consent. I don't mean I wasn't given sufficient Grace. I mean that I sometimes fell into it, Graceorno.

One may, I suppose, regard this as partly penal. One is paying for the physical (and still more the imaginative) sins of ones earlier life. One may also regard it as a tribulation, like any other. The great discovery for me was that the attack does *not* last forever. It is the devil's lie that the only escape from the tension is through yielding. After prolonged resistance it will go away: what seemed yesterday impossible to turn one's mind from will to-day be utterly unenchanted, insipid, tedious.

Do you know St. François de Sales' chapter *De la douceur*:²⁵ meekness to God, to one's neighbour, and (surprisingly and importantly) to *oneself*? Disgust, self-contempt, self-hatred—rhetoric against the sin and (still more) vilification of sexuality or the body in themselves—are emphatically *not* the weapons for this warfare. We must be *relieved*, not horrified, by the fact that the whole thing is humiliating, undignified, ridiculous; the *lofty* vices wd. be far worse. Nor must we exaggerate our suffering. We talk of 'torture': five minutes of really acute toothache wd. restore our sense of proportion! In a word, no melodrama. The sin, if we fall into it, must be

repented, like all our others. God will forgive. The temptation is a darn nuisance, to be borne with patience as long as God wills. On the purely physical side (but people no doubt differ) I've always found that *tea* and bodily weariness are the two great disposing factors, and therefore the great dangers. Sadness is also a danger: lust in my experience follows disgruntlement nearly always. Love of every sort is a guard against lust, even, by a divine paradox, *sexual* love is a guard against lust. No woman is more easily and painlessly abstained from, if need be, than the woman one loves. And I'm sure purely male society is an enemy to chastity. I don't mean a temptation to homosexuality: I mean that the absence of ordinary female society provokes the normal appetite.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

As from Magdalene,
Cambridge.
17/2/58

Dear McCallum

The Christian Herald printer had made absolute nonsense of one sentence in that article, so you're a clever man if you understood it!²⁶ I don't think I'll do any more Spacemanship. Science-fiction has become too scientific and my old windjammer is no longer spaceworthy.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
20/2/58

Dear Gibb

(1.) It is the most ticklish thing in the world to decide just when we gain more than we lose by going into a cheap edition.²⁷ I presume you have weighed the pro's and con's. I have no objection to the format. If you are satisfied that it is a prudent change, I must accept your view.

(2.) I return *Miracles* with my modifications. I thought rather better of the abridgement than you.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

22/2/58

Dear Mary Willis

Joy (who thanks you for your most kind message) tells me I am writing to you on George Washington's birthday, so 'there's glory for you'²⁸ as Humpty Dumpty would say. God is very good to us and we go on happily at present. We kept one of the puppies, and call him Guppy (out of *Bleak House*)²⁹ and he is a lively youngster. I notice, as I have done before in similar circumstances, the common *age* is a bond stronger than common species: i.e. Guppy is friends with the kitten and Guppy's mother is friends with the old cat—a huge Tom called Ginger. I'm glad my angels should be thought more correct than those of the 'Repository Artists', but what the dickens *are* Repository Artists?³⁰ I never heard of them.

I am sorry you had such a bad time at the dentist's but hope that the total result is an improvement. Your mention of 'Valentines' carried me back many years: I have not seen one since I was a small boy, as they have almost died out in this country.

Yes, we must not fret about not doing God those supposed services which He in fact does not allow us to do. Very often I expect, the service He really demands is that of *not* being (apparently) used, or not in the way we expected, or not in a way we can perceive.

I've written an article for an American magazine called *The Christian Herald*.

With all good wishes and love from us both.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

As from Magdalene College

Cambridge
22/2/58

Dear Gibb

(1.) On the *Psalms*, I approve all the typographical solutions, but I shall stick to my capital H for pronouns referring to God. Your B.C.P.³¹ resembles all others in not having them. But they often get one beautifully out of ambiguities which the use of pronouns normally begets. I won't throw away the convenience.

(2.) By Jove, of course there must be a note showing that the paperback *Miracles* is the abridgement. I'm glad you thought of this and I enclose one.

By the way, it would be better if you addressed letters to College: otherwise they add to the week-end accumulation here.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

This is an abridgement, approved and corrected by me, of a book which appeared more than ten years ago under the same title and is still available. I am satisfied that this abridgement preserves without distortion or falsification as much of the original as will fit into a paper-back edition.

C.S.L.³²

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
7/3/58

Dear Gibb

1. I suggest as titles for the abridged *Miracles*, in order of preference
The Problem of Miracles

The Christian Miracles

What to think about Miracles³³

2. I'd quite forgotten about the Puffin LWW. If you think we should both gain more than we lose by this publication, go ahead. The format of the specimen you sent me is quite inoffensive.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO HERBERT PALMER (TEX):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
15/3/58

My dear Palmer

Thank you very much for *The Ride from Hell* which it is nice to meet now properly clothed. I hope it will have all the success it deserves—though I very much doubt my power of assisting this. I often advise people to read various books but only very few take in advice. Either the young man you mention never turned up or I have forgotten it.

The proper title for my book was *Bareface*, but the publishers wouldn't have that because they said people wd. think it promised a book about Red Indians! (Tolkien's title for *The Lord of the Rings* was objected to on the ground that it suggested prizefighting!).

The world gets madder every day. Here in Cambridge especially the things they say about English Literature wd. drive one to despair. Well, we must endure. Thank heavens we both can at least *remember* civilisation and

*I envy not in any moods
The captive void of noble rage,
The linnet born within a cage etc.*³⁴

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
17/3/58

My dear Roger

Thank God. You have been much in our minds and hopes and fears and prayers. Of course the worst of the brunt has fallen on you and June: even if Richard had lost both eyes, you would have felt it far more in the long run. We'll be delighted to see you. I suggest Thurs 27th as a day and dinner here (6.45) as a meeting. Can do?

Yours

Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
26/3/58

My dear Arthur—

Nice to hear from you. I don't think I can make any plans for the summer. Joy (how unlike poor Minto) wd. not breathe a word against my going. But, though all goes splendidly, the sword of Damocles hangs over us. How shd. I feel if it descended quite soon and I then felt 'I did not even stay with her while I had her.' If, by God's mercy, all continued to go well for a couple of years it wd. be a different matter.

I suppose it is idle to speak of *your* coming to England? There's a proper spare room here now, and central heating—and Magdalene is much nicer to stay at than Magdalen. You cd. have breakfast when you pleased in your own sitting room.

Things are wonderful at present. Joy is up all day, can get in and out of cars and go up and down stairs, keeps all the staff in good form, and is (of course) re-decorating the house. You have no idea how lovely it is to have no nurses about.

But I've been meaning to write to you about the last of all the nurses, because her conversation was so exactly that of Miss F's Aunt.³⁵ Here is a specimen: 'I once nursed a lady on Boar's Hill. When I was taking my patient out in her bath chair we used to meet dear Mr Pilkington. He was looking for bees in the woods. With his binoculars. He always stopped his car to tell my patient. The reason he told her about the bees was that she was a Scotchwoman. You see, she was a whiskey lady.'

I'm correcting the proofs of that book on the Psalms at present.

God bless you, and thank you for your prayers, which I know you will continue.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
27/3/58

Dear Gibb—

Here are the proofs of *Reflections*. I have followed your correction on p. 31 but stuck to my guns on pp. 79, 121. Please make sure on p. 35 they get my correction: v. (abbreviation for ‘verse’), not v (= 5). I have added a dedication: you will see that on p. vii.³⁶

I want two entries added. First ‘Appendix’ containing full text, from Prayer Book version, of the Psalms mentioned: then, ‘List of Psalms discussed or mentioned in this book.’ Actually, we ought to have had footnotes directing people to this Appendix at the point where those Psalms are dealt with in the text, but I take it it is now too late. The next big thing is to put the Appendix first after the text where it will catch more attention. I think ‘List’ is more accurate for the next item than ‘Index’. This list is now with the typist, who can’t get it done before Monday.³⁷

About the Dust Cover, I like the colour scheme and wouldn’t object. If you have it, I should go for the best design, and archaeology be damned. But I don’t like the letters. We have very nice plain Roman Capitals now (even those one sees over every H. W. Smith’s shop)³⁸ and I think it a bad fashion to substitute printed mimicry of ugly handwriting. I wish all publishers wd. stop it. Even if the handwriting were a beautiful script, which this is not, the whole idea that decoration consists in making everything masquerade as something else, is surely wrong. Do you like smoking-rooms on ships made up to look like Scotch baronial halls?³⁹ I’ll try to send the TS back tomorrow, and also that of the abridged *Miracles* in which I find no fault. I’m sorry this is a day late, but you haven’t given me much time! All the best.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

58/64

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
27th March 1958.

Dear Gibb,

I liked Sieveking's script, as far as he had gone, very much indeed and told him to go ahead, on the understanding (which he had no objection to) that I could have a look at each episode as he finished it and suggest modifications if need be.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

C.S.L. *Reflections on the Psalms* Late corrections

p. 3, l. 7 for *literaure* read *literature*

p. 25, l. 3 from end of para 1 for *perfects* read *prefects*

p. 38, l. 23 for *Thee* (read *Thee'* (

p. 118, l. 1 for *disciple* read *disciples*

TO WILLIAM P. WYLIE (BOD):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

28/3/58

Dear Mr. Wylie—

I don't know enough to give a very useful opinion on the most important question you have asked me.⁴⁰ I certainly don't think we have to do with the mere fictions or delusions of individual charlatans or lunatics. Something very constant does appear again and again in Oriental religion and in its Western adaptations (ancient Gnosticism and modern Theosophy). It is one of the three perennial views of the universe, which are, in my opinion: 1. Materialism (from Democritus to Marx) 2. Amalgamated High Paganism (from Iamblichus to Steiner) 3. Christianity (from the Apostles to the child who was confirmed this year).

Of course for people like you and me the only live issue is between 2. and 3. We're under no obligation, are we?, to say that everything in 2. is pure falsehood. May it not contain (a.) Truths about the spiritual world omitted by Revelation because they are irrelevant to our redemption. (b.) Truths omitted because they are positively dangerous and noxious to us in our present condition (c.) Real psychic facts of no particular importance (d.) Semi-rationalised—or philosophised—mythology (e.) Diabolical delusions. (f.) Straight quackery for catching flats. And all these mixed in various degrees and modes. What stamps it as an over-all false way—which is not the same as a set of totally false propositions—is, for me, the fact that it is all

for people of a *particular type*. If all Christians were people like Origen or Henry More or Wm. Law in his last phase (but we have Aquinas, Pascal & Dr. Johnson), or people like Italian peasants & Irish nuns (but we have Hooker or Pasteur), we'd be in the same position.

Do come and see me when you are next in Cambridge.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
28/3/58

Dear Gibb

a. Yes. On p. 81, middle, and in all similar places, read 5, 6 instead of 5–6.

b. Yes. On p. 35 read 17, 13. I'm unhappy, though, about *either* 17, 14 or more italicised 14 in the next line. You are specially trained to notice type. The general reader hardly perceives the difference between roman and italicised numbers except when they are juxtaposed and so contrasted. If we put merely italicised 14 he may think we mean Psalm XIV. On the other hand to repeat 17 so soon looks odd. I think in this passage we must either retain 'v.' or (if there's room) substitute for the numeral(s) 'in the next verse'. You cd. save a tiny bit of space by omitting 'Yes' in the next line.

(c.) Normalise names of books of the Bible as you please, all rom, or all itals.

(d.) It *wd.* be a great improvement if you would 'juggle' so as to get footnotes ('see p. n') to the psalms we are printing in full. If so, the entries shd. be as follows

Psalms 8. Footnote to p. 132, para 2, l. 1.

p. 63, para 1, last l.

19

p. 62, l. 2.

36

45 p. 127, para 2, l. 4.

68 p. 125, para 2, l. 1.

104 p. 84, l. 2.

110 122, l. 4.^{[41](#)}

(e.) TS of *Reflections* and abridged *Miracles* went to you yesterday.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
31/3/58

Dear Mary Willis—

Thank you for your letter of the 16th. I am v. sorry to hear about the earache. It is a horrid thing, much worse than toothache.

We all go through periods of dryness in our prayers, don't we? I doubt (but ask your *directeur*) whether they are necessarily a bad symptom. I sometimes suspect that what we *feel* to be our best prayers are really our worst: that what we are enjoying is the satisfaction of apparent success, as in executing a dance or reciting a poem. Do our prayers sometimes go wrong because we insist on trying to talk to God when He wants to talk to us.

Joy tells me that once, years ago, she was haunted one morning by a feeling that God wanted something of her, a persistent pressure like the nag of a neglected duty. And till mid-morning she kept on wondering what it was. But the moment she stopped worrying, the answer came through as plain as a spoken voice. It was ‘I don’t want you to *do* anything, I want to *give* you something’: and immediately her heart was full of peace and delight. St. Augustine says ‘God gives where He finds empty hands.’⁴²

A man whose hands are full of parcels can’t receive a gift. Perhaps these parcels are not always sins or earthly cares, but sometimes our own fussy attempts to worship Him in *our* way. Incidentally, what most often interrupts my own prayers is not great distractions but tiny ones—things one will have to do or avoid in the course of the next hour.

We are all well, but tired of the refusal of spring to arrive. I’ve never known a colder, wetter, darker March. This is pretty early in the morning and Joy is still asleep: otherwise she would join me in our love to you.

Yours
Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
2/4/58

My dear A—

Yes, yes, of course. If we ever dare to make any plans more than a month or so ahead, I certainly want to bring Joy to Co. Down, and the occasional hospitality of your car wd. be most welcome. As for who is going to do the talking—Joy has the extraordinary delusion that I do most of it anyway. Actually, against you *and* her I shd. have no chance.

I agree. One has long since come to regard Mr Woodhouse⁴³ as the most sensible character in the book.

God bless you
Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
5/4/58

Dear Gibb

[1.] On p. 126 (glad you spotted my error) I mean Ephesians (IV) 4–7. About brackets or no brackets on, say, pp. 133 and 137, regularise whichever way, and as far as, you please.

2. Glad you agree about p. 35. By all means have *verse* and *verses* instead of *v.* and *vv.* everywhere. I am surprised there should always be room for it, but pleased 3. I hoped, rather than expected, you wd. be able to fit in Ps. 68.⁴⁴ We *can* do without it, but if you can manage it, it wd. be nice—the book being *v.* short for the price anyway.

4. Ps. 14 was to have its footnote on p. 63 because it is there discussed as a whole and the discussion will make a sensible reader want to see the text as a whole: not on p. 54 where a single verse is quoted as evidence or illustration. There is the same reason for giving 104 its footnote on p. 84 instead of 77: and for Ps. 45 on p. 127 not p. 124. I think the principle will become plain if you imagine the points at which, if you were a reader who had no Prayer Book (or were too lazy to go and get it) you wd. want to have the psalm before you. As to *where* in the line we shd. have the superior number, I have no views. Your judgement on such a point is worth more than mine.

5. Let's have Appendix I (sub-title 'Selected Psalms'?) and *then* 'Appendix II. Other Psalms discussed or mentioned.' I have tried to list all the pp. where each Psalm is mentioned (tho' doubtless many have evaded me), so it is to that extent an index. But if we used that word modern readers wd. expect it to be alphabetical. Please retain all the p. references. I don't attach the importance you do to *first* mention. The first mention may be the least important.

6. Yes, Roman numerals for numbering of paragraphs if you prefer.

7. P. 126 again. Right: follow Coverdale's punctuation.

8. You did get my last minute corrections (*prefects* for *perfects* on p. 25 l. 20 etc) didn't you?⁴⁵

9. I like the Harp jacket and agree to the itals. for title. Not sure that *on the* shd. not also be in itals, retaining the difference of style and colour.

All well here—tho' now that both my stepsons are at home I sometimes think of re-writing the life of David Copperfield from the point of view of that falsely maligned and long-suffering gentleman Mr. Murdstone. By the way is Squeers still in business?⁴⁶

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO WARFIELD M. FIROR (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

Easter Monday [7 April] 1958

Dear Firor

It is always nice to hear from you again and this time it was better than ever. My brother and I were both delighted with your paper on prayer. It wd. be presumption of me to say that it was entirely 'addressed to my condition'. I am afraid most of my praying is on a lower level. But you are dead right. What you describe is what we must all wish to do. Meanwhile (on most occasions) I can only pray to pray better. You will probably [have] spotted a literal error on p. 4., para 2: for *actitivity* read *activity*.

My life has greatly changed. In March 1957 I married, in hospital at her bedside, a woman apparently rapidly dying of cancer. The femur was eaten through, the hip partly destroyed, a metastasis in the shoulder and another on the other leg.

When they sent her home to die in April 57, the experienced nurses thought her life wd. be a matter of weeks. Yet the bad spots in the bones first ceased to increase and then began to heal. The pathological fracture in the femur healed. She is now up and about and walks with a limp only because the net result has been to leave one leg shorter than the other. Whether this is all due to radiotherapy, or to testosterone, or to the prayers of the good man (they seem to have prevailed in other cases) who came & laid his hands on her, is not for me to say. Of course she and I know (and you know better) by how fine a hair the sword still overhangs her head.

I am sure we shall have your prayers. My wife was the Joy Davidman whose *Smoke on the Mountain* (an essay on the Commandments) you have perhaps read.

All last summer I was having a pretty bad time with *osteoporosis*, often screaming when the muscles went into spasm and living on a rich diet of kodis and chloral. It is now quite painless: whether by *vis medicatrix naturae*⁴⁷ or by wearing a surgical belt, I don't know. To write such a medical letter to a great pathologist is to give him rather 'a busman's holiday'! But I thought you wd. like to know—it astonished me—how much gaiety and happiness there was between us during all those months when she was in such immediate danger (not pain by then) and I in such pain.

You are daily in my prayers (such as they are). God bless you.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

P.S. About publication of your essay. I don't know the American periodical market at all. An article of mine has just appeared in *The Christian Herald* but it was on a subject chosen by the editor. On the whole, I think the least troublesome and least time-wasting thing is to put yourself in the hands of a Literary Agent.* They'll charge a commission, of course, but they do know how to place things and often make better terms than the inexperienced author wd. make for himself. No doubt for you an essay on Cancer wd. be more easily placed. If you have anything 'popular' to say about it, it might be a good way of 'putting yourself on the carpet' and getting a hearing, later, for what you have to say on a greater matter.

* My wife says Brandt and Brandt, 101 Park Avenue, New York 17 are, or lately were, a good firm.⁴⁸

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns

12/4/58

Dear Gibb

I enclose MS. of Appendix II. Yes, i.e. *emeth* at top of p. 83.⁴⁹

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELburne (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
15/4/58

Dear Mary Willis—

What lovely news you have to tell. I do thank God on your behalf most heartily. What strange tricks our minds play!—that we should think it presumption to believe what we [are] forbidden *not* to believe. About past, long past, sins: I had been a Christian for many years before I *really* believed in the forgiveness of sins, or more strictly, before my theoretical belief became a reality to me. I fancy this may not be so uncommon.

Joy sends her love. We were away at a v. nice country hotel last week having at last, what we never had before, a honeymoon! Here's another absurdity of the mind: I'm such a confirmed old bachelor that I couldn't help feeling I was being rather naughty ('Staying with a woman at a hotel!' Just like people in the newspapers!) I can't write more, for I'm travelling back to Cambridge to day and the Vicar is coming in a few minutes to give Joy her Easter Communion (she still can't manage church).

God bless you & more.

Yours

Jack

P.S.—By the way, you are one of the *minority* of my numerous female correspondents who didn't gradually fade away as soon as they heard I was married!

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
17/4/58

Dear Gibb

1. I wd. prefer the seven selected Psalms to be retained in Appendix I and the word 'other' to be omitted from its heading. Can you, please, even now make it so? The method you suggest will, I believe, be a nuisance to some readers, especially, as it involves the disappearance of the page references for those seven. A reader may well want to have before him *all*

mentions of a particular Psalm—and that particular Psalm may be one of the Seven. Sorry to be troublesome, but I shd. v. much deplore the other plan.

2. Yes, I suppose we must let *Miracles* go ahead without my seeing the proofs again.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
17/4/58

My dear Roger—

May 19th it is *quoad* dinner and bed, but no B & B, for I have a Board in Cambridge that afternoon and must go by the morning train. I leave it entirely to you whether you prefer to accompany me and use a spare afternoon in Cambridge, or to follow by the 2.20.

I say—the *Sailing of the Ark* is not (humiliating explanation!) meant to be funny.⁵⁰ The Unicorn, as often in medieval symbolism, is Christ, rejected. The ‘stable and manger’ to wh. He will come long after are those at Bethlehem.

We’re all well and hope you are. All loves.

Yours

Jack

TO MURIEL BRADBROOK (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
18/4/58

Dear Muriel—

I am glad you raised this question. I was maintaining yesterday that when a bifurcation of meaning is sufficiently old and wide, the resulting senses often enter the linguistic consciousness of each new generation as mere homophones, and their reunion has the explosion of a pun.⁵¹

But on the other hand, when the bifurcation is less wide there may be a period during which the speakers really do not know in which sense they are using the word. When we speak of a ‘simple meal’ do we always know

whether we mean (a) Not complicated (b) Modest, not ‘posh’, or (c) Easy to prepare? (Of course they needn’t coincide. A haunch of venison is *more* ‘posh’ than a shepherd’s pie, but less complicated, and helpings of caviar out of a jar are easier to prepare than either).

In the passage you quote, almost all of the senses of ‘sad’ (including that which would yield a tautology) seem to me possible, and I suggest that Webster may not have made up his mind between them.⁵² Cf. the passage in Boswell where Goldsmith lets Johnson tell him what he meant by ‘slow’ in the first line of the *Traveller*!⁵³

Yours

Jack

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge.

19/4/58

Dear Miss Douglass—

I am sorry to have been so long returning your script. I can’t judge it myself (I think I told you how un-film-minded I was).

There are, to be frank, things I don’t like about it. I don’t think there’s any point in Lucy’s feeling ‘creepy’ in the study: it was the long, empty passages upstairs that did that. And I don’t like committing myself to exact ages for the children. But all these objections may only show my ignorance of the medium. A friend, better qualified than I to judge, read it and pronounced it ‘un-cinematic’: said there was too much static dialogue.

I’m sorry this is so discouraging: but if, as I suspect, you are embarked on an unpromising proposition (our lives are littered with false starts! at least mine is) the sooner you discover it the better. But of course you’ll take other advice as well. All I am anxious for is that, if the thing is not going to work in the end, I shall not have it on my conscience that I lured you into wasting a moment longer than necessary.

I hope you are quite recovered and that your tour has, on the whole, done good.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

As from Magdalene
20/4/58

Dear George

You and Moira must dine with me this time, in my rooms here. And why make it fishy?⁵⁴ Let us make it Thurs. 1st so as to doon our observance to May Day and

celebrate the names

*Of St. Philip and St. James*⁵⁵

7.15 for 7.30? O.K.?

We live among mercies and marvels, don't we? Love to both.

Jack

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
20/4/58

Dear Joan

Thanks for your nice letter of the—hullo, you haven't dated it! And we simple souls always think of you Americans (I'm married to one now, did you know?) as being so business like. Anyway, you can drive a typewriter, which I cd. no more drive than a locomotive (I'd sooner drive the locomotive too).

The bad spring seems to be all over the world. Ours has been worse than yours in a way. Not colder of course—we never have real cold like yours—but cold for us and *dry*. The ground is parched and heaven knows when we can get anything started in the garden.

I was much interested in your account of the new school. It is nice to like anything but especially nice—almost a kind of victory—to learn to like what at first seemed hateful. I am glad you can do it, for not everybody can. I know a man who never forgives a *thing*, tho' he can forgive people. I mean, if he once had bad weather in a particular place, however nice it was in itself, he'd never go there again: and if he stubbed his toe on the threshold of Heaven itself, it wd. never, never be heaven to him again!

How I remember the pleasures of sleeping late. But they've all gone now. After *having* to get up at 7.15 for many years, I now find it almost

impossible to lie in bed any later and quite impossible to sleep.

I keep on getting nice letters from young readers in America: the number of loyal Narnians seems to be increasing.

With all good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN KILMER (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
24/4/58

Dear Martin

It is always nice to hear of anyone really enjoying *Perelandra*. I don't think the pleasure on my part is merely vanity. I enjoyed that imaginary world so much myself that I'm glad to find anyone who has been there and liked it as much as I did—just like meeting someone who has been to a place one knows and likes in the real world.

96% is a terrific average. Keep it up.

There's no news at all about Cambridge cats. I never see one. No news and no *mews*. But the spring has come at last and the daffodils and primroses are out and the birds are singing. I have not heard a cuckoo yet.

Love to all.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

26/4/58

My dear Van Auken—

A letter from you is always a refreshment. First as to your question. Joy's improvement continues. Indeed except that she is a cripple with a limp (the doctors, rather than the disease, shortened one leg) she is in full health. She had an X-ray examination last week wh. shows that the bones have re-built themselves 'firm as rock'. The Doctor, doubtless without what a Christian wd. regard as true seriousness, used the word *miraculous*. I am also, by the way, nearly quite restored myself. I sometimes tremble when I

think how good Joy and I ought to be: how good we would have *promised* to be if God had offered us these mercies at that price.

How you read my mind! That paragraph about the ‘drastic act of considerable finality’ did at once suggest suicide—but I ought to have thought better of you than to suspect it—and I was relieved to read your postscript.⁵⁶ Now of course you will have my prayers. Whatever the act is we may be sure the results will be quite different from those you expect, and that will not prevent God from bringing good out of them in His own way. More and more I see how useless it is to try to play Providence either to oneself or to another. All we can do is to try to follow the plain rules of charity, justice and commonsense and leave the issue to God.

All blessings. I wish we lived nearer.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO HENRY I. LOUTTIT (P):⁵⁷

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
1/5/58

My dear Lord Bishop

I think I can undertake what you suggest⁵⁸—tape-recording the talks here in England. I am not quite clear how many of such 15-minute periods are wanted. Ten?

The subject I want to say something about in the near future, in some form or other, is the four Loves—Storge, Philia, Eros, and Agape. This seems to bring in nearly the whole of Christian ethics. Wd. this be suitable for your purpose? Of course I shd. do it on the ‘popular’ level—not (as the four words perhaps suggest) philologically.

I shall be glad to hear from you on the further details.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
5/5/58

Dear Gibb

Thanks for cheque (£1499–0–4) received to day. Gosh! What a flop *Till We Have Faces* has been! Glad you discovered the catch about Eyre and Spottiswoode: though it is rum that a Papist firm shd. have an eternal property in the C. of E. prayer book.⁵⁹

Don't say a word against Icelandic: you don't know what you're missing.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JEAN THOMSON:⁶⁰

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

7/5/58

Dear Miss Thomson

Thank you very much for your most kind letter of May 2nd. It was a great treat for me. Children's criticisms are delightfully unlike most modern adult criticism because they talk about the work itself instead of parading themselves. C. Palumbo will possibly go far: in his bit about 'the sad parts' he is already on the verge of the distinction between tragic, and merely depressing, experience.

I am glad you collect children's remarks on lots of older books. They might provide you with material for an interesting study of the whole subject some day.

With very many thanks.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO KATHLEEN RAINE (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

12/5/58

Dear Kathleen Raine

There is a certain monotony in commenting on your *Blakiana*,⁶¹ for the best fact, namely that you are quite clearly right, makes the dullest

proposition. Your case about *Tiriel*⁶² is really quite unanswerable.⁶³ The point on p. 2 about putting actual events in the margin is very helpful.⁶⁴

So is your point about Freud on p. 5.⁶⁵ And of course I, at any rate, am with you about the radically un-classical character of the ‘classics’⁶⁶—and pretty nearly with Blake in his view of ‘Public RECORDS’.⁶⁷

I’m writing at Oxford and away from my books, but is there not just a hint at the end of the prose *Edda* that Har and his two colleagues have been pulling Gangleri’s leg? See your p. 21, at the top.⁶⁸

Colona? Is Colonus not the usual form?⁶⁹ But no doubt you have good reasons.

With very many thanks,

Yours sincerely

Jack Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge.

12/5/58

Dear Starr—

It was nice to hear from you and B. Sibylla, whom I never heard of before, sounds good.⁷⁰ But he falls for me into the less interesting of the sorts of pneumatologists because he apparently divides all the superhuman rationals into good and bad angels.

I, as you see, get more fun out of those who leave us a few neutrals.⁷¹ Your idea of Wither’s little tune—the last protest of the man in him, no longer conscious, against the macrobes, is excellent. I wish I’d thought of it.⁷²

The story of my wife is much more than one of fears not realised. It is one of an apparently certain death sentence reprieved or, dare I hope?, a free pardon. When she came home from hospital in April ’57 she was expected to live a few weeks. Then, after (but long after) the prayers for the sick and the laying on of hands, the unpredictable began to happen. Bones rebuilt themselves in a way the doctors themselves described as ‘miraculous’. Now, though she will always walk with a limp, she is in full health and living a normal, crowded, and happy life. ‘Believe as you list.’ One’s

gratitude to God need not depend on deciding whether this is, in some strict sense, a miracle or not.

My brother is away at the moment (he still lives with us) but wd. join me in hearty greetings if he were at home.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO HELMUT KUHN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
16/5/58

Dear Kuhn

Your letter has obeyed the Horatian precept *Nonum prematur in annum*.⁷³ You need not have sent it, but thank you all the same. I can only renew my penitence for having believed evil of you on such very insufficient evidence. And thank you also for the article. I read German laboriously (what a pity we do not all still use Latin) so I have only skimmed it so far, but with very pleasant anticipations of a fuller study. When will you be in England again? I should much like to renew our friendship.⁷⁴

With cordial greetings.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO BUTCH BANTON (P):⁷⁵

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
16/5/58

Dear Butch Banton

Magic is a rum thing and does not always work out as we would expect. I can only suggest two possible reasons why they saw the plates but not the weapons.⁷⁶

1. A Weapon is much more connected with a warrior than a plate is with a waiter. A sword or spear may have a name. It is a trusty old friend—fits the hand—has stories told about it etc. But a plate is passed from hand to hand, and one plate is as good as another. Do you think if one was invisible

oneself one's invisibility would be more likely to flow over into the weapon one *grasped* than into the plates one was merely *carrying*?

2. Perhaps it was not true that the spears were really invisible till they left the hand.⁷⁷ A spear pointed *at me* would not be easy to see in any case. I would need to be looking in exactly the right place at exactly the right moment. And of course if my enemy were invisible I would not know where to look.

Of course we can't trust what the Dufflepuds themselves say, because they are so stupid!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN HOOTON (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
23 May '58

Dear Hooton

Alas! From now till after the end of term my life consists of marking exam scripts against time 7 days a week from morn till night. Hope we may meet next term.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

*On 23 May 1958 Joy wrote to Roger Lancelyn Green:*⁷⁸

*The Kilns,
May 23 [1958]*

Dear Roger,

Please forgive me for typing this—I'm doing all Jack's letters at the moment and being madly businesslike.

Of course Doug will be delighted to convey Scirard; he thinks the world of him. (Did you know your son is a very determined fighter and discourager of bullies?) As it happens I'm calling at the school tomorrow to take Doug out, and I'll make arrangements with him then. If you are not going to visit tomorrow, I'll see if I can manage to take Scirard out too, and debauch them both with scones and jam.

I usually send Doug L1 (that means a pound, this is an American typewriter) for the journey; it covers fares, FOOOD, and emergencies like missing the train and having to telephone. I think the actual fares both ways come to a bit less, but somehow I never get any change.

I'll make whatever arrangements are necessary with Peter Bayley.⁷⁹ By the way, the Kilns is now a real home, with paint on the walls, ceiling properly repaired, clean sheets on the beds...we can receive and put up several guests, and could have Scirard here another time, not to mention you and June! I've even got a fence round the woods and all the trespassers chased away; I shoot a starting-pistol at them and they run like anything! We'd love a visit.

Poor Jack comes up for air and blows a few feeble bubbles now and then, but is sinking in waves of Tripos.

*Yours,
Joy*

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
May 30th 1958

My dear Arthur—

Here's a copy of W's last book,⁸⁰ with my compliments. It has elicited a furious letter from the present representative of the family, The Duc de Guiche: so furious I was relieved to find it did not end in a challenge!⁸¹

And now—wd. you believe it?—Joy is so well that she and I are proposing to visit Ireland and shd. be in Crawfordsburn for 10 days in the first half of July. I need not say how I hope you'll be in residence. Will you?

Yours
Jack

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

58/21

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
30th May 1958.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

Many thanks for your interesting letter of the 25th; and for the photo of the Tycoon, who seems to be growing at an amazing rate. Can I already detect in his face the rudiments of the future captain of industry whose successful smile beams upon one from the pages of the shinier magazines? He certainly looks an intelligent boy.

We both look forward to our tins of 'Virginny', and to the fruit cake; to get intoxicated on cake will indeed be a novel experience.⁸² And I am most grateful to you for your very kind offer to send some stockings; but I'm given to understand that Nylons can now be got over here without any difficulty. But my wife none the less appreciates your thoughtfulness. She, thank God, continues to go from strength to strength; indeed is so much better that we plan to go over to Ireland for a holiday in July. I shall of course have to take her by air, as she cannot risk the chance of a fall by the jolting of the train or the rolling of the steamer. But that she can face a three hundred mile journey at all is wonderful, when one reflects that this time last year we did not expect that she would ever leave her bed again.

With best love to you, your mother, and the Tycoon, from all of us,
yours ever,

C. S. Lewis

I have reserved St Thomas for the postscript. I would translate the passage⁸³ thus:—

Creator inexpressible who from the treasures of thy wisdom hast into perfect fitness ordered the parts of the universe; thou (I say) who art called the true fountain of light and wisdom and the transcendently-exalted Beginning; deign to pour the two fold beams* of thy brightness over the darkneses of my understanding, removing the darkneses to which I was born, to wit, sin and ignorance. Thou who dost make the tongues of babes to be eloquent, teach my tongue and infuse in my lips the grace of thy blessing. Give me the sharpness to understand, the capacity to retain, the subtlety to explain, the facility to learn, and the plentiful grace of expression. Order my first steps, guide my progress, consummate my conclusion.

* *If duplicem* is right. But I can't help thinking it ought to be *duplices*. In wh. case the meaning is 'the beams of thy brightness, removing the two darkneses to which I was born.'

TO HSIN-CHANG CHANG (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
30/5/58

Dear Mr. Chang

I have been away for 2 days and only now got your letter. I should be delighted to see you if you called at about 2 o'clock to-morrow (Saturday)

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W): TS

[Magdalene College,
Cambridge]
June 6, 1958

Dear Mr. Kilby,

Thank you very much for your invitation to speak at Wheaton College. I hope to visit the United States some day: but my duties at Cambridge will make it impossible for several years to come.

My wife and I appreciate your good wishes about her illness. I'm glad to say she has made an almost miraculous recovery and is at present very well indeed.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

*On 6 June Joy wrote to Mary Willis Shelburne from The Kilns:*⁸⁴

June 6th

Dear Mary Shelburne,

Perhaps you won't mind a letter from me this time, instead of Jack? He is having his first go at examining for the Cambridge tripos, and is fairly drowning in examination papers—apparently very silly ones! He

comes up for air now and then, blows a few pathetic bubbles, then submerges again. He can't even get home for the next fortnight; our longest separation since our marriage, and we're both feeling it badly!

I am sorry you've been having that nasty time in the hospital. I know only too well what even the nicest hospital is like; how the nurses all vanish at the one moment of the day when you really need them, how the televisions and wirelesses all around make night hideous, how the night nurse wakes you from the first really refreshing sleep you've had in a month, at midnight, to give you your sleeping pill...And you, I suppose, have been the subject of demonstrations to medical students as well! In Oxford they give students their examinations at some poor patient's bedside; examiners and student alike all done up in their mortar-boards and gowns, and scaring the patient half to death. But I'm told that experienced patients have been known to whisper the correct diagnosis to the student if he gets stuck...

Well, I hope you're home again now, and that it wasn't too bad and they found the right answers. I can share too in your thwarted desire to be useful. We women feel that more than men, I think. There are a million things that need doing around this house. Once I would have pitched in and helped my housekeeper—but now, because I have to walk with a stick and have only one hand free, I'm more nuisance than help and can only sit on the sidelines and give advice and be a pest. It is difficult having to accept all the time! But unless we did, how could the others have the pleasure, and the spiritual growth of giving? And—I don't know about you, but I was very proud; I liked the superior feeling of helping others, and for me it is much harder to receive than to give but, I think, much more blessed.

Then, too, it's only since I've been ill and helpless that I've realised just how good people in general are, when they have a chance. So many people have taken trouble over me, and gone out of their way to give me pleasure or help! It's very heart-warming—and humbling, for I remember how cynical I used to be about humanity and feel a salutary shame.

Is your pet a cat or dog? I've found that cats stand these changes and separations pretty well—one of mine, when I was ill, took possession of a new home and mistress and had them completely under his thumb in a week. (If one can speak of a cat's thumb?)

Can you do any sort of work? I've found that making crocheted rugs and tablecloths, or knitting socks, was an amazing help with my spiritual difficulties when I was feeling low. One can work off so many frustrations by stabbing away with a knitting needle! It's better to make pretty things, I find, than just useful ones.

Of course we're both praying for you—and don't be too afraid, even if you turn out to need an operation. I've had three, and they were nothing like so bad as my fears.

Blessings,

Yours,

Joy Lewis

Lewis was one of those who signed a letter that appeared in the Church Times of 6 June under the title 'Mgr. R. A. Knox':⁸⁵

Sir,—

It is proposed to establish a memorial to Mgr. Ronald Knox⁸⁶ at Trinity College, Oxford, where he was Chaplain-Fellow from 1910 to 1917, and Honorary Fellow from 1941 to his death. This will commemorate his life and scholarship, and will be independent of any other memorial which the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church may decide to raise. It is felt that as Mgr. Knox had friends of every denomination, the memorial should be inter-confessional and might take the form of something the College needs. The College has been approached in the matter, and has given its approval.

Subscriptions are invited for a sum to be given to the President and Fellows, for the endowment of a prize or scholarship, connected with biblical or classical studies, which might take the form of a grant named after Mgr. Knox to enable a senior or junior member of the College to travel abroad.

The College would also welcome a visible memorial, and for this an existing bust of Mgr. Knox by Mr Arthur Pollen will be purchased out of the fund.

Cheques should be made payable to the honorary treasurer, Mrs Elizabeth Wanbrough, Broughton Poggs, Lechlade, Gloucestershire.

Eric Hamilton⁸⁷

Gilbert Laithwaite⁸⁸C. S. Lewis

Harold Macmillan⁸⁹

J. C. Masterman⁹⁰

Norfolk⁹¹

Oxford and Asquith⁹²

S. C. Roberts⁹³

Evelyn Waugh

Following this appeal a group of Knox's friends opened a fund to endow a memorial at Trinity College. Part was used to purchase the bronze bust of Knox by Arthur Pollen, which was placed in the War Memorial Library and unveiled on 18 April 1959 by Evelyn Waugh. The rest of the fund has been used to endow an annual undergraduate prize for the 'Best First-Class Performance in Finals'.

TO FRANCIS TURNER (MC):⁹⁴

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
10/6/58

Dear Francis

1. I enclose that book of my brother's which I mentioned to you the other night.

2. A challenge is a challenge, so here comes my (Easter) hymn. It aims at little more than to be mouth-filling. If the numbers are unpleasing, the sentiments, since they are scriptural, must surely be just.

Yours

Jack

*Lords coëval with creation,
Seraph, Cherub, Throne and Power,
Princedom, Virtue, Domination,
Hail the long-awaited hour!
Bruised in head, with broken pinion,
Trembling for his old dominion,
See the ancient dragon cower!
For the Prince of Heaven has risen,
Victor, from his shattered prison.
Loudly roaring from the regions
Where no sunbeam e'er was shed,*

*Rise and dance, ye ransomed legions
Of the cold and countless dead!
Gates of adamant are broken,
Words of conquering power are spoken
Through the God who died and bled:
Hell lies vacant, spoiled and cheated,
By the Lord of life defeated.*

*Bear, behemoth, bustard, camel,
Warthog, wombat, kangaroo,
Insect, reptile, fish and mammal,
Tree, flower, grass, and lichen too,
Rise and romp and ramp, awaking,
For the age-old curse is breaking.
All things shall be made anew;
Nature's rich rejuvenation
Follows on Man's liberation.*

*Eve's and Adam's son and daughter,
Sinful, weary, twisted, mired,
Pale with terror, thinned with slaughter,
Robbed of all your hearts desired,
Look! Rejoice! One born of woman,
Flesh and blood and bones all human,
One who wept and could be tired,
Risen from vilest death, has given
All who will the hope of Heaven.*

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
11/6/58

Dear Gibb

I'm still here, alas, reading Tripos papers. I return the proofs with one correction on each. ('Overcrow' on 5 was a quotation from Hamlet⁹⁵ not a toss shot at 'overcrowd'!)⁹⁶

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
June 15th 1958

Dear Gibb

I've just had a letter from Curtis Brown which has given me great delight. You will guess the subject of it. He justly says what a 'delightful and fair minded person' you are: tells me he had hardly begun to put his case before you anticipated him (*multa parantem dicere*)⁹⁷ with your full agreement: and emphasises 'not only the fact but the manner' of it.

Frank Churchill could not have written a handsomer letter than he,⁹⁸ nor Amadis acted more generously than you.⁹⁹ It must be a bit of a bore for you as these lurid bits of dear old Geoffrey's past keep on coming home to roost in your nest—for I cannot suppose I am the only author whom he has treated so.¹⁰⁰ Thank you very much.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
19/6/58

Dear Evans

Thanks for the interesting article on Piskies—I didn't know about that rocket. As regards publication, I hardly know what to answer. I have never succeeded in being of any use to any author in this matter and no publisher has ever taken my advice! In general, I understand the public are more reluctant to buy, and therefore publishers are more reluctant to publish, a *collection* than a book which consists of a single work. Wd. you think of consulting a Literary Agent? (I am like the man in Lamb who, on being asked for his advice advised the questioner 'to take advice') We are all well and I hope you are. I return the article.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
June 24th 58

Dear Evans

I like the poem very much, except for the first two lines of the last stanza, which are a bit trite and not v. neat.¹⁰¹ By the way, I picked up a false trail at the beginning, taking the construction to be ‘some cats, like ponies etc’: and oddly enough this is followed by 3 nouns which might be verbs (*pace, walk, trot*) so that the error was not immediately evident.¹⁰² But probably no one else will be so stupid. (If you put stanza 5 as the first, perhaps nobody could) I have heard Moggs for a cat, but never thought of your explanation.¹⁰³ I think it quite possible. The name Grimalkin wd. have been pronounced Grimaukin in many times & places. I only just remember *Ben-Hur*¹⁰⁴ from boyhood Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MICHAEL EDWARDS (BOD):¹⁰⁵

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
27/6/58

Dear Mr. Edwards

About Books: the Malacandrians were without written books but not without literature. I had a fancy that this *might* be healthiest when in its *oral* condition, like Homer and the Ballads—see in my *Preface to Paradise Lost*.¹⁰⁶ Bookless people have enormous memories.

Also, I wanted to show ‘civilisation’ in the sense in which I value it (i.e. justice, courtesy, wisdom etc) as distinct as possible from, and independent of, ‘civilisation’ in the material sense (printing, transport etc). No moral point involved.

A bit the same about clothes. I thought clothes bred physical modesty or bashfulness and that this has a good deal to do with the *bad* kinds (there is a good kind) of sexual excitement. But of course what results from the Fall is not bad—e.g. the Redemption results from it. So I don’t think clothes are evil *now* and I think Nudists are cranks. No doubt I am influenced by the fact

that to me personally the buying, preserving, putting on and off of clothes is a great bore. But that's of no importance.

I'm afraid I have no photos to spare.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

58/64

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
3rd July 1958.

Dear Gibb,

Thanks for the book, a very nice bit of work. I'll try to re-read *Miracles* for mis-prints while I'm in Ireland,¹⁰⁷ where my wife and I go tomorrow. When is deadline for your *Fifty-Two*? Not that I'm sure I can pump anything up anyway.¹⁰⁸

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO LEE TURNER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

19 July 1958

Dear Mr. Turner—

The main difficulty seems to me not the question *whether* the Bible is 'inspired', but what exactly we mean by this. Our ancestors, I take it, believed that the Holy Spirit either just replaced the minds of the authors (like the supposed 'control' in automatic writing) or at least dictated to them as to secretaries.

Scripture itself refutes these ideas. S. Paul distinguishes between what 'the Lord' says and what he says 'of himself'¹⁰⁹—yet *both* are 'Scripture'. Similarly the passages in which the prophets describe Theophanies and their own reactions to them wd. be absurd if they were not writing for themselves.¹¹⁰ Thus, without any modern scholarship, we are driven a long way from the extreme view of inspiration.

I myself think of it as analogous to the Incarnation—that, as in Christ a human soul-and-body are taken up and made the vehicle of Deity, so in Scripture, a mass of human legend, history, moral teaching etc. are taken up and made the vehicle of God's Word. Errors of minor fact are permitted to remain. (Was Our Lord Himself incapable, *qua* Man, of such errors? Wd. it be a real human incarnation if He was?) One must remember of course that our modern & western attention to dates, numbers, etc. simply did not exist in the ancient world. No one was looking for *that* sort of truth. (You'd find something of my views about all this in my forthcoming book on the Psalms.) As for translations, even if one doesn't know Greek (and I know no Hebrew myself) we have now so many different translations that by using & comparing them all one can usually see what is happening. The blessed and significant thing is that none of all this has bothered your personal faith in Our Lord. Do you see a clear reason why it need bother anyone else's?

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN KILMER (W): TS

58/191

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
21st July 1958.

Dear Martin,

You certainly are having a full life! I think all the translations of Russian novels I have read must be pretty bad. Yes—the *Christian Herald* is pretty frightful, and so apparently are its readers. I have had the stupidest letters about that article.

Love to all.

Yours, in great haste,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
July 21st 1958

Dear Mary Willis—

(1.) Remember what St. John says ‘If our *heart* condemn us, God is stronger than our heart.’¹¹¹ The *feeling* of being, or not being, forgiven & loved, is not what matters. One must come down to brass tacks. If there is a particular sin on your conscience, repent & confess it. If there isn’t, tell the despondent devil not to be silly. You can’t help *hearing* his voice (the odious inner radio) but you must treat it merely like a buzzing in your ears or any other irrational nuisance.

(2.) Remember the story in the *Imitation*, how the Christ on the crucifix suddenly spoke to the monk who was so anxious about his salvation and said ‘If you knew that all was well, what wd. you, to-day, do, or stop doing?’¹¹² When you have found the answer, do it or stop doing it. You see, one must always get back to the practical and definite. What the devil loves is that vague cloud of unspecified guilt feeling or unspecified virtue by which he lures us into despair or presumption. ‘Details, please!’ is the answer.

(3.) The sense of dereliction cannot be a bad symptom for Our Lord Himself experienced it in its depth—‘Why hast thou forsaken me?’¹¹³

Of course we will continue to pray for you.

A *tripos* at Cambridge is an examination: so called for the *tripos* (compare *tripod*) or 3-legged stool on which the candidate used to sit when the exam. was still, not written work, but a disputation.

Joy and I have just been for a lovely fortnight in Ireland. She, and my brother, are both well. We send our loves and blessings.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

[The Kilns
26 July 1958]

Dear Gibb—

Excuse this penurious mode of reply¹¹⁴—I've let myself run short of notepaper. My wife and I wish we had been invisible as the dog: do I look so like a dyspeptic orangutan?¹¹⁵

The German illustrations of HB are ghastly.¹¹⁶ I have no names of reviewers to suggest (amusing to see Lloyd marked with a u!).¹¹⁷ I'll stand for the Japanese Lady's stunt since you approve it. Give her my compliments etc. when you write.¹¹⁸

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO CAROLINE RAKESTRAW (BOD):¹¹⁹

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Aug. 8th 1958

Dear Miss Rakestraw

I am afraid it is quite impossible to have even one typed copy of the talks for you. I work by hand. The MS is not yet finished. Even if it were and I took it to a typing office, they wd. not get it done for weeks.

My address in London, to which I shall go on the evening of Aug. 18th will be the Athenaeum Club.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Aug 14th 1958

Dear Mrs Van Deusen

Thanks for your letter of Aug 10th. In connexion with the *séance* I'd like to tell you my wife's experience. She once or twice did *admittedly* faked thought-reading at Church bazaars. The public were *told* it was all a trick, all done for fun. In spite of that several of those who came to her

sideshow were believing in it and refusing to disbelieve in it by the end of a 20 minutes' consultation! It's perfectly easy, she says. You see (from face & ring) that your patient is a worried middle aged married woman. Is it her own health—or husband's infidelities—or the young people? Throw out suggestions about all three: you'll see at once which she responds to. All you do is tell her back what she has unconsciously told you. Of course she wouldn't have done it if she had dreamed it was going to deceive people: but apparently it always will—even when they've been plainly told in advance that it *is* a trick.

I know nothing about a TV programme in U.S.A. I am tape-recording 10 talks for an American organisation called 'Episcopal TV' but I don't think there's any TV about it.

Of course Genia and you are always in my prayers. It's quite on the cards that that early glimpse of death will have *no* effect on Paul. These things are incalculable.

Love to all. We all continue v. well.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

As from The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Aug 19th 1958

My dear George

From about Aug 30th to Sept 6—W. in Ireland and Joy taking the boys away for a jaunt—I shall be a grass widow, grass stepfather, and grass brother. Any chance of your coming up for a couple of nights or so? Humphrey¹²⁰ also will be very 'grass' etc. and you can have your choice of several bedrooms, all now with new mattresses! Do.

Anyway, love to both.

Yours

Jack

Lewis met Caroline Rakestraw in London on 19 August and during that day and the next he taped ten talks on the 'four loves'— Storge or Affection,

Philia or Friendship, Eros, and Agape or Charity. It was these talks which gave Lewis the idea of writing a book on the same subject, the book published as The Four Loves. [121](#)

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Aug. 23rd 58

My dear George

You are both, as ever, fountains of hospitality: but now that I am no longer a walker you'd find a week of me a bit much. Let us adopt a middle way.

Mon. Sept 1st. You arrive here for lunch time.

Sept. 2nd. We drive to Malvern.

Sept. 3. At Malvern.

Sept. 4th. Drive back to here

Sept. 5th. You drive home

Arrange for lunch at Studley [122](#) with Humphrey and Tolkien either on 1st or 4th or 5th. OK?

Yours

Jack

TO JESSIE M. WATT (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Aug 28th 1958

Dear Mrs. Watt—

How lovely it all sounds! I can well believe you are loth to return, though for my own part I never found a holiday so good that there was not some pleasure in the homecoming too.

All goes amazing well with us. My wife walks up the wooded hill behind our house and shoots—or more strictly shoots *at*—pigeons, picks peas and beans, and heaven knows what.

We had a holiday—you might call it a belated honeymoon—in Ireland and were lucky enough to get that perfect fortnight at the beginning of July. We visited Louth, Down, and Donegal, and returned drunk with blue mountains, yellow beaches, dark fuchsia, breaking waves, braying donkeys, peat-smell, and the heather just then beginning to bloom.

We flew to Ireland, for, tho' both of us would prefer ship to plane, her bones, and even mine, could not risk a sudden lurch. It was the first flight either of us had ever experienced and we found it, after one initial moment of terror, enchanting. The cloud-scape seen from above is a new world of beauty—and then the rifts in the clouds through which one sees (like Tennyson's Tithonus) 'a glimpse of that world where I was born'.¹²³ We had clear weather over the Irish Sea and the first Irish headland, brightly sunlit, stood out from the dark sea (it's very dark when you're looking directly *down* on it) like a bit of enamel.

As for the picture in *The Observer*, even our most ribald friends don't pretend it has any resemblance to either of us.¹²⁴ As a spiritualist picture of the ectoplasms of a dyspeptic orangutan and an immature Sorn¹²⁵ it may have merits, but not as a picture of us.

All good wishes to John and yourself.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Aug 29th 1958

My dear Roger

Thanks very much for the *Old Greek Fairy Tales*.¹²⁶ I was not quite in my *märchen* mood—you know how one's literary weather changes—at the moment, but I believe you have done the job very well. A great deal of the matter is new to me. The end of the Terrible Head¹²⁷ is absolutely stunning. Bellerophon¹²⁸ is v. different from the picture always given me by Homer's sinister hints. The one I like least is Cupid and Psyche:¹²⁹ no fault of yours, but the second part of it—indeed all after Psyche's disobedience—has never really pleased me. I've the feeling Apuleius has spoiled something. I hope

the book will go well and get past the guard of those readers who, like June, but unlike me, don't like too many names.¹³⁰ I love 'em—Launcelot and Pelleas and Pellinore,¹³¹ Aragorn¹³² and Owlswick,¹³³ Arbol¹³⁴ and Tormance,¹³⁵ the more the merrier.

Dinner here on Mon. Sept 29th wd. suit us best. Alright for you?—turn up about 6.40. I shall assume this unless I hear to the contrary.

The lecture on translation was great fun, tho' I felt a bit shamefaced in unexpectedly meeting Rieu a few days later: all the more so when the dear old man behaved like an angel.¹³⁶ Love from both to both.

Yours

Jack

TO DEREK BREWER (P):¹³⁷

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
August 30th 1958

Dear Brewer

—'Trusteth wel I am not textual',¹³⁸ so I won't meddle with your text at all.¹³⁹ I enclose some comments on your introduction and notes. They are mostly merely stylistic, but not all. When I ask to be reassured about matters of fact, this does not mean that I know your statements to be false but only that I don't know them to be true (the only *howler* I confidently detect is where you make the *De Planctu* a poem).¹⁴⁰ Such discomforts are chiefly bunched between pp. 11 and 32, where I rather got the impression—let's mix our metaphors well—that you are skating on thin ice over various hornets' nests that might at any moment burst into flame. You have authority for all these statements have you? If the authority is at all doubtful—and all secondary authorities are—the next question is, do you need to make them at all...By the way, I have known you write better than you do in this introduction.

That was a delightful reunion at Jack B's.¹⁴¹ I wish you and I met more often.

I'll return the text when I've got a large enough envelope. (If only you scholars wd. use ordinary quarto sheets and not enclose your MSS in great flapping containers...) Yours

Jack Lewis

(P. 21) Does this imply in C's mind the same clear distinction between the plant and the goddess¹⁴² that there is in ours? If so, I wonder are you right?

(P. 24) Very well put.

(P. 26) The two more's comparison within comparison, a bit awkward. This whole page—forgive me—is hardly a favourable specimen of your style. Para 3 line 4 is v. uncomfortable!

(P. 31) *necessarily existing*. Are you right? Was not Creation itself unnecessary? And wasn't the sublunary world anyway the home of contingency?

(P. 46) *religia*—Great Snakes, you can't do that with a noun whose nominative is already in *io! Theologica*—if you must do it (at all). But I'd prefer 'religious and scientific concepts.'

(P. 47) (Rum chaps, those medievals...they actually thought temptations ought to be tempting).

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Aug 31/58

Dear Joan

I am sure you had fun writing the stories. The main fault of the animal one is that you don't mix the reality and the fantasy quite in the right way. One way is Beatrix Potter's or *Brer Rabbit's*.¹⁴³ By fantasy the animals are allowed to talk and behave in many ways like humans. But their *relations* to one another and to us remain the real ones. Rabbits are in danger from foxes and men.

The other way is mine: you go right out of this world into a different creation, where there are a different sort of animals. Yours are all in the real world, with a real eclipse.¹⁴⁴ But they don't have the real relations to one another—real small animals wd. not be friends with an owl, nor wd. it know more astronomy than they!

The spy story is better but you *are* trying to get too much into the space. One feels crowded. And wouldn't the police be rather silly if they thought a

man who sang the part of Wotan¹⁴⁵ (how I love it, by the way) well couldn't be a spy?

I hope you don't mind me telling you all this? One can learn only by seeing one's mistakes. We've had a terrible dark, wet summer here but it looks as if we are now beginning a nice autumn.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

P.S. The *content* of the poem is good but the verse 'creaks' a bit!

Reflections on the Psalms was published by Geoffrey Bles of London on 8 September 1958.

TO LUCY MATTHEWS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Sept 11th 1958

Dear Miss Matthews

You've got it exactly right. A strict allegory is like a puzzle with a solution: a great romance is like a flower whose smell reminds you of something you can't quite place. I think the something is 'the whole *quality* of life as we actually experience it'. You can have a realistic story in which all the things & people are exactly like those we meet in real life, but the quality, the feel or texture or smell, of it is not.

In a great romance¹⁴⁶ it is just the opposite. I've never met Orcs or Ents or Elves—but the feel of it, the sense of a huge past, of lowering danger, of heroic tasks achieved by the most apparently unheroic people, of distance, vastness, strangeness, homeliness (all blended together) is so exactly what living feels like to me. Particularly the heart-breaking quality in the most beautiful places, like Lothlorien. And it is so like the real history of the world: 'Then, as now, there was a growing darkness and great deeds were done that were not *wholly* in vain.'¹⁴⁷ Neither optimism (this is the last war and after it all will be lovely forever) nor pessimism (this is the last war and

all civilisation will end), you notice. No. The darkness comes again and again and is never wholly triumphant nor wholly defeated.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Sept 13th 1958

Dear Gibb—

Not knowing that your parcel contained a letter, I did not open it till last night. 11000 is a fine start.¹⁴⁸ I've seen no reviews yet except the TLS¹⁴⁹ and Lord B's. I seem to have got him on the raw!¹⁵⁰

Wd. you please send copies to 1. The Rev. A. Farrer, Trinity, Oxford. 2. Librarian, Magdalen, Oxford. 3. Librarian, Magdalene, Cambridge? All the best.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns
Sept 15th 1958

My dear Arthur—

(1.) The picture gets better every week.¹⁵¹ You have embodied in it the whole feel of the North of Ireland. I can almost feel the damp (not that I need a picture of that to-day, for it's pouring!) and hear the shushing of that wind. I don't in general like titles (fancy ones) for pictures, but this does again and again remind me of the line from Wordsworth 'The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep.'¹⁵²

(2.) After carefully keeping a petrol account with you, did I ever actually remember to *pay*? Let me know.

(3.) Book enclosed.¹⁵³ (4.) W's in Ireland. Joy is grand. Both our loves.

Yours
Jack

TO MR LANGTON (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Sept 22nd 1958

Dear Mr Langton—

Thank you for your kind letter. I am glad you liked the book.

I think *fascinate* and *bewitch* will do if one takes them in the weakened modern sense. But when one is reading great poetry, one never takes words at their colloquial minimum: *mala fascinatio*¹⁵⁴ and witchcraft will be present to the mind. Possibly ‘Oh Lord, strong coil of grace’ (*not* Grace)—see *Antony & Cleopatra*—might do.¹⁵⁵ But it were free.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Sept 23rd. 1958

Dear Vera Gebbert

‘Oh Boy’ as I believe you say in America. Yes, the rich treasure has arrived. As my brother is in Ireland, his tin of tobacco and the cake, in its imperial casket, remain inviolate against his return. His tie too of course. For my own tie (which like the Parsee’s hat in *Just So Stories* reflects the rays of the Sun ‘with more than Oriental splendour’)¹⁵⁶ and for the tobacco, which I was enjoying a pipeful of a moment ago, many, many thanks. You shower us with blessings.

Yes, my wife and I had a glorious trip to Ireland. For one thing, we flew and it was for both of us a new experience. I can quite believe that for really long journies it can be dull and monotonous. But one’s first sight of the cloud-scape from above—then, when the clouds cleared, the coastlines looking (as I’d never really quite believed) just as they do on maps—the first bit of Ireland shining out on the dark sea like enamel work—all this was indescribably beautiful.

As for Ireland, we caught it in one of its very rare heat-waves and Joy has come away with the quite erroneous impression (*impression*, not opinion: she knows better) that it is the land of golden sunshine. But different from *your* sunshine: she calls it 'arctic'. As for beauty, it has the ugliest *towns* in the world—as bad, Joy said, as the worst parts of her native New York—but we saw mountains, heather just beginning to bloom, loughs (= fjords), yellow sand, fuchsia, seas Mediterraneanly blue, gulls, peat, ruins, and waterfalls as many as we could digest.

I can only reply to 'Hello, Dr. Lewis' with 'Hello Tycoon'—*hello* being a remark which demands an echo for an answer. Love to both, and much gratitude.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN KILMER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Sept 29th 1958

Dear Martin

Thanks for your letter, and *fortissimo* congratulations on Miriam's recovery. Also on escaping Cicero,¹⁵⁷ who, to my mind, is the greatest bore (except possibly Ben Jonson,¹⁵⁸ Launcelot Andrewes,¹⁵⁹ and Mrs Humphrey Ward)¹⁶⁰ of all authors whether ancient or modern.

You seem to be doing a pretty wide curriculum; too wide in my opinion. All schools, both here and in America, ought to teach far fewer subjects and teach them far better. We're all well. Love to everyone.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Sept. 30th 1958

Dear Mary Willis—

Thanks for your letter of 26th. The *Time* review was ill-timed, for the American edition of the book will not be published until November.¹⁶¹ I have told Harcourt Brace to send you a copy when it appears.

I also have been in the hands of the dentist but much less unpleasantly than you: I know a 'dry socket' after an extraction can be the very devil and all. We must both, I'm afraid, recognise that, as we grow older, we become like old cars—more and more repairs and replacements are necessary. We must just look forward to the fine new machines (latest Resurrection model) which are waiting for us, we hope, in the Divine garage!

Thank you for the enclosure: I don't think it contradicts anything I've said. Joy continues well, thank God, and wd. send her love if she were awake, which at the moment she's not, for I'm a barbarously early riser and have usually got my breakfast and dealt with my letters before the rest of the house is astir. One result is that I often enjoy the only fine hours of the day—at this time of the year lovely, still, cool sunshine from 7 till 10, followed by rain from then on, is common. I love the empty, silent, dewy, cobwebby hours. I hope your mouth is now comfortable again.

Yours

Jack

There is an old Scots version of Psalm 136 (137) 8ff which goes:

*O blessed may that trooper be
Who, riding on his naggie,
Wull tak thy wee bairns by the taes
And ding them on the craggie*

Jocelyn Gibb wrote to Lewis on 1 October 1958:

*As I am sure you know, PILGRIM'S REGRESS is the only book of yours which has not been published in America. A firm called William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company in Grand Rapids now want to do an edition...As the book was first published here so long ago as 1933 the publishers ask if you could be persuaded to write a new Foreword or Introduction.*¹⁶²

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

[The Kilns

2 October 1958]

The nearest I could come to this wd. be to allow them to shorten the existing preface by stopping at the end of para 2 on p. 10 (at 'Reason and Christianity'). Any good.¹⁶³

(Excuse unconventional method of reply: it has conveniences for us both.)¹⁶⁴

C.S.L.

TO MISS GARDENER (BOD):¹⁶⁵

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Oct 4th 1958

Dear Miss Gardener

Thank you for your letter. Will you kindly direct your people to send one copy of the *Reflections* to Miss M. Radcliffe, The Nook, 11 Beacon Close, Brighton 6?

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO DANIEL DAVIN (OUP):

As from Magdalen College,
Oxford
Oct 7th 1958

Dear Davin

Here is my list (doubtless very incomplete) of corrections for my OHEL volume¹⁶⁶

p. 77 para 2 l. 2. *For* or *read* of p. 99 n. 2 [delete] and substitute 'Our het, too hot.'

p. 507 last l. but one. *For* fourth *read* third p. 509 l. 7 *For propior* read *proprior*

p. 544 para 2 l. 1 *For*–94) *read*–95) p. 597 para 1 l. 7 [delete] first Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO CORBIN SCOTT CARNELL (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 13th 1958

Dear Mr. Carnell—

You pay a wholly undeserved compliment to my erudition by supposing that my debts to modern theologians might be too complicated to sort out! There are hardly any such debts at all; I am not sufficiently well read. Christendom, you see, reached me at first almost entirely through books I took up not because they were Christian, but because they were famous as literature. Hence Dante, Spenser, Milton, the poems of George Herbert and of Coventry Patmore, were incomparably more important than any professed theologians. Later, when I had become interested in Christianity—been *caught* by truth in places where I sought only pleasure—came St. Augustine, Hooker, Traherne, Wm. Law, *The Imitation*, the *Theologia Germanica*.¹⁶⁷ As for moderns, Tillich¹⁶⁸ and Brunner¹⁶⁹ I don't know at all. Maritain I tried but did not admire.¹⁷⁰ He seems to say in 10 pages of pollysyllabic abstraction what Scripture or the old writers wd. say in a couple of sentences. Kierkegaard still means almost nothing to me.¹⁷¹ I read one book of Niebuhr's—I can't remember the title—and, on the whole, reacted against it.¹⁷² I tried Berdyaev,¹⁷³ but he seemed to me terribly repetitive; one paragraph wd. do for what he spins out into a book. I thought Buber made one point well, but with some exaggeration.¹⁷⁴ I never read Marcel but I met him and felt him to be very venerable;¹⁷⁵ but his message the same as Buber's. Barth I have never read, or not that I remember.¹⁷⁶ Otto's *Das Heilige*¹⁷⁷ I have been deeply influenced by. Nygren's *Eros & Agape* gave me a good 'load of thought', a useful classification instrument, tho' I don't think his own use of that instrument v. profitable.¹⁷⁸ I liked, but cd. make no use of, Aulen's *Christus Victor*.¹⁷⁹ I think this is about all. You could hardly, among literate people, find a man who is less 'in the swim' or 'up to date' than I am. Existentialism, so far as I can at all make out what the word means, does not appeal to me.

One false track I shd. warn you against. You will find people who say I am much influenced by Thomism. I do (now) *use* the *Summa* a good deal, mainly as a sort of dictionary of medieval belief. But the appearance of influence is really due to the fact that I am often (especially on ethics) following Aristotle where Aquinas is also following Aristotle; Aquinas and

I were, in fact, at the same school—I don't say in the same class! And I had read *Ethics*¹⁸⁰ long before I ever looked at the *Summa*.

Write again if I have failed to be clear. With all good wishes, Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO THOMAS HOWARD (P):¹⁸¹

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 14th 1958

Dear Mr. Howard

Oh but, believe me, you are still only paddling in the glorious sea of Tolkien. Go on from *The Hobbit* at once to *The Lord of the Rings*: 3 volumes and nearly as long as the Bible and not a word too long (except for the first chapter which is a botch—don't be put off by it). *The Hobbit* is merely a fragment of his myth, detached, and adapted for children, and losing much by the adaptation. *The Lord of the R* is the real stuff. Thanks for all the nice things you say about my own little efforts.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 15/58

Dear Gibb

Will you please send a copy of the Reflections to F. Henry Esq.,¹⁸² Tobberdony House, Dunleer,¹⁸³ Co. Louth, Eire?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 22nd 1958

Dear Gibb

Thanks for your letter containing cheque (£1820–7–2) and other enclosures. I hope you will by now have had a polite formal refusal of your kind invitation to the Phillips beano.¹⁸⁴ If I forgot to send it, I cry you mercy.

I am glad to hear about the new *Peacock's Feathers*.¹⁸⁵ If I remember rightly it was in this that I criticised a howler. Didn't he reproduce the common misunderstanding of Descartes' *cogito ergo sum*? i.e. he took it to mean 'I exist because I think', whereas of course it really means 'The fact that I am now thinking is *evidence* that I exist.'¹⁸⁶ If so, get him to emend it. My kind regards both to Phillips and to him.

Our joint affairs, I agree, are going nicely, I have seen hardly any reviews of *Reflections*, being either too proud or too mean or too lazy (probably all three) to join a Press cutting agency!

All the best.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

As from Magdalene.

Oct 27th 1958

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

My late correspondence with Genia was, I believe, entirely theological and I don't think it contained anything that would give you cause for anxiety.

The postcards are most attractive, and you must both have had a delightful time.

What you say about books turning up at what seems to be just the right moment is well supported from my own experience. So much so that now, if I lose or forget something I've read that seems important, I do not much bother, for I feel a confidence that if I really need it it will be given to me again, and just in time—in a book on some quite different subject I shall find it quoted or a man I didn't much want to talk to will mention it in conversation.

It is hardly possible, at such a distance from the scene of action, to have an opinion as to how you shd. cope with Dr. Higgins. I think, urgently, that

it is false wisdom to have any 'Denomination' represented for Ecumenical purposes by those who are on its *fringe*. People (perhaps naturally) think this will help re-union, whereas in fact it invalidates the whole discussion. Each body should rather be represented by its *centre*. Only then will any agreements that are achieved be of real value.

Love to both. Joy thanks you in advance for the book and my brother sends his warm regards.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO J. R. R. TOLKIEN (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 28th 1958

My dear Tollers

As an elector to your Chair I've had stuff from the Registrar about this forthcoming and deplorable vacancy.¹⁸⁷ I suppose it is quite in order to take the views of the outgoing professor into account. If so, I'd be glad of yours.

It's nice to see Christopher again regularly on Mon. mornings.¹⁸⁸ It wd. be nicer still if he were accompanied by his Aged P.¹⁸⁹

Yours

Jack

TO JESSIE M. WATT (W): TS

58/95

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
30th October 1958.

Dear Mrs Watt,

It was very pleasant to hear from you again and to know that all is well with you; and thank you for your kind enquiries. I'm thankful to say that my wife's health continues to amaze me, and she gets stronger and more active every day. In fact she is now completely 'self-supporting', except that the nurse has to help her to take a bath.

I was much interested to hear of the ‘Eye on research’ programme on TV. Myself, I’m glad to say I don’t often see television, but my brother, who sometimes looks in on a friend’s set, says he can well understand your feelings of ‘horror and terror’. He adds that to him the most terrible part of the business is the implicit assumption that progress is an inevitable process like decay, and that the only important thing in life is to increase the comfort of homo sapiens, at whatever cost to posterity and to the other inhabitants of the planet. I can well imagine how a ‘scientific’ programme would jar after watching a stately ceremony as the opening of Parliament.

After no summer we are at last being paid a trifle of compensation in some lovely autumn weather—my favourite season by the way. All this week has been glorious.

With all best wishes to you and Heather, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Oct 30. 1958

Dear Mary Willis

That is very good news about your daughter and family. Also these last minute mercies which keep on turning up in your financial crises.

I suppose living from day to day (‘take no thought for the morrow’)¹⁹⁰ is precisely what we have to learn—though the Old Adam in me sometimes murmurs that if God wanted me to live like the lilies of the field,¹⁹¹ I wonder He didn’t give me the same lack of nerves and imagination as they enjoy! Or is that just the point, the precise purpose of this Divine paradox and audacity called Man—to do *with* a mind what other organisms do without it?

As for wrinkles—pshaw! Why shouldn’t we have wrinkles? Honorable insignia of long service in this warfare. All well with us, in haste, with love.

Yours
Jack

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W): TS

58/241

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
2nd November 1958.

Dear Mr Kilby,

The editor sent me Pittenger's article and offered to print my reply.¹⁹² I hope you will like it as much as I liked yours. Thank you both for writing and for sending it. We don't overlap much, and I hope they will both be printed.¹⁹³ But alas, we may merely be putting up the sales of what seems a pretty nasty periodical!

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov. 3rd 1958

My dear Arthur—

They gave me calcium tablets and little tablets which (for some reason) contain female hormones. I think there was Vitamin-something mixed with the calcium. Also a surgical belt. The pains gradually became less frequent and less severe. I say *pains* not *pain* because so far as I can make out the bone-condition is not itself painful. What hurts is the spasms the muscles go into in order to protect the bones, when you make any unusual movement.

I am now almost entirely well again and walked about 2 to 3 miles last week. I still wear the belt till about 3 p.m. But I had a whole week without it lately when it was being mended and this produced a little aching. Whether the belt or the calcium or the hormones or nature is responsible for my improvement, of course I don't know. It *feels* as if it were the belt. No one suggested injections.

We are all well and v. happy. W. as sober as a judge.

Yours

Jack In haste—just off the train from my week end at home. Blessings.

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene

Nov. 4th 58

My dear Roger—

I should have written long ago both to send you my book¹⁹⁴ and to thank you for your own.¹⁹⁵ I enjoyed the Hyperborean story¹⁹⁶ better than any of yours (except your real favourites and mine, the utterly romantic ones).¹⁹⁷ I can't remember the first version quite well enough to be sure where the changes come. I think most of the escape from Asgard and the whole of Atalanta's share in it¹⁹⁸ is new, isn't it? Anyway, my general impression is that you have really improved the book. Your conception of Colchis¹⁹⁹ is a real addition to my imagination and I believe one that will stick. Don't forget to read Mary Renault's *The King must Die*.²⁰⁰ All well with us and love to both.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene

Nov 6th/58

Dear Gibb

Good. Wed 26th will suit me well. It will have to be lunch in Combination Room (no Apician banquet I assure you) for my rooms are all messed up by the builders, but if you come to them at 1 o'clock we can have a glass of sherry first, shouting to each other among the blows of the hammers.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO J. R. R. TOLKIEN (P):

The Kilns

Headington Quarry

Nov. 10th [1958]

Dear Tollers

I am glad to hear of the book though I do not know which of many possible bricks it comes to kick away.

Next week-end I shall not be back from Tabland²⁰¹ till the evening and we have two engagements on Sunday. Probably—there's no great hurry—we

can meet more easily as soon as term is over.

You know there is a new E. R. Eddison out?²⁰² Christopher has my copy at present.

Some of your most important doctrines will soon be having a wider circulation just where they are most needed (you'll be a Boot exactly fitting a grievous Bate),²⁰³ for—cd. you believe it?—they've made Perrault's *Contes des Fées*²⁰⁴ a set book to Pt. I of the Mod. Languages Tripos,²⁰⁵ and our French tutor (Dick Ladborough, a good Christian)²⁰⁶ is having new worlds opened to him by your essay in the C.W. volume.²⁰⁷

Thanks, all is better than well here. Warnie, for the first time this many years, came back from his Irish holiday sober: and when I compare my wife's condition or even (*parva licet componere magnis*)²⁰⁸ my own with what we were in last year, I feel that resurrection is almost a more accurate word than recovery.

Yours
Jack

Lewis received a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fisher,²⁰⁹ inviting him to become a member of the Commission to Revise the Psalter. The Commission's terms of reference were:

To produce for the consideration of the Convocations a revision of the text of the Psalter designed to remove obscurities and serious errors of translation yet such as to retain, as far as possible, the general character in style and rhythm of Coverdale's version and its suitability for congregational use.²¹⁰

TO ARCHBISHOP GEOFFREY FISHER:²¹¹

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov. 14th 1958

My dear Lord Archbishop

I have thought over your Grace's letter and come to the conclusion that I cannot refuse to serve on this Commission if I am wanted. I wish I were better qualified, but there is no use in multiplying words about that.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO KATHRYN STILLWELL (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov 17th 1958

Dear Miss Stillwell

I am gratified that you liked my little book.²¹² My wife, my two step sons, my unmarried brother, and myself make up our household.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov. 19th 1958

My dear Cecil—

Many thanks for the book,²¹³ which I have read, everywhere with interest and nearly everywhere with pleasure: more often than you might expect, with agreement. Some of the pleasure was due to the fact that you are one of the decreasing number who still write real English—no *clichés*, no jargon, and a live rhythm. It is also full of good wisecracks. That on p. 36 about the wise adult avoiding controversy etc. comes home to my ‘bosom & business’!²¹⁴ P. 44 for *Luciferus* read *Luciferum*? Very good first para on p. 73—and on *not* teaching best what one knows best, p. 85—child *sub specie hominis*²¹⁵ p. 135. On p. 165, para 2, for *even* read *event*? I do agree with that about the critical faculty on p. 171²¹⁶—and that about the 2 poles of adolescence on p. 181 is superb.²¹⁷

Love to Marguerite and, once more, thanks.

Yours
Jack

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalene
Cambridge

Nov. 21 [1958]

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

I will indeed mention Genia's daughter. How horrid for you all. In great haste—huge mail.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN KILMER (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Nov. 23/58

Dear Martin

I am so sorry to hear about Miriam's nephritis. Please give her and everyone else my sympathy.

It sounds to me as if all had a good time with that Latin master, leading him on to talk of everything under the sun—especially when you don't want him to ask awkward questions, eh? It's a fine old game and we have all played it. But beware of the Maths master who over-marks the work. Generous marking is nice for the moment, but it can lead to disappointments when, later, one comes up against the real thing. American university teachers have told me that most of their freshmen come from schools where the standard was far too low and therefore think themselves far better than they really are. This means that they lose heart (and their tempers too) when told, as they have to be told, their real level.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene
Nov. 28th 1958

Dear Gibb

The list of errors in *Reflections* turned out to be here, not at home. I enclose it. I am making a beast of myself with the honey every morning and find it delicious. So was our chat.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

**TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES LITERARY*
SUPPLEMENT:**[218](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Sir,—

A review of Mr R. L. Green's *Land of the Lord High Tiger* in your issue of 21 November spoke of myself (in passing) with so much kindness that I am reluctant to cavil at anything it contained: but in justice to Mr Green I must.[219](#) The critic suggested that Mr Green's Tiger owed something to my fairy-tales. In reality this is not so and is chronologically impossible. The Tiger was an old inhabitant, and his land a familiar haunt, of Mr Green's imagination long before I began writing. There is a moral here for all of us as critics. I wonder how much *Quellenforschung* in our studies of older literature seems solid only because those who knew the facts are dead and cannot contradict it?

C. S. Lewis

TO CARL HENRY (W): TS
58/224

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
1st December 1958.

Dear Mr Henry,

Thanks for Mr Kilby's article.[220](#) I have sent mine to *Christian Century* but had no acknowledgement yet.[221](#) If you care to write to them and say that in the event of their not using it, you would like it, and I approve of your publishing it, by all means do. It is, I agree, a pity to swell their sales!

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Dec. 2. [1958]

Dear Gibb

Right. I'll be awaiting you at 5 on Thursday next. Thanks for enclosure.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene
Dec 3rd 1958

My dear Roger—

Of course I knew you weren't playing Puzzle, for I read *The Tiger*, or an earlier draught of it, long ago. But I am much distressed over the whole thing. The reviewer cd. not have made a worse mistake:²²² as you say, anyone reading your book under that misapprehension would inevitably be blind to every merit it possesses. I do wish they wd. criticise the books before them a little more and spend less time in constructing imaginary histories of how they came to be written (e.g. that the *ring* in Tolkien 'is' the Hydrogen Bomb!). Histories which in my experience are almost invariably quite wrong.

I have provisionally put you in my diary for 'Dinner-bembreakfast' on night of Mon. Feb 23.

Yours
Jack

TO KATHLEEN RAINE (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Dec 5, 1958

Dear Kathleen Raine

No, no. But thanks for asking me. I've several papers and articles and other *incubi*²²³ at present and can't take on another. Will you convey all this as kindly and regretfully (regretfully on *my* part, I mean) as possible I've been possibly rude in letting the whole term slip past without ever acknowledging *The Sea of Space and Time*.²²⁴ This was not because it did not interest me. On the contrary, I plunged into it at once. It seemed to me so important that I wanted to 'do' it really thoroughly, like a 'set text' and write a long, long commentary which might be of some use to you. But it is so packed and involves so many texts I don't know—obviously I must read Porphyry—that I can't, or can't yet, get anywhere near that.²²⁵

But you carry conviction everywhere. When the Big Book²²⁶ finally appears I think all pre-Raine views of Blake will be obsolete forever. Unlike most of the revaluations and new critical interpretations which our kind

produce, this is really worth doing. A good commentator is to me worth a wilderness of 'evaluative' critics.²²⁷ More power to your elbow.

Yours sincerely
Jack Lewis

TO CORBIN SCOTT CARNELL (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Dec 10th 1958

Dear Mr. Carnell

1. P. E. More was the only distinguished American of that generation whom I ever actually met.²²⁸ We had two long evenings together and he was extremely kind and full of wisdom and humour.²²⁹ (*Old men*, by the way, are one of the things America does very well). I know only some of his books. Good, but not a patch on the man himself. I don't think they influenced me: I was a new convert when we met and had not read him before then. Yes, Chesterton can be, in the bad sense, rhetorical, but v. seldom is. As a man once said to me 'G.K.C. has the same quality of becoming *more* eloquent the more exactly he means what he says.'

2. As I perhaps said before, a great many people think I'm being Thomistic where I'm really being Aristotelian. He's a top form boy, and I a bottom form boy, in the same school: what we share we get from Teacher. I am certainly not anti Thomist. He is one of the great philosophers. On points at issue between Christian Platonism and Christian Aristotelianism I have not got a clear line.

3. I think I took over the expression Arch-Nature²³⁰ because it was C.W.'s own. The implication is, I suppose, the Platonic one & that the Real is not *ganz anderes*²³¹ but the archetype of the Phenomenal.

4. First appearance of Sehnsucht? I don't know. I think it is there in bits of the Odyssey, in Pindar, in some of the choruses of Euripides, in Lucretius' bit about the home of the gods, in the Anglo-Saxon *Seafarer*. Poets have said more about it than philosophers.

5. No. I can't date the ride to Whipsnade.²³²

I am glad to hear *Christian Century* has printed my Rejoinder. But they have not sent me a copy of the number it appears in. If you could without

trouble send me one I shd. be very much obliged indeed.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

58/64

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

11th December 1958.

Dear Gibb,

Stet is the answer. But if you think it still obscure, read 'hitting on'.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

14/12/58

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Rhein's experiments on extra-sensory perception are taken seriously and not generally suspected of containing any fraud, but the question of what they prove is still highly controversial.²³³ They are of course based on predictions of which card from a pack will be turned up etc. Estimating the real significance of the results involves the theory of chances and one needs to be a pretty good mathematician for that.

I don't see anything sinful in *speculating* about the perceptions of the apostles, tho' I doubt if we have evidence enough to make it very useful. But spiritualistic *practices* are a very different thing. First, the record of proved fraud in such matters is surely very big and black: there's money in mediumship! Second, it very often has extremely bad effects on those who dabble in it; even insanity. And thirdly, most supposed communications through mediums are the silliest, sentimental, or even incoherent, twaddle. Why go to spirits to hear bosh when you can hear sense from quite a lot of your neighbours?

But I *think* the practice is a sin as well as folly. Necromancy (commerce with the dead) is strictly forbidden in the Old Testament, isn't it?²³⁴ The New frowns on any excessive and irregular interest even in angels.²³⁵ And the whole tradition of Christendom is dead against it. I wd. be shocked at any Christian's being, or consulting, a medium.

It is Resurrection, not 'survival' that we think of, and the spirit that concerns us is the Holy Spirit! I'd give Mr. A. Ford a wide berth myself.²³⁶

We are all well, God be praised, almost by miracle, and you and Genia are in my daily prayers always.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

*On 15 December 1958 Warnie wrote to Edward A. Allen:*²³⁷

*The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
15th December 1958.*

Dear Edward,

Many thanks for your kind letter card, which was very welcome; though you say nothing about your own health, and the bad time you have been through, which I only learnt from your mother's letter to C.S. and Joy. I should have liked to hear how you were making out, but have to fall back on the old theory that no news is good news. Hope it is true in this case.

I know well the religious experience you get from your 'lower meadow' though personally it more often comes to me on high ground. As the friend who was motoring me in Ireland this year said one fine day when we were on top of a mountain, 'Up here one understands better the point of going up into a mountain to pray, as they do in the Bible.' And I've also felt it very early in the morning at sea.

I'd like to see both the marimba and the pistol; the former is something I've never heard of before, and consequently cannot picture. Is this very ignorant of me? And congratulations on evolving the pistol; as you hint, it is pleasant in these days to hear of any invention which has no military future.

I am very busy just now trying to keep pace with the cost of living by turning out another book;²³⁸ good fun, even if it does 'nt bring home the bacon. Though I rather think I'm wasting my time in not joining the ranks of what we call in our quaint old-fashioned way, 'working men'. I was out along the railway track the other day and came upon a little squad of them 'working'. Got into talk with a young fellow whose job was to pull up weeds out of the ballast, which he was doing at the rate of about one weed every six minutes. I asked him what he got for that? Answer, £520 a year—say \$1560. Even at 63 I think it would not be beyond my powers, physical or mental, to do this. But I could'nt help admiring this lad; after he'd taken a 15 minute rest with me, he got ready to pick another weed—saying, 'And then they wonder why the railways don't pay'! And as no doubt our factories run on much the same lines, one might add, 'and then we wonder why we are losing export markets'.

I hear you are under snow, and almost wish we were too; for weeks now we've hardly had an hour's sunshine a day, and it gets very depressing to live by electric light.

Well Edward, here is where I'm going to 'pack in' as we say, for I hear the soup going on the table up in the dining room, and believe me one needs it on this sort of evening.

With all best wishes to you both for a prosperous and happy 1959.

Yours ever,

Warren Lewis

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford
Dec 15th 1958

My dear Van Auken—

Thank you for extorting the editor's permission to reply to Pittenger.²³⁹ I hope I have been trenchant without any breach of charity. I find it v. hard to approach such a Mr. Facing Both Ways²⁴⁰ with the respect I can easily give to an honest unbeliever. By now, you will have read my Rejoinder.

My wife's recovery is really more like resurrection. We have been to Ireland together. She walks (with a stick and a limp) about the wood shooting—or anyway shooting *at*—pigeons; we walk together to the Ampleforth Arms.²⁴¹ My brother is also well, and my own bone disease is as good as cured—anyway, quiescent.

If Puckishness were part of your nature I shd. think you meant to tantalise me with your references to the great irrevocable step you will never name. Neither monk nor *felo de se*.²⁴² What then?²⁴³ (As if I meant Massachusetts!)²⁴⁴

I've often puzzled over the question of the obligatory lie²⁴⁵—for I am sure wherever it is permissible it is obligatory. The case I am clear about is where an impertinent question forces you *either* to lie *or* to betray a friend's secret (for to say 'I won't tell you' is often tantamount to answering 'Yes'). The two you suggest, pretending to a medical degree or to negro blood, seem to me doubtful. It is hardly possible ever to predict with certainty that a lie will not be discovered some day to have been a lie. I shd. be afraid lest that discovery might undo all the good it had done and even aggravate the evil it was designed to remove.

I have lately passed my 60th. birthday. I pray for you nightly and wd. much like to meet. Very good wishes, and warm love from us all.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO PHOEBE HESKETH (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Dec 20th 1958

Dear Miss Hesketh—

I have treated you badly. There was another book before this which I never even acknowledged. But it came when my life was as swift and narrow as the race from a weir.

I married my wife—she, it was she at that dinner—in March 57, in hospital when she was apparently dying of cancer in the bone. When they sent her home in April 57 the nurses gave her a few weeks to live. At the same time I had developed a harmless but excruciating bone-disease on my

own accord. A good man, thro whom (I had reason to believe) strange things had been done before, came & laid his hands on her and prayed. We lingered on much the same for a month or so—she groaning in bed, I sometimes screaming in my chair. And yet, you know, with a strange terrible happiness, even gaiety, mixed in. Then, unbelievably she began to get better. Now, the latest X-rays show bone which was merely a sort of porridge fully restored. Except for a limp (they left one leg shorter than the other) she is now in normal health—walks about shooting at pigeons in the wood—walks to our local pub, and we have been to Ireland together last summer. My own bones also have recovered. So you see there was not much room for poetry.

Thanks v. much for *B'cup Children*.²⁴⁶ I like the early poems about childhood. Like the longer ones like 'Teddy Boy' and 'No Pause for Death' a good deal less: and the religious one at the end best of all. That's a corker of a line on p. 62 'My built-up world fades out before the dream.'²⁴⁷ 'Becalmed' I liked very much. 'Safety-slime' is good.²⁴⁸ I've been exactly there. Also 'To an Artist.' And one v. good bit on p. 73 'I know him thro' your absence.'²⁴⁹ I also like (without yet fully understanding) 'Three Deaths'. So for the moment. But what does one know about poems at the first reading.

My wife joins me in warmest thanks and good wishes. And please remember us both to heroic old Herbert Palmer. Shall we all ever meet again?

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JESSIE M. WATT (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Dec 20th 1958

Dear Mrs. Watt

Thank you once more for a charming picture which, like all yours, brings the smell of heather and the sound of gulls. I have put it on—not hung it above—the mantle piece in front of my desk so that its calendrical portion is invisible from where I sit.

Everyone continues well and wonderful with us.
With thanks and warm good wishes.
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO PHILINDA KRIEG (P):[250](#)

he Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
Dec 22nd 1958

Dear Mrs. Krieg

Thank you for your kind card. I am sorry to hear of Philinda's trouble.[251](#) Laurence has long been in my prayers, and I will of course mention her too. I wonder how much Laurence is changed.

I expect there are wonderful things to be seen in Chile. I'd never want to go to a place for the sake of its climate (not being a vegetable!) but landscapes, birds, beaches, smells, foods, wines, and people are another matter.

We are both well. With me it has been recovery: with my wife it has been more like resurrection.

With all blessings.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Dec 23rd 1958

Dear Mac

Thanks for your dollop of reviews (Dec 18).[252](#)

As for the Episcopal TV. talks:—an author's airy 'I might write a book on that' is apt to be as much misunderstood by publishers as any man's airy 'Of course I might get married someday' is misunderstood by prospective mothers in law!

Compliments of the season to Jovanovich²⁵³ and yourself from us.
We're fine.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Dec 25th 1958

Dear Mary Willis

I have let our correspondence get rather disgracefully behind on my side, not from ceasing to think of you, but from being very busy finishing a book²⁵⁴ (a dull, academic, technical one, tho' exciting to me) and from the usual daily post—drat it!

Thanks for your nice review. And I am glad our law now allows me to send you a little (I gather you and Barfield have it all in train).²⁵⁵ We are all well—Joy wonderful—but live in perpetual sunlessness. Never knew so long a spell of fogs. One pines for lights and, scarcely less, *shadows*, which make up so much of the beauty of the world. Accept the warmest love and Christmas greetings from us both.

Yours
Jack

TO MRS HOOK (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

29 Dec 1958

Dear Mrs Hook

By an allegory I mean a composition (whether pictorial or literary) in wh. immaterial realities are represented by feigned physical objects e.g. a pictured Cupid allegorically represents erotic love (which in reality is an

experience, not an object occupying a given area of space) or, in Bunyan, a giant represents Despair.²⁵⁶

If Aslan represented the immaterial Deity in the same way in which Giant Despair represents Despair, he would be an allegorical figure. In reality however he is an invention giving an imaginary answer to the question, 'What might Christ become like if there really were a world like Narnia and He chose to be incarnate and die and rise again in *that* world as He actually has done in ours?' This is not an allegory at all. So in 'Perelandra'. This also works out a *supposition*. ('Suppose, even now, in some other planet there were a first couple undergoing the same that Adam and Eve underwent here, but successfully.') Allegory and such suppositions differ because they mix the real and the unreal in different ways. Bunyan's picture of Giant Despair does not start from supposal at all. It is not a supposition but a *fact* that despair can capture and imprison a human soul. What is unreal (fictional) is the giant, the castle, and the dungeon. The Incarnation of Christ in another world is mere supposal: but *granted* the supposition, He would really have been a physical object in that world as He was in Palestine and His death on the Stone Table would have been a physical event no less than his death on Calvary.

Similarly, *if* the angels (who I believe to be real beings in the actual universe) have that relation to the Pagan gods which they are assumed to have in Perelandra, they might *really* manifest themselves in real form as they did to Ransom.

Again, Ransom (to some extent) plays the role of Christ not because he allegorically represents him (as Cupid represents falling in love) but because in reality every real Christian is really called upon in some measure to *enact* Christ. Of course Ransom does this rather more spectacularly than most. But that does not mean that he does it allegorically. It only means that fiction (at any rate my kind of fiction) chooses extreme cases.

There is no conscious connection between any of the phonetic elements in my 'Old Solar' words and those of any actual language. I am always playing with syllables and fitting them together (purely by ear) to see if I can hatch up new words that please me. I want them to have an emotional, not intellectual, suggestiveness: the heaviness of *glund* for as huge a planet as Jupiter, the vibrating, tintillating quality of *viritribia* for the subtlety of Mercury, the liquidity (as I thought) of Maleldil. The only exception I am

aware of is *hnau*²⁵⁷ which *may* (but I don't know) have been influenced by Greek *nous*.

Thank you for the kind things you say about my other works.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

Nous: The intellectual faculty of the natural man...employed in practical judgement, capable of being good or evil, and of being regenerated, the mind, the reason, the reasoning faculty.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Dec 29/58

Dear Mary Willis

Just a very hurried line—

(1.). To condole with you on the loss of Fr. Louis.²⁵⁸ (2.) To tell a story which puts the contrast between *our* feast of the Nativity and all this ghastly 'Xmas' racket at its lowest. My brother heard a woman on a 'bus say, as the 'bus passed a church with a Crib outside it, 'Oh Lor! They bring religion into everything. Look—they're dragging it *even* into Christmas now!'

Love and sympathy from us both.

Yours

Jack

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY*:²⁵⁹

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Sir:

Thank you for publishing my 'Rejoinder to Dr. Pittenger.' (Nov. 26). Now would you, please, complete your kindness by publishing the statement that '*populam*' (p. 1360) is either my typist's or your printer's error for '*populum*'?

An article on ‘translation’ such as Dr. Pittenger suggests in his letter in the Dec. 24 issue certainly needs doing, but I could not usefully do it for Americans. The vernacular into which they would have to translate is not quite the same as that into which I have translated. Small differences, in addressing proletarians, may be all-important.

In both countries an essential part of the ordination exam ought to be a passage from some recognized theological work set for translation into vulgar English—just like doing Latin prose. Failure on this exam should mean failure on the whole exam. It is absolutely disgraceful that we expect missionaries to the Bantus to learn Bantu but never ask whether our missionaries to the Americans or English can speak American or English. Any fool can write *learned* language. The vernacular is the real test. If you can’t turn your faith into it, then either you don’t understand it or you don’t believe it.

C. S. Lewis

TO HENRY B. CHAPIN (P):[260](#)

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Dec 31st 1958

Dear Mr. Chapin

Thank you for sending me your *Carols*.[261](#) They are interesting work. I believe there may be much to be done with that technique of ending on two stressed (and long) syllables, like *waves broke* and *strange night*. If you have not read Charles Williams’ *Taliessin through Logres* you will find it—metrically anyway—‘just up your street’

Thank you for the kind things you say about my own work. I hope I don’t resent on my own account anything Pittenger said. But I do find it hard to stomach the fact that, while contradicting nearly every article of the Creed, he continues to *receive money* as a professor of Christian Apologetics. You and I can respect the honest atheist. But how can a man endure to be what he is? No doubt he finds it uncomfortable, and his resentment of my books has in it both anguish and envy. God help him.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

1959

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Jan. 1st 1959

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

I am rejoiced to hear that your grand-daughter's eye trouble is well cleared up. Of course Genia is always in my prayers. And how wise you are to make prayers your mode of helping: for parents and in-laws and neighbours who try to help in other ways so often do harm! I am no unconditional believer in the popular theory that 'to talk things over' invariably mends matters. I have known it do so, and I have known it do the reverse.

Yes, I replied to Pittenger and enclose my article (I don't need it back). I hope I have not been uncharitable. The temptation was strong for (a.) the poor old goof is such a very bad boxer who lays himself open to such shattering blows, and (b.) While one can respect a straightforward atheist, it is hard not to hate a man who takes money for defending Christianity and spends his time attacking it. But pity comes to one's aid. Such a man cannot be happy. I think there is a good deal of anguish in his rudeness.

We are all well. It is almost as if we had died and were in a new life. A very happy new year to you and yours.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN KILMER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Jan 3, 1959

Dear Martin

I say, I had no idea what a distinguished lot you Kilmers are: ‘a nest of singing birds’.¹ More power to your elbows!

The plan of the pentameter is

— U U | — U U | — || — U U | — U U | U
= U U | = U U | — || — U U | — U U | U

In Ovid the last—U always is one word. That is, you cd. end up *grātūs ē/rām* or *Ōtcūs ā/bēst*, but not *ūndīqūe/nūnc* or *cōntīcū/īt*. Here’s one in English—

Christopher eats grill’d steaks gloomily; fried he prefers.

Yes, understanding without translating is the thing for private reading: it won’t do in exams. But translating can be fun: seeing how to sound perfectly natural English *and* keep close to the Latin at the same time.

Please thank Miriam for her lively picture.

Surprised by J may get dull (I of course wouldn’t know) after Wyvern,² but certainly *not* because *I* had lost interest. Remember this if you ever become a critic: say what the work is like, but if you start explaining *how it came* to be like that (in other words, inventing the history of the composition) you will nearly always be wrong.

Love to all.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY NEYLAN (T):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Jan 8th 1959

Dear Mary,

To be sure. They do, you know. It doesn’t sound as if you had any reason to be dissatisfied. To have a prospective son-in-law with a job,³ as the world now goes, is to be one parent out of a thousand—at least, I understand the modern method is more usually just to join the ration-strength of the girl’s family! Give Sarah my warm congratulations and good wishes.

I’m already going to a party on Sat. 10th, so I can’t come to hers, tho’ fully realising it is ‘rather special’ this year. We are all well and send good

wishes for the New Year.

Yours
Jack

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD): PC

The Kilns
Jan 16/59

I go up to-morrow late (after flu') and will make it my first care to book a guest room for Owen (Thurs. 25) and one for you (Wd 24–Fri 26). If by Friday morning you (I mean *you*) have had too much, you can blank well blank off and blank it blank.

J

TO EDWARD LOFSTROM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Jan 16, 59

Dear Mr. Lofstrom

1. I am afraid I don't know the answer to your question about books of Christian instruction for children. Most of those I have seen—but I haven't seen many—seem to me namby-pamby and 'sissie' and calculated to nauseate any child worth his salt. Of course I have tried to do what I can for children—in a mythical and fantastic form—by my seven 'Narnian' fairy tales. They work well with some children but not with others. Sorry this looks like salesmanship: but honestly if I knew anything else I'd mention it.

2. Of course. 'Gentle Jesus', my elbow! The most striking thing about Our Lord is the union of great ferocity with extreme tenderness. (Remember Pascal? 'I do not admire the extreme of one virtue unless you show me at the same time the extreme of the opposite virtue. One shows one's greatness not by being at an extremity but by being simultaneously at two extremities *and filling all the space between*').⁴

Add to this that He is also a supreme ironist, dialectician, and (occasionally) humourist. So go on! You are on the right track now: getting to the real Man behind all the plaster dolls that have been substituted for Him. This is the appearance in Human form of the God who made the Tiger

and the Lamb, the avalanche *and* the rose. He'll frighten and puzzle you: but the real Christ *can* be loved and admired as the doll can't.

3. 'For him who is haunted by the smell of invisible roses the cure is work' (MacDonald).⁵ If we feel we have talents that don't find expression in our ordinary duties and recreations, I think we must just go on doing the ordinary things as well as we can. If God wants to use these suspected talents, He will: in His own time and way. At all costs one must keep clear of all the witch-doctors and their patent cures—as you say yourself.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
Jan. 16/59

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

I have never read Tillich, but everything I have heard of him seemed to place him clearly side by side with Pittenger (tho' of course far superior in talent) as one of those sincere semi-Christians who are now a greater danger to the Faith than the open unbeliever. It is not horrible that you shd. grant him his ideas: it wd. be horrible if you did not. What puzzles me is why thousands of believers, like yourself, continue to expose yourselves to the temptations against faith which such men will present to you, and swell their fame by attending their lectures!

What 'existentially' means—unless it means 'melodramatically' or 'ostentatiously' or 'making no end of a fuss about it'—I have never been able to find out. But I think I do see a distinction between my 'sin' (or general fallen-ness) and my particular 'sins'. When I yield to or indulge in the pleasures of malicious thinking that is *a sin*, because it is an act of will. But the permanent element in me which renders me liable to find such thoughts not unpleasant is my sinfulness or sin: not an act of will but a state, not something I *do* but part of what I *am*.

I am sure 'demythologising' the N.T. always really means *re*-mythologising it: i.e. clothing it in the popular scientific and historical theories of your own period which are in fact transitory and will soon seem as mythological as those of the first century. Have I recommended to you

Edwyn Bevan's *Symbolism and Belief*?⁶ I think it helps more than any book I know to keep one right on all 'modernism'.

Joy thanks you very much for the little book so delightful to hand and eye and asks pardon for not having done so before. We have been, to tell the truth, a little overwhelmed with Christmas mails and sometimes a little muddled as to who sent what.

I am delightful to hear that tension has relaxed in the Goelz family.

With every good wish from us all,

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO DON LUIGI PEDROLLO (V):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Jan. 19th 1959

Bene fecisti, reverende pater, mittendo mihi pulcherrimum librum de carissimi Patris Joanni vita. Gratias ago. Spero me ex lectione hujus libri certiores fieri de multis quae adhuc latebant; saepe enim vir ille sanctus in suis epistolis insinuabat se nescioquo secreto dolore laborare, occultis Dei consiliis qui flagellat omnem filium quem accipit.

Feliciter evenit ad te ut scribam hac hebdomade quo omnes qui profitentur fidem Christi tenentur orationes facere pro redintegratione Ecclesiae nunc, eheu laceratae et divisae.

Vale

C. S. Lewis

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Jan 19th 1959

It was good of you, reverend Father, to send me this most beautiful book about the life of dearest Father John.⁷ I thank you. I hope that from reading this book I shall become better informed about many things which till now have remained obscure; for often this holy man in his letters implied that he laboured under I know not what secret grief, in the hidden counsels of God who chastises everyone whom He receives as a son.

Happily it occurs that I write to you in this Week when all who profess themselves Christians are bound to offer prayers for the reunion of the Church, now, alas, torn and divided. Farewell.

C. S. Lewis

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Jan. 20/59

Dear Mr. Kilby

As to Professor Van Til's point⁸ it is certainly scriptural to say that 'to as many as believed He gave power to become sons of God'⁹ and the bold statement 'God became Man that men might become gods' is Patristic.¹⁰ Of course Van Til's wording 'that man must *seek to ascend* in the scale of life' with its suggestions (a) That we cd. do this by our own efforts (b) That the difference between God and Man is a difference of position on a 'scale of life' like the difference between a (biologically) 'higher' and a (biologically) 'lower' creature, is wholly foreign to my thought.

I think an anthology of extracts from a living writer wd. make both him and the collector look rather ridiculous and I'm sure publishers would not agree to the plan. I am sorry to reply so ungraciously to a proposal which does me so much honour. But I'm convinced it would not do.¹¹

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO MRS THEODORE ROHRS (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Jan 22d 59

Dear Mrs. Rohrs

Thank you for your kind and encouraging letter. There was no novel between *Perelandra* and *That Hideous Strength* but there was one (*Out of the Silent Planet*) before *P. P.*, however, is the best of the three. You have got a good way on the problem of Free Will. All you need to add is that God is not in Time and therefore does not *foresee* your future actions but

sees them. He is *already* in tomorrow and *still* in yesterday. There's a letter on this in my *Screwtape Letters*.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

On 22 January 1959 Lewis presented himself at Lambeth Palace, home of the Archbishop of Canterbury, for the first meeting of the Commission to Revise the Psalter. The other members of the Commission were Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher, Bishop Donald Coggan,¹² Bishop G. A. Chase,¹³ J. Dykes Bower,¹⁴ Gerald H. Knight,¹⁵ D. Winton Thomas¹⁶ and T. S. Eliot.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

As from Magdalene

Jan 26th 59

Dear Mary Willis—

Thanks for letter of the 26th. Your Grant Ulysses Smith sounds delightful. Did you know that when your army was here in the last war your coloured troops were more popular than the white ones?

A letter from Cuba with no mention of the revolution is rather surprising at first sight. But it might not even be due to caution. I am often struck in reading the records of the past (e.g. letters written during *our* Civil War in the 17th Century) how unimportant the things the historians make so much of seem to have been to ordinary people who were alive at the time. Does not what we call 'history' in fact leave out nearly the whole of real life?

Of course the cure mentioned in my article on prayer was Joy: the 'good man' an old pupil of mine who was a Communist when I first knew him—one of the completest and most beautiful conversions I have witnessed.¹⁷

By the way, I mentioned to a distinguished theologian that I had been attacked by 'a man called Pittenger', and he replied 'Oh! old Norman Pittenger! What does he believe *this week?*'—so apparently he changes his views pretty often. Perhaps one day he may give Christianity a trial. I have put him in my prayers.

I am sorry to hear about the teeth: always a horrid business. We are having beautiful winter weather at present: bright, pale sunshine (paler than

you ever see—Joy calls it the ‘arctic light’), still air, and just that sprinkling of hoar-frost which makes everything sparkle like sugar. All well. Good wishes.

Yours
Jack

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

As from Magdalene
Feb 1st 59

My dear Roger

We have, alas, reckoned without our host. I didn’t know, but apparently ought to have known, that Feb. 23rd is the night of our great domestic binge, the Pepys dinner: and to make it impossible for me to play truant, I have to make the Panegyric.¹⁸ This, I’m afraid, puts the boots on all our arrangements: I can’t even offer you a bed! I hope this is not too serious a *nuisance*: it is certainly to me, a serious disappointment. If you cd. come any later date, let me know.

If you will still be coming to Cambridge on the original date, the B & B and joint journey of course can still stand. I am very sorry. Love to all of you.

Yours
Jack

TO DELMAR BANNER (W):

[The Kilns]
Feb 2nd 1959

Dear Banner

Of course I remember you: and your pictures. My own story, since you ask it, you shall have. In the spring of 1957 I married one Joy Davidman (whose *Smoke on the Mountain* you may have read) at her bedside in hospital, where she was to all appearances dying of cancer of the bone. A good man laid his hands on her and prayed: to-day—except that she is lame, for they managed to leave her with one leg shorter than the other—she is in as good health as ever she was in her life. In April 57 the nurses thought she wd. live only a few weeks.

I am so glad you liked my amateurish little book on the Psalms. With all good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Feb 3rd 59

My dear Cecil

Bembreakfast for Wed, Thurs, and Fri (Feb 25–7) stand firm as a rock. But something that ought not is happening on Monday and something that ought is not happening on Tuesday, so some of my map of the week is now haywire.

On Thur & Fri. evgs. I shall be at your disposal. But on Wed. Joy is here and we shall both be going to the Greek play (*Antigone*).¹⁹ If you wd. like to dine with us at her hotel before the play it wd. be a great pleasure. If you wd. also like to go with us to it, let me know *at once* and I'll try to get you a ticket. If on the other hand you care to polish off that evg. some of the other fish you had to fry, so. But the *Antigone* will be lovely. There's a man here called Trachel²⁰ who writes music for Greek choruses, which (in the *Bacchae*²¹ some years ago) put us both *ἐντός ἑαυτῶν*²² in a bar or two. RSVP.

Yours

Jack

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Feb 3rd 59

My dear Roger

This grows dreamlike.

1. All seats for the Tue. 24 matinée of the A. are sold out.
2. I have a guest already for Wed, Thurs. & Fri. night of that week.
3. I have got 3 seats for the Wed. night. I'm deserting my guest (an old enough friend to use as badly as I use you!) for the evg. but of course

asking him to dine with Joy and me at the hotel.

4. If you can find lodging elsewhere will *you* also dine with me and go on to the play? (The friend is A. C. Harwood—don't know if you've met him.) RSVP 5. By 'some later date' I meant in March—between the 2nd and 13th. This still holds.

6. In a changing world I shall still (D.V.) be at the B & B on the morning of Mon. 22d. Sorry about all this.

Yours

J.

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Feb 3rd 59

My dear Roger

You will have had a letter from me explaining how our plans have been frustrated. But:—

The present arrangement is that Joy accompanies me back to Cambridge on the afternoon of Mon. 23: sleeps & dines alone at The Lion while I'm making a fool of myself at the Pepys Dinner:²³ goes with me to the matinée of *Antigone* on Tue: and goes back to Oxford on Wed. We have a dinner engagement on Tue. night. Shall I book a third seat for you at the matinee? RSVP at once. And of course we can all three travel together on the Mon. and lunch together somewhere on Tue.

I feel sure they want you to *spoil* the Castle in Lyonesse. Fight hard!

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Feb 4th 1959

Dear Gibb

Hearty congratulations on getting through the hands of the carver.²⁴ It is a nice change when such a thing is no longer nearer but further away each morning.

I returned the enclosure with a few v. small corrections, ENNOBLE (for *enable*) on p. 34 is the most important.²⁵

Good wishes for a quick recovery.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Feb 5/59

My dear Roger

Your card of the 4th arrived. I hope you now have my last letter, explaining that no seats can be had for the Tue. matinée but that I have 3 for Wed night's performance. I can dispose of the third ticket if you can't use it, but of course the sooner the better. What a tangle!

Yours

Jack

TO A. E. WATTS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

15/2/59.

Dear Mr. Watts—

Oh thank goodness.²⁶ I was afraid of *vers libre* and modernity and Poundian nonsense. It is delightful to recognise *longo post tempore visum*²⁷ someone who can still turn and polish a heroic couplet. There is grace and music everywhere. There is possibly even too much neatness. Too much, I mean, for Propertius. Is there some danger that where one doesn't remember the original one might suspect that this was a version not of him but of Ovid? But, you may reply, what's a man to do? Your manner does very well for a great deal of Propertius: for *maxima de nihilo nascitur historia*,²⁸ and for all his *nequitiae*.²⁹ If it doesn't do equally well for *sunt apud infernos tot milia formosarum*,³⁰ perhaps this is inevitable: for what in Popian verse, or in any English metre, can really give the feeling of that overwhelming spondee in the fifth!

It is rather important that in (I think) every single case where you have emended your text your afterthought seems to me a clear improvement. This very seldom happens to one in reading someone else's MS or even—a few months later—one's own.

You realise, of course, that tho' this translation pleases you and me, it will not, in the present condition of taste, please the reviewers? *Abandon hope*. You will be blackguarded or ignored by barbarians who can hardly scan an English, much less a Latin, verse, and despise the intelligible.

My Propertius is at Cambridge and I am here, so I'm doing this unseen. This prevents me going through it and picking out a phrase here and a phrase there and cavilling about the exact force of a word. But that's no loss. The man who is not doing the work often hits on something which, tho' it might seem better for the particular passage, really invokes a style which couldn't and oughtn't to be used for the whole work. And your unity of tone is one of your great merits. You will send me back to the original once I can get at it: which is one of the things translation ought to do. Well, congratulations *and* condolences.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

17/2/59

Dear Cecil

Joy, now long disciplined in English cars, wd. love a trip to Ely either on the Wed. or the Thur. morning. But we don't want you to come by car solely on that account, if you prefer trains.

I've just finished Captain Cooke's *Voyages*.³¹ Do you know who wrote these two couplets?

*Slices the natives brought of ham and tongue,
Where on each tree the ready breadfruit hung:
Pleased with the scene, the Navigator smiles,
And names that happy clime the Sandwich Isles.*³²

Yours

Jack

TO DON HOLMES (W):³³

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
17/2/59

Dear Mr. Holmes

Thank you for your kind and encouraging letter. As to your questions:

1. I think one probably *shd.*, when one decently can, avoid meeting—when they are *en masse*, as a group—*thoroughly* bad people whether they profess Christianity or not. Meeting them *singly* is another matter. And of course one may have particular duties (pastoral, family, pedagogic etc. etc.) which oblige one to meet them. But there's no universal rule. One has to decide in each case whether one is more likely to do good or to receive harm.

2. If my books are sometimes permitted by God to deliver to particular readers a more perceptible challenge than Scripture itself, I think this is because, in a sense, they catch people unprepared. We approach the Bible with reverence and with readiness to be edified. But by a curious and unhappy psychological law these attitudes often inhibit the very thing they are intended to facilitate. You see this in other things: many a couple never felt less in love than on their wedding day, many a man never felt less merry than at Christmas dinner, and when at a lecture we say 'I *must* attend', attention instantly vanishes.

3. If you think I can help you about any particular problem, of course write. But general correspondence—what is called 'having a pen-friend'—is quite impossible for me. The daily letter writing is the chief burden of my life. I hope this doesn't sound unpleasant? There are only 24 hours in a day!

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD LOFSTROM (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
18/2/59

Dear Mr. Lofstrom

I certainly had not realised from your previous letter how distressing the problem was. My allusion to the psychotherapists was a fling at the increasing modern habit of seeing *all* personal difficulties in terms of disease and cure, and so reducing things that are really moral or intellectual or both to the pathological level. In your own case there certainly does seem to be a pathological element. And of course it is 'proper' to make all efforts after relief. I wrote under the false impression that, like a good many people, you were regarding as a peculiar medical condition of your own things which were in fact the common infirmities of us all. Now I know better. I need not say you have my sympathy.

But I dare not advise. Amateur advice in such cases is unlikely to do good and may do harm. You must go to the professionals. All you can get from me is my prayers, and these you shall have.

Yours most sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO BASIL WILLEY (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
19 Feb 1959

Dear Basil

I have been very rude and beg you to make the best apology you can for me to your wife. I was out of sorts last Friday and fit for nothing but to sit over the fire. I ought to have written excusing myself from my engagement with you, but somehow the whole day dozed and fuddled* itself through without this getting done. *Mea culpa*. Of course this demands no reply,

Yours

Jack

* This sounds as if I were drunk! I wasn't, but might as well have been for all the good I was.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Feb 19th 59³⁴

Dear Gibb

I am sure your people will 'check for literals' more efficiently than I ever do.³⁵ It is nice to hear that you are mending apace.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO STEPHEN SCHOFIELD (W): TS

28/59

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

26th February 1959.

Dear Mr Schofield,

Thanks for your letter, and I am so glad that you find some comfort in *Mere Christianity*.

The reference you want is second Thessalonians, Chapter III.

With all good wishes, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis³⁶

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W): TS

148/59

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

4th March 1959.

Dear Professor Kilby,

I am very glad to hear of the proposed edition of *Phantastes*, but I'm afraid I have already said—indeed more than once—what I have to say about it.³⁷ Wishing you every success, yours sincerely, C. S. Lewis³⁸

TO MARTIN HOOTON (BOD):³⁹

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

March 4th 59

Dear Hooton

You must by now think me the most pigly of all pigs that go on two legs. First of all, I put aside your kind gift of the *Box of Delights*⁴⁰ in order to read it before I acknowledged it. I then took it up in a bad mood—I was not quite well—and not only could not read it but couldn't understand it. Since then I've been in and out of a series of small illnesses ever since, and only got to the book this week.

It is, as I now see, a unique work and will often be re-read. A bit *too full* for me—I mean, too many things happen and too quickly—but the beauties, all the 'delights' that keep on emerging from the box—are so exquisite, and quite unlike anything I have seen elsewhere. Thank you very much indeed.

I am sorry that, entirely by my fault, we have let a term pass without meeting. I hope we can remedy this next term: at present I am still v. imperfectly convalescent from my second go of flu'. Till then, all good wishes—and apologies.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MICHAEL EDWARDS (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
6/3/59

Dear Mr. Edwards

Oxford, Sat. March 21, wd. be best for me. My house is some way out of Oxford and very hard to find, so I will meet you at the Eastgate Hotel, High St., opposite (v. nearly) Magdalen, at 4.50, or as near that as you can manage.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD LOFSTROM (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
8/3/59

Dear Mr. Lofstrom—

I very much doubt if any book, least of all a book by me, would much help anyone in the condition you describe. For a book can offer only thoughts and thoughts are not what such a person, perhaps, needs most. One can argue against egoism, but then egoism is not his trouble. If he were a real egoist he wd. be either blissfully unconscious of the fact or else fully convinced that egoism was the rational attitude. You, on the other hand, suffer from a more than ordinary horror of egoism which you share with us all. And therefore, as you will see, the thing you need is not to think more or better about it but to think less: to *act* unselfishly—that is, charitably and justly—and leave the state of your feelings for God to deal with in His own way and His own time. And this of course you know better than I do.

But how to do it? For the very effort to forget something is itself a remembering of that something! I think, if I were in your shoes I shd. try to regard this sense of self-imprisonment not at all as a sin but as a mere tribulation, like rheumatism, to be endured in the same way. It has no doubt its medical side: diet, exercise, and recreations might all be considered. And, though this is a hard saying, your early upbringing may have something to do with it. Great piety in the parents *can* produce in the child a mistaken sense of guilt: may lead him to regard as sin what is really not sin at all but merely the fact that he is a boy and not a mature Christian. At any rate, remember ‘I cannot turn one hair black or white: but I can brush my hair daily and go to the barber at regular intervals.’ In other words we must divert our efforts from our general condition or frame of mind (wh. we can’t alter by direct action of the will) to what is in our power—our words and acts. Try to remember that the ‘bottomless sea’ can’t hurt us as long as we keep on *swimming*. You will be in my prayers.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOY LEWIS (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

11/3/59

Well, darling? I hope I shall get a letter tomorrow saying that all those aches have chased themselves off. Mine (as has happened before) arrived a few days later: knees on Monday night, chest, belly, back, and hips yesterday.

And that horrid dog George completely made a fool of me at the B & B. John Walsh⁴¹ had been absent the previous Monday, so I said ‘Now watch! Ever see anything like this before?’—poured out the beer—and summoned the dog. The brute never touched it!

You made a mistake in not persevering with Cavendish’s *Wolsey*:⁴² it contains very gripping and moving scenes.

Love

J

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
11th March 1959.

Dear Mrs Gebbert,

Many thanks for your letter of the 7th, and for the review enclosed⁴³—to say nothing of the more interesting enclosures from the Tycoon’s sketch book. I fear though he is going to be a ‘modern’ there is that unconventional approach, that breakaway from pictorialism, etc. etc. He has my profound sympathy in his attitude to mathematics, a science of which I have to this day not succeeded in mastering the elements; and like him, there are times when I would be grateful for a sixteen hour day. Whether it is that one’s pace slows down with increasing age I don’t know, but personally I seem to have less and less time in which to try to do more and more.

My brother and I differ about your weather; he envies you your all the year round summer, whilst I should hate it. Like you I am a winter lover. Though to be sure, one can have too much of a good thing; last year we had no summer at all, except for a fortnight in June, when my wife and I were lucky enough to be in Ireland. And, after no summer, we had no autumn and then entered on a long dreary winter which still continues.

I hope the literary efforts will be crowned with success, and don’t despair; the effort to get the first book published is practically always a long and tedious one. And my brother had his first book refused by nearly everyone in London. Anyway, if the book is never published, and the Tycoon grows up as we hope he does, you will still be able to look back on life with the feeling that you have done your bit in the world.

We are all well here, Joy surprisingly so; she now goes out pigeon shooting for the pot; and though the pot is not noticeably fuller, it is wonderful that she should be able to make such a strenuous attempt to fill it. This spring she is getting great amusement out of the study of our English birds; which she tells me are nothing like as beautiful as the American ones, but make far better music.

With love to you all from us all.

Yours ever,

C. S. Lewis

TO SISTER MADELEVA CSC (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

13/3/59

Dear Sister Madeleva

I am really most indebted to you for sending me *My First Seventy Years*.⁴⁴ You can hardly have anticipated how much pleasure I got out of it. No! not chiefly for pp. 75–6, though of course I read them with a purr.⁴⁵

What I really love is the early chapters. These set an old string vibrating—all the stories which a specially loved aunt used to tell me of her Canadian childhood.⁴⁶ That lake, that Indian village. You give me a delicious nostalgia for places I have never seen. And all that smell of leather and wood. You do it, if I may say so, extremely well. And what a lucky girl you were. You are good on walking sticks too.

I believe that when they told you long ago of my refusal to take women pupils, the true statement wd. have been ‘He has a full time-table and refuses *any* more pupils.’

Why is Tolkien not on those shelves that you describe?

Well: all blessings, and great thanks.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford

16/3/59

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Oh, I am sorry. Operations are horrid things. I will indeed have you all in my prayers. May the time seem as short as possible till the blessed time when the event is a day further away each morning instead of a day nearer. 'Time and the hour ride through the roughest day.'⁴⁷ God bless and strengthen both of you. We are all well, Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO BARBARA REYNOLDS (W):⁴⁸

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
19/3/59

Dear Miss Reynolds

C.W. was not a trained scholar and on all subjects could make mistakes. His view of Dante was also highly idiosyncratic. But my own opinion, for what it's worth, is that the *Figure of B*⁴⁹ is a book every student of Dante must reckon with—the sort of book which may offend narrow experts as much by its merits as by its faults. If he knows less than they about Florentine politics and the history of the language, he knew a good deal more about poetry and love—possibly about Heaven and Hell. He was, after all, a member of the Dante Society at Oxford⁵⁰ and scholars like Colin Hardie, Dawkins,⁵¹ and Sumner⁵² thought him well worth their attention.

How far would Dorothy have reached the same views without C.W.? Hasn't it been said that if prophecy is our most gratuitous error, prophecy is the pluperfect subjunctive in its most gratuitous form?⁵³ I at any rate don't know. And, as it happens, tho' I knew both, I only once met them both *together*.

It sometimes happens that a scholar, dealing with work by an amateur of genius, can present its real strength freed from the flaws his imperfect knowledge imposed on it. That is what I hope you may do with the *Figure*!

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
23/3/59

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Deo gratias. It's horrid—how well I know—waiting for 'good news so far as it goes' to become 'All clear' but I hope and trust it will have done so by the time you get this letter.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
25/3/59

My dear Arthur—

When you wrote you had not heard the news about Janie.⁵⁴ Actually, at the moment, I am *feeling* very little (this is often the way) but I know that you and I have had a huge bit of our past hacked away. And even while I write this comic ideas come into my head. She seems to have had the nicest possible death.

Now. We have just been financially knocked flat by a huge surtax on royalties earned 2 years ago, which was a bumper year, long since forgotten and of course spent. I think we shall weather it alright, but we shall have to go very carefully—not perhaps for always but certainly for 18 months or so. Joy and I were talking it over only yesterday and agreed that the Irish holiday will almost certainly have to be given up this year. A great loss! This 'Janie business' makes me feel it worse, as it will you too. Now don't you go dying or anything silly!

Has the old lady⁵⁵ met her?—the slow head-shake and 'Oh Tchanie, Tchanie'

All well. We ramble about the woods like anything.

I'd give anything for a few hours with you just now.

Yours

Jack

MRS KENNETH POBO (W): TS

182.59

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
26th March 1959.

Dear Mrs. Pobo,
Many thanks for your most kind and encouraging letter of the 5th. With all good wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN KILMER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
27/3/59

Dear Martin
Thanks for your letter of the 15th. You don't tell me how your sister is; be sure to mention this the next time you write. I think your proposed metre is far too rollicking and comic for any original in so solemn a metre as the Virgilian hexameter.⁵⁶ To such a rime as yours I would put only words like
'A pound of that cheese and an ounce of the butter,'
Aeneas replied with his usual stutter.

I'd like to do the *Aeneid* into rhyming Alexandrines (U—U—U—U—
U—U—) but *without* a regular break in the middle as classical French has. This wd. give them the v. Virgilian quality of sounding almost like prose in the middle while the end of each line keeps them in order—e.g. I 32–3

Leading them far, for-wandered, over alien foam
*—So mighty was the labour of the birth of Rome.*⁵⁷

I can't give you the low-down on St. Michael's of Toronto.⁵⁸ Lovely spring weather to-day (Good Friday) as it is nearly every year. Love to all.
Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO DON LUIGI PEDROLLO (V):

Collegium Stae Mariae Magdalenae
apud Cantabrigienses
xxviii Mart. 1959

Reverendissime Pater

Grato animo te tuosque hoc die solemniter et severo quo Dominus noster animabus incarceratis praedicavit salutem. Ego meique valemus. Nunc scribo libellum *De IV Amoribus* i.e. Graece *Storge, Philia, Eros, Agape*—quibus vocabulis utor quia Latina nomina desunt. Ora pro me ut Deus mihi concedat aut salutaria aut saltem haud nocitura dicere. Nam ‘periculosae plenum opus aleae’ ut Flaccus scripsit. Casa vestra semper in orationibus meis. Valet in Salvatore nostro C. S. Lewis

The College of St Mary Magdalene
Cambridge
28 March 1959 [Holy Saturday]

Most Reverend Father

With a grateful heart I salute you and yours on this solemn and serious day on which the Lord preached to the souls in prison.⁵⁹ I and mine are well.

Now I am writing a little book on *The Four Loves*, i.e., in Greek: *Storgé, Philia, Eros, and Agapé*—I use these words because there are no names for them in Latin.

Pray for me that God grant me to say things helpful to salvation, or at least not harmful. For this is a work ‘full of dangerous hazard’ as Flaccus wrote.⁶⁰

Your House is ever in my prayers,
Farewell in our Saviour,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W): TS

54/59
The Kilns, Kiln Lane,

Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
1st April 1959.

My dear Mrs van Deusen,
Congratulations. I hope all will soon be completely well. I would write more, but there is a *ghastly* mail this morning!
Yours ever,
C. S. Lewis

P.S. My brother asks me to say how pleased he is to hear the good news, and that he hopes for even better shortly.

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
1/4/59

My dear Arthur—
I'm already doing something about J. for Campbell, impelled by a man called Armour⁶¹ who makes the shattering statement 'I always felt that J.M. was a mystic and more deeply soaked in the mystic point of view than anyone I have known' (!!?-\$\$\$\$-1÷d!). Well! If so, we missed a good deal. I am shaking with laughter while I write, and I hope you are while you read. Having heard Armour on J. how I wish I could hear J. on Armour.

Are you and I a pair of humbugs? We now miss her dreadfully: while she was alive what a lot of time we spent evading her!

W. says 'I must be like a cat who loves places more than people. What really hurts is the idea of never being in that house again.'

God bless you.

J.

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

1/4/59

Dear Mac

(Why don't you stop *mistering* me?) If you think *Efficacy*,⁶² *Obstinacy*,⁶³ *Outer Space*,⁶⁴ and *Christian Hope*⁶⁵ (which I have forgotten) would make a book, by all means proceed.⁶⁶ *Lilies that Fester*⁶⁷ might go in—the little one from the *Spectator*⁶⁸ wd. not suit. There is also one on Work due to appear in the (American) *Catholic Art Quarterly*.⁶⁹

The talks for Episcopal TV will, I hope, become a substantive book in due course and should certainly not—anyway they are not ready—go into this miscellany.

I shd. like the title 'Will we lose God etc' (it was never my choice) changed to *Religion and Rocketry*, if you approve the latter.

You will of course remove all the sub divisions and silly little sub-headings which editors introduce and print each essay as continuous prose?

There is one on Children's Stories in a Librarian's magazine which I think I could dig out.⁷⁰ How about it?

Would *Essays in Re-action* be a possible title?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns

April 3/59

My dear Arthur

Our prospects have suddenly cleared up. We are going to get a fair amount of refund for erroneously paid tax and also have found means of keeping more of my own royalties.

This is probably unintelligible, but the upshot is that we CAN come to Ireland this summer after all. Are you still available? We cd. take our fortnight any time between June 20 and July 15. Rathmullan, I suppose? Or have you any other ideas? I can't tell you how pleased I am. Joy sends love

Yours

Jack

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns etc.

April 10. 59

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

I have just had Sister Hildegard's letter. My heart goes out to you. You are now just where I was a little over two years ago—they wrongly diagnosed Joy's condition as Uremia before they discovered cancer of the bone.

I know all the different ways in which it gets one: wild hopes, bitter nostalgia for lost happiness, mere physical terror turning one sick, agonised pity and self-pity. In fact, Gethsemane. I had one (paradoxical) support which you lack—that of being in severe pain myself. Apart from that what helped Joy and me through it was 1. That she was always told the whole truth about her own state. There was no miserable pretence. That means that both can face it side-by-side, instead of becoming something like adversaries in a battle-of-wits. 2. Take it day by day and hour by hour (as we took the front line). It is quite astonishing how many happy—even gay—moments we had together when there was no hope. 3. Don't think of it as something *sent* by God. Death and disease are the work of the Devil. It is *permitted* by God: i.e. our General has put you in a fort exposed to enemy fire. 4. Remember other sufferers. It's fatal to start thinking 'Why should this happen to *us* when everyone else is so happy.' You are (I was and may be again) one of a huge company. Of course we shall pray for you all we know how. God bless you both, Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W): TS

54/59

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
18th April 1959.

My dear Mrs van Deusen,

I am most thankful to hear of the improvement, though I hardly know enough physiology to follow the details. I continue my prayers. God bless you all.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

P.S. My brother bids me tell you how pleased he is too.

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
20/4/59

Dear Joan

Hurrah! The essay on Easter is a promising bit of work; the sentences are clear and taut and don't sprawl. You'll be able to write prose alright. As for what you are saying, I think you are exaggerating a bit at the end. Everything I need is in my soul? The Heck it is! Or if so, it must contain a great many virtues and a great deal of wisdom which neither I nor anyone else could ever find there. Very little of what I need is at present in my soul. I mean, even things of the soul's own sort, like humility or truthfulness. And it certainly does not in any obvious sense contain a number of other things which I need at the moment: e.g. a stamp for this letter. Never exaggerate. Never say more than you really mean.

The Dream is the better of the two poems, chiefly because of the line 'But Mechta shall orbit the sun.' I don't, honestly, think the other gains anything by being printed as verse. You know, my dear, it's only doing you harm to write *vers libre*. After you have been writing strict, rhyming verse for about 10 years it will be time to venture on the free sort. At present it only encourages you to write prose not so good as your ordinary prose and type it like verse. Sorry to be a pig!

I am so glad you like *Till We Have Faces*, because so few people do. It is my biggest 'flop' for years, and so of course *I* think it my best book.

I envy you your tour. It must be a wonderful car to climb a fire-tower!—or have I misunderstood. Nor do I know what a fire tower is. But as we have water-towers here, I suppose other countries may have fire-, earth-, and air-, towers.

We are having a very cold, wet spring, but are all well.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
22/4/59

Dear Starr

Whenever you come you will both be very welcome. Your belief that I live in Oxford during the Vacations is right: my wife, my brother (who lives with us) and I will be glad to see you.

There is still a weekly meeting at the Bird and Baby: but whether you can call it the Old Group when there is a new landlord and Charles Williams is dead and Tolkien never comes is almost a metaphysical question, and one you will discuss much better on the spot.⁷¹

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
24/4/59

Dear Gibb

Thanks for cheque (1350-0-1) received to-day. Not a hope for May 12th, I'm afraid: I have to go to Manchester.⁷²

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO SISTER MADELEVA CSC (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
27/4/59

Dear Sister Madeleva

But of course you must call! But make it at Oxford, not Cambridge, for I spend the vacation at the former.

Thank you for your kind words about my wife. She was given a few weeks to live. A good man laid his hands on her and prayed. Now, two years later, she is walking about our wood pigeon shooting. At her last X-

Ray check the doctor used the word ‘miraculous’—tho’ I don’t suppose he meant it quite as you or I would. *Unde hoc mihi?*⁷³

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
27/4/59

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

I am glad to hear that progress continues. Of course you are very much in my prayers at present.

No, I won’t comment on what you say! Where one has never met the people concerned, where one has heard only one side, and where all the terms used are indefinable, it is so easy to go wrong.

God bless you both
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
30/4/59

My dear Dom Bede

First, in answer to your question. My wife has continuously gone on from strength to strength. Except that one leg will always be shorter than the other so that she walks with a stick and a limp, she now leads a normal, and active, life. My own bone-trouble, tho’ not completely cured, is so much better as to be now merely a trivial inconvenience.

Thanks for *Christ and India*.⁷⁴ It confirms what I had, less clearly, thought already—that the difficulty of preaching Christ in India is that there is no difficulty. One is up against true Paganism—the best sort of it as well as the worst—hospitable to all gods, naturally ‘religious’, ready to take any shape but able to retain none. Δεισιδαιμονία⁷⁵ is harder to convert than materialism as a fog is harder to remove than a tree.

About the Semitic genius, my wife, who is a Jewess by blood, holds two views which wd interest you.

1. That the only living Judaism is Christianity. Where her own people still have any religion it is archaic, pedantic, and—so to speak—sectarian, so that being a devout Jew is rather like being a Plymouth Brother 2. That we Goyim misread much of the O.T. because we start with the assumption that its sacred character excludes *humour*. That no one who knew the Jewish *ethos* from inside could fail to see the fully accepted comic element in Abraham's dialogue with God (Genesis XVIII) or in *Jonah*.

While we are on exegesis, am I right in thinking that the key to the parable of the Unjust Steward⁷⁶ is to grasp that the Master in it is *The World?* (= this Aion). The dismissal is the notice—apparently now being served on you and long since served on me—that our present tabernacle will soon be taken down. The moral is 'Cheat your master.' If he gives us wealth, talent, beauty, power etc. use them for your own (eternal) purposes—spoil the Egyptian! If you can't do that with *his* kind of property, who will trust you with the true kind? Of course? ὁ κύριος⁷⁷ who praised the Steward is not the Master *in* the parable but Our Lord, the Master who is telling the story. And telling it not without paradoxical humour.

It would be very nice to meet when you are in Europe, if this should be at all possible.

The man (Peter Bide) who laid his hands on my wife and she recovered, writes to me that his own wife is now struck down with the same disease. Would you mention him in your prayers?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

6/5/59

Dear Mary Willis

I am sorry you have been worried. Actually I was quite unaware that we owed you a letter. But never assume that anything is wrong if I shd. make the same mistake again. Remember, I don't type. Also, man-like, I am not

naturally a correspondent at all. The daily letter-writing I have to do is very laborious to me.

We are all well. Indeed Joy and I both *dig*—a thing neither of us expected ever to do again.

We also have a Siamese cat. In my heart of hearts I really prefer the great, grey bullet-headed native cat, but the Siamese are delicate and fascinating creatures. Ours adores me because I lift her up by her tail—an operation which I can't imagine I should like if I were a cat, but she comes back for more and more, purring all the time.

The young priest after whose laying-on-of-hands Joy began so miraculously to mend now writes to tell me that his own wife is suffering from cancer. His name is Peter. Will you, of your charity, have him in your prayers?

Joy, if she were here, wd. join me in all greetings and good wishes.

Yours

Jack

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W):⁷⁸

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

7/5/59

Dear Mr. Kilby

Thank you for your kind letter. I enclose what, at such short notice, I feel able to say on this question. If it is at all likely to upset anyone, throw it in the waste paper basket. Remember too that it is pretty tentative, much less an attempt to establish a view than a statement of the views on which, whether rightly or wrongly, I have come to work.

To me the curious thing is that neither in my own Bible-reading nor in my religious life as a whole does the question *in fact* even assume that importance which it always gets in theological controversy. The difference between reading the story of Ruth⁷⁹ and that of Antigone—both first class as literature—is to me unmistakable and even overwhelming. But the question 'Is Ruth historical?' (I've no reason to suppose it is *not*) doesn't really seem to arise till afterwards. It wd. still act on me as the Word of God if it weren't, so far as I can see. All Holy Scripture is written for our learning.⁸⁰ But learning *of what?* I should have thought the value of some things (e.g.

the Resurrection) depended on whether they really happened: but the value of others (e.g. the fate of Lot's wife)⁸¹ hardly at all. And the ones whose historicity matters are, as God's will, those where it is plain.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

Whatever view we hold on the divine authority of Scripture must make room for the following facts

1. The distinction which St Paul makes in I Cor vii between οὐκ ἐγὼ ἀλλὰ ὁ Κύριος (v.10) and ἐγὼ λέγω, οὐχ ὁ Κύριος (v.12).⁸²

2. The apparent inconsistencies between the genealogies in Matt i and Luke iii: between the accounts of the death of Judas in Matt xxvii 5⁸³ and Acts i 18–19.⁸⁴

3. St. Luke's own account of how he obtained his matter (i 1–4).⁸⁵

4. The universally admitted unhistoricity (I do not say, of course, falsity) of at least some narratives in Scripture (the parables), which may well extend also to Jonah and Job.

5. If every good and perfect gift comes from the Father of Lights⁸⁶ then all true and edifying writings, whether in Scripture or not, must be *in some sense* inspired.

6. John xi 49–52.⁸⁷ Inspiration may operate in a wicked man without his knowing it, and he can then utter the untruth he intends (propriety of making an innocent man a political scapegoat) *as well as* the truth he does not intend (the divine sacrifice).

It seems to me that 2 and 4 rule out the view that every statement in Scripture must be *historical* truth. And 1, 3, 5, and 6 rule out the view that inspiration is a single thing in the sense that, if present at all, it is always present in the same mode and the same degree. Therefore, I think, rule out the view that any one passage taken in isolation can be assumed to be inerrant in exactly the same sense as any other: e.g. that the numbers of O.T. armies (which in view of the size of the country, if true, involves continuous miracle) are statistically correct because the story of the Resurrection is historically correct. That the over-all operation of Scripture is to convey God's Word to the reader (he also needs His inspiration) who reads it in the right spirit, I fully believe. That it *also* gives true answers to all the

questions (often religiously irrelevant) which he might ask, I don't. The very *kind* of truth we are often demanding was, in my opinion, never even envisaged by the Ancients.

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
8th May 1959.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

Many thanks for your letter of the 1st and for the interesting enclosure; the Tycoon certainly shows a remarkable quickness of apprehension. Those clouds for instance; when I was older than he is, I'm sure I never drew anything which showed that I was in the least aware of the existence of clouds—or indeed any features of nature.

Well yes of course the Cross *is* a sad thing, but are we not to be reminded that there is in it a sad significance as well as a symbol of a victory?⁸⁸

We look forward to hearing more of the morality,⁸⁹ and my brother, who has read your letter, is purring all over at your compliment to his 'command of English'. On the whole you might I think have come worse out of the educational gamble than you did; very few of us get a really good education, whether in England or America, and I feel pretty sure that if fate had sent you to one of our 'good' girl's schools, you would have found quite a few holes in your stock of learning when you had finished. I was at four schools, and learnt nothing at three of them; but on the other hand I was lucky in having a first class tutor⁹⁰ after my father had given up the school experiment in despair.

We too would be very glad to see you settled in England, but I'm afraid that in a brief visit you did not see the many snags about living over here; first and foremost of course that one is in the front row—or any way the second row—of the stalls if the European theatre of war should open again. And too we live under the constant threat of a Socialist government, which would finish us off completely.

With love from us all, yours ever,

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
12/5/59

My dear Roger

I am not going to America. Your letter of the 10 May wh. you describe as 'this second letter' is the only one I've had. June 2nd wd. be no good for me as I already have a guest for that night. June 9th O.K. Shall I book you for it?

Yours
Jack

*On 12 May 1959 Joy wrote to Arthur Greeves:*⁹¹

*The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
May 12, 1959*

Dear Arthur

Yes, make it a week at Rathmullan if they can take us. I think we tried last year and they managed it, so I'm hopeful. On checking our dates I see we can manage any time between June 20th & July 19th—we'll pick a fortnight, more or less to suit you. I suppose we'd better have several days at Crawfordsburn before Rathmullan, as before.

September wouldn't do, I'm afraid, because the boys are home from school then. We daren't leave the helpless housekeeper at their mercy, and we're planning to take them to Wales.

I'll be a surprise to you this year—I can walk a mile without tiring, now! I hope you feel as well as I do.

*Yours
Joy*

On 13 May Lewis was awarded a Doctorate of Letters by Manchester University. While in Manchester he was the guest of Professor and Mrs Eugéne Vinaver.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
May 14th 59

Dear Gibb

Sieveking sent me his script.⁹² There were very few places where I wanted it changed and those he did change without demur. In one he defended his own words and succeeded in convincing me that they were, for this purpose, right. Of course if they now change it again, behind my back, they'll be villains.

Thanks for copies of paper-backed SBJ.⁹³

Yours

C. S. Lewis

P.S. How do you go on? Quite restored, I hope

TO CHARLES MOORMAN (L):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
15 May 1959

Dear Mr Moorman

I don't think your project at all 'presumptuous', but I do think you may be chasing after a fox that isn't there.⁹⁴ Charles Williams certainly influenced me, and I perhaps influenced him. But after that I think you would draw a blank. No one ever influenced Tolkien—you might as well try to influence a bandersnatch. We listened to his work, but could affect it only by encouragement. He has only two reactions to criticism: either he begins the whole work over again from the beginning or else takes no notice at all.

Dorothy Sayers was not living in Oxford at the time and I don't think she ever in her life met Tolkien. She knew Charles Williams well, and me much later. I am sure she neither exerted nor underwent any literary influence at all. Of course it may be that, just because I was in it myself, I don't see (objectively) what was really going on. But I give my honest impression for what it is worth.

To be sure, we had a common point of view, but we had it before we met. It was the cause rather than the result of our friendship.

I hope I don't seem to be 'putting you off'. My real anxiety is lest you shd waste time on what might prove a barren field.

TO ELIZABETH VINAVER (W):⁹⁵

Magdalene College,
Cambridge
May 19th. 1959

Dear Mrs. Vinaver

I have to thank you both for a present, as well as for a past, pleasure: for I find already that my visit begins to mature very nicely in the cellars of my memory and bids fair to be a great wine for many years. That, you know, is the real test. It was a delightful epilogue to what had been a somewhat arduous day—just what I was needing.

Your husband is a dangerous man, though. Far from impressing on me the fact that he is a very learned man and a brilliant talker, he gave me the illusion that I was both! Courtesy and skill cannot go further—and it feels grand—but I can't believe it is good for me. How does he do it? I wish this lyric close to my trip had not been crossed by the tragic matter of poor Mrs. Gordon and her son; yet I was very glad to meet her too.⁹⁶

Letters of real thanks, like letters of real condolence, suffer from the fact that one has written—and the recipient has read—so many false ones. Can I make you both believe that I really do feel rather as if I had had a night in Joyous Gard?⁹⁷

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO EUGÈNE VINAVER (W):

Magdalene
May 19th 59

Dear Vinaver—

You could not, if you had thought for a year, have given me a more acceptable *ξενήτιον*⁹⁸ than that offprint. *À*⁹⁹ You carried me back in a flash to 1915 when I bought Bédier's *Roman de T. et I. renouvelé*.¹⁰⁰ It was the first book I ever took to a binder's and had bound—oh those golden years (you must have known them too) when one's medieval reading, far from being meritorious, was all a truancy from one's classics and mathematics!

Your character of Bédier is most impressive. His thought is extremely attractive to me and it made me wish for a moment that the truth, at least about many medieval texts, did not seem to me the exact opposite. Or perhaps not the *exact* opposite. I certainly don't believe in the work *crééd'un coup par le génie populaire*.¹⁰¹ But the typical activity of the medieval author, at any rate the English medieval author, seems to me to be that of 'touching up' something that was there already—Wace touching up Geoffrey¹⁰² and Layamon touching up Wace,¹⁰³ or Chaucer touching up Boccaccio.¹⁰⁴ The text before one must of course always be taken just as it stands and not dissolved into its known or supposed ingredients:¹⁰⁵ must in that sense be taken 'like the *Cid* or *Tartuffe*'. But one can't always find any single author who stands to it as Corneille¹⁰⁶ or Molière¹⁰⁷ did to them. And the last author is sometimes most original just where he is most indebted to his predecessor—it is where the 'French Book' has most kindled Malory's imagination,¹⁰⁸ or Wace has most kindled Layamon's, that they are inspired to their finest additions.

I agree delightedly with the second part of your paper. How v. odd it is that the absurd equation (*le beau = le primitif*)¹⁰⁹ should flourish in a period whose *general* thought is steeped in the idea of 'evolution'! And of course you are right in what you say about *le lyrisme courtois*.¹¹⁰ Certainly no song is, save accidentally, a confession. I tried to make the point (about the Elizabethan sonneteers) by saying that their work was not a series of love stories but rather an erotic *liturgy* to which we, all the lovers in the world, can join.¹¹¹ The subjective and romantic way of reading them is as if we sought in the words of the Mass for biographical details about its compilers!

I will send the fat volume containing my Spenser essay under a separate cover.¹¹² It was intended for American students who are on the level of our schoolboys and is v. little worth your attention, and really says nothing about interwoven narrative which you have not said, and better, yourself. All I add is that the technique began before the Middle Ages and survived them. Some younger man might well write a whole book on the subject.

A thousand thanks for both corporal and intellectual hospitality,

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
May 19th 1959

Dear Mary Willis

I am sorry to hear you have lost an old friend. Curiously enough the same thing has just happened to my brother and me—[an] old lady (at least I suppose she must have been old, tho' she was always a girl to us) whom we have known since before we can remember. And, just like you, we keep on hearing jokes for which she would have been exactly *the* right recipient. There is no way out of it: either one must die fairly young or else outlive many friends.

We are now told by the learned that Siamese are not royal cats at all, but the common jungle cat of those parts and quite 'without honour' in their own country! Another disillusion!

In haste—all blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
25th May 1959

Dear Mac,

Thanks for your letter of the 18th.

I don't care for *Dangers of Belief*. I would like *The World's Last Night and other Essays*. The *and other essays* would appear on the title page only—not on spine, back, or jacket.

For No. IV I should prefer *Good Work and Good Works*.

As soon as I can get it typed I shall send you a long correction for *Lilies that Fester*. It will replace the bit which in the *Twentieth Century* article begins 'About Culture as' (para 3, p 332) and ends 'to extraneous ends', (para 2, l. 3, p. 334). This is necessary because E. M. Forster has said in print that he really meant the alternative 'b' which I offered him in a footnote to p 333.¹¹³ Most of the passage I want to alter is therefore now irrelevant. And anyway I think that what I want to substitute for it is better and of less ephemeral interest.

O.K.? [114](#)

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN BOCKELMANN (P): [115](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

May 29th 1959

Dear Miss Bockelman

Thank you for your most kind and encouraging letter. Of course authors like those 'tid-bits' (why is it *tid-bits* in America and *tit-bits* in England?) and even if they make us vain, it is better to be vain than proud. I was a very inexperienced writer when I wrote *The P's Regress* and that is why it is so difficult. I could make it easier now.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO RICHARD LADBOROUGH (BOD): [116](#)

Magdalene College,
Oxford.

June 3rd 1959

My dear Dick—

Remembering that (spoken) words are winged, I thought it might be useful to repeat in writing what I said, or think I said, or would now wish to have said, to you about P.W. [117](#) this evening.

1. I think well of him. He has given us good service without counting the cost and he seems to me to be a friendly, decent, straightforward sort of person.

2. I have come to feel—I did not feel at first—that he is a very great Bore. I am not sure that I know anyone whose conversation fatigues and dejects me more.

3. In view of the services we have already accepted from him, I think it would be ungrateful or even dishonourable—in view of the services he may still do us in the future I think it would be foolish—to allow any decisions we

make about him to be at all influenced by his boringness. It would be useful to retain him. If we do, it would be proper to increase his dining rights.

I feel v. strongly that to suffer bores patiently—'gladly' may be impossible—is a plain duty, and that it is even plainer when we owe them some gratitude.

Anyway, it really comes under the Golden Rule. Each of us, no doubt, is a bore to some people. I should like those whom I bore to treat me kindly and justly and therefore I must be kind and just to those who bore me.

He is, so far as I am concerned, the only Bore at our High Table.* Can one expect to have less than one? We are being let off very lightly.

Yours
Jack

* I see of course who the other might be and why I shd. not recognise him if he were!

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
June 7th 1959

Dear Mary Willis

I am sorry to hear that so many troubles crowd upon you but glad to hear that, by God's grace, you are so untroubled. So often, whether for good or ill, one's inner state seems to have so little connection with the circumstances. I can *now* hardly bear to look back on the summer before last when Joy was apparently dying and I was often screaming with the pain of osteoporosis: yet at the time we were in reality far from unhappy. May the peace of God continue to infold you.

Your elderly neighbour would be comic if the matters at issue were not so serious. She has an odd idea of how to cheer people up! Like having a visit from a ghoul. People in real life are often so preposterous that one would not dare to put them in a novel.

I gather you are having a heat-wave in America, and I hope this won't make things harder for you. We have had a lot of (for us) hot weather: now,

though the heat has gone, the drought continues and the soil in our garden is like dust.

What a state we have got into when we can't say 'I'll be happy when God calls me' without being afraid one will be thought 'morbid'. After all, St. Paul said just the same.¹¹⁸ If we really believe what we say we believe—if we really think that home is elsewhere and that this life is a 'wandering to find home', why should we not look forward to the arrival. There are, aren't there, only three things we can do about death: to desire it, to fear it, or to ignore it. The third alternative, which is the one the modern world calls 'healthy' is surely the most uneasy and precarious of all. We are well here. God bless you.

Yours
Jack

TO DONOVAN AYLARD (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
June 9th 1959

Dear Mr. Aylard

Thank you for your most kind and encouraging letter.

I'm no good at all as what the women call a 'pen-friend' but I always try to answer letters that ask me any specific question.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MR KNIGHT (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
15th June 1959

Dear Mr. Knight

Thank you for your most kind and encouraging letter. But you must learn to read books in general—I don't mind especially about *mine!*—more carefully. I did not say that God did not always 'answer' prayers, but that

He did not always *grant* the thing asked for.¹¹⁹ May God bless you and give you perseverance to the end.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
June 16th, 1959

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

Thank you for your letter of June 12th. There is not, to my commonplace eye, very much difference between the Tycoon's masterpieces and some modernistic works that are hung and sold. You have no doubt noticed that 'pictures' by a chimpanzee have lately fetched 30 guineas each?¹²⁰

I hope the school will prove good. I don't doubt that the tables, windows, kitchens, etc. are superb, as they are here in our free schools. Indeed, nothing in English education is more striking than the contrast between the palatial conditions under which the young proletarians are amused and flattered at the public expense, and the sordid pokiness in which the Collegers at Winchester live and work. But *en revanche*¹²¹ the latter are really educated and the former are not. I wish our ministry of education would realise that a school with good teachers is a good school even if it meets in a tin shed, and a school with bad teachers is a bad one even if it meets in a palace.

My brother, my wife, and I will do what we can about the Morality Play.¹²²

We are all well and the summer is one of the most beautiful we have ever had—except to the gardener in one—for we are suffering one of our rare droughts. England is usually such a wet country that all the land is drained to an extent you can hardly imagine: consequently there is hardly any surface water and when a drought *does* occur, soil turns to dust very quickly.

With all good wishes.
Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO T. S. ELIOT (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
June 19th 59

My dear Eliot

I think Fr. Gervase Mathew OP (Blackfriars, Oxford) is the person who would best combine the Theological and Middle English scholarship necessary for judging a version of Lady Julian.¹²³ Failing him, Mrs Zeeman of Girton would be quite good. I certainly don't feel qualified for the job myself.

On quite another matter—I can't find the name and address of the secretary of our Commission on the Psalms. As you are in London could you kindly let her know that I have rescued the use of the inner library at Magdalene for our July session? It would be convenient if she told me—for the benefit of the servants—what our daily hours of sitting are likely to be I also look forward to it.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO KATHLEEN RAINE (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
June 19th 1959

Dear Kathleen

One must (and will) write poetry if one can. That one must therefore return to the place where the Muse once appeared, as if she were bound to appear there again, is quite a different proposition. The gods will not be met by appointment. They never give us their addresses. And tho' the Faculty has not been able to give you what you, reasonably, want, it does not follow that they don't want you. At any rate *postpone*.

There will never be a time when you can't leave Cambridge: there could easily be one when you couldn't return.¹²⁴

Yours
Jack

TO MERVYN PEAKE (UCL):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
June 20th 1959

Dear Mervyn Peake—

We have been terribly rude, but it came by negligence and the negligence came from ‘the weight of the superincumbent hour’.¹²⁵ The book came, you see, while I was still at Cambridge.¹²⁶ I only got home last week and then my wife and I got engulfed by a whirlpool of business correspondence. It wd. have been no compliment to reckon you among the *agenda*—I shd. hate to be an *agendum* myself—of the continual committee into which our life seemed to have resolved itself. Nor indeed did we think of anything pleasant or (in itself) interesting. Now we draw breath. And the first use of the breath must be apology; the second, very warm thanks.

Ignorant thanks, mostly. Of your writing I can speak as one in the same trade; of your drawing, only as a member of the public. As such, I find the pictures very satisfactorily ‘horrid’—using the word in Miss Morland’s sense.¹²⁷ The Mariner himself (facing p. 6) has just the triple chord I have sometimes met in nightmares—that disquieting blend of the venerable, the pitiable, and the frightful. But at the same time—thanks, I suppose, mainly to the position of the arms—the horrid *representation* is a graceful *thing* (I give no praise to picture or story which does not fulfil both demands. What the, so to speak, ‘plot’ requires representationally must coincide with what the ‘thing’ requires in order to be a delightful object).

And that of course explains (it took me a few minutes to see this) why you *represent* almost exclusively the terror—what corresponds to S.T.C.’s ‘brook In the leafy month of June’¹²⁸ being done by your line. Thus while few things could be nastier (in what it represents) than the picture facing p. 70, the composition of it is a harmonious tranquillity. The very lines which make the Mariner a hideous and rigid *man* simultaneously make him a *shape* as charming as a beech-tree. Another beautiful example is that facing p. 24, to the imagination, all ruin, despair and monstrosity, but to the eye as

relaxed and liquid and gentle as a willow hanging over a pool. ‘Abstract’ and ‘photographic’ art (with their literary equivalents) are simply two alternative refusals of the real problem. (I see it of course mainly in terms of my own craft—to make sure that the logical sequence of events demands episode X at exactly the moment where the symphonic structure of moods etc also demands it).

Well, a thousand thanks, both from me and from my wife who has equally enjoyed the book. We go to Ireland for 3 weeks on Monday. If there were any chance of your both being in Oxford after that it would be a great pleasure to meet you.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis¹²⁹

Lewis and Joy were in Ireland from 21 June to 10 July, the first two weeks of which were spent with Arthur Greeves. During the third week Lewis gave a number of dinners and teas so Joy could meet members of his family and old friends. They spent part of their time at The Old Inn, Crawfordsburn, Co. Down,¹³⁰ and the rest at the Fort Royal Hotel, Rathmullan, Co. Donegal.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Old Inn,
Crawfordsburn,
Co. Down,
Northern Ireland
June 26th 1959

Dear Gibb

I gather you have heard about the collection of old articles by me which Harcourt, Brace and Co. are going to bring out. You may have wondered why I have done nothing about arranging for an edition by yourself. These are the reasons 1. My *real* 'new book', *The Four Loves*, is ready to go to the typist and will no doubt reach you through Curtis Brown in a month or so. This is the one I want you to get on with, and the collection would only be a hindrance.

2. The idea of the collection was initiated by H. & B. If they think they can sell such a book I have no objection to their project. But I doubt if the English prospects—as opposed to the American—are at all good. Our public, as you know, does not much buy collections of essays on different subjects.

3. They are old work and would, I think, be more perceptibly so here than in U.S.A. There might come a time for publishing them, or some of them with others, in England. I don't particularly want to do so now.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO T. S. ELIOT (P):

The Port Royal Hotel,
Rathmullan,

Co. Donegal,
Eire
June 29th 1959

My dear Eliot

Your kind letter has, as you see, followed me to the world's end—or one of its ends. My wife and I would like nothing better than to dine with Mrs Eliot and yourself, and since you leave us a choice of dates, we prefer Tue 21st. Thank you very much.

I will write to Miss Allan.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO ROSAMOND CRUIKSHANK (HAR):[131](#)

As from Magdalene College, Cambridge.

[2 July 1959]

Dear Miss Cruikshank

Thank you for your kind letter. Personally, I liked nearly all my books less than *Screwtape*,[132](#) and the Ransom trilogy or the children's stories are, from my own point of view, quite as 'serious' as it.

Yes: I do wish we would get some more heroic romances out of Tolkien. But he is over 65—I'm over 60—and a very slow worker.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Old Inn,
Crawfordsburn,
Co. Down,
Northern Ireland
July 7th 1959

Dear Mary Willis

Your letter of the 20th has followed us here. You seem to have had a very nasty experience. I can see why you describe it as 'looking into the face of death': but who knows whether that face, when we really look at it, will be at all like that? Let us hope better things. I had a tooth out the other day, and came away wondering whether we dare hope that the moment of

death may be very like that delicious moment when one realises that the tooth is really out and a voice says 'Rinse your mouth out with this.' 'This' of course will be Purgatory.¹³³ What you have gone through begins to reconcile me to our Welfare State of which I have said so many hard things. 'National Health Service' with free treatment for all has its drawbacks—one being that Doctors are incessantly pestered by people who have nothing wrong with them. But it is better than leaving people to sink or swim on their own resources.

You surely don't mean 'feeling that we are not *worthy* to be forgiven'? For of course we aren't. Forgiveness by its nature is for the unworthy. You mean 'Feeling that we *are not* forgiven.' I have known that. I 'believed' theoretically in the divine forgiveness for years before it really came home to me. It is a wonderful moment when it does.

I am sorry this is so illegible but we are away on holiday and I have only Joy's *biro*¹³⁴ to write with. Odious thing! We have been having a nice time, tho' not very good weather. Love and sympathy from both.

Yours
Jack

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Old Inn,
Crawfordsburn,
Co. Donegal,
Northern Ireland
July 7th 1959

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

I am glad to hear that the news is at any rate 'so far, so good'. As my wife and I discovered during our terrible time two years ago, the great thing, both for the patient and for the lover of the patient, is to live it day by day, in the *present* endurance and the *present* case, giving as little of one's mind as possible to fears or hopes (hopes beget fears)—as animals live, and soldiers, and, I expect, saints.

I am always puzzled by what seem to me vulgar—or idiotic—calls to 'religion'. But we must remember Balaam's ass!¹³⁵ God can use the queerest instruments. I suppose we are *all* pretty queer, vulgar, and clumsy ones by angelic standards?

You and yours will of course still be in my prayers. Naturally, knowing none of the factors or people at first hand, I can have no opinion of my own about most of the issues.

I am so glad you liked Edwin Bevan's book. It *does* clear things up, doesn't it. My wife and I are having a lovely holiday, Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO FRANCIS WARNER (P):¹³⁶ PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
11 July '59

I got your letter late last night on return from Ireland. I am afraid I know very little about Agrippa and nothing at all about the relation to *modern* English literature. His relation to Elizabethan lit. wd. be a very jejune and unrewarding subject, I think—and is not, I take it, your aim? So I suggest you tell Mr. Henn¹³⁷ that I shd. be a quite unsuitable supervisor. I shall be in Cambridge from July 20 to 22nd but on a conference all day each day. I cd. see you at about 9 p.m. on July 20th if you looked in. But I believe it wd. be a waste of your time.

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

11 July 1959

Dear Mary Willis

We got back from Ireland last night, when I found an infinite pile of letters awaiting me, so this can be only a hurried scrawl. Your doctor sounds delightful and I am glad you have that comfort. Not that I know what a *pediatrician* is any more than a boojum! All our good wishes go with you.

Yours
Jack

The intended publication of a paperback edition of Miracles gave Lewis the opportunity to correct the flaw in his argument pointed out by Elizabeth Anscombe in her 1948 paper 'A Reply to Mr C. S. Lewis's Argument that "Naturalism" is Self-Refuting'.¹³⁸ Besides rewriting part of Chapter 3 he changed its title from 'The Self-Contradiction of the Naturalist' to 'The Cardinal Difficulty of Naturalism'.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

The Kilns etc.
11 July [1959]

Yes, there is one chapter of *Miracles* that needs revision. The result of the revision will, I think, make it shorter rather than longer. I'll get onto this job as soon as I can.

C.S.L.

TO FRANCIS WARNER (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
15th July 1959

Dear Mr. Warner,
No, no, I am not (*simpliciter*) 'agin Agrippa'. It was your reference to Yeats which, by suggesting that his influence on *modern* literature was to be your whole purpose, that made me feel I had nothing to do in your galley. An edition of the *De Occ. Phil.* is a wholly different thing. This is very badly needed and I wd. v. much approve of your doing it, if only for the selfish reason that I might then have a copy on my own shelves. (The only one I have ever had access to is that in the library of University College, Oxford).¹³⁹ What you say about its relation to Musicology is new to me and greatly increases its importance.

I shd. have thought myself that a new edn. of the Latin text—especially if it had the old translation on the opposite page—wd. by itself be sufficient for

the D.Phil. and twenty times more worth doing than a thesis. It wd. even probably have quite a decent sale; for scholars wd. have to buy it and a good many 'phonies' (believing occultists) wd. want it too. Consult Mr. Henn on this.

There are expressions I wd. like you to reconsider in the Typescript you sent me.

P 1. para 1. l. 4. Apotheosis. Do you mean more than 'consummation'?
P. 1. para 2. ll. 1–2. Omit 'the medieval attitude to'. A. no doubt takes up an attitude, but surely he is writing not *about* an attitude but about Physics etc.?

Ibid. l. 8. 'By Theology A. means' etc. Nonsense! He no more 'means' daemons etc by 'Theology' than you 'mean' cats by 'Zoology'. Read 'Under Theology A. includes the study of angels etc' or 'By Theology A. means Pneumatology. Not only God but all angels etc are its subject matter'
P 1. last line. Inevitably. You can only mean 'invariably' or 'always'.

P 2. para 1. l. 16. Benefits of God. Unless you *mean* this to be funny (and if so, it is not quite funny enough) I'd alter it! ('For the glory of God' or 'to please God?') Ibid l. 27. attitude. I'd prefer 'practice' or 'principle'. And the clause 'even if' etc seems to me to be doing harm rather than good.

P 3. para 2. l. 4. a source for. Better 'a source used by'. A. is the source of passages and ideas in Yeats not of Yeats himself: *his* sources, as you know, were *Deus, Sol, et parentes!*¹⁴⁰

P. 3. para 3 l. 8. The second Arden etc. This surely shd. begin a new para. And even then the connection of thought is not perfectly clear.

Para 4 l. 1. Part of...to Agrippa. This actually *is* sense but it *sounds* rather rum to include what you don't do as 'part of your method'. Why not simply 'I shall limit my study to authors who specifically mention A'?

Ibid l. 2. But *achtung!* Even this is not conclusive proof. Many profess to quote authors they never really read.

P. 4. para 2. Take your Saurat *very* critically.¹⁴¹ He is liable to give the obscurest sources for things in Milton which Milton cd. have got from well known passages in the Bible.

Ibid. l. 3. valid. I've no idea what a valid field may be. Don't you mean 'fruitful' or 'useful'?

Para. 4 l. 1. 'It remains to demonstrate the reason why.' Surely a 'wearisome pomp of circumlocution'?¹⁴² (Why not 'This debt needs examination, for if we ignore it we cannot understand' etc?) Ibid. l. 5. depends etc. You don't mean 'depends on its source' but 'depends on our knowledge of its source'. And you don't mean 'its understanding' but our understanding of it. Read 'cannot be understood unless we know its source'.

P. 5. l. 10. act. Read 'action'. *Act* might mean a dramatic 'Actus'.

P 6, l. 2. The Dionysiac. Or possibly 'the Dionysus'?

P 8 ll. 5–16. The quotation is much too long for the sentence 'In the third verse we see' to tuck it in. Try reading this para. aloud and you'll see the difficulty. Better 'The third verse runs: (quotation). Here we see etc'

Para 2. l. 3. depend. *On* what?

I hope this doesn't all sound too pedantic. But the matter is important. So many people, when they begin 'research', lose all desire, and presently all power, of writing clear, sharp, and unambiguous English. Hold onto your finite transitive verb, your concrete nouns, and the *muscles* of language (*but, though, for, because* etc.). The more abstract the subject the more our language shd. avoid all unnecessary abstraction. Write mysteriously and elusively about a drawing room if you please: but write about mysteries as like Cobbett¹⁴³ (or Hume)¹⁴⁴ as you can!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO T. S. ELIOT (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
17th July 1959

My dear Eliot

Your letter of the 8th, after following me from one Irish hotel to another, reached me to-day. The programme of the conference is fiercer than I expected, and I agree with you that we shall have to dine at Selwyn every night, almost certainly.¹⁴⁵ We shall be happy to lunch with you on Thursday 23rd, if (as is probable) that proves the better time. With many thanks.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MICHAEL EDWARDS (BOD): PC

[The Kilns,
20 July 1959]
[Tel.] 62963 Oxford

I shd. much like another meeting but I am not sure of my movement. If you are in Oxford anyway, try me by ringing me up.

C. S. Lewis

TO GERTRUDE E. DIGGLE (BOD):¹⁴⁶

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
25th July 1959

Dear Mrs. Diggle

Thank you for your extremely kind offer.¹⁴⁷ But I don't think I am the proper owner of this rare book. I also am 'by no means young' and, if it came into my possession, it would soon have to find a new home once more. If I were you I would leave it to the library of MacDonald's old college at Aberdeen.¹⁴⁸ I forget which college it was but Greville's *Life*¹⁴⁹ will no doubt tell you.

With much gratitude and all good wishes, Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO NICOLE R. F. ROBINSON (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford

1 Aug 1959

Dear Miss Robinson

I suppose our moral responsibility for the results of our behaviour on other people's lives varies, doesn't it? Zero when these results were quite impossible for us to foresee: 100% where we both foresaw and intended

them: and then all sorts of degrees in between these two. Often we *could* foresee it if we cared enough about other people to try. The passage in my book is an encouragement to do so.¹⁵⁰ I am not thinking of a sort of legal standard of responsibility. If there were no Judge and no punishment, I should not like to know that my nastiness to a man, tho' repented by me, still went on degrading his character.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
3 Aug. 1959

My dear George—

Lor' bless you, I was sent this book when it came out, and the main use of your packet was to remind me that I've lent my copy to Christopher Tolkien and it is high time he returned it.

About the scheme, I'm afraid we're off to Wales at that time and what between Wales ahead and Ireland behind ('the deep before, the foe behind')¹⁵¹ the Vac. is devilish tight for the work I have to do in it. So nothing doing, I fear. But I can't have you for a night in College next term? I am suffering from 'George-starvation'. Love to Moira.

Yours
Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns etc
Aug 3/59

Dear Mary Willis

I have your letter of 30 July. It has puzzled me. I understood that you were going to the doctors for heart trouble. How and why do the psychiatrists come into the picture? But since they have come, I am glad to hear they are nice.

I sympathise most deeply with you on the loss of Fr. Louis. But for good as well as for ill one never knows what is coming next. You remember

the *Imitation* says ‘Bear your cross, for if you try to get rid of it you will probably find another and worse one.’¹⁵² But there is a brighter side to the same principle. When we lose one blessing, another is often most unexpectedly given in its place.

We are all well here though I am frantically busy: and though I get no more tired now than I did when I was younger, I take much longer to get un-tired afterwards. All blessings and sympathy.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

8 Aug 59

Dear Gibb

Courage! Revisions of second (not first) chapter in *Miracles* go to the typist to-day.¹⁵³ I was by no means in the vein and the job was itself v. ticklish and the weather v. hot—so you’re lucky it took no longer.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

11 Aug. 1959

Dear Joan

Congratulations on your 98% in Latin. What a droll idea in Florida, to give credits not for what you know but for hours spent in a classroom! Rather like judging the condition of an animal not by its weight or shape but by the amount of food that had been offered it!

A story about Caesar in Gaul sounds very promising. Have you read Naomi Mitchison's *The Conquered*?¹⁵⁴ And if not, I wonder should you? It might be too strong an influence if you did (at any rate until your own book is nearly finished). On the other hand, you may need to read it in order to avoid being at any point too like it without knowing you are doing so. I don't know what one shd. read on Gaul. Apart from archaeological finds (Torques and all that)¹⁵⁵ I suppose Caesar himself is our chief evidence?¹⁵⁶ He will be great fun and I hope you will enjoy yourself thoroughly. Which side will you be on? I'm all for the Gauls myself and I hate all conquerors. But I never knew a woman who was not all for Caesar—just as they were in his life-time.

One of our rare really hot English summers this year.

Sorry the previous page is such a mess. I mistook a piece of ordinary paper for blotting paper!

With all good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN KILMER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

18 Aug 1959

Dear Martin

Don't bother about Alanus.¹⁵⁷ The prophecies of Merlin are much the least interesting thing about him. The fullest source for the Merlin story is the prose *Merlin*.¹⁵⁸ The medieval English translation of this (several volumes) was published by the Early English Text Society.¹⁵⁹ You are not likely to find it except in a university library. You have Geoffrey.¹⁶⁰ A v. good source, if you can get hold of it, is *Arthurian Chronicles from Wace and Layamon* by Eugene Mason, published by Dents of London many years ago in the series called the Everyman Library. The Layamon part is the part worth reading. The full text of Layamon was also done in 3 vols. by Sir

Charles Madder and had a trans. into modern English at the bottom of the page—but it is now a very rare book.¹⁶¹ The big 3 vol. *Works of Sir Thomas Malory* edited by E. Vinaver¹⁶² wd. be easier to come by, and perhaps by assiduously going through his notes wherever Merlin is mentioned (begin from the index of course) you might find some helpful facts.

I am so very glad to hear of your sister's recovery.

All the best.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ALLAN C. EMERY (W):

As from Magdalene College, Cambridge

18 Aug. 1959

Dear Mr. Emery—

Thank you for your kind letter of the 13th. The fairy-tale version of the Passion in *The Lion* etc. works in the way you describe because—tho' this sounds odd—it bye-passes one's reverence and piety. We approach the real story in the Gospels with the knowledge that we *ought* to feel certain things about it. And this, by a familiar psychological law, can hinder us from doing so. The dutiful effort prevents the spontaneous feeling; just as if you say to an old friend during a brief reunion 'Now let's have a good talk' both suddenly find themselves with nothing to say. Make it a fairy-tale and the reader is taken off his guard. (Unless ye become as little children...)¹⁶³

If I may say so, you are the sanest and fairest tee-totaller I have met for a long time. I think that if I lived in certain American or Scotch circles I might feel it my duty to be one too. The point is that the association between T.T.-ism and Christianity is almost strictly confined to the English-speaking world—i.e. to those parts of the world where there is no tradition of *civilised* drinking. In France or Germany, where the most pious people, and even children, normally drink wine at table it wd. be unintelligible. And societies which do that have far less drunkenness than you or we.

With cordial good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

I suppose wine was almost a necessity for the Ancients, wasn't it? Because (a) Owing to insanitary conditions much of the water was dangerous (b) Fermentation was their only preservative—no frigidaires. Even in my time it was suicidal to drink water in an Italian village!

TO MICHAEL EDWARDS (BOD):[164](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

20 Aug 59

Dear Edwards

You offer so much and ask so little that I feel rather a cad to say No. But there are two reasons. The one (particular and temporary) is that we are shortly off for a holiday. The other (general and permanent) is this. If you were here on the terms you suggest I should feel uncomfortable unless I could give you a fair amount of my time—and indeed your purpose in coming wd. be frustrated if I didn't.

But I have so little time. The claims of my work, my wife, my (resident) brother, the daily post (that utterly galley-slave hour or so every day), already leave me hardly time to pray, to think, or to rest. My plate is too full. Everyone's and everything's share of me is already too small. This isn't excuses—nor at all disinclination for your society, which I find v. good value—but plain mathematics. Like packing a suitcase. If you put in the spare pair of boots you must leave out the spare pair of trousers, and that's all there is to it.

I hope this won't deter you from coming again whenever it's convenient. I like, and can manage, occasional meetings. But no additions 'on the strength'.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

21 Aug 59

My dear Chad–

I have no changes to suggest in your ‘Brief Life’, unless possibly you delete ‘Arras and’ in l. 6. Lillers is a day’s-long drive from Arras.

I’ve now made a book out of those talks I gave for Episcopal T.V. and the MS went to my library agent yesterday. I have taken the liberty of dedicating it, without permission, to you. O.K.? [165](#)

If Joy were awake–I breakfast at unearthly hours and tackle my post in the day’s cool and silent hours–she wd. join me in love to you all.

Yours
Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

21 Aug 59

Dear Mary Willis

Yes, six snacks instead of three meals must be a frightful nuisance. One must be always washing up! And I know how, when one is on one’s own, even a nice meal and a good appetite can hardly make the whole time-wasting business of getting it and clearing it away seem worth the few minutes of actual eating.

You will be surprised to hear that our temperatures are, for once, not very much lower than yours. Yesterday at 11.30 a.m. on our lawn the thermometer read 94°. A big tree and a still bigger branch off another came

crashing down in the wood yesterday, in windless calm—purely for lack of internal moisture. The early mornings and late evenings are lovely, but not the blistering hours in between.

A ‘move’ is a beastly thing at the best of times. One’s things have a sort of whining pathos (do you know what I mean) about them once they are winkled out of their old native haunts.

I wish you had better news to send me and I more comfort to send you. Of course you are always in my prayers.

The house is still asleep—I get up early and try to dispose of my mail in the day’s cool and silent hours, so I can send you only *my* love and sympathy. Joy would add hers if she were awake!

Yours
Jack

TO EUGÈNE VINAVER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

22 Aug 59

My dear Vinaver

I have read the MS with great interest and often with delight.¹⁶⁶ I shall, however, be a less useful critic than you hoped. This is because your book is so much concerned with relating medieval narratives to the whole history of fiction and, especially, the French novel—a very legitimate and important theme but not one on which I am well qualified to speak.

It is significant that the part I am best able to judge is the part I like best. This raises a presumption that the places where I am a little ‘at sea’ are equally sound. The part I refer to is cap iii, of which your late *Medium Aevum* article was a foretaste.¹⁶⁷ I think you here settle for good and all the most important question. I, at any rate, do not see any possible answer. You have killed the anthropological giant and those who think all lost stories *ipso facto* better than all extant stories ought to be silenced.

I am less happy—perhaps because I understand less—about cap i. The contrast between narrative which merely states (like the *Chansons de Geste* or the Ballads) and that which interprets, which anticipates the question *why?*—I of course admit. (I wd. even add that I find the former technique still dominant among country-people in any village pub. If, at the end of their narrative you ask them ‘But *why* did he say that? Was he joking? Or angry? etc’, you get no answer. Or rather, their answer is to repeat the *fact*).

What I am not quite convinced of is the view that the *sen*¹⁶⁸ is related to the events of the story as the spiritual senses are related to the events of the story in Scriptural *exegesis*. For all the spiritual senses (as enumerated in Pseudo-Dante to Can Grande)¹⁶⁹ are after all allegorical. But the event of, say, Achilles loving Polyxena, is not related to his love-speech in that way at all. To say that ‘Israel came out of Egypt’¹⁷⁰ means (in addition to the historical sense) ‘the soul turns from sin’ is quite different from putting a speech about it into the mouth of Pharaoh.

I am doubtful about your explanation of the poet’s motives¹⁷¹ (p. 29. para 1) for giving Achilles a speech. Can it not be fully explained (we have both read Auerbach) as part of the increasing demand for *mimesis*?¹⁷² Once it was enough to say what happened. Then you add what people looked like—with similes as in Homer. Then what they felt and said. Of course A’s speech contributes little to *our* knowledge of the human heart. We are *blasé* by now. But would not the original audience have been enabled by that speech to imagine his love more vividly?

I am similarly uneasy about your treatment of Soredamors and Alexandre (pp 34 sq).¹⁷³ These speeches may be, as you say (p. 36A) ‘unnecessary to the action’. But your view, unless I mistake your point, leaves them *inconsistent* with the action. How can it be an ‘interpretation’ of the factual story to make your protagonists say things for which that factual story gives no pretext? I am assuming—this may be where I’m wrong—that you reject Paris’s objection as irrelevant but accept his view that in fact there was no reason why S. and A. shd. not get married. But is this so? Their rank makes a marriage not impossible. Does it not also make it inconceivable that they shd. take the initiatives about their own marriages? The King and the Emperor will have their own plans. Even now princes are not v. free in such matters.

In all this I may seem to you—and you may be right—to be naively clinging to a modern idea of story telling. To some extent I am. The Scylla

of our approach to old texts is of course this naïf modernity: we go into the past as the most regrettable type of English tourist goes abroad, carrying his 'Englishry' with him and meaning by a 'good hotel' in Picardy that which is more like a hotel in Brighton. But there is Charybdis too—a tendency to forget that these foreigners, or these medievals, are after all human, to explain everything by dead disciplines (e.g. Rhetoric) even if this involves attributing to them strictly unimaginable states of mind. I think you and I are both in more danger from Charybdis than from Scylla. Hence, I am rather on my guard.

In the Erec-Mabonagrín episode (pp 50 sq.)¹⁷⁴ I myself can feel no tension, and hardly even a *conjointure*¹⁷⁵ between the fairy and the country element, and I wonder whether something simpler than *conjointure* is at work. In a savage story if the hero finds the home of the dead or of the gods it will be a Kraal with huts just like the Kraals of the poet and the audience. So Valhalla is a ring-giver's hall just like Cerdic's or Alfred's. Ovid's Olympus is v. like Rome. Nearly every Christian representation of Heaven makes it a court. The naïf negro representation in *Green Pastures* significantly substitutes an office and gives a God a roller-top desk instead of a throne.¹⁷⁶ This is not *conjointure*. It is, on whatever level of crudity or sophistication, seriousness or playfulness, the changeless and unavoidable procedure of human imagination. Is it not possible that the (to coin a word) *curialisation*¹⁷⁷ of the fairy element in *Erec* is in the same way inevitable? Once you make your *fée* a lady—and you must do that if she is to be a proper mistress for a knight—I suspect that a good deal more curialisation follows of itself.

A few marginalia:

P.23 para 2.1.1. *exposition*. Wd. 'exegesis' leave less room for misunderstanding?

P. 29 para 2. 1. 6. *bound by...the literal sense*. Wd. it be better to say 'limited to' or 'confined to'. You mean, don't you, that he could go beyond it? It sounds as if you meant he could contradict or throw it over.

P. 4119 *speaks of love*. Surely not of love (the passion) but of Love (the personification)?

P. 109 para 2 This, if I may say so, seems to me excellently said. P. 120 para 2. 1 13 *irrational*. Yes, but how terribly familiar in our actual experience!

P. 146 *ad fin.* When Ross lectured us on Aristotle he forbade us to translate *dojei!* by 'seems'. He said it always means 'is (popularly or universally) thought'.

I admired your *ordonnance*. In so many books I find myself saying 'Yes: I understand that sentence in itself, but why is he saying this just here?' You never once made me do so.

Now something quite different. I hear from J. A. W. Bennett that you think of withdrawing your essay from the collection he is editing on Malory.¹⁷⁸ I implore you to reconsider this. If you don't care to put in the one you originally intended, can you not let us have something else? A book on Malory without an essay by you will be so emphatically 'Hamlet without the Prince' that the rest of us wd. be embarrassed to appear in it. It will also be misinterpreted. Too many people in our profession look on scholarship as if it were a kind of politics. The book (without you) will be taken to mark the cleavage between a Vinaverian and an anti-Vinaverian 'school', or some such nonsense. The fact that Brewer argues against your decision and that my essay¹⁷⁹ (based on that old T.L.S. review)¹⁸⁰ dissents from you will be seized on. I shd. find this very distressing. Could you not let us have as your contribution a v. slightly modified re-print of the *Medium Aevum* article? I know that it's all in cap iii of the *Perspective*, but it is very well able to stand alone.

It has been a great privilege to read your MS. With kindest regards to Mrs. Vinaver and yourself.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

P. S. How about getting the TS of my essay from J.A.W.B. (or from me if you can wait till term and I am re-united to the carbons, which are at Cambridge) and writing an answer to it—or, if in any places you agree with me, a development from it? This wd. give the book a *symposiastic* quality. At any rate we cd. show our juniors—what they increasingly need to be shown—that disputation is not the same as quarrelling.

TO ROBERT M. METCALF JR (P):¹⁸¹

As from Magdalene College Cambridge

25 Aug 59

Dear Mr. Metcalf

I don't feel at all qualified to contribute to a 'master' list of writings. The languages I don't know are of course very much more numerous than those I know; and even in the languages I do know there are a great many books I have not read. And I rather doubt whether a list of masterpieces picked from all over the world—mostly, I presume to be read in translations?—is a v. useful thing.

I would rather see young men beginning from where they are and being led on from one thing to another: e.g. that Milton shd. lead them *either* to Virgil and Homer (and therefore to a really serious study of Latin or Greek) *or* to Dante (and therefore to a whole course of Medieval and Italian studies). That, after all, is how every educated person's development has actually come about.

The sort of culture one can get from the 100 or 1000 Best Books read in isolation from the societies and literatures that begot them seems to me like the sort of knowledge of Europe I shd. get from staying at big hotels in Paris, Berlin, Rome, etc. It wd. be far better to know intimately one little district, going from village to village, getting to know the local politics, jokes, wines, and cheeses. Or so it seems to me.

But here I go offering you advice, which you didn't ask for, and refusing that which you did! Forgive me, and believe me Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO EUGÈNE VINAVER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

26 Aug 59

My dear Vinaver–

You make far too much of something that was more of an honour than a task and more of a pleasure than either.

One thing I ought to have said in my last letter. Some of my difficulty in fully understanding parts of your argument may be neither your fault nor (in a way) mine. It may be due to ‘un-shared background’. You come to the subject, obviously, from a whole literature on the novel, especially ‘Form’ in the novel, of which I know hardly anything. It is therefore v. possible that many words, including ‘Form’, have overtones for you which they lack for me.

I am very, very glad that you are disposed to reconsider your decision about the J.A.W.B. collection. My own essay exists (a) In the TS which he, as editor, now has; (b) In two carbons and one illegible MS now at Cambridge. I can’t go over to Cambridge at present. You can therefore, if you follow the symposiastic idea, either ask J.A.W.B. to lend you his copy, *now*, or wait till term begins when I can send you one of the Cambridge carbons.

Have you read Tolkien’s lecture on *Fairy Tales* in the volume *Essays presented to Charles Williams*? Part of my case against the Celticists wd. be his maxim that ‘*motifs* are products of analysis’—not bricks out of which stories are put together but *entia rationis*¹⁸² into which we analyse them—rather like metrical feet or grammatical conjugations and declensions.

Does it ever occur to you that the procedure of the Celticists is really a response proving how well the ‘ferlies’¹⁸³ in the Romances work?¹⁸⁴ For the Celticist is saying ‘Hush! Stop! Here is something hidden. Behind this lies something far older, mistier, more barbaric, more momentous than you might suppose.’ * Is not this just the response the romancers intended? But when v. unimaginative people are thus, for once, trapped into a healthy and *naif* response, they mistake it for a scientific theory! Their quest for the hidden Pagan ritual is itself another romantic quest and gives just the same *sort* of pleasures as the romances they think they are explaining. The same holds for the Jungians.

None of this expects an answer—I’m ‘just talking’.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

* Or more briefly and far better, *numen inest*.[185](#)

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

The Kilns etc
Aug 26 [1959]

One more correction to *Miracles*.
P. 209 para 2. l 6 for *precious* read *previous*
C.S.L.

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

6 Sept 1959

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

Your italic typewriter is very pleasant to the eye. I have prayed for Paul and his Headmaster. Do not attach too much importance to the latter! I think H.Ms' influence on—and even knowledge of—their own schools is greatly exaggerated by a kind of romanticism. What really matters, for learning, is of course the immediate teacher. What matters for happiness and morals is the other boys.

My reason for not mentioning E. Underhill's *Worship*[186](#) was the silliest and most cogent in the world: I have not read it. You have no idea how many books written in this century are unknown to me. I believe she is a good author.

With all best wishes,
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MICHAEL EDWARDS (BOD):[187](#)

The Kilns,

Headington Quarry
Oxford

6 Sept 59

Dear Edwards

Thanks 1000 times and also for the admirable illustration. You are a chap! Anything from feeding a pet crocodile to entertaining a lunatic's cousin! I'll bear it in mind. Who would not?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns etc.

8 Sept 59

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

In answering Genia's letter I was concerned only with the questions she asked. That she described her problems as arising out of opinions she attributed to you was not relevant. I mean, it did not matter (for that purpose) whether she was giving a correct account of your vicar or not.

No one, I presume, can imagine life in the Glorified Body. On this, and on the distinction (in general) between belief and imagination, I have said all I can in *Miracles*.¹⁸⁸ Lor' bless me, I can picture v. few of the things I believe in—I can't picture will, thought, time, atoms, astronomical distances, New York, nor even (at the moment) my mother's face.

Your whole worry about the word *Christian* comes from ignoring the fact that words have different meanings in different contexts. The best parallel is the word *poet*. We can argue till the cows come home whether 'Pope is a poet.' On the other hand, a librarian, putting 'poets' in one shelf and prose writers in another, after a single glance at one page of Pope, classifies him as a 'poet'. In other words, the word has a deep, ambiguous,

disputable, and (for many purposes) useless, sense: also a shallow, clear, useful sense. So has the word 'Christian'. It is not for me to say who is a Christian in the first sense. In the second sense it seems to me more useful *not* to classify Quakers as Christian. But this is a linguistic, not a religious, question.

By the way, is it necessary to salvation, to charity, or to affection, that you and Genia should achieve precise verbal agreement on these points? If not, why worry? Live and let live. 'Take life easy as the leaves grow in the tree.'¹⁸⁹ There is, if you will forgive me for saying so, a self-tormenting and a mutually tormenting element in both of you.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

The first radio performance of The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, dramatized by Lance Sieveking, was broadcast during the BBC Home Service's 'Children's Hour' in six 40-minute parts between 5.15 and 5.55 p.m. on successive Friday evenings from 18 September to 23 October 1959.

TO BERNARD ACWORTH (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

18 Sept 59

Dear Acworth—

It was a great pleasure to hear from you again. I don't see any clear grounds on which the drawing of the D.A.P.¹⁹⁰ can be pronounced immoral. I think one may be right in opposing a scheme and yet also right in enjoying some benefit it produces for oneself. On active service one might surely oppose a strategy which put one's own ship or unit in a 'cushy' job, and yet enjoy the cushiness? One wd. have *more* scruple about enjoying it if one had argued *for* the scheme.

I am most interested to hear of your young biologist; and his experience impresses one again with the suspicious *disingenuousness* of orthodox biologists.

By the way I saw last week the Hell scene from Shaw's *Man and Superman*.¹⁹¹ What awful thin stuff all the Life Force worship is when you hear it on the real stage. The Devil stole the whole scene. At first I thought this was because he was the best actor and was inclined to criticise the producer for distributing the parts badly. But later on I suspected that Shaw himself has made the result inevitable by (unintentionally) giving his devil sense to talk while his Don Juan talks gas.¹⁹²

About my (very happy) marriage, do you know the story? I married my wife at her bedside in hospital when she was to all appearances certainly dying of cancer in the bones. The young priest who married us (I knew that strange things had been done through him before) laid his hands on her and said the prayers for the sick. Then—it was unbelievable—nature went into reverse. The totally disintegrated *femur* slowly rebuilt itself. Now (2 years later) except that she limps, she is living a normal life, gardening, shooting, shopping, and walking. The doctors themselves used—tho' not so seriously as we would, perhaps—the word 'miraculous'. May we have your prayers? For of course the sword of Damocles always hangs over our heads.

My brother, who still lives with us, is at present away in Ireland. He remembers you very warmly and wd. join me in greetings if he were at home.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD LOFSTROM (P):

As from Magdalene College, Cambridge

20 Sept 59

Dear Mr. Lofstrom

I think your comparison between the self and the telescope is singularly accurate. The instrument vanishes from consciousness just in so far it is perfected. But *until* then we must attend to it: otherwise we shall be like the

man who mistakes a smudge on the glass for a gigantic animal on the Moon. You are still in my prayers.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

21 Sept. [1959]

1. Athens–Rhodes–Crete 3–14 April best for us: 11–22 impossible.
2. Can you come and dine here on Sat. Oct 3rd.

Love,

J.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns etc 21 Sept [1959]

Dear Mary Willis–

In great haste–indeed no more than a scrape of the pen to express my sympathy. House-hunting is gruelling and heart-breaking work at the best of times. I'm sorry I missed Fr. Louis. How pleased you must be about selling that article! All well here. If *I* got a crocodile skin I'd sell it! Blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

As from Magdalene College, Cambridge

24 September 1959

Dear Father Milward

Don't give that book another thought.¹⁹³ It isn't an allegory. I was trying to tell a story. The main themes are 1. Natural affection, if left to

mere nature, easily becomes a special kind of hatred. 2. God is, to our natural affections, the ultimate object of jealousy.

I don't think, you know, that our two minds communicate at all easily. We always misunderstand one another. You are in my prayers and I hope I am in yours. That is much better than postal correspondence!

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO K. C. THOMPSON (W):[194](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
11 Oct. 1959

Dear Mr. Thompson

Thank you for kindly sending us a copy of *I Paul*.[195](#) You were set a difficult job to do and so far as I can see you have done it very skilfully. Your commission was in one way a compliment from the R.C.'s tho' rather the same sort of compliment the Israelites paid their Egyptian neighbours over all that jewelry![196](#)

I'm not quite happy about para 2 on p. 63. Anyone cd take A.V. 'in high places'[197](#) to mean 'in the highest (social or political) positions'. But I suppose, your St. Paul was talking Greek. Could any one so take ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις? Or could he even take πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας[198](#) to mean *human* wickedness at all? The soldier would have heard lots about aerial daemons all his life.

I hope the book will have a great success.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):[199](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
[14 October 1959]

The four loves are of course Affection, Friendship, Eros, and Charity. They have often been dealt with separately by authors so different as Ovid,

St Bernard, and Stendhal, and usually, one or other of them is treated as the only love worth much consideration. Dr. Lewis is more a map-maker than a partisan. He marks frontiers and trade-routes and tries to do justice to all.

Three quotations used by the author indicate the principles that govern his survey: from St John, 'God is Love',²⁰⁰ from Donne 'That our affections kill us not nor die',²⁰¹ and from Denis de Rougemont 'Love ceases to be a demon when he ceases to be a god.'²⁰²

On the three natural loves much demolition and reconstruction has proved necessary. Affection had to be disentangled from a suffocating overgrowth of sentimentality, and Eros from some misplaced solemnities. Friendship needed defence against modern neglect and even suspicion.

Dr. Lewis's power of expressing easily thoughts not very easy in themselves has never been more fully exhibited.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
18 Oct. 59

Dear Mary Willis

Well, thank goodness your move is now over.²⁰³ A 'bed-sitter', as we call them over here, has certainly its drawbacks. In England, where most houses have no central heating, it has one compensation—that of going to bed and getting up in a warm room. But that, I suppose, would be so anyway in America. I am very glad to hear of Lorraine's being kind and helpful.

Will you redouble your prayers for us? Apparently the wonderful recovery Joy made in 1957 was only a reprieve, not a pardon. The last X Ray check reveals cancerous spots returning in many of her bones. There seems to be some hope of a few years life still and there are still things the doctors can do. But they are all in the nature of 'rearguard actions'. We are in retreat. The tide has turned. Of course God can do again what He did before. The sky is not now so dark as it was when I married her in hospital. Her courage is wonderful and she gives me more support than I can give her.

The dreadful thing, as you know, is the waking each morning—the moment at which it all flows back on one.

Yours

Jack

TO EUGÈNE VINAVER (W):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge.

21 Oct. 1959

Dear Vinaver

I think this open letter is one of the very best things you have ever done—and to have occasioned it is perhaps the most useful thing I ever did.²⁰⁴ There is really no difference left between us about Malory. Further discussion would lead us into a different field. If we disagreed—and I am not quite sure whether we should—it would be about the meaning of words like Art and Nature. It's amusing, by the way, that you and Proust move the idea of 'genius' back much nearer to the Medieval and Renaissance meaning—something about other than the man.²⁰⁵ I'm not at all sure you are wrong. Though we shd. have to inquire whether the otherness between the *moi profond* and the common *moi* is a constant. The gap may be greater in some writers than in others.²⁰⁶ Of course I am completely with you in opposing the identification of the two taken for granted by many critics. I made my critical *enfances* by opposing it in *The Personal Heresy*.²⁰⁷

It is v. appropriate that a book on a medieval author shd. contain an *estриф* or *débat*.²⁰⁸

When you write to J.A.W.B. will you be so kind as to tell him (with my authority—which is really *your* authority gratefully accepted) to substitute 'accused of' for 'convicted' on p. 6 of my essay.²⁰⁹

My duty to Mrs. Vinaver.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):²¹⁰

Magdalene College,

Oxford.

22 Oct. 1959

Dear Gibb

*Sunt bona, sunt etiam mediocria, sunt mala plura.*²¹¹ I think Milton and you were being rather bat's eyed in some places but to the point in others. I enclose my emendations, concessions, and resistances. I also return your letter of reference. You read my notes as footnotes to yours, hence the numerals.

Now as regards my emendations, will you be so kind as to type them and send them to Harcourt Brace for the American edition. Otherwise we shall create a 'textual problem'.

Please thank Milton for sending me de Chardin's book,²¹² which I want to read.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

(1)²¹³ There is no suggestion on pp. 83 sq that *friend* and *ally* are synonyms. The whole point is that, tho' a Friend will at need be also an Ally, such services are 'not the stuff of friendship' (p. 80). What can you and Milton have been dreaming of? Still we can make it easier. For the existing last 3 lines of p. 87 read— [']closer than a brother'. But when we speak thus we are using *friend* to mean 'ally'. In ordinary usage *friend* means, or should mean, more than that. A Friend will, to be sure, prove himself to be also an ally when alliance becomes necessary, will lend or give when we are in²¹⁴

(2)²¹⁵ Of course we cd. have community of interest without Friendship. What has this to do with my statement that we can't have Friendship without community of interest. You can often have A without B where you can't have B without A: fire without smoke but not smoke without fire: a ground floor without a first floor but not *vice-versa*.

(3)²¹⁶ Already dealt with on p. 80 para 3 'no Friendship can arise—though Appreciation of course may.²¹⁷

(4)²¹⁸ I don't understand this.

(5)²¹⁹ No (6)²²⁰ Disagree. There can be real F. between thieves, Teddy Boys, and bullies.

(7)²²¹ Well of course it *could* be. It needn't.

(8)²²² V. well, we'll put it in. On p. 81 para 1, l 7 between *or later*. And *But this* inset And, conversely, erotic love may lead to Friendship between

the lovers.²²³

(9)²²⁴ No, no, no. Falling in love does not create but transforms our sexuality. The sexuality (a 'need' *par excellence*) was there before. We weren't eunuchs.²²⁵

(10)²²⁶ Let 'em 'doubt'. All this needs to be said.

(11)²²⁷ Thanks. You have a real point here. Between paras 1 and 2 on p. 128 inset (as a short, separate para) the following: To say this is not to say that there is any virtue or wisdom in making a marriage that involves such misery. There is no wisdom or virtue in seeking unnecessary martyrdom or deliberately courting persecution, yet it is, none the less, the persecuted or martyred Christian in whom the pattern of the Master is most unambiguously realised. So, in these terrible marriages, once they have come about, the 'Headship' of the husband, if only he can sustain it, is most Christ-like.²²⁸

(12)²²⁹ Tut-tut!

(13)²³⁰ No matter (14)²³¹ Do anything you like (in reason) to the punctuation.

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
22 Oct. 1959

Dear Chad

Do exactly as you choose about Mrs. R's request. The talks have now been made into a book (*The Four Loves*) which is already in the hands of Harcourt Brace for the American edition. Wd. it be a good thing if you get their advice?

The blow has fallen. Joy's last x-ray check reveals that cancer has returned in several parts of the skeleton. There are still measures that can be taken: but they are in the nature of rear-guard actions. Of course the prospect is no darker than it was in 1957. But dare one hope for a second resurrection? Pray for us.

Yours
Jack

TO RHONA BODLE (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
27 Oct. 1959

Dear Miss Bodle,

It was nice to hear from you again. Of course you will have my friend's prayers—you always have—in the extremely delicate and important work you are doing. God-children are a terrible problem. One seems to have promised what, if the parents are the wrong sort, one cannot perform.

Will you also pray for me. My wife (I married in 1957) has cancer.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

29 Oct 59

Dear Gibb

Thanks. I await further protests from Milton.²³² Did I ask you to put in the dedication TO CHAD WALSH? If not, I hope it is not too late to do so. As to the Brace collection, it was their idea, not mine!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

As from Magdalene College, Cambridge

8 Nov 59

Dear Gibb

Fri. 20th wd. suit me. We could lunch in Combination Room and talk afterwards, if that fits in for you. What to do with Screwtape's after-dinner

speech is a question that needs some thought.²³³ I suppose a new edn. of the original papers, adding this, and entitled *The Whole Screwtape* might kill the sale of the old book?

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P): TS

74/59
The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
9th November 1959.

Dear Mac,
One or other of us (far more probably me) is muddled. I intended *The Four Loves* to be dedicated to C. Walsh, *not* the *World's L.N.*
Yours

TO DEREK BREWER (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

16 Nov 1959

Clive Dear Derek

1. Yes. A Jonsonian masque with a good introd, packing tight all we now know about masques, wd. be an excellent choice.

2. No. Haven't you discovered yet that I'm not a Scholar but only a Learned Man. *

Lor' bless you, I can't *edit* any more than I can audit. I'm not accurate. Sorry.

It was lovely to see you and I hope you'll come again, some night when I'm fully free.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

* A Cambridge don asked me the other day whether the last syllables of *polymath* and *aftermath* were derived from the same word!

TO HUGH KILMER (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

18 Nov 1959

Dear Kilmer

I meant only to deal with that particular argument, which, as you rightly say, has been used by Fundamentalists (and Calvinists) as well as by Rome. I was not proposing a discussion on the Roman position in general. Indeed if Faith (*proprement dite*) in the Church of Rome only comes by supernatural gift, there is not much room for discussion.

All the best.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOY LEWIS (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

19 Nov. [1959]

Joan and Stanley *can* come,²³⁴ so if only G. Watson²³⁵ will play we're now fixed.²³⁶

I was kept up late last night by a fool of a former chaplain to the College who brought some hobble-de-hoys of schoolboys to see me. As they had nothing to say to me and I had nothing to say to them, this meant our all listening to the said chaplain. His name, believe me or believe me not, is TIBBATTS.²³⁷ Sounds like a character out of the Peter Rabbit books.

Cold much better in general, but left ear, tonsil, and gland all v. sore. I want to be fussed over, in fact. And 'want must be my master'.

A warm day. Guest-night to night which I wish it weren't. Do you know, I find I really do want to see the new dresses! Love J.

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

25 Nov 59

My dear Roger

In a sense it might be said that Joy 'is' not ill at present. But the last X ray check revealed that the cancer in the bones is awake again. This last check is the only one we approached without dread—her health seemed so complete. It is like being recaptured by the giant when you have passed every gate and are almost out of sight of his castle. Whether a second miracle will be vouchsafed us, or, if not, when the sentence will be inflicted, remains uncertain. It is quite possible she may be able to do the Greek trip next spring. Pray for us.

I have always wanted to have the Fifth Book of Odes, having seen it years ago. The preface, with its *Grosspaniandrumpinacotheca* and Tomirotius is an absolute delight. What men there were in those days! Even in a university it wd. now be hard to collect a dozen people who can even appreciate this book.²³⁸ Very, very many thanks.

Yours
Jack

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (L):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

3 December 1959

Dear Master,

I have learned now that while those who speak about one's miseries usually hurt one, those who keep silence hurt more.²³⁹ They help to increase the sense of *general* isolation which makes a sort of fringe to the sorrow itself. You know what cogent reason I have to feel *with* you: but I can feel *for* you too. I know that what you are facing must be worse than what I must shortly face myself, because your happiness has lasted so much longer and is therefore so much more intertwined with your whole life. As Scott said in like case 'What am I to do with that daily portion of my thoughts which has for so many years been hers?'²⁴⁰ People talk as if grief were just a feeling—as if it weren't the continually renewed shock of setting out again and again on familiar roads and being brought up short by the grim frontier post that now blocks them. I, to be sure, believe there is something beyond it: but the moment one tries to use that as a consolation (that is not its function) the belief crumbles. It is quite useless knocking at the door of Heaven for earthly comfort: it's not the sort of comfort they supply there.

You are probably very exhausted physically. Hug that and all the little indulgences to which it entitles you. I think it is tiny little things which (next to the very greatest things) help most at such a time.

I have myself twice known, after a loss, a strange excited (but utterly un-spooky) sense of the person's presence all about me. It may be a pure hallucination. But the fact that it always goes off after a few weeks proves nothing either way.

I wish I had known your wife better. But she has a bright place in my memory. It was so reassuring to the Oxford deserter to meet someone from L.M.H.²⁴¹ and be able to talk about 'the Hippo'.²⁴² She will be very greatly missed—on her own account, quite apart from any sympathy with you—by every fellow of this College.

And poor Horace²⁴³ too—'the single talent well employed'.²⁴⁴ I shall not be at the funeral. You can understand and forgive my desire, now, to spend every possible moment at home. Forgive me if I have said anything amiss in this letter. I am too much involved myself to practise any skill.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

4 Dec 1959

Dear Gibb

1. All clear. Fire ahead about *Screwtape*. I ought to be able to let you have MS. of new preface before the end of the coming vacation.²⁴⁵ How long do you want it? I feel inclined to spread myself a bit.

2. Please send the proofs of the *4 Loves* to my Oxford address. It wd. be best if they did not arrive there till Monday next, so as to make sure they are not forwarded here by mistake.

3. *Mea culpa*. I forgot all about the paperback *Miracles* and have lost your letter. I suggest: This is neither an abridgement nor a reprint but a new edition. The author has re-written a large part of Chapter? and corrected all errors that he could find elsewhere.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

Magdalene

4 Dec [1959]

Addendum—You will of course let me have proofs of the paper-back *Miracles*

C.S.L.

TO DAN TUCKER (BOD):²⁴⁶

As from Magdalene College, Cambridge

8 Dec 1959

Dear Mr. Tucker—

Thank you for your most interesting letter of the 3d. The devil about trying to write satire now-a-days is that reality constantly outstrips you. Ought we to be surprised at the approach of ‘scientocracy’? In every age those who wish to be our masters, if they have any sense, secure our

obedience by offering deliverance from our dominant fear. When we fear wizards the Medicine Man can rule the whole tribe. When we fear a stronger tribe our best warrior becomes King. When all the world fears Hell the Church becomes a theocracy. 'Give up your freedom and I will make you safe' is, age after age, the terrible offer. In England the omnipotent Welfare State has triumphed because it promised to free us from the fear of poverty.

Mind you, the bargain is sometimes, for a while, kept. A warrior king may really save a tribe from extinction: the Welfare State, at a cost, has come nearer than any society ever did before to giving every man a square meal and a good house to eat it in. The fears from which scientocracy offers to free us are rational ones. We *shall* fairly soon hopelessly overpopulate this planet and that population will be as defective in quality as excessive in quantity. But we cannot trust these New Masters any more than their predecessors. Do you see any solution?

A hundred years ago we all thought that Democracy was it. Neither you nor I probably think so now. It neither allows the ordinary man to control legislation nor qualifies him to do so. The real questions are settled in secret and the newspapers keep us occupied with largely imaginary issues. And this is all the easier because democracy always in the end destroys education. It did so for you sometime ago and is now doing so for us (see a speech of Screwtape's wh. will soon appear in the *Sat. Evening Post*). I am, you see, at my wit's end on such matters. Only a power higher than man's can really find a way out. Odd to compare humanity's political inefficiency with its wonderful success in the arts.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

P.S. Has a book called *The Phenomenon of Man* by a more or less renegade Jesuit (de Chardin) come your way yet? Sir J. Huxley gives it a preface as if it was an absolute new Gospel. It seems to me both commonplace and horrifying.

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford

8 Dec 1959

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen—

I am very glad to hear all your good—indeed excellent—news. So is my brother, who has read your letter.

My news is very difficult. The last X-ray check-up which Joy had was the first which we approached without dread: she seemed so obviously in complete health. The photographs told a different tale. The disease is returning. Not in one place but in many. It is true that the situation is not (yet) as bad as it was in the spring of '57 when her life was not worth six weeks' purchase. But her recovery then was seemingly miraculous. Dare one hope again? Have we ever heard of a miracle repeated? At present she is to all appearance quite well: we shouldn't know she had cancer if we didn't know. The condemned cell *looks* like an ordinary and comfortable sitting room. I know we shall have your prayers. Forgive me for writing so egotistical a letter. One of the drawbacks about living in a tragedy is that one can't very well see out of the windows. Pray particularly that our faith may grow stronger and stronger.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

10 Dec 1959

Dear Fowler

Thanks, greatly. The Spenser article²⁴⁷ confirms the impression increasingly made on me while writing lectures on F.Q. last term:²⁴⁸ that of

its amazing close-wovenness. Damme, you can't pick up a line anywhere but it starts another line wriggling ten cantos away.

Most of what you say seems to me true. Somehow I don't believe in *Paridell* or *Helen-whore*.²⁴⁹ On *Noctante* (p. 589), more relevant perhaps than *noctare* wd. be the *pernoctare* wh. must, I suppose, lie behind our Oxford 'pernoctate', which does mean 'to spend the night'.²⁵⁰ I think I remember that in appropriate contexts (Ovid & Propertius) *nox* itself means 'night spent by two lovers in one bed'. Hence, of the mistress *fallere promissam noctem*.²⁵¹ This is all from memory, so it may be wrong. Of course I'm only seeking authorities: the *fact* that *Noctante* is what you say is surely quite certain? The only impropriety I see in your article is on p. 597—*reductum* for *reductio*. A slip of course, your pen anticipated the *-um* of *absurdum*. But how did either you or the editor let it through?

By the way isn't S's attitude to the Courtly Love *mystique*, not rejecting but purging, beautifully focussed by the touch that the very reason why Britomart wd. be deceived by Malecasta's *feigned* love-pain²⁵² was that she herself so well knew the real one!

Sorry my OHEL is such a nuisance.²⁵³ I only once detected a pupil offering me some one else (Elton)²⁵⁴ as his own work. I told him I was not a detective nor even a schoolmaster, nor a nurse, and that I absolutely refused to take any precaution against this puerile trick: that I'd as soon think it my business to see that he washed behind his ears or wiped his bottom. He went down of his own accord the next week and I never saw him again. I think you ought to make a general announcement of that sort.

You must not waste your time constantly reading me & Dowden & Churton Collins as a sort of police measure. It is bad for them to think this is 'up to you'. Flay them alive if you *happen* to detect them: but don't let them feel that you are a safeguard against the effects of their own idleness.

What staggers me is how any man can prefer the galley-slave labour of transcription to the freeman's work of attempting an essay on his own.

You asked me before about II. i.57–8 and I did not know. I still don't.

Nor can I explain *Hudibras*.²⁵⁵ I don't think that many Spenserian names are to be explained by syllabic analysis of the HudiBRAS type.

Good hunting!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO THOMASINE (L/WHL):[256](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
14 Dec. 1959

Dear Thomasine,

It is very hard to give any general advice about writing. Here's my attempt.

(1) Turn off the Radio.

(2) Read all the good books you can, and avoid nearly all magazines.

(3) Always write (and read) with the ear, not the eye. You shd. hear every sentence you write as if it was being read aloud or spoken. If it does not sound nice, try again.

(4) Write about what really interests you, whether it is real things or imaginary things, and nothing else. (Notice this means that if you are interested *only* in writing you will never be a writer, because you will have nothing to write about...) (5) Take great pains to be *clear*. Remember that though you start by knowing what you mean, the reader doesn't, and a single ill-chosen word may lead him to a total misunderstanding. In a story it is terribly easy just to forget that you have not told the reader something that he needs to know—the whole picture is so clear in your own mind that you forget that it isn't the same in his.

(6) When you give up a bit of work don't (unless it is hopelessly bad) throw it away. Put it in a drawer. It may come in useful later. Much of my best work, or what I think my best, is the re-writing of things begun and abandoned years earlier.

(7) Don't use a typewriter. The noise will destroy your sense of rhythm, which still needs years of training.

(8) Be sure you know the meaning (or meanings) of every word you use.

TO DON LUIGI PEDROLLO (V):

E Collegio Stae Mariae Magdalenae apud Cantabrigienses
xv Dec. mcmlix

Reverende Pater

Gratias cordialiter ago pro benevolis tuis litteris. Scito domum vestram quotidie in orationibus meis nominari. Et tu orationibus pro nobis insta. Nunc enim, post biennium remissionis redit uxoris meae letalis morbus. Placeat Domino, ut quodcunque de corpore voluerit, integri maneant animi amborum; ut fides intacta nos corroboret, contritio emolliat, pax laetificat. Et hoc usque ad nunc fit; neque faciliter crederes quanta gaudia inter medias aerumnas nonnumquam sentiamus. Quid mirum? Nonne consolationem lugentibus pollicitus est? Vale.

C. S. Lewis

The College of St Mary Magdalene Cambridge
15th December 1959

Reverend Father

I send you my cordial thanks for your kind letter.

Be assured that your House is daily named in my prayers. And do you persevere in prayers for us. For now, after two years' remission, my wife's mortal illness has returned. May it please the Lord that, whatever is His will for the body, the minds of both of us may remain unharmed; that faith unimpaired may strengthen us, contrition soften us and peace make us joyful.

And that, up till now, has happened; nor would you readily believe what joys we sometimes experience in the midst of troubles. What wonder? For has He not promised comfort to those who mourn?²⁵⁷

Farewell.

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
15 Dec. 1959

My dear Gibb

I return to-day, under separate cover, the *dejecta membra*²⁵⁸ (relax!—I know it doesn't scan in that form) of the original edition of *Miracles*.²⁵⁹ I have finished the preface to the new *Screwtape* and will send it you as soon as I can get it typed. And now, about the new *Screwtape* itself.

I consider *The Screwtape Letters*, whatever addition follows those words, to be a fatal title. How accurate customers are likely to be in such matters may be gauged by your amusing story of the *Screwed-up* letters.²⁶⁰ All except bibliographers will think it to be simply the old book: the rest will never even notice the sub-titular matter. Even many editors will make the same mistake and give it no reviews, regarding it as a mere reprint. Thus the real novelties of this edition will be deprived of all selling power. I suggest

Screwtape proposes a Toast with
The Screwtape Letters—

thus making the new part the title and the old the sub-title. Then, list of contents:

Preface

Preface to the Screwtape Letters

The S. Letters

S. proposes a Toast

This seems to me vital. A few years ago Dent reissued an old poem of mine with a new preface.²⁶¹ It was reviewed nowhere and sold, I think, well under 100 copies.

I await your views.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

Sorry if I seem to be trying to teach you your own business, but you know what authors say—that whatever else publishers may be right about they are *never* right about titles!

TO LANCE SIEVEKING (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
18 Dec. 1959

Dear Sieveking

(Why do you 'Dr.' me? Had we not dropped the honorifics?) As things worked out, I wasn't free to hear a single instalment of our serial except the first. What I did hear, I approved. I shd. be glad for the series to be given abroad.

But I am absolutely opposed—adamant isn't in it!—to a TV. version. Anthropomorphic animals, when taken out of narrative into actual visibility, always turn into buffoonery or nightmare. At least, with photography.²⁶² Cartoons (if only Disney did not combine so much vulgarity with his genius!) wd. be another matter.²⁶³ A human, pantomime, Aslan wd. be to me blasphemy. All the best.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
20 Dec. 59

Dear Gibb

I enclose corrected proof of *The Four Loves* and TS of the Screwtape Preface.

I'm still thinking about the title. If you don't like my last suggestion, how about THE WHOLE SCREWTAPE/CONTAINING/THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS (date)/SCREWTAPE PROPOSES A TOAST (date)? Only the first line wd. appear on the spine.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

We shall pledge you when we uncork that bottle a few days hence.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

22 Dec 1959

Dear Mary Willis

I have got your note. It finds me with as clear a conscience about correspondence as a not very methodical, nor leisured, man ever has. I am pretty sure I have written to you since I last heard from you. Let us, however, make a compact that, if we are both alive next year, whenever we write to one another it shall *not* be at Christmas time. That period is becoming a sort of nightmare to me—it means endless quill-driving!

Despite the terrible news of which I told you, we hobble along wonderfully well. I am ashamed (yet in a way pleased) to tell you that it is Joy who supports me rather than I her. I do not forget your prayers and am most grateful for them.

I hope you are now fully settled into your new quarters and find them tolerable? Also that ‘Brother Ass’ is behaving better.²⁶⁴

Christmas will be over by the time you get this, but you know you will have been (as always) in my thoughts and prayers. Let us hope that both of us will have been given Grace, amidst all this ghastly commercial racket of ‘Xmas’, to enter into the feast of the Nativity: the racket has nearly smothered it!

Yours
Jack

TO SOPHIA STORR (L):²⁶⁵

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
24 Dec. 1959

No, of course it was not unconscious. So far as I can remember it was not at first intentional either. That is, when I started *The Lion, Witch and Wardrobe* I don’t think I foresaw what Aslan was going to do and suffer. I think He just insisted on behaving in His own way. This of course I did understand and the whole series became Christian.

But it is not, as some people think, an *allegory*. That is, I don’t say ‘Let us represent Christ as Aslan.’ I say, ‘Supposing there was a world like

Narnia, and supposing, like ours, it needed redemption, let us imagine what sort of Incarnation and Passion and Resurrection Christ would have there.' See?

I think this is pretty obvious if you take all the seven Narnian books as a whole. In *The Magician's Nephew* Aslan creates Narnia. In *Prince Caspian* the old stories about Him are beginning to be disbelieved. At the end of the *Dawn Treader* He appears as the Lamb. His three replies to Shasta suggest the Trinity.²⁶⁶ In *The Silver Chair* the old king is raised from the dead by a drop of Aslan's blood. Finally in the *Last Battle* we have the reign of anti-Christ (the ape), the end of the world, and the Last Judgement.

TO DONOVAN AYLARD (W): TS

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
24 Dec. 1959.

Dear Mr. Aylard

Yes! my handwriting is awful. It used to be nice but my muscles have stiffened up and the strokes no longer come out as I intend.

I give 'this generation' all I can in the way of books and articles. Particular articles by request are not usually the good ones: and, you know, I should reach more readers through other organs than your paper. I hope this doesn't sound stand-offish or conceited, for it is not meant to be. It is really common sense to speak where one can be most widely heard.

I agree that drama is a good medium for our purpose. In this country Dorothy Sayers' broadcast set of plays on the life and death of Our Lord (*The Man Born to be King*) did a great deal of good. I don't attempt this form myself because any talent I may have is narrative, not dramatic.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

25th December 1959

Dear Joan Lancaster,
Many thanks for your card; I wish you all possible happiness in the coming year.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis²⁶⁷

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

Christmas Day [25 December, 1959]

Dear Gibb

Now that you put it to me, I accept your objection to my first proposal about the title.²⁶⁸ My intention was—or I hope it was—not to produce a deception in our favour but to avoid a deception of the opposite sort. Still, it wd. certainly have been censured on the grounds you mention.

I am glad you approve *The Whole S. Omne tulit punctum*,²⁶⁹ I think: for *whole* implies both that you have had some already and that you are now getting more. Also has a pleasant echo of Elizabethan titles like *The Whole Contention of York & Lancaster*.²⁷⁰

I don't think the finality matters: for (a) I am v. unlikely to use S. again, and (b) If I do, it only means a future problem about titles which, I have no doubt, we could solve between us. (We'd point out in the preface to that very hypothetical work that devils are notoriously liars).

Perhaps my view about publishers' titles is biased by the absurd stunt titles wh. Eyre and Spottiswoode force my brother to give to his French historical books. I've also an old grudge against the Clarendon Press for making me call my first book *The Allegory of Love* when I wanted a sober academic title like *The Allegorical Love Poem*.

I have no objection to being 'lectured on morals'. Hang it all I've done that v. thing to others on a pretty large scale and it wd. be hard if I resented the opposite process! In a few hours I shall drink either to Gibbs and Godliness or Jocelyn and Justice in a glass of your own wine.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JESSIE M. WATT (W): PC

Christmas 1959

Thanks v. much, and herewith our greetings. We never needed the prayers of our friends more. The tide has turned and the latest X-ray check reveals that my wife's trouble is all coming back. The cat had let the mouse run so far away that it thought it had escaped...

C. S. Lewis

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Christmas Day 1959

Dear Milwood

I hope my last letter to you did not sound chilling: still less (heaven help us!) as if I were offended by criticism. I think the chief reason why I am less disposed than you for large-scale discussion by letter is the difference of our ages. In youth we conduct (at least I did) long and deep disputations through the post. It is indeed a most valuable part of our education. We put into it quite as much thought and labour as wd. go to writing a book. But later, when one has become a writer of books, it is hard to keep it up. One can't fill one's leisure with the v. same activity which is one's main work. And in my case not only the mind but the *hand* needs rest. Penmanship is increasingly laborious, and the results (as you see) increasingly illegible!

If you sometimes read into my books what I did not know I had put there, neither of us need be surprised, for greater readers have doubtless done the same to far greater authors. Shakespeare wd., I suspect, read with astonishment what Goethe, Coleridge, Bradley and Wilson Knight have found in him! Perhaps a book *ought* to have more meanings than the writer intends? But then the writer will not necessarily be the best person with whom to discuss them.

You are in my daily prayers. Will you pray much for me at present? The cancer from which my wife was (as I believe, miraculously) delivered 2½ years ago, when death in a few weeks was predicted, is returning. Can one without presumption ever ask for a *second* miracle? The prophet turned

back the shadow for Hezekiah once:²⁷¹ not twice. Lazarus, raised from the dead,²⁷² presently died again.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

P.S. I never thought of it before, but how Lazarus was sacrificed. To have it all to do over again—*bis Stygios innare lacus!*²⁷³

TO MARTYN SKINNER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

31 Dec 1959

My dear Skinner—

You must have had hard thoughts of me by now. But it was harder than you could have guessed to qualify myself for writing you a letter about the *Return* Pt II. For the story is closely enough knit to make II unintelligible without I, and though I had II at Cambridge, I was here. And when I had got home I had a good many priorities (reviews articles etc) to get through before I cd. read I and II through continuously—the only kind of reading that would be any good.

In Pt II²⁷⁴ two passages stand out as perhaps your highwater mark. One is the snow-scape in I 2–25 (the wings and stage image is especially admirable), and the other, of course, the wood-carving in VI 59–67 (last line of that stanza, a corker. Also, that of 65).

As one expected there are minor felicities all over the place: ‘life-till-death’ (I, 32), ‘craters on the Somme or on the moon’ (I 39), the whole of II, 38, and 67, the ‘barbed months’ (III, 68), ‘pins and needles etc’ (III 79), ‘lively’ and ‘deadly earnest’ (IV 2: *bravissimo*), ‘off-female face’ (IV, 35: why did no one ever think of that before?), the two stanzas on Siberia (V 30, 31), Merlin’s ‘eye-beards’ (62), the bit about modern poetry (VI, 11)—

and many more. Does the expression *trompe l'oeil*²⁷⁵ occur a bit too often, or have I imagined this?

The episodes which make up Pt II are all, in themselves, good, and you manage the Ovidian or Ariostovian switch-over well. The old substitution trick of Leo for Mary works. The appearance and impact of Mary at Arthur's HQ. is v. impressive. Morgana and Martha are always good fun.

But it wd. be dishonest not to add that after a continuous reading of both Parts I have a grumble. Is it not high time that the people on the right side *did* something? Their actions so far are all dictated by the enemy. Of course, I speak in ignorance of what yet may come. It is just possible that when our friends take the initiative you may make it so splendid that we shall feel it was worth waiting for. But you haven't a moment (that is to say, a stanza) to lose.

In characterisation you do better. Mary and George are alive and lovable; so in a less degree is Leo. But Merlin is to me less vivid than Martha, Morgana, and even Hengist. And Arthur? You haven't made him *anything* yet. The canto (Pt I, vii)²⁷⁶ where you allow him to speak is the weakest in the whole poem. This you *must* re-cast. What demon persuaded you to make him talk like a leading article? And what demon led you merely to tell us about Matthew Bennet instead of *presenting* him in speech and action?

I'm going to make a guess what the demon was. The *Don Juan* element²⁷⁷ in your style works admirably for your own satiric comments *and also* for dialogue between vulgar and depraved characters. And there is a second style (your own) into which you can rise at any moment; usually for ethical *gnomae* or descriptions of nature (your sense of natural *lighting* is your great gift). But what you haven't so far got is a style in which great and wise and almost numinous persons can speak.

Thus all the good dialogue goes to the enemies. You must *not* keep your high poetry for yourself. Merlin must speak like one whose father was an aerial daemon, and A.²⁷⁸ like one who has been in Avalon. I won't believe you are incapable of this. I don't think you have faced up to the necessity. You tell us (and very well) in Pt I, v, 50–53²⁷⁹ how your A. affected George. But mustn't you make him affect us in the same way?

Or have I quite misunderstood your air?

Remember me, with my duty, to your wife. And may we have your prayers? The last X-rays show that the cancer of the bone from which Joy

was (as it seemed, miraculously) recovered in 1957 is returning.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

1960

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT*:¹

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Sir,—

Nearly everything I have ever read about spelling reform assumes from the outset that it is necessary for us all to spell alike. Why?

We got on for centuries without an agreed common orthography. Most men of my age remember censoring the letters of soldiers and know that even the wildest idiosyncrasies of spelling hardly ever made them unintelligible. Printing houses will always have, as they have now, their own rules, whether authors like them or not. Scholars, who know the ancestry of the words they use, will generally spell them accordingly. A few hard words will still have to be learned by everyone. But for the rest, who would be a penny the worse if *though* and *tho*, *existence* and *existance*, *sieze*, *seize* and *seeze* were all equally tolerated?

If our spelling were either genuinely phonetic or genuinely etymological, or if any reform that made it either the one or the other were worth the trouble, it would be another matter. As things are, surely Liberty is the simple and inexpensive ‘Reform’ we need? This would save children and teachers thousands of hours’ work. It would also force those to whom applications for jobs are made to exercise their critical faculties on the logic and vocabulary of the candidate instead of tossing his letter aside with the words ‘can’t even spell.’

C. S. Lewis

TO RICHARD WILLIAM DAVID (CAM):²

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

4 Jan 1960

Dear Mr David

I am sorry to refuse so reasonable a request³ but I have, by agreeing to do one thing and another, of which each seemed small and reasonable—piled up too many commitments just at present.

With regret.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis⁴

TO MARTYN SKINNER (BOD):⁵ PC

As from Magdalene

6 Jan. 1960

Stuff and nonsense. If we have got to a place in which English makes high speakers almost inarticulate you must make yours speak accordingly—short, groping for words—earthy—the inarticulation of child or peasant rather than that of chaps like us. Grandeur *can* be felt struggling thro' such language. It needn't be Plato *cum* Charlemagne. It can be Bunyan *cum* the old thatcher. At any rate, have a try. Don't make *per vilta il gran rifiuto*.⁶

C.S.L.

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

9 Jan 60

Dear Chad

Thanks for your letter of the 3d. I've sent it on to my agent who will write direct to you or McCorkle.

Joy is still almost quite well except for the lassitude and nausea produced by radiotherapy. Her courage and contentment are, most of the

time, incredible.
Love to all,
Yours
Jack

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
12 Jan. 1960

Dear Miss Douglas
Sorry. I am afraid I know nothing at all about the history of *Emmanuel*.
With all good wishes.
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

17 Jan 1960

Dear Vera Gebbert

Yes, *mea culpa*. I am a poor correspondent. That is to say, the ghastly, daily grind of unavoidable letters leaves me a brain and hand very ill disposed to pleasanter and friendlier correspondence. For example, it is now 9.50. a.m. and I've already been writing letters as hard as I can drive the pen across the paper for an hour and half; and when on earth I shall get a chance to begin my own day's work, I don't know.

I suppose my brother told you that the bone cancer from which my wife seemed to be almost miraculously delivered three years ago has returned. The doctors hold out no hope. And perhaps that too makes me neglect my 'pen-friends' a bit. When one lives in a tragedy one does not always see very clearly out of the windows (so to speak) into the rest of the world.

I am glad to hear that the Tycoon develops and prospers. I quite realise that it wd. be difficult to emulate H. B. Stowe's⁷ writing in the kitchen. But—we know what the books were like—do we know what the cooking was like? It may have been horrid.

I am pretty well, though always very tired. The weather is mostly fog, but that is normal for England at this time of year. We have so far escaped snow.

Very good wishes to the Tycoon and yourself.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

Around this time, Lewis received a letter from Sister Mary Celestine Kearns, a member of the Sisters of Providence, Seaford, Sussex. She told Lewis that one of the English texts used in their school was the poem 'Non Nobis' by Henry Cust (1861–1917):

*Not unto us, O Lord,
Not unto us the rapture of the day,
The peace of night, or love's divine surprise,
High heart, high speech, high deeds 'mid honouring eyes;
For at Thy word
All these are taken away.*

*Not unto us, O Lord:
To us thou givest the scorn, the scourge, the scar,
The ache of life, the loneliness of death,
The insufferable sufficiency of breath;
And with Thy sword
Thou piercest very far.*

*Not unto us, O Lord;
Nay, Lord, but unto her be all things given—
My light and life and earth and sky be blasted—
But let not all that wealth of loss be wasted:
Let Hell afford
The pavement of her Heaven!*

TO SISTER MARY CELESTINE KEIRNS (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

17 Jan 1960

Dear Madam

Please, I'm a professor of *Medieval* and *Renaissance* English. That is, my job concerns that happy age when poets wrote poems instead of puzzles.

The sense seems to be 'We don't get (stanza 1, 2) and don't ask (st. 3) a good time, but I hope our sufferings are not wasted but will somehow contribute to *her* happiness'. That is, I think *Hell* and *Heaven* in the last stanza are just rhetorical hyperboles for unhappiness and happiness. And *pavement of* just means 'conducive to'. I.e. the poem is an attempt to apply the general idea that one's sufferings may somehow or other help others.

I think *she* must be either his lady love or the Blessed Virgin Mary. Neither interpretation will make it a good poem, but I can't think of a better. And what is the 'insufferable sufficiency of breath'?

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN WARWICK MONTGOMERY (P):⁸

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

21 Jan 1960

Dear Mr. Montgomery

Thank you for your kind letter of the 14th and the enclosure.⁹ I need not say that your article on the Narnian books gave me much pleasure. I had thought of children rather than adolescents as my readers, but have found (wh. confirms your view) that they are read also by schoolboys. But the truth is that my fan mail makes hay of the (too popular) classification by

Age-Groups. It is types of people, at whatever age, that really matters. By the bye, children of 6 or 7, if brought up in Christian homes, usually know who Aslan is quite as quickly as their elders.

Now for your questions. *Shadows of Ecstasy*¹⁰ and *Essays presented to C.W.* are both extremely hard to get. But there are better 2nd hand booksellers than Blackwell. I recommend Rogers, Booksellers, Newcastle on Tyne (that is sufficient address). He takes a great deal of trouble to find copies and his charges are v. honest. As for other fiction of the ‘Williams–Lewis’ brand, I don’t know that any is now being produced—unless you wd. include Tolkien’s huge (and magnificent) 3 vol. romance *The Lord of the Rings*. Going back to the Victorians, you probably know already G. MacDonald’s *Lilith* and *Phantastes*?

Under the Mercy

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN M. GORDON (BOD):¹¹

Magdalene College,
Cambridge

25 Jan 1960

Dear Mr. Gordon

Forgive me for saying that I do not think you have read that passage with complete attention. Wishing to upbraid Phariseeism (self-righteousness and externality) I tried to show impartiality by selecting the most opposite examples of it—the religion which is ‘*all* rules and relics and rosaries’ and that which is ‘*all* long faces—and petty traditional abstinences’.¹² Of course *all* is the operative word. There is no slightest suggestion that a saintly person *cannot* either use rosaries or be a total abstainer. How could you think so?

To be sure, the person who thinks either the use of the rosary or the abstinence from liquor an essential to Christianity will be, in my opinion, holding an unscriptural and erroneous doctrine. If, in addition, his passionate adherence to this ἐθελοθρησκεία¹³ leads him to denigrate

and misrepresent those who do not share it, he will be sinning against the plainest commands we have received. But that is quite another matter. One doesn't blame the Pharisee for washing his hands before food (indeed I do myself) but for neglecting 'the weightier matters of the law'.¹⁴

May I add that a great deal of shame, terror and misery has been caused in my own life by the drunkenness of a relative? I do not 'jest at scars' without ever having 'felt a wound'.¹⁵

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

Horrid thought!—If you have misunderstood all my books as badly as you have misunderstood this bit, I must have no title to the admiration you so kindly mention. Have you read *all* my blacks as whites?

TO SISTER MARY CELESTINE KEIRNS (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

31 Jan 1960

Dear Madam

Oh, of *course*.¹⁶ I never suggested that by assuming the Blessed Virgin to be the addressee we could make it a good poem, let alone good Theology. But the other candidates for this position don't make it good either!

If you ever *do* find out what it is all about, I'd be interested to hear.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO ALAN HINDLE (BOD):¹⁷

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

31 Jan 1960

Dear Mr. Hindle

Voyage to Arcturus was reprinted by Messrs Faber and Faber within the last 20 years.¹⁸ The original edition (I forget who published it) is still sometimes obtainable. Rogers of Newcastle on Tyne is quite as good a bookseller for hunting out old books as any London or Oxford firm, and usually charges less. The author, David Lindsay, is dead. If you get the book, I shd. think twice before introducing it to the young. It is very strong meat indeed and the philosophy behind it is that of Schopenhauer¹⁹ or the Manichaeans. A youngster unless in perfect psychological health (and what youngster is?) cd. damage himself with it a good deal.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO STEPHEN SCHOFIELD (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
31 Jan '60

Dear Mr. Schofield

Your parcel arrived on Saturday. You could not have chosen a better present. My wife (who is American) loves maple syrup and, as it is a pretty rare commodity, her heart leaped up, as yours or mine would at the sight of white man's food in the depth of China. And we all like honey. It is really extraordinarily kind of you not only to buy us these dainties but to think of it and go through all the Red Tape. Hearty thanks. It is like spring here today and the first snowdrops and crocuses are already coming up.

With all grateful greetings—the alliteration came unasked.
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

Sister Mary Celestine Keirns wrote to Lewis again, probably at about this time, sending him two further poems and asking him for his comments. Lewis returned the poems with his annotations:

TO SISTER MARY CELESTINE KEIRNS (W):²⁰

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
[1 February 1960?]

Dear Sister Mary Celestine

The Rose of the World
By W. B. Yeats

Who dreamed that beauty passes like a dream?
For these red lips, with all their mournful pride,
Mournful that no wonder may betide,
Troy passed away in one high funeral gleam,
And Usna's children died.*

We and the labouring world are passing by:
Amid men's souls, that waver and give place**
Like the pale waters in their wintry race,
Under the passing stars, foam of the sky,
Lives on this lonely face.***

Bow down, archangels, in your dim abode:
Before you were, or any hearts to beat,
Weary and kind one lingered by His seat;****
He made the world to be a grassy road
Before her wandering feet.

W. B. Yeats

* In Irish legend, Usna was the father of Naisi, Ainlé and Ardan. Naisi loved and abducted Deidre, wife of the High King Conchobar mac Nessa. She and Naisi, and N's two brothers lived long together in Alba (= Scotland). Finally they were lured back to Conchobar's court under a promise of forgiveness. But C. killed all three brothers and D. killed herself. The stanza therefore means 'You were Helen & you were Deidre.'

*** *Lonely* because all her lovers are merely transitory beings.

** I *think* he means ‘We common mortals are transitory, but the archetypal beauty, which appears now as Helen and now as Deidre and now as *you* is eternal.’ The *you* is probably Maude Gonne.²¹

**** *Weary and kind*. A. qualities Yeats saw (perhaps erroneously) in the real woman to whom the poem is addressed. B. Qualities attributed to the archetypal beauty manifested in all the great beloveds of legend. The profane hyperbole is that God created the universe as a sphere or field for this (pre-existent) Beauty to haunt. Memo: Yeats was a Rosicrucian, an Occultist, and (in intention anyway) a magician. The idea of a pre-cosmic *weibliches*—‘the world’s desire’—may have been to him serious. This is the best I can do.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

Near Dover, September 1802

By William Wordsworth

Inland, within a hollow vale, I stood;
And saw, while sea was calm and air was clear,
The coast of France—the coast of France how near!
Drawn almost into frightful neighbourhood.
I shrunk; for verily the barrier flood
Was like a lake, or river bright and fair,
A span of waters; yet what power is there!
What mightiness for evil and for good!

*Even so doth God protect us if we be virtuous and wise**

[*Sister Mary Celestine said of the poem by Wordsworth:*

(This is another line and a half that rather baffles me—not as far as interpreting it goes, but because I think it denotes a most peculiar way of looking at God’s Providence. Must we conclude that every time a nation is victorious over its enemies it is ‘virtuous and wise’? Anyway, can a Nation as a whole be said to be ‘virtuous and wise’? Exactly what is the ‘Even so’ linked up with?

*(Virtuous and wise) WINDS BLOW, AND WATERS ROLL,
STRENGTH TO THE BRAVE, AND POWER, AND DEITY;**
Yet in themselves are nothing! One decree
Spake laws to them, and said that by the soul
Only, the Nations shall be great and free.]*

* The way in which the Channel, properly used, can protect England, is analogous to—is an allegory of—the way in which God furnishes individual souls with assets (e.g. circumstances & talents) which, *if* they use them virtuously & wisely (but not otherwise) will protect them.

** (The comma after *roll* must be a mistake). Inanimate & a-moral factors become means of grace to ‘the brave’ and lend them God-like powers. But they are only means. It is God’s changeless decree that nations and individuals can be great & free only by the quality of soul wh. enables them to accept and use these gifts rightly. But for that, all natural advantages will be ‘nothing’ i.e. worthless. *Roll* is transitive = waft, convey.

This is the best guess I can offer.

C.S.L.

TO SUSAN SALZBERG (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
5 Feb. 1960

Dear Susan Salzberg

All I can tell you is that pictures come into my head and I write stories about them. I don’t know how or why the pictures come. I don’t think I could write a *play* to save my life. I am so glad you like the Narnian books. Remember me to David Davies.²² Yours C. S. Lewis

The World’s Last Night, And Other Essays was published by Harcourt, Brace & World of New York on 10 February 1960.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):²³

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

11 Feb 1960

Dear Gibb

Thank you very much. Yes, Chad Walsh and Austin Farrer certainly.
Then

Librarian, Magdalen College, Oxford
Librarian, Magdalene College, Cambridge.

Miss Margaret Radcliffe, The Nook, Beacon Close, Ditchling Rd.,
Brighton 6

A. O. Barfield, Danes Inn House, 265 Strand, London W.C. 2A. C.
Harwood c/o the above.

There may be one or two others later.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MICHAEL EDWARDS (BOD):²⁴

As from Magdalene College
Cambridge
11/2/59 [1960]

Dear Mr. Edwards

As regards the ‘interdenominational’ question, I have never said anything in print except that I am *not* offering guidance on it (this comes in the preface to *Mere Christianity*).²⁵ Whatever utility I have as a defender of ‘mere’ Christianity would be lost if I did, and I should become only one more participant in the dog-fight. And I have an idea that the more people there are preaching ‘mere’ Christianity, the more chance there is of some day ending that dog-fight. I should therefore probably be of very little use to you in your own decision. Of course come and see me if, after consideration, you think it worth doing: my own idea is that you would be wasting your time.

As to your other question, I wonder whether you are on the right track in expecting ‘stable sentiments’ and ‘successful adjustment to life’. This is the language of modern psychology rather than of religion or even of common experience, and I sometimes think that when the psychologists speak of adjustment to life they really mean perfect happiness and unbroken

good fortune! Not to get—or, worse still, to *be*—what one wants is not a disease that can be cured, but the normal condition of man. To feel guilty, when one is guilty, and to realise, not without pain, one's moral and intellectual inadequacy, is not a disease, but commonsense. To find that one's emotions do not 'come to heel' and line up as stable sentiments in permanent conformity with one's convictions is simply the facts of being a fallen, and still imperfectly redeemed, man. We may be thankful if, by continual prayer and self-discipline, we can, over years, make some approach to that stability. After all, St. Paul who was a good deal further along the road than you and I, could still write *Romans*, chapter 7, verses 21–23.²⁶

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

13 Feb 1960

Dear Mary Willis

I am sorry to hear, from your letter of 8 Feb, about the 'Asian flu'. Either we haven't yet got it here or our doctors call it by some other name. I very much hope that by the time this reaches you, you will be really on the mend.

Many thanks for the pretty card and poem you sent Joy—it was a kind thought. She remains so far amazingly well and strong to all appearances, thank God. It looks as if we shall after all be able to manage a lightning air-trip to Greece which was arranged in happier times. It wd. mean a great deal to both of us to have stood even once on the Acropolis.

I am suffering from a strange condition which makes it impossible ever to *stay* asleep (I can *go* to sleep easily enough) for more than about 70 min. continuously at night, or to *stay* awake in the day time if I relax at all! Premature senility perhaps.

God keep us all.
Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

18 Feb 60

Dear Gibb

This is a v. nice point. Of course 'will be used' is the traditional joke. That wd. not prevent some editor from getting the book reviewed by a police officer who wd. make 'this hackneyed inaccuracy' the main subject of the review!²⁷ On the other hand, to substitute 'may' rather spoils the point. I know it's a frightful nuisance putting in a correction at this stage: but if we want to be quite safe read 'disprove our religion. We treat God as the policeman in the story treated the suspect: whatever He does "will be used in evidence against Him".'²⁸ If this involves too much re-setting, then stick to 'will'.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO PAULINE BANNISTER (W):²⁹

Magdalene College,
Cambridge
19 Feb. 1960

Dear Pauline Bannister

I could not write that story myself.³⁰ Not that I have no hope of Susan's ever getting to Aslan's country, but because I have a feeling that the story of her journey would be longer and more like a grown-up novel than I wanted to write. But I may be mistaken. Why not try it yourself?

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS ROBERT MANLY (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
25/2/60

Dear Mrs. Manly

Yours is a v. difficult question and I only give my own guess at the answer. The simplest instance of the distressing phenomenon you mention occurs during the temporary irrationality produced by anaesthetics. I am told that during an operation patients of the greatest virtue and modesty often shout out extreme profanities and blasphemies. As one surgeon said 'You wd. wonder where an old lady of that type and upbringing could ever have learned the words she brought out.'

I take it [that] the point at which Rational Soul has purchase on the body—the starting platform from which she controls the whole engine—is the brain. When this is temporarily or permanently disordered Rational Soul loses control. What then takes over? I shd. have thought, a mere random rubble of emotions, associations, sensations, impulses. But why such nasty ones? Perhaps because in a good or even a sensible, person they are always being held back by Rational Soul—to that extent Freud is right.

But we must not strictly call them (morally) evil. Moral evil occurs when Rational Soul, able to control these things, refuses to do so. When the control is impossible what happens is mere *events*, neither morally good or evil—i.e. loving and pious expressions produced under these conditions are no sign of virtue, nor are the opposite ones signs of vice. (When the locomotive is hopelessly out of control, the speed at wh. it travels is not an instance either of good or of bad driving, because it is not an instance of *driving* at all). Whether, at such a time, the Rational Soul is (so to speak) asleep, or whether it is behaving well or ill, we can't find out because the body is no longer obeying it. One often gets apparently rational answers from a man talking in his sleep, but when he wakes he has no recollection of making them. In fact *he* didn't make them: motor habits lodged in his speech organs made them in response to a familiar stimulus.

To be sure, the mass of filth, rage, and nonsense which come up does show what a lot of *potential* evil exists in the best soul. But it is actual evil only when willed. Till then, it is 'rubbish' rather than sin. At least, that's as far as I can see at the moment.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO BERNARD ACWORTH (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
5th March 1960

Dear Acworth—

Did you know that your theory of a catastrophic shift in the angle between our axis and the ecliptic is closely paralleled in Milton? *P. Lost* Bk X—or possibly IX. This on his view is one of the ways in which the change of conditions after the Fall cd. have been produced.

Have you read this book by the Jesuit de Chardin (*The Phenomenon of Man*) wh. is being praised to the skies? This is evolution run mad. He saves 'continuity' by saying that before there was life there was in matter what he calls 'pre-life'. Can you see any possible use in such language? Before you switched on the lights in the cellar there was (if you like to call it so) 'pre-light': but the English for that is 'darkness'. Then he goes on to the future and seems to me to be repeating Bergson (without the eloquence) and Shaw (without the wit). It ends up of course in something uncomfortably like Pantheism: his own Jesuits were quite right in forbidding him to publish any more books on the subject. This prohibition probably explains the *succés fou* he is having among our scientists—on the same principle whereby Pasternak's (really, v. second rate) novel owes its world-fame to the condemnation of the Russian government.³¹

My wife's condition is v. like that of a battalion which is almost daily fired on from a new direction. It silences these fires, but new ones always break out till it becomes evident that one is in fact surrounded. I know you will not cease your prayers.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford, England

7th March 1960

Dear Father Milward

As an old lecturer may I give a bit of advice about preaching? The joints (we have finished point A: now for B or Here the digression ends) cannot be made too clear. Unless you seem to yourself to be exaggerating them almost absurdly they will escape 9/10 of your hearers. Also, slow, slow. If you want people to weep by the end, make them laugh in the beginning. I hope your priesthood will be blessed.³² I really agree with your maxim 'the greater the author the less he understands his own work'. In haste.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
7th March '60

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for your most kind letter of the 4th. I sent you a signed copy of *The World's Last Night* weeks ago and am distressed to note that it has not arrived. Love from both.

Yours

Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

12 March 1960

My dear Arthur

I am afraid it is rather an understatement to say that Joy is 'not so well'. The last x-ray test revealed that cancer is returning in almost every part of

her skeleton. They do something with radiotherapy, but as soon as they have silenced an ache in one place one breaks out in another. The doctors hold out no hope of a cure; it is only a question of how soon the end comes and how painful it will be. She is still, however, mostly free from pain and able to get about and unbelievably cheerful. We hope to do a lightning trip to Greece by air this vacation. We hardly dare to look as far ahead as next summer.

I am sorry for your sake that my old friend Peter is going but glad for his. Life is not much use to an animal when it can no longer enjoy its body. They can't, like us, make up for it by reading and talking.

W. is v. well. I have had flu' and am discovered to be suffering from high blood pressure. I have in consequence been put on a very rigid diet!

I think a dentist who, having pulled *your* tooth out, complains about how it affects his lumbago, has either no sense of humour or a v. mischievous one!

God bless you. I hope you and I at least will be spared to one another.

Yours

Jack

P.S. Get a cat. They're more suitable to us old people than dogs, and a cat makes a house into a home.

TO HUGH A. HARKER (BOD):³³

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

21 March 1960

Dear Mr. Harker

'Rather like vegetables' is fortunately a pretty vague expression.³⁴ I was certainly not referring to anything so definite as structure.

I think I meant that the foetus at one stage is the kind of thing which, if they encountered it, ordinary people wd. hesitate whether to call a vegetable

or an animal; as distinct from a later stage at which they wd. almost certainly call it the latter, but cd. hardly recognise it as a *human* animal. But it was a bad illustration and creates, rather than solves, difficulties.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

23 March 1960

My dear Roger

Thanks—I shall get my teeth into the monograph³⁵ with great zest. Joy and I are joining at the Airport. Love from both to both.

Yours
Jack

TO JAMES AULT (W): TS

60/197

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
25th March 1960.

Dear Mr Ault,
Many thanks for your most kind and encouraging letter of the 9th, which naturally has given me much pleasure.

With all good wishes, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford

26 March 1960

Dear Mary Willis—

Do you know, I shd. have more hope for the young cad described in Fr Louis's letter than for many people in a quiet, cultured state of unbelief who wd. always speak of Christianity with reverence? His very rudeness shows that he is not quite free from the fear that there 'might be something in it after all'. I bet that if he were talking to Hindoos or Buddhists he wd. speak more politely of *their* religion.

You must be having the same flu' bug that has visited us. Its visits are not always very severe, but it is a wonderful *stayer*.

Things are not, or not much, worse with us, but life is very terrible. I sometimes feel I am mad to be taking Joy to Greece in her present condition, but her heart is set upon it. They give the condemned man what he likes for his last breakfast, I am told.

I hope *your* news will soon be better.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

60/59

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
31st March 1960.

Dear Gibb,

Thanks for the copies.³⁶ Yes, of course send Milton a copy, with kind regards from my brother and myself. I need no more myself at present, but will remember your kind offer.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

*Lewis and Joy spent 3 to 14 April with Roger and June Lancelyn Green in Greece on a 'Wings Tour'. They climbed the Acropolis to the Parthenon (4 April) before visiting Mycenae (5 April), the Gulf of Corinth (6 April), the Island of Rhodes (7–10 April), Crete (11–13 April) and Pisa, Italy (14 April).*³⁷

Warnie wrote to Jocelyn Gibb on 4 April:³⁸

60/59

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
4th April 1960.

Dear Mr Gibb,

C.S.L. went off to Greece yesterday morning, leaving me to hold the fort. So I write to acknowledge with thanks your cheque for £1,714–3–9 which arrived today.

With good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

W. H. Lewis

TO AUDREY CLEOBURY (BOD): TS

60/247

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
7th April 1960.

Dear Miss Cleobury,

Many thanks for your kind and encouraging note of the 5th. It is always a real pleasure to me to be told that anything I have written has been of use to a reader.

With all good wishes,

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis³⁹

TO SHERIDAN BAKER (W):⁴⁰ TS

60/253

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
8th April 1960.

Dear Professor Baker,
Many thanks for your kindness in sending me the Meter article, which I
look forward to reading.
With all good wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis⁴¹

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

15 April 1960

Dear Miss Douglass

We would indeed have been delighted to dine with you in New York if
there were any truth in the rumour that I was going there at all! There is
none, and I can't understand how your friend got such an idea into his head.
But a mistake which brings a kind letter has not been made in vain!

With kindest remembrances.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

*On 30 March 1960 the American author Basil Davenport wrote to Lewis via
Cambridge University Press concerning a passage in Studies in Words.⁴²*

*Having read with great pleasure and admiration Studies in Words, I
am writing to suggest a passage for your consideration. Let me begin
by acknowledging that I have always had a vague idea that in
eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century literature conscious
somehow meant self-conscious. I found your discussion of its use in*

Jane Austen extremely illuminating. Even so, I should like to put forward Crashaw's epigram on the miracle at Cana:

Nympha pudica Deum vidit, et erubuit,

with his own translation:

The conscious water saw its Lord, and blushed.

I cannot here find any meaning in conscious beyond that of pudica. And with great diffidence I should like to suggest that the same thing may be true of the line you cite from Windsor Forest...I retain a perhaps mistaken impression that it was full of conscious nymphs and conscious swains and that the point meant no more by the words than the pudor which used to be considered an attractive quality in youth. You of course know much more about this than I; but I do think the Crashaw is worth your attention.

The following letter is Lewis's reply:

TO BASIL DAVENPORT (BOD):⁴³

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
15/4/60

Dear Mr Davenport

The Press has sent me on your letter of March 30 about *conscious*.⁴⁴ In Crashaw's English version⁴⁵ the classical *conscia* makes admirable sense: the water was 'privy to' the secret of Christ's Divinity. But I wd. agree that the fact of its being used to render *pudica* is v. odd. Don't you think C. has changed the idea: substituting for the rather weak 'bashful, modest nymph' the 'water wh. was privy to the great secret'? Once it ceases to be *nymph* and becomes *water* would *pudica* or any simple English equivalent (e.g. shamefast) be v. appropriate? But I'm not at all sure you're not right.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO DON LUIGI PEDROLLO (V):

quasi e Collegio Stae Mariae

Magdalenae apud
Cantabrigienses
Pascha 1960

Reverende Pater

Gratias ago pro benevolis litteris vestris. Gaudeo me locum adhuc tenere in memoria vestra; et vos et vestri quotidie in orationibus meis.

Equidem hoc tempore in magnà aerumnà sum. Nihilominus sursum corda: Christus enim resurrexit. Vale.

C. S. Lewis

as from The College of St Mary Magdalene
Cambridge
Easter 1960
[16 April 1960]

Reverend Father

I thank you for your kind letter. I rejoice that I still hold a place in your memory; both you and yours are daily in my prayers.

As for me, I am at this time in great trouble.

None the less, let us lift up our hearts: for Christ is risen. Farewell,

C. S. Lewis

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):⁴⁶

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
16 May [April] 60

Dear Vanauken

I was glad to hear from you again after your mysterious secession. I very much hope we may some day meet again.

You *must* pray for me now. Joy's cancer has returned and the doctors hold out no hope. Of course this is irrelevant to the question whether the previous recovery was miraculous. There can be miraculous reprieve as well as miraculous pardon, and Lazarus was raised from the dead to die again. I can't write much else; you can well imagine why. God bless you.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
16/4/60

Dear Starr

Very good news. So far as I can foresee I shall be here on July 21st and you will be very welcome. In great haste.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

Air Mail

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

As from Magdalene,
Cambridge
19/4/60

Dear Mary Willis

We did get to Greece, and it was a wonderful success. Joy performed prodigies, climbing to the top of the Acropolis and getting as far as the Lion gate of Mycenae. She has (no wonder) come back v. exhausted and full of aches. But I wd. not have had her denied it. The condemned man is allowed his favourite breakfast even if it is indigestible. She was absolutely enraptured by what she saw. But pray for us: the sky grows v. dark.

I can't begin to describe Greece. Attica is hauntingly beautiful and Rhodes is an earthly paradise—all orange and lemon orchards and wild flowers and vines and olives, and the mountains of Asia on the horizon. And lovely, cheap wines. I've eaten squid and octopus!

Yours

Jack

TO AUDREY SUTHERLAND (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

28 April 1960

Dear Mrs. Sutherland

Thank you for your most kind letter of the 24th. Oddly enough, all my copies of the Psalms book⁴⁷ are at my house in Oxford, so I can't at the moment look up the place on p. 6. I will do so when I am next at home—I am glad you drew my attention to it.

I believe you are right in thinking that most ancient peoples had no hope of heaven, tho' of course selected and exceptional individuals might be made gods and go to Olympus. That was as much out of the common course in their scheme as Elijah's being caught up in the fiery chariot⁴⁸ is in ours. I won't answer for the Egyptians: nor for the Greek 'mystery' religions.

What is v. much more important is that the ancients may have been right. The N. T. always speaks of Christ not as one who taught, or demonstrated, the possibility of a glorious after life but as one who first created that possibility—the Pioneer, the First Fruits,⁴⁹ the Man who forced the door. This of course links up with Peter 1. III 20 about preaching to the spirits in prison⁵⁰ and explains why Our Lord 'descended into Hell'⁵¹ (= *Sheol* or Hades). It looks v. much as if, till His resurrection, the fate of the dead actually was a shadowy half-life—mere ghosthood. The medieval authors delighted to picture what they called 'the harrowing of Hell',⁵² Christ descending and knocking on those eternal doors and bringing out those whom He chose. I believe in something like this. It wd. explain how what Christ did can save those who lived long before the Incarnation.

What pleased me enormously in your letter was the bit about *Till We Have Faces*, for I think it far and away my best book but it has, with the critics and the public, been my one great failure: an absolute 'flop'. No one seems to have the slightest idea what I'm getting at in it.

With cordial greetings.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JANE DOUGLASS (BERG):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

3 May 1960

Dear Miss Douglass

You take this matter too hard. It is indeed an occasion for disgust, but nothing to worry about. The ‘smut-hounds’ have done this to author after author, but the libels are soon forgotten and the authors remain where they were. Also ‘blessed are ye when men shall revile you’⁵³ etc. Leave the *gamin*⁵⁴ to make his mud pies and pass on.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MR SEARLES (MC):⁵⁵

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

7 May 1960

Dear Mr. Searles

1. ‘Eternal death’ was a bit vague. I meant final ruin, or rejection—the scrap-heap.⁵⁶ Whether that scrap-heap is annihilation or some kind of decayed consciousness is a point I won’t dogmatise on. Our Lord’s words usually stress the negative side of it, not what the lost souls get but what they miss. Perhaps we had best leave it at that.

2. About the Deity of Christ:

a. ‘The Word was *with* God and the Word *was* God’

Jn. I.i.

b. ‘Philip said, Show us the Father. Jesus said, “Have I been with you all this time and you haven’t recognised me? He who has seen me has seen the Father”.’

Jn. XIV.9–10.⁵⁷

3. ‘The only-begotten’ (Jn. I. 14.) Then Lucifer wd. not be, in the same sense, the son of God.

4. 'In him all things were created.' (Col. I. 16.) How, then, cd. He himself be a created thing?

Of course how He can both 'be God' and be 'with God' is a mystery. But that is what the Bible teaches. I've tried to say something about it later on in the part called 'Beyond Personality'.

All good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

On 9 May 1960 Fontana Books of London published the paperback of Miracles: A Preliminary Study containing the revised and retitled Chapter 3.[58](#)

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):[59](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

9 May 1960

Dear Gibb

(1.) I am afraid I can't agree to a Japanese version of *Miracles* with those expurgations. Small though they are, their aim clearly is that I should be disguised as a fundamentalist and a non-smoker. I shd. be trying to attract a particular public under false pretences. I have hitherto been acceptable to a good many different 'Denominations' without such camouflage, and I won't resort to it now. The Baptist translator may, if he pleases, add notes of his own, warning readers that the book is at these points, in his opinion, pernicious. But he must not remove them. Perhaps you had best transmit to Mr Cole exactly what I say here.

(2.) About the next Screwtape, I suggest that you arrange the business side with Curtis Brown. Of course the original Screwtape was not under the C.B. regime, but this is a new work, more or less.

(3.) I'm glad the *IVL's* is selling. I've seen hardly any reviews and shd. be glad if you wd. send me any you have done with. I didn't see Miss Nott's

and therefore don't get your point about her.⁶⁰

Greece was wonderful. We badly need a word meaning 'the-exact-opposite-of-a-disappointment'. *Appointment* won't do!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

Magdalene

12/5/60

Thanks for cuttings. It is pretty clear in what way the book touched that lively lady on the raw.⁶¹ But she is not without wit. I am glad we both feel the same about the Japanese Bowdler.

C.S.L.

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD): PC

Magdalene

13 May [1960]

Thanks. I am v. glad you liked it. As for the parts where you find me too confidently doing a 'profile' of the ὑψιστος⁶² I hope I am usually reproducing the doctrines of 'my ain folk' or admittedly offering, as I say, 'one man's myth'.⁶³

We were not in Athens at the same time as Owen. Attica, even more than Athens, overwhelmed us both. But Rhodes is the real earthly paradise. In its beautiful crusader city⁶⁴ we drank Malvoisie *vel* Malmsey and did not fail to toast the D. of Clarence. And every where peasants who are 'Αγγλόφιλοι⁶⁵ and refuse tips. Love to Marguerite. J.

MRS JOHN D. PETERSON (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

14 May 1960

Dear Mrs. Peterson

Thank you very much for writing to me. I doubt if I *can* produce any more fairy-tales. One is in a certain vein for a few years and then, later, one is not. If one then tries to go on, the result sounds, as it is, forced.

Accept my sympathy for your great sorrow. My deeply loved, and only lately married, wife is apparently dying of the same disease. She was much touched by your letter, and so was I.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO KATHRYN LINDSKOOG (P):⁶⁶

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

16 May 1960

Dear Mrs. Lindskoog

Thank you for your kind letter. I could not answer it before, as I have been away from home.

The essay about Outer Space⁶⁷ is now published (by Harcourt Brace) in a volume called *The World's Last Night*.

I cannot write more for I have returned to an appalling pile of correspondence and have already spent 14 hours driving the pen across the paper!

With kind regards.
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis.

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

23 May 1960

Dear Chad

Thanks for your letter of the 18th. It looked very doubtful if Joy and I would be able to do our trip to Greece, but we did. From one point of view it was madness, but neither of us regrets it. She performed prodigies of strength, limping to the top of the Acropolis and up through the Lion Gate of Mycenae and all about the medieval city of Rhodes (Rhodes is simply the Earthly Paradise). It was as if she was divinely supported. She came back in a *nunc dimittis*⁶⁸ frame of mind, having realised, beyond hope, her greatest lifelong, this-worldly, desire.

There was a heavy price to pay in increased lameness and leg-pains: not that the exertions had or could have any effect on the course of the cancers, but that the muscles etc had been overtaxed. Since then there has been a recrudescence of the original growth in her right breast which started the whole trouble. It had to be removed last Friday—or, as she characteristically put it, she was ‘made an Amazon’. This operation went through, thank God, with greater ease than we had dared to hope.

By the evening of the same day she was free from all severe pain and from nausea, and cheerfully talkative. Yesterday she was able to sit up in a chair for 15 minutes or so.

Love and greetings to you all, in which Warnie (who is fine) joins me. Thank you for your prayers.

I had some ado to prevent Joy (and myself) from relapsing into Paganism in Attica! At Daphni it was hard not to pray to Apollo the Healer. But somehow one didn’t feel it wd. have been very wrong—wd. have only been addressing Christ *sub specie Apollinis*.⁶⁹ We witnessed a beautiful Christian village ceremony in Rhodes and hardly felt a discrepancy. Greek priests impress one very favourably at sight—much more so than most Protestant or R. C. clergy. And the peasants all *refuse* tips.

Yours
Jack

TO DELMAR BANNER (W):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge.

27 May 1960

My dear Banner

Thanks. I'm glad you liked the book.⁷⁰ I quite agree with you about Homosexuals: to make the thing criminal cures nothing and only creates a blackmailers' paradise. Anyway, what business is it of the State? But I couldn't well have had a digression on that.⁷¹ One is fighting on two fronts: *a.* For the persecuted Homo. against snoopers and busybodies. *b.* For ordinary people *against* the widespread freemasonry of the highbrow Homos who dominate so much of the world of criticism and won't be nice to you unless you are in their set.

Remember me to your wife. If I'm ever in London at the right time I'll look out for her 'Nativity'.⁷²

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO T. S. GREGORY (BBC):⁷³ TS

60/263

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
28th May 1960.

Dear Mr Gregory,

Thanks for your letter of the 24th, 04/HT/TSG.

As it happens I was prevented by illness from delivering this paper. I have no MS of it suitable for Broadcasting, and I'm afraid I could not work it up at present.⁷⁴

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis⁷⁵

TO MARY NEYLAN (T):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge.
30 May 1960.

Dear Mary

I am very sorry to hear of Sarah's misfortune. I have no idea what I wrote to you to make you 'cross', nor when, nor about what. You may be sure the offence was unintentional. I can't write more, for I am marking Tripos papers 14 hours a day.

I am sure you will forgive my mysterious offence enough to give us your prayers when I tell you that the cancer from which my wife so miraculously rallied 3 years ago has come back.

Yours
Jack

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
2 June 1960.

Dear Mac—

Your cable has just been phoned to me. As regards rights to the *Time* photo, settle direct with *Time*. Who the Murray (?) mentioned in your cable is, I don't know. As far as my own feelings are concerned, I loathe the *Time* photo.⁷⁶ The one of me lighting a pipe,⁷⁷ or the one on your *S. by J.*⁷⁸ are both better.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

3 June 1960

Dear Gibb

Thanks for the Robertson talk.⁷⁹ It is (between ourselves) a prime instance of the favourable review which exasperates an author more than the most spiteful censure could do. He misunderstands so deeply. But not a word of this.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

60/59

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
4th June 1960.

Dear Gibb,

Thanks for sending me the Japanese SCREWTAPE—the second copy I have had. Yesterday one arrived from the translator.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS H. H. WALKER LEWIS (W): TS

60/318

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
4th June 1960.

Dear Mrs. Lewis,

Many thanks for your kind and encouraging letter of 19th May and the enclosure, * and it is a pleasure to know that you have enjoyed the books.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

* Very good (and deserved) satire indeed

TO PATRICIA MACKEY (P):⁸⁰

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

8 June 1960

Dear Miss Mackey

All your points are in a sense right. But I'm not exactly 'representing' the real (Christian) story in symbols. I'm more saying 'Suppose there were a world like Narnia and it needed rescuing and the Son of God (or the "Great Emperor oversea") went to redeem *it*, as He came to redeem ours, what might it, in that world, all have been like?' Perhaps it comes to much the same thing as you thought, but not quite.

1. The creation of Narnia is the Son of God creating *a* world (not specially *our* world).

2. Jadis plucking the apple is, like Adam's sin, an act of disobedience, but it doesn't fill the same place in her life as his plucking did in his. She was *already* fallen (very much so) before she ate it.

3. The stone table *is* meant to remind one of Moses' table.

4. The Passion and Resurrection of Aslan are the Passion and Resurrection Christ might be supposed to have had in *that* world—like those in our world but not exactly like.

5. Edmund is like Judas a sneak and traitor. But unlike Judas he repents and is forgiven (as Judas no doubt wd. have been if he'd repented.)

6. Yes. At the *v. edge* of the Narnian world Aslan begins to appear more like Christ as He is known in *this* world. Hence, the Lamb. Hence, the breakfast—like at the end of St. John's Gospel.⁸¹ Does not He say 'You have been allowed to know me in *this* world (Narnia) so that you may know me better when you get back to your own'?⁸²

7. And of course the Ape and Puzzle, just before the last Judgement (in the *Last Battle*) are like the coming of Antichrist before the end of our world.

All clear?

I'm so glad you like the books.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
8th June 1960.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

Yes, I'm afraid that I've been remiss in writing to you, but, in addition to domestic circumstances I can plead examining in extenuation—a task which comes towards the end of the summer term, and which leaves no time to attend to anything else. Then of course when I am at home there are other things to make letter writing difficult.

Many thanks for your prayers and good wishes. All I can say is that on the short term view Joy is better than could be expected; last month she had another operation, and made a wonderful recovery—was back home just a fortnight to the day after the operation, and the surgeon said that he was 'very satisfied' with the result.

My brother tells me that he wrote to you 'quite recently' but declines to be more definite, so I hope you have had at least one Lewis letter since you moved to the East. Your new home sounds delightful, and I feel it would be much more my sort of place than California.⁸³ After the newness of the West coast, such things as schoolrooms a hundred years old must give a deep satisfaction; and the old-fashioned bell too.

I'm so sorry to hear that the LAST NIGHT has gone astray, and cannot imagine what has happened to it; however I have written today to the publishers to send you another one.

We are having the usual varieties of weather which islanders expect. Last Sunday, Whitsunday, was the hottest there has been since records were first established, and tropical clothes were welcome; today, 72 hours later, I have the electric light on at 9.15 a.m., and am wearing a woolly waistcoat. But I have no patience with those who, in your language, 'knock' the British climate; its variety is to me its charm. Perhaps its worst feature is the lack of *water*. We had a warmish May, and a few hot days this month, and already in more than one district of England, water is *rationed*. An annoyance which remains vividly in my mind, for in the great drought of 1921 I was living in a village whose sole source of supply was one well.⁸⁴

I'm very glad that the Tycoon has taken the emigration from West to East in his stride, and that he does not miss the luxury of motor travel to

school. I don't know what the local children would say if asked to walk to school; on our building estate a bus—paid for of course by the rate-payer—calls for the kids from door to door, and brings them back in the evening. No wonder they are discontented and unsettled.

I have not entirely given up hope that a day may come when I shall be able to sample your guestroom, but not yet, or in the foreseeable future.

With all love and blessings, in which wish my brother joins me,
yours ever,
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS R. E. HERMAN (W):⁸⁵ TS
60/334

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
10th June 1960.

Dear Mrs. Herman,

Many thanks for your most kind and encouraging letter of May 22nd. Naturally it is a great pleasure to me to hear that you enjoyed *Screwtape*, and I hope you will get equal pleasure from some of the others.

With kindest regards,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO THE REV. PETER BIDE (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

14 June 1960

My dear Peter

I hear so much of other people's sorrows at present—the knowledge of one's own elicits them—that I read your news with a sort of ghastly lack of

surprise.⁸⁶ Yet it was in a way unexpected. I know your faith will stand firm.

Joy says (do you agree?) that we needn't be too afraid of questionings and expostulations: it was the impatience of Job⁸⁷ not the theodicies of Elihu⁸⁸ that were pleasing to God. Does He like us to 'stand up to Him' a bit? Certainly He cannot like mere flattery–resentment masquerading as submission thru' fear.

How impossible it wd. be now to face it without rage if God Himself had not shared the horrors of the world He made! I know this is Patipassianism.⁸⁹ But the other way of putting it, however theologically defensible, lets in (psychologically) perhaps a more serious error.

Joy had her right breast removed about 10 days ago, or—as she characteristically put it—became an Amazon

*Nor sometime forgets
Those other two equalled with her in fate,
Penthesilea and Hippolyta⁹⁰*

Thus we can still play the fool...you will not misunderstand it. I wish we could meet. Till we do, be sure of our prayers.

Thanks for the enclosure. Even now such things give me pleasure: I can still play with my toys. Don't be ashamed to play with yours if you have any. The less miserable we succeed in being the more we can do for *them* *Eating* is a great stand-by! But, drat it, they've put me on a diet.

Yours
Jack

TO PHOEBE HESKETH (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

14 June 1960

Dear Mrs. Hesketh

How cd. such a story as you tell me be an 'affront'? It did me good. The most mischievous—and painful—by-product of any sorrow is the illusion that

it isolates one, that one is kicked out alone for this from an otherwise cheerful, bustling, 'normal' world. How much better to realise that one is just doing one's turn in the line like all the rest of the ragged and tired human regiment! Yours is a very terrible bit of it. But I'd sooner be you than that housemaster—or than the Doctor (one of the closest friends) who could and should have diagnosed Joy's trouble when she went to him about the symptoms years ago before we were married. The real trouble about the duty of forgiveness is that you do it with all your might on Monday and then find on Wednesday that it hasn't stayed put and all has to be done over again.

Yes, we will pray for one another.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO KEITH MASSON (W):[91](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

15 June 1960

Dear Mr. Masson

Yes. The questions which Tyndale leaves unanswered are those which St. Augustine and St. Paul leave unanswered. I am quite sure that none of them wd. have abandoned his position however fully he had reflected on the difficulties; for each, experientially and existentially, *knew* his account of Grace and conversion to be true.

My criticism of Tyndale was that he restates (with incomparable clarity and grandeur) the Pauline conception without any mention of the difficulties it raises. See the long paragraph on my pp. 33, 34.[92](#) The only person who seems to me to do this is Coleridge (in his *Aids to Reflection*).[93](#)

Thank you for your kind words about the book.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

17 June 1960

Dear Master

Francis⁹⁴ flatters me with the idea that, if there is a division as to printing those 'curious' passages in our new Pepys, my opinion might be asked for.⁹⁵ Since I can't be sure of coming to the next meeting of the Governing Body, I have decided to let you have it in writing.

A prudential and a moral problem are both involved.

The prudential one is concerned, (a) with the chances of a prosecution, and (b.) with the chances of disrepute and ridicule. On (a.) it wd. be ridiculous for me to express any opinion in your presence and Mickey's.⁹⁶ As to (b.), a spiteful or merely jocular journalist could certainly make us for a week or two very malodorous in the public nostril. But a few weeks, or years, are nothing in the life [of] the College. I think it wd. be pusillanimous and unscholarly to delete a syllable on that score.

The moral problem comes down to the question 'Is it probable that the inclusion of these passages will lead anyone to commit an immoral act which he would not have committed if we had suppressed them?' Now of course this question is strictly unanswerable. No one can foresee the odd result that any words may have on this or that individual. We ourselves in youth have been both corrupted and edified by books in which our elders could have foreseen neither edification nor corruption. But to suggest that in a society where the most potent aphrodisiacs are daily put forward by the advertisers, the newspapers, and the films, any perceptible increment of lechery will be caused by printing a few, obscure, and widely separated passages in a very long and expensive book, seems to me unrealistic or even hypocritical.

A very severe moralist might argue that it is not enough to be unable to foresee harm; that we ought, before we act, to be able to foresee with certainty an absence of harm. But this, as you see, would prove too much. It is really an argument against doing, or not doing, any action whatsoever.

For they all go on having consequences, mostly unforeseeable, to the world's end.

I am therefore in favour of printing the whole, unexpurgated, Pepys.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

17 June 1960

Dear Gibb

1. No, no! The *Toast* must certainly not be included in the Letters. The Title Page for the volume must be The Screwtape Letters and Screwtape Proposes a Toast

The List of Contents must be

The S. Letters _____ p n.

S. proposes a Toast _____ p n 2

After the Letters (perhaps with a blank page in between) there must be a sub-titlepage bearing the words *S. proposes a Toast*.

2. I am afraid I must retain the para. you object to on pp. 7–8, of the Preface.⁹⁷

3. Have I already given you the following corrections to the *Preface*?

P.5 1. 1 For *sit* read *sink* (SINK) P. 7 para 2, 1 12. For *fellows* read *fellow* (FELLOW) P. 10 para 218 For *Erewhose* read *Erewhon*

4. Apparently I forgot to ask for a copy of *The Four Loves* to be sent to this college library. I'd be glad if you'd kindly rectify this.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO CHARLES MOORMAN (WHL):

[Magdalene College]

23 June 1960

Dear Mr Moorman

Thank you for kindly sending me a copy of your 'Arthurian Triptych'. It is of course impossible to criticise objectively a book in wh. oneself and one's greatest friend⁹⁸ play so large a part. I am inclined to think that your method works better for Charles Williams than for me, and better for me than for Mr Eliot. But I may be mistaken. The whole is beautifully intelligible and free from jargon—rare merits now-a-days—and the initial discussion on Myth seems to me very well done. I have enjoyed it and hope it will have every success.

Joy was now very ill. She went into the Acland Nursing Home on 20 May to have her right breast removed. After returning to The Kilns for a few weeks she was rushed back to the nursing home. Warnie wrote in his diary on 21 June:

Joy is dying in the Acland. Of course ever since the cancer reappeared last autumn she has been under sentence of death, but her courage and vitality were such that one was able to forget the grim fact for hours and even days at a time. I can see now that the beginning of the end was when she had her right breast removed on Friday 20th May; though she emerged from the ordeal radiant, and the surgeon spoke enthusiastically of her condition. She was home just a fortnight later, apparently with health much improved, and in great spirits...

On the following Tuesday [14 June] which was a glorious day, I pushed her to the library,⁹⁹ and afterwards up as far as the pond, with stops for her to inspect her favourite flower bed; and from there we went to the green house where she got out and looked at her plants.¹⁰⁰ It was expected to be Joy's last outing. Her condition deteriorated, and Warnie continues:

When I got downstairs on Monday morning J told me that he had been up with her all night, and, poor thing, she had been vomiting or at least trying to vomit all the time. About 10 a.m. she said to Hibbie, ‘Nurse, this is the end. I know I’m dying. Telegraph for Doug.’ But even then the old courage was still there; almost the last thing she said before falling into a drug-induced coma was, ‘I’ve got enough cancers now to form a Trades Union of the darned things.’ And to the doctor she said, ‘Finish me off quick. I won’t have another operation’ ...¹⁰¹

David returned home from Magdalen College School and Douglas was driven by his headmaster all the way back from Lapley Grange School in Machynlleth, Montgomeryshire. ‘The first thing she said,’ Douglas wrote, ‘was “Doug, congratulations on passing your Common Entrance examinations.” I held her in my arms and merely wept. I was now taller than she would have been had she been able to stand, but as usual it was she who comforted me.’¹⁰²

‘Once again,’ wrote Warnie on 8 July, ‘Joy has made fools of the doctors and nurses.’¹⁰³ Joy returned home from the Radcliffe Infirmary on Monday 27 June feeling quite well. By Sunday she felt well enough to go to Studley Priory for dinner, and the following day she went for a drive in the Cotswolds. But the reprieve was brief. At 6 a.m. on 13 July the household was awakened by Joy’s screaming. During what Warnie called ‘a nightmare morning of planning, improvisation, and errands’¹⁰⁴ Jack managed to get a private room for her in the Radcliffe Infirmary, and he was able to dictate a letter to Jocelyn Gibb and get Warnie to cancel an appointment with Roger Lancelyn Green.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

60/59

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
13th July 1960.

Dear Gibb,
Right, I agree to all those suggestions.¹⁰⁵
Yours,
W. H. Lewis

(dictated by C.S.L.).

On 13 July 1960 Warnie wrote to Roger Lancelyn Green:[106](#)
60/289

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
13th July 1960.

Dear Green, I'm sorry to say that Jack's wife is desperately ill, and he is in continuous attendance on her; so you will understand that it is out of the question for him to see you on Saturday. He asks to send his regrets.

An ambulance took Joy to the hospital during the morning of 13 July. Lewis spent the day with her. Later that night he was collected from the Radcliffe by his friend Clifford Morris who drove him home.[107](#) At 11.40 p.m., wrote Warnie,

I heard J come into the house and went out to meet him. Self: 'What news?' J: 'She died about twenty minutes ago.' She was, he tells me, conscious up to the last, just before Till called J out of the room to say she was dying rapidly. J went back and told Joy, who agreed with him that it was the best news they could now get. During the afternoon and evening she dozed from time to time, but was fully sensible whenever she was awake. Asked during these final hours that she should be cremated, left her fur coat as a parting gift to K. Farrer, and was able to receive Absolution from Austin, whom she asked to read the funeral service over her at the crematorium. Once during the afternoon she said to J, 'Don't get me a posh coffin, posh coffins are all rot.' God rest her soul, I miss her to a degree which I would not have imagined possible.[108](#)

TO THE REV. PETER BIDE (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford 14 July 1960

Dear Peter

Joy died at 10 o'clock last night in the Radcliffe. I was alone with her at the moment, but she was not conscious. I had never seen the moment of *natural* death before. It was far less dreadful than I had expected—indeed there's nothing to it. Pray for her soul. I have prayed twice daily of late for us four together—you and Margy and me and Joy. I shall continue for you two.

I can't *understand* my loss yet and hardly (except for brief but terrible moments) feel more than a kind of bewilderment, almost a psychological paralysis. A bit like the first moments after being hit by a shell.

I'd like to meet. Perhaps I cd. come up to town some day when you are in town and take you to lunch at the Athenaeum. For I am—oh God that I were not—very free now. One doesn't realise in early life that the price of freedom is loneliness. To be happy one must be tied. God bless all three of us.

Yours
Jack

TO WILLIAM GRESHAM (W): TS

60/363

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

15th July 1960.

Dear Bill,

Joy died on the 13th July. This need involve no change in your plans, but I thought you should arrive knowing it.

Yours,

Jack

TO K. C. THOMPSON (W): TS

60/337

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
15th July 1960.

Dear Mr Thompson,

Thanks for your kind letter.¹⁰⁹ You won't think I value it the less if I say no more than that—as you can imagine, I have much on hand. I wrote to the Vicar yesterday asking him to ask the prayers of our congregation for the repose of the soul of Helen Joy Lewis, and have just heard that you are for the moment in charge of the parish; might I ask you to do this, and of your charity add your own prayers.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

60/77

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
15th July 1960.

Dear Mrs Gebbert,

Alas, you will never send anything 'for the three of us' again, for my dear Joy is dead. Until within ten days of the end we hoped, although noticing her increasing weakness, that she was going to hold her own, but it was not to be.

Last week she had been complaining of muscular pains in her shoulders, but by Monday 11th seemed much better, and on Tuesday, though keeping her bed, said she felt a great improvement; on that day she was in good spirits, did her 'crossword puzzle' with me, and in the evening played a game of Scrabble. At quarter past six on Wednesday morning, the 13th, my brother, who slept over her, was wakened by her screaming and ran down to her. I got the doctor, who fortunately was at home, and he arrived before seven and gave her a heavy shot. At half past one I took her into hospital in an ambulance. She was conscious for the short remainder of her life, and in very little pain, thanks to drugs; and died peacefully in my company about 10.15 the same night.

I could not wish that she had lived, for the cancer had attacked the spine, which might have meant several days of suffering, and that she was mercifully spared. You will understand that I have no heart to write more, but I hope when next I send a letter it will be a less depressing one.

My love to the Tycoon, who is growing into a fine looking lad.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis¹¹⁰

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
15 July 1960

15 July 1960

Dear Mary Willis

I've just got your letter of the 12th. Joy died on the 13th. I can't describe the apparent unreality of my life since then. She received absolution and died at peace with God. I will try to write again when I have more command of myself. I'm like a sleep-walker at the moment.

God bless.

Yours

Jack

Joy had wanted her body to be cremated, and on 18 July 1960 Jack, Warnie, David and Douglas Gresham went to the Oxford Crematorium for her funeral, which was conducted by Dr Austin Farrer. Afterwards Lewis had a plaque erected at the crematorium near where Joy's ashes were scattered. On it is inscribed a poem he wrote for his wife:

*Remember
Helen Joy
Davidman D. July 1960
Loved wife of C. S. Lewis*

*Here the whole world (stars, water, air,
And field, and forest, as they were
Reflected in a single mind)*

*Like cast-off clothes was left behind
In ashes yet with hope that she,
Re-born from holy poverty,
In Lenten lands, hereafter may
Resume them on her Easter Day.*¹¹¹

David and Douglas returned to school after their mother's death. Lewis accepted responsibility for them, but he was fortunate in having the help of Joy's friend, Jean Wakeman. The boys knew her well by this time, and she made it clear that they could always regard her house, a few miles away at Horton-cum-Studley, as their home.

TO GRACIA FAY BOUWMAN (W):¹¹²

As from Magdalene College,

Cambridge

19 July 1960 Dear Miss Bouwman

I haven't a copy of the P. of P.¹¹³ to hand and I can't remember the exact words I used. What I wd. now say wd. be something like this.

We have A. The Scriptural representation of God—a god not only of love but of στυοογγή¹¹⁴ whose 'bowels are moved'¹¹⁵ with compassion and who also can fall into 'fury'.¹¹⁶

B. A philosophical concept of the Absolute Being to which (one can hardly say 'to whom') all these human characteristics are inapplicable.

We have a tendency to regard B as the literal truth and A either as poetical decoration or as a concession to the 'primitive' mind of the ancient Jews.

We are right in thinking that A cannot be literally true. But no more can B. B is an abstract construction of our own minds. It represents to us as an abstraction, a mere concept, what must in reality be the most concrete of all Facts. B can make no claim to be a revelation: we have made it. A does make this claim.

If we accept A literally we shall remain on the mythological level. But it is no improvement to take B literally. Both are only shadows or hints of the reality. A cannot really imagine, and B cannot really conceptualise, God as He is in Himself. To prefer B is to think that the symbol we have made is better than the symbol *He* has made. I think we are right to use B as a corrective wherever A, taken literally, threatens to become absurd: but we

must instantly plunge back into A. Only God Himself knows in what sense He is 'like' a father or king, capable of love and anger. But since He has given us that picture of Himself we may be sure that it is more importantly 'like' than any concept we might try to substitute for it. You'll find this dealt with more fully in chapter XI of my *Miracles*.

We can get no further than this in knowledge about (*savoir*) God: but we are vouchsafed some knowledge-by-acquaintance (*connaître*) of Him in our devotional and sacramental life. This, if it clothes itself in words and images at all, always borrows them from the A view. But these are not the real point, are they? It is as the moment of personal contact fades that they press upon the mind. We cry 'Father' without attending to all those implications wh. wd. become more mythological the further we pursued them. As Buber might say God is most fully real to us as *Thou*, less so as *He*, least so as *It*. We must worship the *Thou*, not the *He* in our own minds, which is just as much an image (therefore a possible *idol*) as a figure of wood or stone.

Yrs. sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO KATHARINE AND AUSTIN FARRER (BOD):

The Kilns
21 July [1960]

My dear K. and Austin

Shortly before her death Joy said 'Give my fur coat to K. I know it's far too big for her, but she could use it as a present for someone else.' So perhaps when the car has returned to its duties you could come up and collect it?

She loved you both very much. And getting to know you both better is one of the many permanent gains I have got from my short married life.

There are a lot of things about sorrow which no one (least of all the tragedians) had told me. I never dreamed that, in between the moments of acute suffering, it wd. be so like somnambulism or like being slightly drunk. Nor, physically, often so like fear.

Douglas and Warnie have both been absolute Bricks. The latter, alas, goes to Ireland on Monday

Yours
Jack

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE LISTENER*:[117](#)

Cambridge

Sir,—

Professor Empson is mistaken when he says (*The Listener*, July 7) I have argued that Milton's Satan 'must be meant to be funny'.[118](#) I took *Paradise Lost* as a tragic, and *The Egoist* as a comic, treatment of 'the Satanic predicament'.[119](#) I said that Milton had subordinated the absurdity of Satan to his misery; but that, just as Meredith cannot exclude all pathos from Sir Willoughby, so Milton cannot exclude all that is ridiculous from Satan.[120](#) Surely the distinction between saying this and saying that Satan is 'meant to be funny' is not imperceptibly fine?

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

60/59

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
22nd July 1960.

My dear Gibb,

Thank you for your very kind letter. You won't think I value it the less if I say no more than that—as you can imagine, I have much on my hands.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):

The Kilns
25 July [1960]

Dear K

Come up any day that suits. Not seeing you two wd. never be a 'rest'. Nor am I sure that rest is what I need. I'm learning a good many things about grief wh. the novelists and poets never told me. It has as many different facets as love or anger or any other passion. In the lulls—between the peaks—there is something in it v. like fidgety boredom: like just 'hanging about waiting'—tho' what the deuce one thinks one is waiting for I don't know.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns etc 25 July [1960]

Dear Gibb

Will you please order 1 copy of S by J to be sent to Dr Richards, 59 Banbury Road, Oxford?¹²¹

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS H. V. M. MCGEHIE (P):¹²²

As from Magdalene College,

Cambridge

26 July 1960 Dear Mrs McGehie

Nearly every big bookshop in this country has a second-hand department, but some specialise in finding particular out-of-print books for their customers. The best I know is Rogers, Booksellers, Newcastle on Tyne (That is sufficient address). He will take a lot of trouble and will not charge more than an honest price.

But don't assume that a book is really out of print just because the local bookshop tells you it is. Booksellers dislike orders for single copies, for the profit is hardly worth the trouble to them, and they try to choke you off. The first step always is to write direct to the book's publishers (if you can discover who they were) whether in New York or London. Only after that has failed need you turn to the second-hand market.

Thanks for the kind things you say about my work. I am not likely to be in America in the near future.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO VICTOR HAYWARD HALL (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

3 Aug 1960

Dear Mr. Hall

Thanks for all the kind things you say about my work. I am afraid I couldn't come and visit your people. One reason is that I have for a long time given up that sort of work. I am much more use with the pen than with the tongue, and of use to more people. Every man to his own trade!

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

5 Aug 1960

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

Thanks for your kind letter. I believe in the resurrection, and also (rather less confidently) in the natural immortality of the soul. But the state of the dead *till* the resurrection is unimaginable. Are they in the same *time* that we live in at all. And if not, is there any sense in asking what they are 'now'?

Thanks also for your very moving offer of hospitality. There's no chance of travel at present, though.

I can't write more. One of the indirect results of Joy's death is that I have thousands of things to do which I didn't do before. And, to make matters worse, my brother is away on his holidays so I miss his secretarial help. Perhaps being maddeningly busy is the best thing for me—anyway I am. This is one of those things which make the tragedies of real life so *very* unlike those of the stage.

With warm regards.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO HELMUT KUHN (WHL):

16 August 1960

My Out of the Silent Planet has no factual basis and is a critique of our own age only as any Christian work is implicitly a critique of any age. I was trying to redeem for genuinely imaginative purposes the form popularly known in this country as ‘science-fiction’—I think you call it ‘future-romanz’ just as (*si parva licet componere magnis*)¹²³ *Hamlet* redeemed the popular revenge play.

TO FATHER RICHARD GINDER (P):¹²⁴

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

18 Aug 1960

Dear Father Ginder

Thanks for your kind letter. I wonder do we blame T.V. and the Comics too much? Was not a certain sort of boy in a certain sort of home wasting his time just as badly in other ways before they were invented? It annoys me when parents who read nothing but the newspapers themselves—i.e. nothing but lies, libels, poppycock, propaganda, and pornography—complain of their children reading the Comics! Upon my soul I think the children’s diet is healthier than their parents’.

My wife died last month. Of your charity mention us both sometimes in your prayers.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford

19 Aug 1960 Dear Mac,

Thanks for the reviews¹²⁵—not a single stinker among them. I have not written a book called *Greatest Problems* and think it most unlikely I ever shall.

Studies in Words is the first academic work I've written since they gave me a Chair at Cambridge, so I felt it almost an obligation to let C.U.P.¹²⁶ do it—especially as it is so very far from 'popular'. Do you want to do an American edn. of it? It hadn't occurred to me that you would, but if you do, let me know.

All the best.

Yours

Clive

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

20 Aug 1960

My dear Roger

Yes. On July 13. As we announced it only in the *Daily Telegraph*, v. few people seem to have heard.¹²⁷ Of course I knew you wd. write when you did. I am very glad we all shared that wonderful time in Greece. It is a close and lasting bond between the three survivors.

Warnie is away till mid Sept. and there is a spare bedroom here if you cd. come for a few days. It wd. be a great time for me if you would.

I've read Cohen's book on Haggard¹²⁸ (good, I thought) and written an article arising out of it for *Time & Tide*.¹²⁹

Love to June.

Yours

Jack

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

24 Aug 1960

My dear Roger

Good. Wed. Aug 31 it is. If you'll tell me the train I'll meet it in a car—the Oxford bus service has become almost purely theoretical.

Yours
Jack

TO HELMUT KUHN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

26 Aug 1960

Dear Kuhn

It was a pleasure to hear from you again. Hegner's first step shd. be a letter to my literary agent, S. Curtis Brown, 13 King Street, Covent Garden, London W.C. 2.¹³⁰ The business side will be a little complicated since some of the Narnian books are published by John Lane and others by G. Bles.

If any of the seven are omitted I wd. make it an absolute condition that the omission shd. be mentioned on, or opposite to, the title-page. Naturally I don't *like* (what author would?) the idea of any omissions!

I am delighted that you shd. have enjoyed these books and value your good opinion highly.

Is there any hope of seeing you in this country again?

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ANNE SCOTT (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

26 Aug 1960

Dear Mrs Scott

Thank you very much for your most kind and encouraging letter. You gave me great pleasure by what you said about *Till We Have Faces*, for that book, which I consider far and away the best I have written, has been my one big failure both with the critics and with the public.

My small stepson entirely agrees with your children about the present wicked misdirection of my talents, and asks 'When are you going to stop writing all that bilge and write interesting books again?'

Cookery books are not such bad reading. Have you Mrs Beeton with the original preface?¹³¹ It is delicious.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

30 Aug 1960

My dear Arthur

It is nice to hear from you. It might have been worse. Joy got away easier than many who die of cancer. There were a couple of hours of atrocious pain on her last morning, but the rest of the day mostly asleep, tho' rational whenever she was conscious. Two of her last remarks were 'You have made me happy' and 'I am at peace with God.' She died at 10

that evening. I'd seen violent death but never seen natural death before. There's really nothing to it, is there?

One thing I've been glad about is that in the Easter Vac she realised her life long dream of seeing Greece. We had a wonderful time there. And many happy moments even after that. The night before she died we had a long, quiet, nourishing, and tranquil talk.

W. is away on his Irish holiday and has, as usual, drunk himself into hospital. Douglas—the younger boy—is, as always, an absolute brick, and a very bright spot in my life. I'm quite well myself. In fact, by judicious diet and exercise, I've brought myself down from 13 stone to just under 11.

Yours

Jack

*Since Joy's death a number of Lewis's letters had contained reflections on the nature of his grief. As so often, he followed the advice he had given Arthur Greeves many years ago: 'Start writing: ink is the great cure for all human ills.'*¹³² Sometime during August he wrote a short work to which he gave the name *A Grief Observed*.¹³³ When Roger Lancelyn Green visited Lewis at The Kilns from 31 August to 2 September Lewis showed him the work under a pledge of secrecy.

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
9 Sept. 1960

My dear Roger

Thanks for the MSS. Douglas started on them on last night and we await his first review!¹³⁴ Alas! When we talked of your Apician banquet I assumed it wd. be in Vacation. In term-time it will be impossible for me to *mensis accumbere divom*.¹³⁵ I shall have to content myself with a sight of the *menu* and your account of the scene.

Love to all. Your visit was a v. bright spot in our lives.

Yours

Jack

Studies in Words was published by Cambridge University Press on 9 September 1960. For help in promoting the book, they asked Lewis to ‘Give a short description of your book in simple non-technical language which will be understood by salesmen and booksellers in all countries—who need to know about it in sufficient detail to direct it towards the right buyers.’ Lewis wrote the following reply:

In how many different senses do you use the word wit or nature (or sense itself)? How many more senses of them have you found in old authors? How did such multiplicity of meanings come about? Do you always know which sense you are using yourself? These are the questions to which this book attempts an answer as regards seven words. They have been selected mainly for the light they throw on the history of thought and sentiment. But it is hoped that the study of them will have for the reader (as it has had for the author) a more than historical interest in increasing his awareness of what we are doing when we talk. It belongs on the same shelf as Pearsall Smith’s Four Words,¹³⁶ Owen Barfield’s Poetic Diction,¹³⁷ and Professor Empson’s Structure of Complex Words.¹³⁸

TO MRS RAY GARRETT (P):

12 Sept 1960

Dear Mrs. Garrett

As you see from the book the whole lesson of my life has been that no ‘methods of stimulation’ are of any lasting use.¹³⁹ They are indeed like drugs—a stronger dose is needed each time and soon no possible dose is effective. We must not bother about thrills at all. *Do the present duty—bear the present pain—enjoy the present pleasure—and leave emotions and ‘experiences’ to look after themselves.* That’s the programme, isn’t it?

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
15 Sept. 1960

My dear Roger

Oh Hell! What a trial I am to you both! If Warnie really came home on the 23rd—and if he did not come home so drunk as to have to be put straight into a nursing home—I could and wd. with delight come to you on the 24th. But neither is really at all probable. And of course I can't leave this house with no grown-up in charge. What it comes to is that you must count me out. I am *very* sorry. *Don't* make any further efforts to accommodate such an entangled man as me—it wd. only for me add to the loss of a great pleasure the embarrassment of knowing I was a nuisance.

Have you seen Allan Garner's *The Wierdstone of Brisingamen*?¹⁴⁰ Not bad, tho' too indebted to Tolkien. He seems to be a fairly near neighbour of yours—Alderley, Cheshire.

Thanks, evermore thanks, and love

Yours

Jack

TO FATHER QUINLAN (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
16 Sept. 1960

Dear Father Quinlan

Thank you for your kind and encouraging letter. Since you so generously acknowledge a debt,¹⁴¹ I will tell you how you can repay it.

My wife died in July. I should be grateful if you would sometimes mention both her and me in your prayers.

Would you believe it?—one reviewer has complained that the book 'makes no mention of conjugal love'.

With cordial greetings,

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO THE REV. PETER BIDE (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

20 Sept 1960

My dear Peter

I have just come in from saying my morning prayers in the wood, including as always one for 'Peter and Margy and Joy and me', and found your letter.¹⁴² I hope they are allowed to meet and help one another. You and I at any rate can. I shall be here on Wed. next. If you could let me have a card mentioning the probable time of your arrival, all the better. If not, I shall just 'stand by'.

Yes—at first one is sort of concussed and 'life has no taste and no direction'. One soon discovers, however, that grief is not a state but a process—like a walk in a winding valley with a new prospect at every bend God bless all four of us.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
20 Sept. 1960

Dear Gibb

I have no copy of the English edn. of the *Reflections* here. If you can lend me one for the purpose, or let me have a set of the galley proofs for the Fontana edn., I'll go through for misprints. There were some, I believe.

I'm glad the *Loves* thrive.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO FATHER FREDERICK JOSEPH ADELMANN SJ (P):[143](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
21 Sept. 1960

Dear Father Adelman

Your invitation—to a Protestant and a layman—is a great compliment and I fully appreciate it. But I must refuse. I am now a widower with two (most fascinating) stepsons to bring up, and I don't allow myself distant adventures!

There is even a deeper objection. I don't know exactly what I shd. say in those lectures. When one accepts a lectureship because one has, at that moment, something to say for wh. those lectures wd. be the suitable form, the result is good: but when one has to think up something to say because one has accepted the lectureship—why, then the creak of the pump-handle becomes audible. You see what I mean? I can't be fruitful when I'm not pregnant. An invitation like yours can be a good *mid wife*, but not a good *father*!

With thanks and regrets.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

P.S. How right your Society was to shut up de Chardin! Can you explain the enormous boosts now being given to all that Bergsonian-Shavian-pantheistic-biolatrous waffle?

Having shown the manuscript of A Grief Observed to Roger Lancelyn Green, Lewis contacted his literary agent, Spencer Curtis Brown, and over lunch on 21 September they discussed publication. Because Lewis did not want it to appear under his own name, nor from his usual publisher, Curtis Brown offered it to Faber & Faber, of which T. S. Eliot was a director. Lewis had chosen as a pseudonym 'Dimidius'—meaning 'Halved' or 'divided in two'.

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

23 Sept 60

Dear Van Auken—

You have convinced me that my comment was crude & facile.¹⁴⁴ The puzzle is more intricate than I thought. The truth is that no one can comment usefully on an experience he can't *imagine*. I don't say 'an experience he hasn't had', for that is quite different. We are, on the other hand, much at one in our reaction to grief and I find much wisdom in your poem.

My great recent discovery is that when I mourn Joy least I feel nearest to her. Passionate sorrow *cuts us off* from the dead (there are ballads & folk-tales wh. hint this). Do you think that much of the traditional ritual of mourning had, unconsciously, that very purpose? For of course the primitive mind is v. anxious to *keep them away*.

Like you, I can't imagine real Eros coming twice. I still feel married to Joy.

God bless you,

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY NEYLAN (T): PC

The Kilns
Sept 23 [1960]

Thanks for your kind note. Love to all. *Orate pro nobis*.

J.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

24 Sept. 1960

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for your letter of the 21st. I hope from what you say that the end of this bad patch is now in sight. Meantime, you seem in fine spiritual health.

As to *how* I take sorrow, the answer is 'In nearly all the possible ways.' Because, as you probably know, it isn't a state but a process. It keeps on changing—like a winding road with quite a new landscape at each bend. Two curious discoveries I have made. The moments at which you call most desperately and clamorously to God for help are precisely those when you seem to get none. And the moments at which I feel nearest to Joy are precisely those when I mourn her *least*. Very queer. In both cases a clamorous need seems to shut one off from the thing needed. No one ever told me this. It is almost like 'Don't knock and it shall be opened to you.'¹⁴⁵ I must think it over.

My youngest stepson is the greatest comfort to me. My brother is still away in Ireland.

God bless us all.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

25 Sept. 1960

Dear Gibb

Thanks for the extra copy of the old edn,¹⁴⁶ which I will gladly retain.

1. Yes (p. 2—galley 10) for *1 Sam* read *2 Sam*

No (p. 92 29) I meant TONE DEAF (or TONE-DEAF, if you prefer).

Yes (galley 101) for 28 read 22

2. I am glad to say that the most troublesome changes I have indicated are necessitated by your printer's error on galleys 30, 65, and 95, where he has made nonsense.

3. My own second thoughts are mainly due to the discovery that I had used OF COURSE with intolerable frequency.

4. If you are using again any of the puffs quoted on the jacket of the first edn, notice that the first line of the bit from *The Scotsman* must be corrupt. Insert OF after OUT?

5. I have not vetted the psalms printed in Appendix I.

All the best.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
26 Sept. 1960

Dear Father Milward

First, about the Grail. I think it important to keep on remembering that a question can be v. interesting without being answerable and one of my main efforts as a teacher has been to train people to say those (apparently difficult) words 'We don't know.' We haven't even got anything that can be quite accurately called '*the* Grail legend'. We have a number of romances which introduce the Grail and are not consistent with one another. No theory as to the ultimate origin is more than speculation. The desire to make that origin either Pagan or (less commonly) heretical is clearly widespread, but I think it springs from psychological causes not from any evidence.

I do not myself doubt that it represents in a general way an imaginative and literary response to the doctrine of Transubstantiation and the visible act of the elevation.¹⁴⁷ But we must be on our guard against abstraction. A story does *not* grow like a tree nor breed other stories as a mouse begets other mice. Each story is told by an individual, voluntarily, with a unique artistic purpose. Hence the germination goes on where historical, theological, or anthropological studies can never reach it—in the mind of some man of genius, like Chretien or Wolfram.¹⁴⁸ Those who have written stories themselves will come nearer to understanding it than those who have 'studied the Grail legend' all their lives.

The whole (unconscious) effort of the orthodox scholars is to remove the individual author and individual romance and substitute the picture of something diffusing itself like an infectious disease or a fashion in clothes.

Hence the (really senseless) question ‘What is the Grail?’ The Grail is in each romance just what that romance exhibits it to be. There is no ‘Grail’ over and above these ‘Grails’. Hence, again, the assumption that the mystery in each romance could be cleared up if we knew more about the Celtic Cauldron of Plenty, or the Cathari or what you will.¹⁴⁹ It never occurs to the scholars that this mysteriousness may be a calculated and wholly effective literary technique.

I am entirely on the side of your Society for shutting de Chardin up. The enormous boosts he is getting from scientists who are very hostile to you seems to me v. like the immense popularity of Pasternak among anti-Communists. I can’t for the life of me see his merit. The cause of Man against men never needed championing *less* than now. There seems to me a dangerous (but also commonplace) tendency to Monism or even Pantheism in his thought. And what in Heaven’s name is the sense of saying that before there was a life there was ‘pre-life’? If you choose to say that before you switched on the light in the cellar there was ‘pre-light’, of course you may. But the ordinary English word for ‘pre-light’ is darkness. What do you gain by such nick-names?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
29 Sept. 1960

Dear Gibb

1. I agree that the top one is the best design.
2. don’t object to the colours, but neither wd. I object to your dark red.
3. If it can be managed I shd. like a design wh. made it clearer that *The S. Letters and S. proposes a T.* is the title of this publication. Having *The S. Letters* at all (instead of my proposed *The Whole S.*) is already a grave disadvantage and is going to lead to endless confusion—ambiguous orders to booksellers and cross-purposes in those conversations about books wh. are the most valuable medium of *lasting* publicity. But if you insist on this form we must palliate its faults as much as we can. The new title, all 8 words, must by their type and arrangement make a unit for the eye. A man in a

bookshop, seeing this present design from a few feet away, will simply notice the words on the black cartouches and think 'The S.L....I've got a copy of that already.' This, I think, is what you are suggesting yourself. Wd. something like this be possible L. 1 THE S. LETTERS.....caps

2 AND.....caps

3 S. PROPOSES A T.....v. slightly largercaps

4 with a new preface.....different type

5 C. S. L.....caps

The essential is that L. 3 shd. be what first catches the attention.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
30 Sept. 1960

Dear Mac

'Why the heck can't C. S. L. have the civility to answer a letter?' I don't blame you, but it wasn't exactly my fault. Like a fool, I dealt direct with C.U.P. for *Studies in Words* instead of working through Curtis Brown: chiefly because I regarded this book as too academic to be of any serious commercial value. And like a double fool I've let them take it up so that I'm not free to arrange for an American edn. with anyone else.

The delay in answering you is due to the fact that I've been all this time trying to get out of them whether this is exactly what my contract with them means. It is. But of all the impenetrable block heads! Their answer—the correspondence was long and infuriating—dealt with every question under the sun except the one I had asked (besides being unintelligible and contradictory). I am sorry about all this.

How well Chaucer advised us 'Flee fro the Presse'!¹⁵⁰

Yours

Clive

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

The Kilns

1 Oct. [1960]

Agree about title, wrapper etc. Am standing by for proofs.
C.S.L.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

I go on Wed. to Magdalene College,
Cambridge
3 Oct [1960]

Dear Gibb

Thanks for the proofs, which I send under separate cover. Don't be hurt if so ham-handed a man as I fails to manipulate your beautiful packaging materials and has to fall back on my old squashy envelopes after all. I can't tie knots.

1. Title page. I agree with your proposed change.
2. Verso of title page. This should read

The Screwtape Letters are reprinted by kind permission of *The Guardian*, and *Screwtape proposes a Toast* by that of *The Saturday Evening Post*, with some changes.

(rom. for the rest and itals. for the titles)

3. pp. 7–8. Yes, transpose: but now for a far more serious matter.

4. The Prefaces come in the wrong order! By all ordinary rules the preface to this whole volume ought to come first. This wd. lead to a new list of contents, as follows:

i.e. the new preface

Preface

The S. Letters including *its* preface, the old one, wh. need not appear in the list of contents.

S. proposes a
Toast

After the general preface of course your present p. 21 just as it is, and after that the original preface. Is all this possible? The existing arrangement

is one I v. strongly deprecate—one more effort to make the *Toast* like part of the Letters.

5. You are right about pp. 121, 141, 152, 153. Do as you think best about p. 157. Larger type as at the beginning seems to me rather a good idea.

6. On p. 10 should we add *Oxford* and on p. 19 *Cambridge*? Otherwise those who don't know any better will think that we haven't made up our minds how we spell the same college's name.

7. On p. 25 l. 1. I've had dozens of letters telling me that you wouldn't see a No 73 bus in the street outside the B.M.!¹⁵¹ Will you and your fellow-Londoners substitute some bus you could see? Preferably a number of two digits!¹⁵²

8. The words I have deleted on p. 139 were put in for the benefit of those who wd. meet the name for the first time in the *Sat. Evg. Post*. They do no good now.

9. I've also removed some Americanisms from the *Toast*—put in for the American reader.

My handwriting is worse than usual to-day. Sorry—I can't help it.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO BASIL WILLEY (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
5 Oct. 1960

Dear Basil

This stuff¹⁵³ arrived addressed jointly to you and me: only my name came first because of the way the alphabet is arranged. I hope you'll enjoy it. I didn't much. Perhaps Dorothy W. is the proper recipient.¹⁵⁴ I suppose these paynim knights, jousting in Christian armour, shd. be treated with courtesy. If Dorothy won't play, you and I must concoct a letter. But I hope she will.

Yours

Jack

(= C.S.L.)

TO FATHER QUINLAN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge
9 Oct. 1960

Dear Father Quinlan

I am most grateful. Both your letters strangely warmed my heart. I am sorry we are so unlikely to meet in the flesh: let us hope to do so in a better place.

Yes—‘little Flower’ is a dreadful name to inflict on any decent girl, let alone a saint.¹⁵⁵ What harm we have done ourselves by all this saccharine sentiment! The worst of all is those *feminine* angels in 19th. century stained glass: as if creatures stronger and more ancient than man were consumptive schoolgirls!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

9 Oct 1960

Dear Gibb

1. Yes, the bits from Luther and More will do very well facing the first Letter.

2. I am glad you agree about transposing the prefaces. But the arrangement is still not exactly what I should like. I want, if I can have it, this order:

1960 Preface

Page containing the title *The Screwtape Letters*

1941 Preface

Text of the Letters.

This arrangement is surely truer to the facts? The 1941 Preface is *not* a preface to this present volume as a whole: it is part and parcel of the new edn. of the *S. Letters* which is only *one* of the two items that make up this new book, and it ought to appear along with the text of the *Letters* as a single unit. It is, you see, quite a different *sort* of preface.

The 1960 Preface is me speaking in my own person and giving literal autobiographical facts. The 1941 one is part of the fantasy or convention which the *Letters* employ—spoken by the imaginary C.S.L. who has somehow tapped a diabolical correspondence. In the 1960 Preface I come before the curtain in my ordinary clothes and address the audience. Then the lights go down and the curtain goes up and there I am in grease paint and fancy-dress speaking a prologue which is part of the play. See what I mean? For similar reasons I wd. like the dedication to Tolkien so placed that it clearly dedicates *not* this whole book (wh. T. never saw) but only the *S. Letters*. You cd. put it either to face p. 23, along with the Luther and More, or on the verso of that same leaf, below the title *S. Letters*.

3. Drat that omnibus.¹⁵⁶ It need not be visible *from* the B.M.: it need be visible only in some neighbouring street which the patient might see on his way to or from lunch. If you can provide the number of any bus that might be seen in some such neighbouring street, and then emend *street* to *streets* in the last line of p. 24, we shall have saved our bacon. If this is impossible, then take your choice of *green coach, jeep, fire engine, Rolles, police car, or ambulance*. The moral (that country cousins shouldn't try to pretend they are Londoners) is sadly clear!

4. For heading on p. 11 wd. just *Preface* or *General Preface* do? This 'new edn.' somehow sounds to me a little childish.

I can't spot any more corrigenda.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

MRS R. E. HERMAN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
10 Oct. 1960

Dear Mrs. Herman

Thank you for your kind and encouraging letter. Somebody certainly ought to write a book on the subject you mention: but it could not be written

well except by one who had some experience at first hand both of children in general and of retarded children. I haven't either.

The queer thing is that this horror of the deficient is quite modern. Our ancestors don't seem to have felt it at all. On this, as on many other subjects, we have grown odiously and wickedly 'refined'.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO I. O. EVANS (W): PC

Magdalene,
Cambridge
12 Oct. '60

Thanks very much. It is a fascinating subject, isn't it? I had not heard 'so-called gangsters'. Your explanation wd. never have occurred to me, but it seems very probable. If true, it is an interesting example of the way in which fuller knowledge of the total linguistic situation may reveal sense in what, by itself, looks sheer nonsense.

All good wishes.
C.S.L.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
12 Oct. 1960

Dear Gibb

I do believe we've got it right at last.¹⁵⁷ I accept the order given in your letter (11 Oct) and also your kind emendation for the bit at the bottom of p. 24 and the top of p. 25. Thanks very much. Whew! If place and time agreed I shd. suggest we had long drinks together at once.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

16 Oct. 1960

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

Thank you for your kind letter and announcement of good things to come.

I wasn't at all questioning the life after death, you know: only saying that its character is for us unimaginable. The things you tell me about it are all outside my knowledge and most of them outside my powers of conception. To say 'They are now as they were then' and add next moment 'unhampered of course by the body'¹⁵⁸ is to me like saying 'They are exactly the same but of course unimaginably different.'

But don't let us trouble one another about it. We shall know when we are dead ourselves. The Bible seems scrupulously to avoid any *descriptions* of the other world, or worlds, except in terms of parable or allegory.

My brother is away in Ireland but is expected home next week. If he were here he would join me in warmest regards.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge.

18 Oct. 1960

Dear Chad

I knew without being told how you would both feel about Joy's death. What I did not know was the touching fact that our joint happiness had added something to your own. It was a wonderful marriage. Even after all hope was gone, even on the last night before her death, there were 'patins of bright gold'.¹⁵⁹ Two of the last things she said were 'You have made me happy' and 'I am at peace with God.'

Grief is quite unlike what I imagined. I thought of it as a state, but it is really a process. At each bend of the valley there is a new landscape.

I look forward to meeting you when you are in England. Love to both.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

Magdalene
20 Oct. [1960]

Nov. 30 is a good day for me. What time? Let me know. All hours that day are free at present.

C.S.L.

TO NICHOLAS ZERNOV (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
24 Oct. 1960

My dear Nicholas

Thank Militza very much for the negatives¹⁶⁰ and thank you both very much for your prayers. I will try to arrange about coming with the boys—they're getting nice, aren't they!?!—as soon as term is over. We are all starting our winter colds at present.

Yours

Jack

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
24 Oct. 1960

Dear Fowler

I think the *right* way to 'anticipate anticipation' is to bring out as many of your chapters, or equivalents to them, as you can in periodicals. Warburg, for example sounds the right place.¹⁶¹ I am sure the wrong way is to try to rush the complete book through any sooner than its size and nature demands.

Have you read Robert Ellrodt's *NeoPlatonism in the Poetry of Spenser* (Librairie E. Droz, 8 Rue Verdaine, Geneva)?¹⁶² Almost certainly you have.

Reading your account of the book, I am divided between a great greed to see it and the little haunting fear 'Is he beginning to see pictures in the fire?'—as, you know, all critics of *P. Plowman* or *F.Q* (except oneself) end by doing.

I didn't know you knew Harding's book.¹⁶³ It's time I read it again too. What I am revelling in at present is Emily Dickinson.¹⁶⁴ Odd, the way bits quite [like] Housman¹⁶⁵ and other bits quite like De la Mare¹⁶⁶ keep on coming in, yet the totality is so different from either.

I'm not much good at advising about publishers. Is it relevant to say that if you offered it to C.U.P. they'd almost certainly send it to me for an opinion? I don't *like* acting in this capacity when the author is a personal friend, and it's on the cards I shall be leaning over backwards in my attempt not to be biased in your favour, which wd. be bad luck on you. But at least you'd get a careful reading.

Thanks for your sympathy. I hope we both have your prayers (or don't you pray for the dead?).

More power to your elbow. The unintelligible review of me in T.L.S. was by Empson: not at all nasty, but about as opaque a bit of writing as I've seen this year.¹⁶⁷

Yours

C. S. Lewis

On 24 October Curtis Brown wrote to Lewis: 'I know that the enclosed copy of the letter from T. S. Eliot will give you pleasure.' On 20 October Eliot had written:

I and two other Directors have read A Grief Observed. My wife has read it also, and we have all been deeply moved by it. We do in fact want to publish it...We are of the opinion that we have guessed the name of the author. If, as you intimate and as I should expect from the man I think it is, he does sincerely want anonymity, we agree that a plausible English pseudonym would hold off enquirers better than Dimidius. The latter is sure to arouse curiosity and there must be plenty of people amongst those who know him, and perhaps even among the readers of his work who do not know him, who may be able to penetrate the disguise once they set their minds working.¹⁶⁸

Seeing the force of Eliot's argument, Lewis devised a new pseudonym. He had used the name and initials 'Nat Whilk' and 'N.W.'—Anglo-Saxon for 'I know not whom'—on many occasions, and by combining them with 'Clerk', which in medieval usage meant 'scholar', he came up with the pseudonym he would use on the book, 'N. W. Clerk'.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
25 Oct. 1960

Dear Gibb

Will you kindly send a copy of my *Transposition* etc,¹⁶⁹ with my compliments, to this correspondent?¹⁷⁰ Thanks for v. satisfactory cheque received the other day. You haven't fixed our 'Date' in Cambridge yet.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ELIZABETH BREWER (BBC):¹⁷¹

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

26 Oct 1960

Dear Miss Brewer

I'm afraid not. As you probably know, a short talk (for some of us) takes longer to prepare than an ordinary lecture, and I couldn't do it except by stealing time and energy from jobs I ought to do.

With thanks and regret.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JILL BLACK (P):¹⁷²

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
27 Oct. 1960

Dear Mrs. Black

I shall be happy to see you both. In term I spend my weeks here and my week-ends in Oxford: in Vacation I am in Oxford pretty well all the time. Perhaps you will suggest a date.

If I can do the monograph on G.M. at all, I can do it before the end of February.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
28 Oct. 1960

Dear Mary Willis

Dear, dear, this is very distressing news. How many things have come upon you at once! As Coleridge says

*–to be wroth with one we love
Doth work like madness in the brain.*¹⁷³

It's the mixture, or alternation, of resentment and affection that is so very uneasy, isn't it? For the indulgence of either immediately comes slap up against the other, which then, a few seconds later comes slap up against it, so that the mind does a diabolical 'shuttle-service' to and fro between them. We've all at some time in our lives, I expect, had this experience. Except possibly anxiety nothing is more hostile to sleep. One must try, I suppose, to keep on remembering that the love part of the suffering is good and purgatorial while the anger part is bad and infernal. Yet how madly one cherishes that base part as if it were one's dearest possession—dwells on everything that can aggravate the offence—and keeps on thinking of things one wd. like to say to the other party! I suppose all one can do is to keep on meditating on the petition 'Forgive us our trespasses *as we forgive those that trespass against us*'.¹⁷⁴

I find *Fear* a great help—the fear that my own unforgivingness will exclude me from all the promises. Fear tames wrath. And *this* fear (we have Our Lord's word for it) is wholly well-grounded. The human heart (mine anyway) is 'desperately wicked'.¹⁷⁵ Joy often quoted this in connection with the great difficulty she found in forgiving a v. near and v. nasty relative of her own. One has to keep on doing it over again, doesn't one?

God send you help of every sort.

Yours
Jack

P.S.—It's also useful to think 'Either X [is or] is not so bad as, in my present anger, I think. If not, how unjust I must be. If so, how terribly X needs my prayers'

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
28 Oct. 1960

Dear Gibb

Thanks v. much. I'll expect you at 2:30 on Wed Nov 30.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD): PC

Magdalene
30 Oct [1960]

Thank you with all my heart. These reminders that we are not alone do, I find, do some good.

J.

TO NINA HOWELL STARR (W):¹⁷⁶

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
1 Nov. 1960

Dear Nina

Thank you very much for the photos. I can't judge the likeness to myself of course, but if I've come out as well as Nathan it must be very good. Your own absence from the group is much to be regretted. The consolation is that it makes it a Problem Picture. WHOSE WAS THE THIRD GLASS? might well be engineered into a Research question!¹⁷⁷ I may some day accept your most kind offer of a duplicate or so.

It was a delightful meeting and I hope there may be others. Love to both.

Yours

Jack

TO ROBIN ANSTEY (P):[178](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
2 Nov. 1960

Dear Vice Principal

I am afraid I had no idea what of mine Clarke quoted on the jacket of *Childhood's End*. Probably a bit written for that very purpose at his publisher's request, I should say.[179](#)

I hope you'll write that survey. S.F.—however bad most of it is—is now the chief vehicle for 'thoughts that wander up and down eternity'.[180](#) How trivial, by comparison, are most of the issues presented by our 'serious' novelists!

You probably know David Lindsay's *Voyage to Arcturus* (Faber)? If not, don't overlook it. This is the fullest example of what I mean—tho' the message he is putting over is a v. horrible one—Schopenhauer if not Manes himself.

Thank you very much for your prayers for my wife. Add some for me.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
4 Nov. 1960

Dear Fowler

Thanks for the offprints. The only one I've read is 'Emblems of Temperance'[181](#) but I had to do it in much haste. I shall be glad to have them all.

I don't agree with Berger[182](#) in the main but he did get into my head the truism (which I had never fully attended to before) that the characters in an allegory don't know they're in an allegory. *They* live in a wholly literal adventure. Obvious, but v. far-reaching. To Guyon the Mammon episode is just one more 'strange adventure.'[183](#)

I've read Hieatt in page-proof.[184](#) I can't help suspecting it's a mare's nest.

The real philosophy of prayer is, I think, to be found in 2 Cor, all over it, where you [are] presented with a positive carnival of vicariousness. I'll try to work this out some day but I haven't time now.

What is the correct translation of 'Venus selfe doth soly couples seeme' in *Colin Clouts Come Home Again* (801)?¹⁸⁵

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO HSIN-CHANG CHANG (BOD):

As from Magdalene
6 Nov '60

Dear Chang

Thank you very much. Mondays are always impossible for me. Would Thursday Nov 24th at 4.30 suit you? If so, it will give me great pleasure to come there.¹⁸⁶

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):

As from Magdalene
6 Nov. 1960

Dear Fowler

I'm bothered about your interpretation of Brigador.¹⁸⁷ A horse may well symbolise passion. If Brigador bolted while being ridden by Guyon, and Guyon, after advice from the Palmer, learned how to manage him better, this wd. be a clear allegory. But what can be meant by having your passions stolen by someone else and then having to get on without them (symbolised by travelling on foot)? If Braggadochio's main trouble were an inability to ride Brigador, we cd. still make out some sort of allegory: one man can manage Passion and another can't. But is anything made of that except in XII. 53?—a point surely sufficiently accounted for by (a) the Ariosto passage—and (b) common observation of real saddle horses with unfamiliar riders.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JILL BLACK (P):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

6 Nov 1960

Dear Mrs. Black

I am ashamed of myself! I want to cry off. Please don't imagine this has anything to do with the terms, which would fully have satisfied me. I have been looking through the other monographs and also thinking about my old preface to my G.M. Anthology. No good (even apart from copyright) in repeating *that!* And a new one of the sort you (quite rightly) want is, I find, not up my street at all. It needs a sort of quiet competence and reliability which I couldn't achieve without more work than quite a big book would cost me. Sorry, but I must ask to be excused.

Yours (with his tail between his legs) C. S. Lewis

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W): TS

60/272

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
14th November 1960.

Dear Miss Douglass,

Many thanks for your letter of the 11th, and for your kind interest in my doings. I'm glad you enjoyed yourself in Boston, and would like to see those pictures; but I'm afraid a visit to America is at the moment an impossible pleasure.

I should think Wolff's book will be frightful.¹⁸⁸

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis¹⁸⁹

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

As from Magdalene

Nov. 1960

Dear Gibb

Here is the portrait.¹⁹⁰ As long as the lines are preserved, I suppose the treatment can be different. I think bold black or red lines on a white or grey surface wd. be better than the present white on weak red.

Is there a copyright question? If so, no doubt you have already settled it with American Macmillans.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

In the legend I don't care for *Mr.* after *Excellency*.¹⁹¹ If this can be altered without technical difficulties, wd. 'His Infernal Excellency Under Secretary S' be better? Or 'Abysmal Sublimity' etc as at the end of Letter XXII?¹⁹²

TO SARAH NEYLAN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
21 Nov. 1960

My dear Sarah

A hundred thousand congratulations and blessings. I hope you will be very happy indeed.¹⁹³ The Lieutenant sounds all he ought to be—tho' I rather regret the evolutionary process which has turned sea-dogs into salt horses!

I couldn't come to the wedding, my dear. I haven't the pluck. Any wedding, for the reason you know, would turn me inside out now—I send a little present. All blessings, and love to your mother and father.

Yours ever

C. S. Lewis

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
22 Nov. 1960

Dear Fowler,

1. They have now sent me a copy of Heatt's book,¹⁹⁴ so it is no longer a breach of confidence to pass these page proofs on to you. I don't want them back 2. I've been familiar all my life with that proverb in the form 'Set a *beggar* on horseback' etc.¹⁹⁵

3. F.Q. V.iii 22–4. Your interpretation wd. surely make things worse. Taking the scene literally, Guyon can perhaps be excused for standing by while his claim to ownership of the horse is put to the test. What else could he do? It would be much worse if the Knight of Self-Control stood and watched while his own unmastered passions broke other people's ribs.

3. [4.] CCCHA 801¹⁹⁶ I was worried as to how *solely* acquired the form *solly*, and why, if S. meant 'Venus is a couple' he should say 'Venus seems to be *couples*'. I suspect there is corruption. As for Venus' hermaphroditism: a. HHL 29–30¹⁹⁷ The generation of the Son is conceived as a kind of hermaphrodite self-fertilisation within the First Fair (the Father) b. Nicolas Cusanus, *De Docta Ignorantia* I. xxv (Trans. not v. reliably by G. Heron. Routledge & K. Paul, 1954,¹⁹⁸ p. 57): The Ancients called God both 'Venus' and 'Nature'

God contains in Himself both sexes

Valerius Romanus (whoever he may be) calls God *Jupiter pater* and *Jupiter mater*¹⁹⁹

c. Origen. *In Genesim* I. 15 *Ad imaginem Dei homo factus masculus et femina est.*²⁰⁰

d. Apuleius *Met* xi. 2. *Tu caelestis Venus quae primis rerum exordiis sexuum diversitatem generato Amore sociasti*²⁰¹hellip;she must have produced Amor himself hermaphroditically I'm not doing this *only* to show off, but also because I think you are in some danger of

a. Of assuming that all the figures are ethical, or at least psychological, allegories, so that you seek in Venus an image of how we feel or act when we are in love. I don't think that is the right line here. V. is cosmic or metaphysical allegory.

b. Of refining on the allegory of the particular story at each moment to the neglect of the general iconographical, emblematic, and philosophical elements.

4. [5.] I've just finished a long notice of Ellrodt's book for the *Revue Anglaise*.²⁰² As it may be ages before they print it, I'll send you a carbon as soon as it's typed, if you think it would be any use to you.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

24 Nov 1960

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for your letter of the 20th. About forgetting things, Dr. Johnson said 'If, on leaving the company, a young man cannot remember where he has left his hat, it is nothing. But when an old man forgets, everyone says, Ah, his memory is going.'²⁰³ So with ourselves. We have *always* been forgetting things: but now, when we do so, we attribute it to our age. Why, it was years ago that, on finishing my work before lunch, I stopped myself only just in time from putting my cigarette-end into my spectacle case and throwing my spectacles into the fire!

What I was writing about last time was the pain and resentment you were feeling about some thing your daughter had said or done. I wasn't trying to lecture. Rather, to compare notes about temptation we all have to contend with.

There, by the way, is a sentence ending with a preposition. The silly 'rule' against it was invented by Dryden.²⁰⁴ I think he disliked it only because you can't do it in either French or Latin which he thought more 'polite' languages than English.

As for the bug-bear of Old Peoples' Homes, remember that our ignorance works both ways. Just as some of the things we have longed & hoped for turn out to be dust and ashes when we get them, so the things we have most dreaded sometimes turn out to be quite nice. If you ever do have to go to a Home, Christ will be there just as much as in any other place.

The bit of conversation with your daughter which you quoted sounds as if there were nothing much wrong on either side but nerves. But I admit I don't know the cure. Slowing down the *speed* of the conversation (so far as this depends on oneself) is sometimes helpful. Also sitting down. I think we

all talk more excitedly when standing (Notice how often the actors in a comedy *sit* whereas those in a tragedy usually stand) All blessings,

Yours

Jack

TO MEREDITH LEE (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
6 Dec. 1960

Dear Miss Lee, 1. Why did I become a writer? Chiefly, I think, because my clumsiness of fingers prevented me from making things in any other way. See my *Surprised by Joy*, chapter I. [205](#)

2. What 'inspires' my books? Really, I don't know. Does anyone know where, exactly, an idea comes from? With me all fiction *begins with* pictures in my head. But where the pictures come from I couldn't say.

3. Which of my books do I think most 'representational'? Do you mean (a.) Most representative, most typical, most characteristic? Or (b.) Most full of 'representations' i.e. images. But whichever you mean, surely this is a question not for me but for my readers to decide. Or do you mean simply which do I like best? If so, the answer wd. be *Till We Have Faces* and *Perelandra*.

4. I have, as usual, dozens of 'plans' for books, but I don't know which, if any, of these will come off. Very often a book of mine gets written when I'm tidying a drawer and come across notes for a plan rejected by me years ago, and now suddenly realise I can do it after all. This, you see, makes predictions rather difficult!

5. I enjoy writing fiction more than writing anything else. Wouldn't anyone?

Good luck with your 'project'.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

60/59

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford.
8th December 1960.

Dear Jock,

Right. But I didn't write the Milton article in the T.L.S.²⁰⁶ It would be hard to prevent Mr Skill from just being Screwtape in reverse.²⁰⁷ But I'll chew the idea again.

Yours,
Jack

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
10 Dec. 1960

My dear Roger

No. I never heard that rhyme in my life. I enjoyed *Winy ille Pooh*.²⁰⁸ Could anyone but an Englishman have conceived a Latin version of a children's book in such extremely advanced Latin that only an adult could possibly read it? I like that absurdity.

Happy Christmas to all.
Yours
Jack

TO BELLE AND EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford. 10th December 1960.

Dear Allens both,

Very shabbily, we are about to fob you off with one answer for two letters—that which Belle sent to Warren a few days since, and Ed's to Jack dated 5th. But it is not so unfair as it sounds, for not only are we both 'snowed under' at this time of year, but also there is nothing to say to one of you which can't be said to the other.

Yes, it is always sad to see places like your blackberry hunting grounds turned into building estates, and it depresses us more and more every time we revisit our native Ulster; for example, the quiet semi-rural suburb in

which our grandparents used to live on the shores of Belfast Lough is now having the foreshore dredged out as a preliminary to turning it into a deep water harbour with an oil refinery back of it. And I remember it as an area of big solid Victorian houses, each standing in 2–3 acres of garden.²⁰⁹

I liked the holiday photos and envied you your sunshine; we alas had not any at all here, and we are not being compensated in the autumn. Unless you call it compensation to be living through an all-time record. Our county has had the wettest and dullest autumn for 145 years—since Waterloo in fact—and we are by no means the worst off district; down in Devon and Cornwall, also on the Welsh border, the unfortunate people have been flooded out twice in five weeks, losing of course most of their clothes and furniture twice over. True, they will get government compensation, but when? And anyway many must have lost things of sentimental value which no compensation can make good.

So you too have the Christmas racket do you? Well you have all our sympathies, for here it has got to such a point that by the time the *real* festival takes place one is often too jaded to enjoy it. We were in hopes that we would escape much of it this year, because the postmen had decided to hold up the country by putting on a strike ten days before the 25th Decr. But this now seems to be off. We could'nt agree more with you about the madness of the atomic bomb, but what can one do? The Labour folk over here claim that 'unilateral disarmament' is the solution, but this seems to me simply an invitation to the Russians to go ahead with world conquest. What the answer may be, no one knows, but Warren says that the best guarantee of peace is what happened at the end of the last war—we established the precedent that the winners put the leaders of the losing powers to death, after making retrospective laws of which no one had previously heard. He says that any group of statesmen will think twice about making the first move when the stakes are their own necks. There may be something in this. Apropos, I should like to have heard what the Japanese Warren had to say.

With all blessings for a happy celebration of the *real* Christmas, and good wishes for 1961,
yours ever to both,
Warren & Jack Lewis

TO MABEL DREW (BOD):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

16 Dec 1960

Dear Miss Drew

Thanks for your kind and encouraging letter. I think I know exactly what you mean.²¹⁰ Fewer things are more exciting than the discovery that there are, after all, other people in the world who have met what we ourselves have met. I am gradually finding out, largely through letters from people I've never seen, that there are really quite a lot of us! It is not only fun: it also heads one off from feeling either ashamed or conceited about the thing we have in common. We're not, either for better or for worse, so exceptional as we supposed. Thank God!

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JILL FREUD (T): TS

The Kilns, Kilns Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
22nd December 1960.

My dear June,

How very nice to hear from you again, and in the form of such a welcome present—one to which can really be applied the much abused word *seasonable*, which meets me at every turn in this regrettable season of the year. (I'm not of course referring to Christmas, but to the commercial racket which Warnie and I call *Xmas* to distinguish it from the Christian festival). Indeed we shall not put the bottles away and forget them, probably not until next July at any rate.

What a man of parts Clé is! That he should write cooking articles, and also the odd story does not surprise me, but I confess I had'nt seen him in the role of 'our Sports Correspondent'. Warnie and I are such old fogies now that neither of us is clear as to what a 'commercial' is; are you one of

the people who interrupts the programme to explain that all sensible housewives use FOAM, DAZ or whatnot?

Yes indeed, we could do more than 'stand' a Freud invasion, we could and will welcome it; and as for who you bring, that is rather a matter for you than for us. My term begins on 17th January, so don't come on Sunday 22nd; but any Sunday after that you would be more than welcome. Let us know what Sunday you select, in time for Mrs Miller to order a fatted calf.

With love and best wishes to you all,
yours ever,
Jack

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
24 Dec. 60

Dear Father Milward

Greetings and good wishes, but I'm afraid I can't touch the question of the Grail, or anything else, at the moment. This is the worst possible time of year for getting a letter out of me. The ruthless, almost unbroken rain of letters, cards, and presents, destroying all leisure, and all work, almost obliterates the Christian festival. I dread this vast (and largely commercialised) nuisance more every year. Ugh!

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
26th December 1960.

Dear Joan,

How very nice to hear from you again; and though I'm too late to wish you a merry Christmas, I can at least hope that you will have a happy 1961. Glad to know you've managed to get hold of a copy of *The Conquered*.²¹¹

I suppose down in Florida you are living under almost summer conditions; here it is dull, wet, and warm—worst fall for 145 years in this part of the world!

With all best wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

1961

The paperback edition of Reflections on the Psalms was published by Fontana Books of London on 2 January 1961.

TO DON LUIGI PEDROLLO (V):

Collegium Stae Mariae Magdalensis
apud Cantabrigienses

Anglia

iii Jan. MCMLXI

Gratias tibi ago, mi pater, pro amicabili epistola et te tuosque in his beatissimis festis saluto.

Vellem me posse ad te mittere exemplaria epistolarum quas scripsit Ven. Pater D. Ioannes Calabria. Sed neque ipsas epistolas neque exemplaria habeo. Moris est mei omnes epistolas post biduum ignibus dare. Non, mi crede, quia nullo pretio illas aestimo; immo quia res saepe sacro dignas silentio posteris legendas relinquere nolo. Nunc enim curiosi scrutatores omnia nostra effodiunt et veneno 'publicitatis' (ut rem barbaram verbo barbaro nominem) aspergunt. Quod fieri minime vellem de Patris Joannis epistolis. Admirabilis ille vir, aliis mitissimus idemque sibi severissimus vel saevissimus, humilitate et quadam sancta imprudentià multa scripsit quae tacenda puto. Hanc meam apologiam vellem curialibus verbis Patri Mondrone patefacias.

Multo gaudemus de recenti colloquio inter Sanctum Patrem et nostrum Archiepiscopum. Dominus corroboret bonum omen.

Uxor mea mense Jul. mortem obiit. Pro illa et me orationes reduplica. Tu et domus tua semper in meis sunt. Vale C. S. Lewis

The College of St Mary Magdalene
Cambridge
England
3 January 1961

I thank you, my Father, for your friendly letter, and I greet you and yours on this most blessed festival.

I wish I could send you copies of the letters which the Venerable Father Don John Calabria wrote. But I have neither the letters themselves nor copies of them. It is my practice to consign to the flames all letters after two days—not, believe me, because I esteem them of no value, rather because I do not wish to relinquish things often worthy of sacred silence to subsequent reading by posterity.

For nowadays inquisitive researchers dig out all our affairs and besmirch them with the poison of ‘publicity’ (as a barbarous thing I am giving it a barbarous name).

This is the last thing I would wish to happen to the letters of Father John.

That admirable man, to others most lenient but to himself most severe, not to say savage, out of humility and with a certain holy imprudence wrote many things which I think should be kept quiet. If you would politely convey this explanation of mine to Father Mondrone,¹ I would be grateful.

We greatly rejoice at the recent meeting between the Holy Father and our Archbishop.² May the Lord confirm this happy omen.

My wife died in the month of July. For her and for me redouble your prayers. You and your House are ever in mine.

Farewell

C. S. Lewis

TO K. C. THOMPSON (W):

The Kilns.
5 Jan. 1961

Dear Mr. Thompson

Thank you very much for so handsome a gift as the Penna–Thompson *St. Paul*.³ It is intriguing to meet a real ‘recension’,⁴ I mean a work which has actually had the sort of history which higher critics attribute to nearly all ancient texts! I didn’t believe it ever happened in real life. I have already begun it and believe I shall get a great deal out of it. All that on p. 20 about St. Paul’s cool use of O.T. language to say almost the opposite of what O.T. really said is most illuminating.

I expect you were wise to use the knife—the Italian type of piety is often very uncongenial to us Northerners, isn't it? The R.C. clinging to archaic misspellings of names is rather absurd. No more absurd, though, than what I'm fighting against on the Commission for revising the Coverdale Psalter—I mean, the impulse to retain what we know to be mere howlers because they are 'so beautiful'.

I seldom notice misprints in other people's books and never in my own.

My brother joins me in all good wishes for 1961 to Mrs. Thompson and yourself.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO ANNE THOMAS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

5 Jan 1961

Dear Miss Thomas

I agree with you. The boy and young man depicted in *Surprised by Joy* was a very self-centred PRIG. I had thought there were indications in the book of *some* Love: for my mother, my nurse, my brother, the Mountbracken family, the Matron at Chartres, Arthur, Kirk, Johnson, Jenkin, Barfield and Harwood.⁵ Not even these? Well, more's the pity. Let's hope I'm better now.

The great love of my life, and my marriage, are not mentioned in the book because they happened after it was written, and long after the period it dealt with. The real explanations of things are often as simple as that!

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):

The Kilns,

Headington Quarry,
Oxford

7 Jan 61

Dear Fowler

I don't think there's anything 'presumptuous' in applying for a chair: the question is whether it is prudent. I think it is possible to do oneself harm by a *series* of unsuccessful applications—by getting oneself known as, so to speak, a 'chronic candidate'. But this need not be the first of a series and it might be successful.

Most boards of electors are conventional and will be guided by 'experience', seniority, and bulk of published work. An exceptionally bold board might, however, be guided by the support you will clearly be getting from Kinsley⁶ and me. I wonder who they are. If Leavisites, of course K. and I wd. be your undoing! Even if not, I have an uneasy suspicion that I have the reputation of being one whose geese are all swans. Possibly K. knows whether this is so or not. Net result: my advice comes to zero. There are arguments for both courses.

I haven't enough books here to give you the *loci classici*⁷ for the 2 *fortunae*,⁸ but will try to do so next term.

There's no doubt about Sol providing *calor*.⁹ The question is whether a figure lying in a dark grove, hidden from the Sun, can *be* Sol. Keep the carbon as long as it is convenient.

Perhaps I shd. add that in my opinion you wd. fill the Exeter Chair v. well, and I'll tell 'em so if I'm asked.

In confidence. If you were asked to nominate a candidate for the Nobel Prize (literature) who wd. be your choice? Mauriac has had it.¹⁰ Frost? Eliot? Tolkien? E. M. Forster? Do you know the ideological slant (if any) of the Swedish Academy?¹¹ Keep this all under your hat.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,

Headington Quarry,
Oxford
9 Jan '61

Dear Mary Willis

I don't feel at all 'wise' and the only bit of advice I can give you with perfect confidence is—*don't* sit up writing long letters either to me or to anyone else when you are tired! It is very bad for you. Now as to the main issue.

Whatever you decide to *do*, get your own attitude right. They are behaving as if they were penitent and wished to make restitution. Their penitence may no doubt be v. imperfect and their motives v. mixed. But so are all *our* repentances and all *our* motives. Accept theirs as you hope God will accept yours. Remember that He has promised to forgive you *as*, and only *as*, you forgive them.

The decision, however, remains, I agree, a terrible one to make, and only someone who really knew you and Don and Lorraine—I have met none of the three—is really qualified to give you advice. Is it not possible to give their plan a trial run, with the understanding on both sides that after 6 months or a year it can be continued or discontinued and 'no offence'? Of course this wd. involve giving up a great deal, including your cat. But I'm afraid as we grow older life consists more and more in either giving up things or waiting for them to be taken from us.

As you rightly see, to become a member of their household wd. involve a severe and continual self-suppression. You wd. have to be silent about many things when you longed to speak. But the alternative is also bad.

Is it not impossible to predict which way will give you less unhappiness? Isn't one therefore thrown back on asking which will be best for the others? But how to decide that I don't know.

The only certain thing is that your acceptance (if you accept) or your refusal (if you refuse) must be made with perfect charity and courtesy. May God's grace give you the necessary humility. Try not to think—much less, speak—of *their* sins. One's own are a much more profitable theme! And if, on consideration, one can find no faults on one's own side, then cry for mercy: for this *must* be a most dangerous delusion. Incidentally, I can't help feeling that you shd. take L's account of D. with a grain of salt. On your own showing she can't be an easy woman to live with and there is usually something to be said on both sides.

Well, I'm afraid all this comes to precious little. But I don't, and can't *know* enough. I can only pray that you may be guided to the right choice. It is (no disguising it) only a choice between Crosses. The more one can accept that fact, the less one can think about happiness on earth, the less, I believe, one suffers. Or at any rate the suffering becomes more purgatorial and less infernal.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

65/61

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
10th January 1961.

Dear Jock,
Many thanks for the two copies of *Reflections on the Psalms* which arrived this morning.
All the best.
Yours,
Jack

TO DONOVAN AYLARD (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
10 Jan. 1960 [1961]

Dear Mr. Aylard
My wife died in July, so my married life was very short; it surpassed in happiness all the rest of my life. You'll find anything I have to say about marriage in my *The Four Loves*.
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

11 Jan 1961

Dear Mr. Kilby

My critic follows the utterly illogical principle that what a man does not say, he denies.¹² If I had any hesitation in saying that God ‘made’ the *Tao*¹³ it wd. only be because that might suggest that it was an arbitrary creation (*sic volo sic jubeo*):¹⁴ whereas I believe it to be the necessary expression, in terms of temporal existence, of what God by His own righteous nature necessarily is. One cd. indeed say of it *genitum, non factum*:¹⁵ for is not the *Tao* the Word Himself, considered from a particular point of view? I abstained from all this in the *Abolition* because I was there trying to write ethics, not theology.

Thank you for your sympathy and still more for your prayers.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

P.S.

1. In other words, I think (with Hooker)¹⁶ *not* that certain things are right because God commanded them, but that God commanded them because they are right.¹⁷

2. If you care to use this letter as the basis for a letter to the W.T.J., you are very welcome to do so.

TO K. C. THOMPSON (W):¹⁸ PC

11 Jan [1961]

I dare say even a howler may be inspired and blessed. But surely a howler made in good faith? I don’t think a commission, appointed by the Arch b. to *correct* Coverdale, and preserving what they *knew* to be a mistranslation, cd. claim that inspiration or expect that blessing. Wd. this not be ‘to offer unto the Author of truth the unclean sacrifice of a lie’?

C.S.L.

TO HELEN ADOLF (W):¹⁹ TS

75/61

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
12th January 1961.

Dear Miss Adolf,
Many thanks for so kindly sending me your VISIO PACIS,²⁰ which I
look forward to reading.
With all good wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN GAWSWORTH (TEX):²¹

Magdalene College,
Cambridge
17 Jan. 1960 [1961]

Dear Sir
I am sorry, and perhaps I ought to be ashamed, to say that I am not
familiar with the work of Philip Lindsay.²² That being so, I feel that to sign
your appeal would be to make a *suggestio falsi*.²³ It might be kind but it
would not be quite honest. I am sorry to be in this position.
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JILL FREUD (P): TS

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
18th January 1961.

My dear June,
Many thanks for your letter, and we are both delighted to hear that a
Freud descent on the Kilns may be anticipated. Of the two dates you offer,
29 Jan would be most suitable for me.
I hope you all had a good time in Suffolk.
Yours ever,
Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
25/1/61

My dear Arthur

Thanks for noting misprint—I'm v. bad at spotting them.²⁴

I do hope you'll risk a few days with us when you are in England. We do now have a decent spare room with a double bed nearly as broad as it's long. Or, if it is in term time, this college has a good guest suite, sitting room as well as bedroom (with TV) and you can have breakfast in it by yourself unshaved at any hour you like. Do.

Yours

Jack

Lewis had contributed the following short article to the mimeographed Cambridge Broadsheet of 9 March 1960:

The faults I find in contemporary undergraduate criticism are these: (1) In adverse criticism their tone is that of personal resentment. They are more anxious to wound the author than to inform the reader. Adverse criticism should diagnose and exhibit faults, not abuse them. (2) They are far too ready to advance or accept radical reinterpretations of works which have already been before the world for several generations. The prima facie improbability that those have never till now been understood is ignored. (3) Most European literature was composed for adult readers who knew the Bible and the Classics. It is not the modern student's fault that he lacks this background; but he is insufficiently aware of his lack and of the necessity for extreme caution which it imposes on him. He should think twice before discovering 'irony' in passages which everyone has hitherto taken 'straight'. (4) He approaches literature with the wrong kind of seriousness. He uses as a substitute for religion or philosophy or psychotherapy works which were intended as divertissements. The nature of the comic is a subject for serious consideration; but one needs to have seen the joke and taken it as a joke first. Of course none of these critical vices are peculiar to undergraduates. They imitate that which, in their elders, has far less excuse.

A long article entitled 'Professor C. S. Lewis and the English Faculty' subsequently appeared in the student publication, Delta: The Cambridge Literary Magazine.²⁵ It was followed by this letter from Lewis:

**TO THE EDITORS OF DELTA: THE CAMBRIDGE
LITERARY MAGAZINE:²⁶**

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Sirs,

You have invited me to comment on your article in No. 22. I am hampered by the fact that I have kept no copy of my own article in *Broadsheet* and do not remember it very well, so that I have to rely chiefly on your quotations from it; but I will do what I can.

1. 'Radical interpretation', I agree, is bosh.²⁷ But the text is corrupt. It is either my slip of the pen or a printer's error for 'radical reinterpretations'. My objection to them is not that they are 'impertinent' but that they are, in my opinion, immensely improbable.

2. The complaint that many modern undergraduates know the Bible and the Classics so little that they miss many allusions and conscious echoes is a very old one. I have seldom, if ever, heard it contested among those who have had a wide experience of undergraduate work over the last thirty years. I said, apparently, that 'most' European literature presupposed the Biblical and Classical background. There are, as you justly claim, some works and parts of works that do not. What is this in the purpose?²⁸

3. From what premises you draw the 'conclusion' that I am 'also insisting on a background of feeling and attitude'²⁹ you don't tell me. I am curious to hear them.

4. I am glad you ask 'what is the wrong kind of seriousness'.³⁰ The word *serious* has two meanings. It can mean something like 'grave' or 'solemn', as when we say 'Mr. Twiddle is a very serious young man.' It may also mean 'thoroughgoing' or 'wholehearted', as when we say 'Mr. Thews is a serious student.' Mr. Twiddle, far from being a serious student, may be an idler and a smatterer; Mr. Thews, far from being a solemn young man, may be gay and jocund. Seriousness in the second sense seems to me proper in our approach to all literature; seriousness in the first sense, only to some. I heard lately a paper on Jane Austen by an undergraduate from

which nobody, unless he knew it already, could possibly have suspected that there was any element of comedy in her books. That is what I mean by the wrong sort of seriousness.

5. I freely admit that when I wrote for *Broadsheet* it never entered my head that I ought to attend exclusively, or even especially, to such undergraduate criticisms as have appeared in print. I assumed I was to draw on my experience as a teacher, an examiner, and one who meets undergraduates. I still do not see what advantage there would have been in the other course. If what gets into undergraduate periodicals were strikingly better or worse, or strikingly different in any way, from what is offered in weekly essays and examinations, it ought, no doubt, to be treated separately, though not exclusively. But I am not convinced that it does. Certainly I cannot remember having often seen work in any such periodical which I thought equal to the best that is done by first class candidates in the examination room.

6. Drawing thus on my total experience of the undergraduate as critic, I did not support my censure with quotation. But on one point, fortunately, your article provides me with the very thing. I complained that the tone of undergraduate criticism was too often 'that of passionate resentment'. You illustrate this admirably by accusing me of 'Pecksniffian disingenuousness', 'shabby bluff' and 'self-righteousness'.³¹ Do not misunderstand. I am not in the least deprecating your insults; I have enjoyed these twenty years *l'honneur d'être une cible*³² and am now pachydermatous. I am not even rebuking your bad manners; I am not Mr. Turveydrop and 'gentlemanly deportment'³³ is not a subject I am paid to teach. What shocks me is that students, academics, men of letters, should display what I had thought was an essentially uneducated inability to differentiate between a disputation and a quarrel. The real objection to this sort of thing is that it is all a distraction from the issue. You waste on calling me liar and hypocrite time you ought to have spent on refuting my position. Even if your main purpose was to gratify resentment, you have gone about it the wrong way. Any man would much rather be called names than proved wrong.

7. I do not understand why you think it so improper of me to say that you have learned some of your faults from your elders. This rather condones than aggravates your offence. Do you yourself not admit, in a cool hour, that you have been influenced by them? Will you not admit, even as a theoretical possibility, that you may have imitated those elements in

their work which least deserve imitation? Alexander's courtiers, you remember, imitated the droop of his shoulder rather than his strategy.³⁴ It was easier. It is not difficult, least of all when you are angry, to write as harshly as Dr. Leavis. But don't think that will ever make you of the same importance.

8. You accuse me of contempt for undergraduates.³⁵ Why? I have used of them no such opprobrious terms as you lavish on me. I gave an unfavourable opinion of their critical work. To tell a young man that his work is in many ways bad is not contempt; especially when one's opinion has been asked for. It is often a plain duty. If I had been given to understand when I was asked for an opinion that I was really expected to produce a eulogy, I would have refused the job.

If you think that your work has no faults, 'I entreat you to believe that you may be mistaken'.³⁶ If you think it has any you must learn to listen with patience to those who attempt their diagnosis. If you don't learn to do that, you can never learn anything else.

No doubt the diagnostician may be in error; so may the patient. But there are reasons (which you at any rate should meditate) for thinking that error in the patient is *a priori* more probable. Self-love is involved on both sides, for each cherishes his own opinion. But it is doubly involved on the patient's side. To believe that you have such and such faults does not flatter my vanity; to believe that you have them not, flatters yours. I have another advantage over you. For thirty-six years at two different universities I have had to read a great deal of undergraduate criticism. I thus inevitably have a standard of comparison which you, no less inevitably, lack. You may overestimate the value of your own work not through conceit but because you have seen so little really good work on the undergraduate level. A man who reckons himself tall in Japan might change his view if he visited Patagonia or even Norway.

The anger my article so clearly aroused in you is a symptom which both you and your teachers will do well to note. There was, I believe, little or no novelty in my strictures. These things are often said *about* you; it seems they have too seldom been said to you. You appear to be young people who have been so long shielded and softened by flattery that they can no longer bear unexpurgated criticism.

9. The syllabus has been under continual discussion by the Faculty ever since I joined it. And not only by the Faculty; advice (not always foolish)

from our pupils as to what we should teach them and how, has never been lacking. It is not, however, likely that the advice of any particular undergraduate group will make so much difference as that group would wish. You, I feel sure, will attribute our disobedience to ‘contempt’, or even to some more sinister motive. You will be mistaken.

The Faculty is a democracy. The most diverse conceptions of English meet and contend there. Almost every undergraduate conception is already represented on it. Because it is a democracy, no one conception is likely to secure a complete victory. Compromise is inevitable.

If (which heaven forbid) we were a dictatorship you could have a consistent scheme expressing a single conception. But this would be something narrower than a school of English. It would once have been a school of Q-ism;³⁷ it might now be one of Leavisism or Willeyism, or even Lewisism. None of these would please all. Each of them would inflict far more serious hardships and frustrations on some students than are inflicted on any now.

Those very conceptions of English studies which you now cherish were able to emerge and colour the syllabus just because the school has been a free-for-all. You inherit a freedom which you would deny to your successors.

For you are not the only kind of undergraduates. From the very nature of our job we know more about undergraduates in general than you do. Your intercourse with your fellow-students is mainly voluntary; you therefore, naturally and properly, meet mostly men of your own kidney. But we have to meet whoever comes. We know, and must take into account, the sort of students you never heard of. Their needs and desires often differ from yours; so do their talents; not always, by any means, for the worse.

10. For Research as practised at this and other universities to-day I make no defence. I detest it.³⁸

Yours, etc.,
C. S. Lewis

P.S.—On p. 8, para. 3, l. 5, *Delta* 22, for *these critical views* read *these critical vices*.

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene

1 Feb 1961

My dear Roger

Thanks for the dream. It is the only one in real life I've ever met which is really like the ones in the books on psychology! An absolute stunner. I suppose you had never read Freud when you dreamed it?

Thanks also to both of you for your kind suggestions about a holiday and your offer to facilitate it.³⁹ As usual, I've asked other people too and must try to find out how far they've taken the matter before I can close with any *one*. I'll try to get this fixed next week-end and let you know.

Love and gratitude.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge
2 Feb. 1961

Dear Jock

I've not additions to make, but one subtraction. Delete *Cambridge Review*.⁴⁰ It's mainly in the hands of Leavisites⁴¹ who will blackguard any book of mine, and I don't know why we should let them have a free copy for their sport!

I met a friend of yours the other night—Lord Delisle.⁴² There's a chap if you like it!

Yours

Jack

TO THOMAS MCALINDON (W):⁴³

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
5 Feb. 1961

Dear McAlindon

Deo gratias. As you are the first D.Phil student I've had at Cambridge (except one wh. dropped off!) my pleasure and relief are probably not much less than yours. I'd certainly like to see that last chapter, at your convenience. Now you can breathe.

I also look forward to the real book. I still think 'the Marvellous' is a better category than 'the Supernatural'. It is already sanctioned by Neo-Classical criticism—indeed ever since Tasso's *Discourse*⁴⁴—and it evades theological complications about *super*—and *preter*.

I can't tell you how glad I am not only that you have succeeded but also that you feel it has been worth while. I was frequently haunted by the fear that I had seduced you into the subject because it is a favourite of my own—possibly to your undoing. Well, good-bye to that worry.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

13 Feb 1961

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

I am very glad to hear you are all so well.

There are, as you know, two schools of Existentialists, one anti-religious and one religious. I know the anti-religious school only through one work: Sartre's *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*. I learned from it one important thing—that S. as an artist in French prose has a sort of wintry grandeur which partly explains his immense influence. I couldn't see that he was a real philosopher: but he is a great rhetorician.

The religious school I know only from having heard a lecture by Gabriel Marcel⁴⁵ and reading (in English) Martin Buber's *I and Thou*. They both say almost exactly the same things, though I believe they reached their common position quite independently. (As a man, Marcel was a perfect old

dear). And what they are saying is impressive—as a mood, an *aperçue*, a subject for a poem. But I didn't feel it really worked out as a philosophy.

I had been classifying Tillich more as an interpreter of the Bible than as a philosopher. I dare say you are right in thinking that, for some people at some moments, what I call semi-Christians may be useful. After all, the road in to the city and the road out of it are usually the same road: it depends which direction one travels in!

At the back of the religious Existentialists lies Kierkegaard. They all revere him as their pioneer. Have you read him? I haven't, or hardly at all.

Thanks for all your news. We get along fairly well. Blessings to everyone, Yours most sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO HUGH KILMER (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
15 Feb. 1961

Dear Kilmer

If I had time to re-read my own book (by now a pretty old one) I'd be able to answer you better, meanwhile: 1. Can we assume that whatever is true of the glorified body of our Lord is equally true of the glorified body of each Christian?⁴⁶ I doubt it. His natural body did not undergo dissolution.

2. I don't quite accept the implication of your phrase '*restricted* by external quantity', for restriction suggests imperfection. But to be in one place (or therefore not in another) seems to me possibly part of the perfection of a finite creature—as it belongs to the perfection of a statue to end where it does or of a musical note to be just so loud (neither more or less) or of a metrical verse.

3. I am not at all sure that blessed souls have a strictly timeless being (a *totum simul*)⁴⁷ like God. Don't some theologians interpose *aevum*⁴⁸ as a half-way house between *tempus* & *aeternitas*.⁴⁹

In general, I incline to think that tho' the blessed will participate in the Divine Nature, they will do so always in a mode which does not simply annihilate their humanity. Otherwise it is difficult to see why the species was created at all.

Of course I'm only guessing.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO HUGH KILMER (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
17 Feb. 1961

Dear Kilmer

I was so interested in the questions your last letter raised that I forgot two things I meant to say in my answer.

1. Deep sympathy on the diabetes, and thank God for insulin.

2. An appeal for your charity.⁵⁰ Mrs. M. W. Shelburne, 1851 Columbia Rd., N.W., Apt. 104, Washington 9 D.C., is a lame duck with whom I have corresponded for many years. She is a R.C.—and, I fear from her letters, a very silly, tiresome, and probably disagreeable woman. But she is old, poor, sick, lonely, and miserable. I have done, and am doing, what I can for her with advice and a little money. But a little help and friendship from co-religionists on the spot is badly needed. Could you, or anyone in your circle—perhaps a really nice Nun—get in touch with her and lend a hand?

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ERIC ROUTLEY (W):⁵¹

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
17 Feb. 1961

Dear Mr. Routley

Thank you for your extremely interesting letter. The word I am working on at present is *World*,⁵² wh. the A.V. uses impartially for *aion*, *ge*, *kosmos* and *oikoumene*—so I was already concerned with A.V. It was slightly archaic English when it first appeared, for it retained a good deal of Tyndale. It was also influenced by Vulgate, Ximenes, Erasmus, Rheims etc.⁵³ and (for O.T.) by LXX.⁵⁴

I Cor XI 14⁵⁵ is frightful in every way. The difficulty about N.T. language is that the authors are all linguistically living from hand to mouth. The *koine*,⁵⁶ I take it, was a language in which no one prayed, joked, made

love, or thought—a neutralised, internationalised language for business and government: cut off equally from the fireside and the library. St Paul wd. have meant by *phusis*⁵⁷ whatever shopkeepers, soldiers, and minor officials meant by it in Antioch or Damascus: or else, possibly, what the synagogues in the *diaspora*⁵⁸ made it mean as a rough equivalent for some Semitic word. Isn't it quite possible that 'Doesn't even *phusis* tell you' means little more than 'Hang it, don't we all spontaneously feel?'

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS MORLEY (P): TS

165/61

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
18th February 1961.

Dear Mrs Morley,

Many thanks for your kind and encouraging letter of the 6th. I need hardly say that it gives me real pleasure to hear that anything I have written has been of some service to you.

With all good wishes.

yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis⁵⁹

TO ALFRED R. PAASHAUS (P):⁶⁰ TS

168/6

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
23 February 1961.

Dear Mr Paashaus,

Thank you for your letter of the 15th. The answer is Freud in *The Future of an Illusion*.⁶¹ See B. G. Saunders' *Christianity after Freud*, Bles, London, 1949.⁶²

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
24 Feb. 1961

Dear Mary Willis

I am very glad you have made the decision and I believe it is the right one. I realise that you are taking on a very different life, which will involve much frustration, self-effacement, and patience. There will be every opportunity and necessity of mortifying the 'highly developed pride' diagnosed by the grapho-analyst! There will have to be plenty of 'turning back' and 'change of purpose'—except, to be sure, the constant and prayerful purpose of continual sacrifice. The great thing is that you realise all that, and as the comic beatitude says 'Blessed are they that expect little for they shall not be disappointed.' I hope and pray you will be able to do them some good, but probably if you do, it will not be by any voluntary and conscious actions. Your prayers for them will be more use. Probably the safe rule will be 'When in doubt what to do or say, do or say nothing.' I feel this very much with my stepsons. I so easily *meddle* and *gas*: when all the time what will really influence them, for good or ill, is not anything I do or say but what I *am*. And this unfortunately one can't know and can't much alter, though God can. Two rules from Wm. Law must be always in our minds.

1. 'There can be no surer proof of a confirmed pride than a belief that one is sufficiently humble.'⁶³

2. 'I earnestly beseech all who conceive they have suffered an affront to believe that it is very much less than they suppose.'

I hope your vet is not a charlatan? Psychological diagnoses even about human patients seem to me pretty phoney. They must be even phonier when applied to animals. You can't put a cat on a couch and make it tell you its dreams or produce words by 'free association'. Also—I have a great respect for cats—they are very shrewd people and wd. probably see through the analyst a good deal better than he'd see through them.

Remember me kindly to Fr. D'Arcy.

Jobs bunch oddly in my profession and for the last fortnight I have been so busy as hardly to know whether I'm on my head or my heels and am very tired. Otherwise well enough. We keep on having spring and winter

alternately, and however few or many blankets one starts the night with one will wake up either sweating or shivering before morning.

Well—God speed the new arrangement. You will all be much in my prayers.

Yours
Jack

The Screwtape Letters and Screwtape Proposes a Toast, with a new Preface, was published by Geoffrey Bles of London on 27 February 1961.

TO FRANCIS WARNER (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
28 Feb [1961]

Dear Warner

I forgot to tell you that I have to go to London to-day and shall not be able to see you to-morrow. Next week as usual. If you are looking for any of the things you left here, you'll find them on a chair in the corner of the room we usually work in.

Yours
C. S. L.

TO ANNE JENKINS (QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, BELFAST):⁶⁴

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

5 March 1961

Dear Anne—

What Aslan meant when he said he had died is, in one sense, plain enough. Read the earlier book in the series called *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*, and you will find the full story of how he was killed by the White Witch and came to life again. When you have read that, I think you will probably see that there is deeper meaning behind *it*.

The whole Narnian story is about Christ. That is to say, I asked myself ‘Supposing there really were a world like Narnia, and supposing it had (like our world) gone wrong, and supposing Christ wanted to go into that world and save it (as He did ours) what might have happened?’

The stories are my answer. Since Narnia is a world of Talking Beasts, I thought He would become a Talking Beast there, as he became a Man here. I pictured Him becoming a lion there because (a) The lion is supposed to be the King of beasts: (b) Christ is called ‘The Lion of Judah’ in the Bible:⁶⁵ (c) I’d been having strange dreams about lions when I began writing the books. The whole series works out like this: *The Magician’s Nephew* tells the creation and how evil entered Narnia.

The Lion _____ etc the Crucifixion and Resurrection *Prince Caspian* _____ restoration of the true religion after a corruption *The Horse and his Boy* _____ the calling and conversion of a heathen.

The Voyage of the Dawn Treader _____ the spiritual life (specially in Reepicheep) *The Silver Chair* _____ the continued war against the powers of darkness *The Last Battle* _____ the coming of Antichrist (the Ape). The end of the world, and the Last Judgement All clear?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD T. DELL (P):⁶⁶

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

5 March 1961

Dear Mr. Dell

Thanks for your kind letter. A book on death is a pretty tough proposition, but I’ll think about it. The view that death is a hideous enemy is not unscriptural, you know: much less so than all the blab about there ‘being no death’ or ‘death not mattering’. But there—you see, I’m starting to write the book already!

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

12 March 1961

My dear Roger

Thanks very much for the *L. of T.*⁶⁷ Just the thing for the train tomorrow. The beatnik in running shorts⁶⁸ is unfortunate!

I've treated you badly about Windermere, but for a time the alternative arranger neither succeeded nor could be shaken off.⁶⁹ We're now fixed for somewhere in Scotland, to which we can get a lift the whole way by car. Also perhaps less populous than the Lakes in summer? But thanks very much for your labours.

You needn't have bought the supplemented *Screwtape*. I'd have sent you a copy. Is one any use to you now? I mean, you might get rid of the one you bought if you owe any one a small present.

I look forward to seeing you in May. Meanwhile, love to the Pert Baggage⁷⁰ and to yourself.

Yours
Jack

TO HUGH KILMER (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

13 March 1961

Dear Hugh

Of course I'd quite forgotten that your family first put Mrs. S. in touch with me (and how!—the poor old soul is the lengthiest letter writer, barring the lunatics—on my list). I wd. not have mentioned her to you if I'd had the

fact before me. You've done your bit. But your account raises my opinion of her; she never mentioned the old Virginian blood to me. That silence is a point in her favour.

I can't possibly pursue the theological question just now, but I think the disagreement between us is less than I had supposed.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO DARREN MELDRUM (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

14 March 1961

Dear Mr. Meldrum

I remember your visit with pleasure. But I'm not at present in a position to help you. I have just undertaken to read a MS for someone else—I wish your request had come first!—and this will tear as big a hole as I can afford in the very scanty leisure which the forthcoming vacation wd. in any case have allowed me—for there is, after all, a great deal of my own work which I am longing to do.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

On learning that Lewis was allowing the publication of The World's Last Night by Harcourt Brace of New York, Jocelyn Gibb had begun thinking of a collection of essays he might publish. He discussed the idea with Lewis, and during a meeting in Cambridge Lewis gave him copies of various essays to look over. Gibb would make proposals about what might go in it, to be answered by counter-proposals from Lewis.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,

Headington Quarry,
Oxford

21 March 1961

Dear Jock

I shall not be away from home this vacation except perhaps for an odd night or so. I think the best plan wd. be for you to send me back the whole pile⁷¹ with your comments and proposals. I'll send you my counter-plans and counter-proposals if I have any. If you think of using any poems, my selection there might be fairly drastic. I'd also do a certain amount of prefaces and such gas. Then we cd. meet at Cambridge next term and hammer things out! I shd. suppose Kenya to be ghastly!⁷²

Yours
Jack

TO EVELYN TACKETT (W):⁷³ TS

202/61

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
24th March 1961.

Dear Mrs Tackett,

Many thanks for your most kind and encouraging letter of 5th March; and I hope I need not tell you how much pleasure it has given me to hear that anything I have written has been of use to you. The novel which you mention has not come my way, but it is an interesting idea.

With all good wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis⁷⁴

TO MICHAEL EDWARDS (BOD): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
28 March 1961

Except on April 10 and 11, I shall be here till April 17 and happy to see you. Let me know what day and hour.

C.S.L.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

28 March 1961

Dear Mary Willis—

The unexpected crisis wh. hurried you into that house has all the air of an act of God:⁷⁵ it looks as if He meant you to be there. While you were still debating whether the move was to your interest, He suddenly made it your duty. A pretty clear call, I take it. As to the ‘sincerity’ of D’s behaviour, remember (let us look in *our own* hearts for the truth!) humans are v. seldom either totally sincere or totally hypocritical. Their moods change, their motives are mixed, and they are often themselves quite mistaken as to what their motives are. There is probably some real repentance and desire for amendment on D’s part: it won’t necessarily be permanent any more than our own countless repentances and good resolutions are. There is also probably a desire, whether conscious or unconscious, to make a party *with you against* L.⁷⁶ There is also perhaps a desire to make L. feel ‘If he is so nice to Mother, perhaps it may be my fault that he is not nice to me.’ Also, a desire to make you feel ‘Since he really behaves like this, perhaps most of L’s complaints about his treatment are untrue or exaggerated.’ But all these mixed up together: the good motives partly poisoned by the bad ones and the bad ones partly modified by the good ones. At any rate, ‘charity hopeth all things, believeth all things.’⁷⁷ The rule is to give every one ‘the benefit of the doubt’ about sincerity yet at the same time to be on one’s guard. Above all, be guarded when either complains to you about the other. They may, at that moment, be quite

sincere. But when they are next reunited to each other (and of course sex probably insures reconciliation from time to time) they will infallibly repeat to each other all you have said. Here, as usual, the *Imitation* is a good guide: 'I have often repented of speech but hardly ever of silence.'⁷⁸ And don't believe 1/4 of what they say. Without any intention of lying, people so arrogant as D. and so obviously unstable as L. can hardly tell anything without misrepresentation. Notice this even when they are talking on quite neutral matters.

'My own life as a person seems definitely at an end.' I know it's easy for me to give good advice to others in situations which I probably could not face myself. But that can't be helped: I must say what I think true. Surely the main purpose of our life is to reach the point at which 'one's own life as a person' is at an end. One must in this sense 'die', become 'naught', relinquish one's freedom and independence. 'Not I, but Christ that dwelleth in me'⁷⁹ 'He must grow greater and I must grow less'⁸⁰ 'He that loseth his life shall find it.'⁸¹ But you know all this quite as well as I do. It may well involve eating white bread instead of brown! How many millions at this moment have no bread at all.

All blessings.

Yours

Jack

P.S. Of course the little addition to your income can continue.

TO JONATHAN MUEHL (W):⁸² TS

229/61

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
29th March 1961.

Dear Jonathan Muehl,

Yours is one of the nicest letters I have had about the Narnian books, and it was very good of you to write it. But I'm afraid there will be no more of these stories. But why don't *you* try writing some Narnian tales? I began to write when I was about your age, and it was the greatest fun. Do try!

With all best wishes,

yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis⁸³

TO T. S. ELIOT (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

3 April 1961

My dear Eliot

Your letter followed me here. Our session at Lambeth is from 12 noon on Mon 10 April to 4. p.m. on Tue. April 11, so there will certainly be dinner at Lambeth on the Monday 10, and almost certainly work after dinner.

This knocks out the very attractive idea of dining with you and your wife, but very many thanks to you both. It would have been fun: especially as you and I share the distinction of (a.) Having educated Betjeman,⁸⁴ (b.) Not having given evidence about *Lady C.*⁸⁵

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MICHAEL EDWARDS (BOD):⁸⁶ TS

216/61

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

4th April 1961.

Dear Mr Edwards,

This is most kind of you, but really you should'nt have done it you know. However, I'm very grateful, and wish you a happy Eastertide in your turn.

I don't understand your good wishes for 'my brother's speedy recovery': I'm the person who has been ill, not my brother. If you were told

over the phone that *I* could'nt see you because *my brother* was ill, you must have thought him very ill indeed!

Yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

i.e. it was my brother who spoke to you. His voice is v. like mine on the phone.

TO HUGH KILMER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

5 April 1961

Dear Kilmer

Yes. I'd heard about M.W.S's being more or less kidnapped and am praying that this arrangement (since with God all things are possible!) may prove a success. I notice that Loraine's iniquities are always *directly* reported by M.W.S. while those of Don are nearly always reported on the testimony of Loraine. Is L. the real villain of the piece—a poisonous woman—and Don a sorely tried, tho' no doubt imperfect, husband? It sounds like that to me from the letters, but I'd welcome your own opinion.

Your definition of gaiety is v. much to the point. Perhaps one can carry it further. A creature can never be a perfect *being*, but may be a perfect *creature*—e.g. a good angel or a good apple-tree. Gaiety at its highest may be an (intellectual) creature's delighted recognition that its imperfection as a being may constitute part of its perfection as an element in the whole hierarchical order of creation. I mean, while it is a pity there shd. be bad men or bad dogs, part of the excellence of a good man is that he is *not* an angel, and of a good dog that it is *not* a man. This is an extension of what St. Paul says about the body & the members. A good toe-nail is not an unsuccessful attempt at a brain: and if it were conscious it wd. delight in being simply a good toe-nail.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO DON LUIGI PEDROLLO (V):

Collegium Stae Mariae Magdalenae
apud Cantabrigienses
viii Apr. MCMLXI salv. nostrae

Dilecte Pater

Grato animo accepi litteras vestras. Dies festos, eheu, equidem in lectulo degi, febre laborans; nunc admodum sanatus, Deo gratias, salutationes vestras reddo et vota pro vobis et domo vestra facio. Scio vos preces effundere et pro desideratissima uxore mea et pro me qui jam orbatus et quasi dimidiatus solus hanc vallem lacrimarum peragro. Valete.

C. S. Lewis

The College of St Mary Magdalene
Cambridge

8th April in the year of our Salvation 1961

Dear Father

I was glad to receive your letter. The Feast Days for my part, alas, I spent in bed suffering from a fever; now I am somewhat restored to health, God be thanked. I return your greetings and I offer prayers for you and your House.

I know that you pour forth your prayers both for my most dearly-longed-for wife and also for me who—now bereaved and as it were halved—journey on, through this Vale of Tears,⁸⁷ alone.

Farewell.

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

8 April 1961

Dear Jock

Don't apologise! I positively like a letter that encloses £1981-5-3. And thanks also for Davies' autobiography which I expect to find very interesting.⁸⁸

The 'juveniles'⁸⁹ keep their end up nicely, don't they?

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

12 April 1961

Dear Jock

I thought my counter-proposals wd. come most conveniently as *scholia*⁹⁰ for your document, and you will accordingly find them on its p. B. The two *addenda* which I set against my excisions are, I think, valuable. I press strongly for the title-essay from *Transposition* and wd. prefer it, if there is competition, to any of your choices for that volume.

Wd. May 16 do for your visit? I put it fairly late so as to give me time for revision and general mending. But if you'd like a preliminary call, just to get the Kipling essay,⁹¹ come May 3d as well. Let me know.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

16 April 1961

Dear Jock

First, and by the way, I've now read the Davies book. It interested me extremely. It showed me how little I had known of the period in which we both lived. But also, in another way, how little he knew. Fancy having reached the Spanish War without knowing, and discovering there for the first time, what humanity is really like! Most of us learned this during the First German War. Thanks v. much for the present.

I enclose

1. Copy of *Transposition etc.* You told me not to send it back but I do so because I hope you will agree to include the title essay in the new volume plus the addendum. It shd. follow the first para. of the existing essay with a short space.⁹² There is one comma to be put in to the copy at p. 20. The addendum covers all I can preserve from the 'sermon on Hebrews'.⁹³

2. TS. Of 'Mr. R.'⁹⁴

3. *Socratic Digest* containing 'Is Theology Poetry?'⁹⁵ with many excisions *plus* addendum A which incorporates into it a good deal of the 'Funeral of a Myth'.⁹⁶

I shall give you the Kipling essay when you come. There is also the London University Lecture on A.V.⁹⁷ Also my presidential speech on Scott to the Walter Scott Club at Edinburgh.⁹⁸ We cd. also dig out of *Essays and Studies* a thing on Psychoanalysis and Literature Criticism.⁹⁹ The book begins to shape in my mind something like this—with a progression from lit. thro' ethics to theology: Hamlet¹⁰⁰

Kipling

Lit. Impact of A.V.

De Descriptione¹⁰¹

Psychoanalysis & Lit. Criticism

Lilies That Fester

(Good Work?)¹⁰²

Inner Ring¹⁰³

Is Theology Poetry?

Obstinacy¹⁰⁴

Reply to Mr. R.

Transposition

Weight of Glory.¹⁰⁵

I think the *bulk* anyway is quite sufficient.

Yours

Jack

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):

As from Magdalene

17 April 1961

Dear Fowler

Thanks for the review, which I return.¹⁰⁶ You get a great deal in, and I'll tackle Hieatt again as soon as I get a moment. I expect you are right about him and I was wrong. (When you speak of his 'methodology' on p. 7, I think you mean only his 'method') I have given *one* reading to de Chardin and don't, on that, like him as much as you do. I'm nervous of Pantheism and biolatry. And don't see how anything is clarified by saying that before life there was pre-life. Of course you can if you want say there was pre-light in the cellar before you switched on the electric light: but the word 'darkness' seems clearer. Yes Gagarin is exciting.¹⁰⁷ Any chance of seeing you in Cambridge?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

17 April 1961

Dear Fowler

I don't think you are 'overvaluing limited particular existences.' $0 \times 00 = 0$, and if the individual life has no value of course the aggregate of all lives has no value either.

What you commend de Chardin for ('view of evolution as fumbling but with an impulse of its own') is surely just a restatement of Bergson, *a.* without B's incomparable *literary* power, *b.* embarrassed by a Theism wh. is hardly consistent with it. If you haven't read *L'Évolution Créatrice*,¹⁰⁸ you shd.

Yes, use my name of course.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

20 April 1961

Dear Jock

I felt an unconquerable repugnance to re-opening that ghastly envelope of snippets. 'Look on't again I dare not.'¹⁰⁹ But I send 1. Copy of *F and SF* containing a short story.¹¹⁰ You wd. need to reprint their headnote to make it fairly intelligible.

2 & 3. Two articles on punishment. The *Churchman's* text is a reprint from the Australian periodical *Res Judicatae*.¹¹¹

4. *Literary Impact*.

5. (Reprint from *Medium Aevum*: but this is probably too professional.)¹¹²

I also have, but don't send because they are in MS: A paper on Dante's imagery¹¹³

——on Ethics¹¹⁴

This ought to keep you going for a bit.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,

Cambridge.

21 April 1961

Dear Mary Willis

I have your letter of the 16th. You were (very naturally) distraught when you wrote it, and you don't even make clear to me *exactly what* Jeanne¹¹⁵ did! Did she get, as they say, 'into trouble' those two nights? If nothing worse happened than being out and alone in wet weather, I should have thought a girl in reasonable health wd. get over it alright, and so, I hope, will you all. Don seems to be doing his best now, whatever he did in the past: and with such a wife and such a daughter his home life can't be a bed of roses. It is a pity he 'gets on your nerves' but you are, rightly, controlling your reactions. I know well how a person's very voice, looks, and mannerisms may grate on one! I always try to remember that mine probably do the same to him—and of course I never hear or see myself.

Thanks for the poem. I've got some sort of virus into me which has kept me from being quite well all this spring, never quite awake by day and never quite asleep by night (and never without unpleasant dreams), so don't expect much from me. Blessings on you all.

Yours
Jack

TO ROGER SHARROCK (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

22 April 1961

Dear Sharrock,

Thanks, and condolences. Your time in France was clearly very rewarding. I shall be glad to see you again when you are here, if I'm not

still in Cambridge marking Tripos papers.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

25 April 1961

My dear Cecil—

I got your letter alright, but it arrived after Owen. If I hadn't, what wd. it matter? It's a bit late in the day for you and me to start caring about punctilios. Of course we both regretted missing a Cecil who could only listen but not speak. It wd. have been a golden opportunity. *When* this summer will you be free? Might not the three of us foregather for a few days in some village? I am a (moderate) walker again now.

As for my own state, isn't it rather like after an amputation? The stump is not always equally painful but one is always equally a one-legged man!

Yours

Jack

Laurence makes an excellent impression on every one he meets. You have every right to be proud of him.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

Magdalene,
Cambridge.

26 April 1961

Dear Jock

Yes. I was hoping you wd. lunch here on May 16. Come to my rooms just before one o'clock.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): TS

Magdalene
28th April 1961.

Dear Jock,

Have you already filled Don Wiskerando's order? If not, better send the book to me and I will autograph it and send it on to him.[116](#)

Yours,
Jack

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

4 May 1961

Dear Fowler

You talk of Evolution as if it were a substance (like individual organisms) and even a rational substance or person. I had thought it was an abstract noun. So far as I know it is not impossible that in addition to God and the individual organisms there might be a sort of *daemon*, or created spirit, in the evolutionary process. But that view must surely be argued to on its own merits? I mean, we mustn't, unconsciously and without evidence, step into the habit of hypostatizing a noun. (If there is such a *daemon* it wd., I suppose, be our old friend Genius).

Thanks for the bit from the Hermetica.[117](#)

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

4 May 1961

Dear Jock

I wasn't able to lay the affair of the Kipling MSS before the College till yesterday.¹¹⁸ They much appreciate your good offices. Their desire to have the collection is certain, but balanced *a*. By a wish not to appear grasping. That is, they wd. like to be sure that Mrs Bambridge has considered the University Library and nevertheless preferred us.¹¹⁹

b. By a doubt about the *bulk* of the collection. It might, for all we know, require more space than we can afford.

If you can get any data for settling these two scruples we shall gratefully accept the offer.

Yours
Jack

*On 6 May 1961 Arthur Greeves wrote to Lewis:*¹²⁰

*Silver Hill,
21 Ballymullan Rd
Crawfordsburn,
Co. Down.
6. 5. 61*

My dear Jack,

I am hoping to fly to London on the 21st June (Wednesday), staying with my friend Will McClurg at 109 Park St. W. 1 till Monday 26th; then on to Rege at Plymouth for a week or two.

I thought I might, if suitable, get down to see you for a day or a night at Oxford between 21st & 26th before I go to Plymouth. If I remember right, Paddington is the station for Oxford. This would be much simpler than Cambridge: besides, I'll only have a dark grey suit

(no dinner jacket) &, as you know, am rather shy of all the people one meets in college.

I presume this would have to be the Friday or Saturday? as you will be at Cambridge earlier. This is only tentative. Especially as I've had a little heart grogginess—not serious, the doctor says, but please God I'll be free of it when I leave.

Don't hesitate to say at once if any of those dates don't suit.

Everything is changing. Lismachan (where we saw the 'hedge pig'—do you remember?) is being sold.¹²¹ The four aunts nearly all over 90, have gone elsewhere. I've been re-reading 'Lilith'. This man has a fascination.

Let me know what you think. I suppose there are good trains about 11 AM. Or earlier. I suppose you wouldn't be up in London?

Hope you are all keeping well.

Love

Arthur

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

7 May 1961

Dear Jock

P. 72, 5 ll. from bottom: the correct reading is *He does not want men*

2. 84. para 3 l. 5 the correct reading is *stronger*

Thank your correspondent.¹²²

Yours

Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

8 May 1961

My dear Arthur

Your letter has brightened my whole sky. I shall, by June 21, be here, not at Cambridge. Can you come on Thurs 22, and stay at least till the morning of Sat 24?—longer if possible. But if you can manage only two nights, make them the Thurs. and Fri., for our ‘daily’ doesn’t come on week-ends and it will not be so comfortable. Also roads are more crowded. This matters because (D.V.) I’ll run up to London in a hired car and we’ll drive* back here together—the run down thro’ the Chilterns and Thames valley is a pleasant one. By the way, this time you shall have a double-bed nearly as broad as it is long.

I am concerned to hear your medical news. Unfortunately it is just at that point that your letter turns illegible. It looks as if you had HUNT POGGINES. I suppose the first word is HEART, but I can’t make out the second.

Yes, all changes. The party gets thinner and I suppose you and I shall be leaving it soon.

A-propos of Geo. MacDonald, some American has written a ghastly psychological study of him, trying to prove that he had an incestuous love for his mother, couldn’t bear his father, hated the human race, and delighted in cruelty. I only hope I shall be asked to review it![123](#)

Yours
Jack

* (Don’t worry. I mean we shall be driven! Not me at the wheel) **TO MARGARET GRAY (BOD):**

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

9 May 1961

Dear Mrs. Gray–

How right you are when you say ‘Christianity is a terrible thing for a lifelong atheist to have to face’! In people like us—adult converts in the 20th century—I take this feeling to be a good symptom. By the way, you have had in most respects a tougher life than I, but there’s one thing I envy you. I lost my wife last summer after a very late, very short, and intensely happy married life, but I have not been vouchsafed (and why the deuce shd. I be?) a visit like yours—or certainly not except for one split second. Now about reading.

For a good (‘popular’) defence of our position against modern waffle, to fall back on, I know nothing better than G. K. Chesterton’s *The Everlasting Man*. Harder reading, but very protective, is Edwyn Bevan’s *Symbolism & Belief*. Charles Williams’ *He Came Down from Heaven* doesn’t suit everyone, but try it.

For meditative and devotional reading (a little bit at a time, more like sucking a lozenge than eating a slice of bread) I suggest the *Imitation of Christ* (astringent) and Traherne’s *Centuries of Meditations* (joyous). Also my selection from MacDonald, *Geo. MacDonald: an Anthology*. I can’t read Kierkegaard myself, but some people find him helpful.

For Christian morals I suggest my wife’s (Joy Davidman) *Smoke on the Mountain*: Gore’s *The Sermon on the Mount* and (perhaps) his *Philosophy of the Good Life*.¹²⁴ And possibly (but with a grain of salt, for he is too puritanical) Wm. Law’s *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*. I know the v. title makes me shudder, but we have both got a lot of shuddering to get through before we’re done!

You’ll want a mouth-wash for the *imagination*. I’m told that Mauriac’s novels (all excellently translated, if your French is rusty) are good, tho’ very severe.¹²⁵ Dorothy Sayers’ *Man Born to be King* (those broadcast plays) certainly is. So, to me, but not to everyone, are Charles Williams’s fantastic novels. *Pilgrim’s Progress*, if you ignore some straw-splitting dialogues in Calvinist theology and concentrate on the story, is first class.

St. Augustine’s *Confessions* will give you the record of an earlier adult convert, with many v. great devotional passages intermixed.

Do you read poetry? George Herbert at his best is extremely nutritious.

I don’t mention the Bible because I take that for granted. A modern translation is for most purposes far more useful than Authorised Version.

As regards my own books, you might (or might not) care for *Transposition*, *The Great Divorce*, or *The Four Loves*.

Yes—'being done good to'—grrr! I never asked ever to be.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO FUMIO OCHI (W): PC

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

May 10, 1960 [1961]

Dear Mr. Ochi

I shall be happy to see you if you can call on me here at 12 noon on Friday May 12.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

On 12 May 1961 Arthur Greeves again wrote to Lewis:

Silver Hill,
21 Ballymullan Rd
Crawfordsburn
Co. Down
12/5/61

My dear Jack,

How wonderful of you to make it so easy for me by taking me by car! I've just written to Will to tell him of the arrangement. Thank you so much—D.V. I'll hope to stay with you from the Thursday June 22nd till Saturday June 24th as you suggest. I'm delighted so much [it] has been settled. I can hardly believe it.

In case I forget when writing again, Will's address is William McClurg, Flat 1. 109 Park Street London W.1 (Phone May fair 3889). I'll go there in taxi. If it would be easier for you if I met you elsewhere, let me know.

The correct translation is: HEART GROGGINESS! In other words, Palpitations—breathlessness etc. But I am much better & had a longer walk this morning. Yes, I wonder how much longer?

*Aren't I four years older?
The American must be 'knuts' himself. But it might have the effect
of drawing attention to G.M. A good thing.
As ever,
Arthur*

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

14 May 1961

My dear Arthur

About our journey from London to Oxford on Thurs. June 22. My Jehu and I might waste a good deal of time finding 109 Park St. W.1, so I suggest, if convenient, you shd. meet us at some station nearer the outskirts. Ealing Broadway at about 12 noon wd. do well. Let me know (at Magdalene, Cambridge) as soon as possible. I am excited at the prospect of meeting again. Heaven send that nothing goes wrong!

Yours
Jack

TO I. O. EVANS (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

16 May 1961

Dear Evans

Your line comes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Bk I where he says that Prometheus, fashioning Man,

Finxit in effigiem moderantum cuncta deorum, Pronaque cum spectent animalia cetera terram, Os homini sublime dedit caelumque videre Jussit et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus (I 83–86)

(...formed him in the image of the gods who govern all, and, whereas other animals look earthwards, he gave to man a lofty countenance and ordered him to contemplate the sky and to raise his erected face to the stars).

Thanks, I shall have no time for weeks to do anything but read exam papers, so don't bother about the Verne, [126](#) nor the article about Ezekiel's vision. I doubt whether it is possible to reconstruct it: certainly not till we the new translators have come to that passage.

All good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

On 17 May 1961 Greeves once more wrote to Lewis:

*Silver Hill,
21 Ballymullan Rd.
Crawfordsburn,
Co. Down.
17. 5. 61*

My dear Jack,

*Yes certainly—D.V. I'll meet you at Ealing Broadway Tube Station—
or wherever the bus from Marble Arch lets me down at that terminal
on 22nd June at noon—(not midnight—or AM or PM—or any other M).*

*I shall just bring a handbag, two steamer trunks & a portmanteau
(a little shabby) The latter can go in the boot so we'll have plenty of
room to stretch our legs!! Without joking—just the handbag (& what I
stand up in of course) And please God all will be well.*

*I'm looking forward to it all tremendously & I'll try & not be a
damned nuisance.*

Arthur

P.S. Do you think Warren can bear it!!

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

17 May 1961

Dear Mary Willis

I am sorry to hear of the heart attack, and astonished that any doctor should advise a patient in your condition to live alone. Lorraine's behaviour was surely only the occasion, not the cause, of the fit. It might have occurred if you were in a flat of your own and who wd. have picked you up?

Like you, I am not attracted by the tropics, but I dare say Florida will be quite good for you.

I think your presence in that household is doing Don some good: perhaps undoing some of the harm that Lorraine has so obviously done to him. Obviously, from your narrative, every one, including Jeanne, is saner and wholesomer than Lorraine! Jeanne appears to have been most providentially protected in a very perilous situation: how you must thank God for that!

Your standard of living is v. different from ours. Hardly any one here wd. dream of having a telephone extension in his bedroom! And are there no cheap watches?

My inside is still thoroughly upset, but as I've lived over 60 years without indigestion I suppose I'm luckier than most. Our weather continues miserably cold.

All blessings.

Yours

Jack¹²⁷

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG): PC

[21 May 1961]

Thanks for cutting. As I don't know any of the authors I can't make any comment.

If Evolution is an abstract H.C.F.¹²⁸ of all biological chances (as *sphericity* of all spherical objects) of course it is not an entity in addition to particular organisms. That is the view I'd take. My point was that Butler, Bergson, Shaw, D. H. Lawrence etc. keep on talking as if it *were* a thing (a Platonic εἶδος¹²⁹ or a daemon)! They call it *Life*. But *life* (H.C.F.) can't be alive any more than *speed* can move quickly!

C.S.L.

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford 21 May 1961

My dear Arthur

Good. 12 Noon Thurs. June 22d, Ealing Broadway Station. This is not, by the way, exactly a tube station. It is on the Metropolitan which has become a surface railway by the time it reaches there, so that the E. Broadway Metropolitan station and the ordinary G.W.R.¹³⁰ station are one and the same station. Whichever of us gets there first must await the other on the 'down' platform. (There is probably a refreshment room) I shall bring sandwiches for lunch on the drive.

This is not because I have lost my old preference for hotels, but my usual driver, who is almost a family friend, is unable to come, and his substitute is not a man we could very comfortably take into a dining room. (He is also, by the way, one of the most vociferous bores in England.) Warnie will be away while you are here. He's not (honestly) running away on your account—it had all been fixed before we knew you were coming.

Yours

Jack

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

Magdalene etc
23/5/61

Dear Father Milward

I saw nothing rude in your manner, tho' I thought you were misunderstanding me. I, you see, come to the matter from fighting on another front, against Atheists, who say (I have seen it in print) 'Christians

believe in a God who committed adultery with a carpenter's wife.' You used language which cd. have been interpreted as an agreement with *them*. Naturally there is no disagreement between us on that point. And I wd. agree that the supernatural begetting of Our Lord is the archetype, and human marriage the ectype: not the *perversion* (that wd. seem to me Manichean). All these arguments are perfectly consistent with a disagreement between us on the Immaculate Conception of Mary and your general Marian theology.

Of course when one has decided that A is the Archtype and B the ectype one has not said A = B: i.e. whichever way you work it, it remains true that Mary was not the Bride of the Holy Ghost in the same sense in which the words are used of ordinary marriage: whereas she was the Mother of Jesus in exactly the same sense in wh. my mother was my mother—as Gervase Mathew said.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

Greeves replied to Lewis on 31 May 1961:

Silver Hill,
21 Ballymullan Rd
Crawfordsburn,
Co. Down.
31st May '61

My dear Jack,

Yes, I understand about the metropolitan station. I'll hope to be there E. Broadway G.W.R. on the down platform on Thursday June 22nd 12 noon. I haven't been away since last May when I saw you, so am looking forward to everything.

Esther is leaving definitely for good when I go.¹³¹ There are snags of course—but it is all for the best.

I'm sorry I won't see Warren & I hope I'm not being a nuisance. It will be interesting to see all the old haunts again. I can hardly believe that I will.

In case you've lost my London address:—c/o W. M. McClurg—Flat 1. 109 Park St (Quite close to Marble Arch) W.1 Phone 3889 Mayfair.

*I'll be there on the night of 21st.
As ever
Arthur*

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

3 June 1961

Dear Jock

As to your first letter (24 May): Yes, the Kipling does overlap, rather badly, with *The Inner Ring*. It is the better of the two. Let's jettison *The Inner Ring* altogether. The *Scott* is after all an oration, not an essay, and there is no need to disguise the fact. Marks of origin such as 'here in Edinburgh' are not in the same position as colloquialisms of phrase. I'd print it as it stands. It hasn't got the chatty straight-talkism which the B.B.C. stuff had. Same with *Hamlet*.

Examining and indigestion have reduced my mind to a state in which it is hard to invent a title. I'm not sure that something absolutely straight like *Collected Papers* wd. not be best. If you want to emphasise the theme 'Jekyll meets Hyde', I suppose one cd. have something like *On Two Fronts* or *Janus*. Or *Essays from Bletchley*,¹³² with a little prefatory note explaining that as I oscillate physically between Oxford and Cambridge so I oscillate mentally between the literary & the religious themes. Anyway, I can't think of anything better at the moment.

As to your second (1 June)—*De Descriptione* shd. be printed as it stands, on the same grounds as the *Scott*.

I'm afraid I've lost (after making notes on it, too!) the letter from the Japanese lunatic about washing behind the years! Sorry.¹³³

Yours
Jack

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

5 June 1961

My dear George

Thanks so much. I'll come, D.V., on July 7th. I *may* be on the water-wagon and capable of v. little walking, but let us hope better things. Vocal organs in good order. Love to both Yours

Jack

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
5 June 1961.

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

My brother has sent on to me your letter of May 29, and I am very glad to hear that things are so good. The very name of the Smokies is attractive!¹³⁴

Kierkegaard can certainly wait. I can't read him myself, which I am sure is my own fault, for I hear him well spoken of by many whose opinion I value. I've been shut up here for weeks, for this is now the examining period and I can't afford my week-ends at home—indeed it is only by working 10 hours a day all marking exam. papers that I can get the job done in time. As I already had indigestion and sinusitis when this programme began, I am now in a very chastened frame of mind. This is a strange year—I think we have had only one day of real sunshine since March. (it was yesterday).

Congratulations on Paul's success—I mean the Science prize. I have even less idea than you what an 'Achievement Test' can be. I shd. have supposed that *achievement* was what all school awards tested—merits etc. being left over for consideration at the Day of Judgement.

Yes 'day to day' is the thing. But some days are darn long, I find!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

5 June 1961

Dear Mary Willis

It certainly is a terrible story. But it shows very clearly how useless all comments are in such a case when made by an outside person who never knows and can never possibly know all the facts. He is sure to blunder. So indeed I have nothing to say but things you know already quite as well as I do.

We must beware of the Past, mustn't we? I mean that any fixing of the mind on old evils beyond what is absolutely necessary for repenting our own sins and forgiving those of others is certainly useless and usually bad for us. Notice in Dante that the lost souls are entirely concerned with their past. Not so the saved. This is one of the dangers of being, like you and me, old. There's so much past, now, isn't there? And so little else. But we must try very hard not to keep on endlessly chewing the cud. We must look forward more eagerly to sloughing that old skin off forever—metaphors getting a bit mixed here, but you know what I mean.

I almost dare to believe my digestion is coming right again, but I am so tired out with it and with marking exam papers that there isn't much left of me at the moment! God bless us all.

Yours
Jack

TO JILL BLACK (P):[135](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

8 June 1961

Dear Mrs. Black

Thank you for French's *Grettir*.¹³⁶ I am not 'with book' at present myself! By the way, Green himself has, you know, done about as good a re-telling of the Arthurian stories as anyone.¹³⁷ The big gap in this sort of literature is the Persian cycle—Jamshid and Rostum and all that:¹³⁸ but I've no idea who wd. be able to do it for you.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

13 June 1961

Dear Jock—

A work of mine will have to be posthumous indeed before the word *culture* appears in its title or sub-title!¹³⁹ I can't abide it. I really think we shall have to give this volume a quite non-descriptive name—*Vacation Exercises*, or *Shotover Essays*¹⁴⁰ or *Holiday Tasks* or *They Asked for a Paper*, or *Essays in Truancy*.

Yours
Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

13 June 1961

Dear Mary Willis

This is dreadful. It comes home to me a bit more than you might expect, because dear Joy went through something not quite unlike it from her first husband (only, with him there was a clearer cause—alcoholism). The sooner you are all out of that man's reach the better. The curse of modern city life is that people in your situation are so *alone*, like in a desert. In a village the neighbours would interfere and someone wd. offer you a refuge and someone else wd. do the same for the children and someone else wd. duck D. in the horse-pond. Couldn't, or wouldn't the Kilmers or some religious house do anything? Or the police? At any rate it becomes obvious why you were led by God to join the household. L's situation wd. be a good deal more desolate if you were not there.

I am sure that however inadequate you *feel*, you will be given day by day and hour by hour the strength and wisdom that are needed ('I can do all things through Christ who empowers me')¹⁴¹ Legally D. seems to have put himself in a quite hopeless position: and I may be able to make some contribution to the lawyer's bill. As for shame, what have *you* to be ashamed of? What, if anything, is D's job? Has he bosses or colleagues whose good opinion matters to him?

Courage! People have weathered storms as bad as this and smiled again. Take it bit by bit, like an illness. I'm a bit better myself (since you ask) and haven't vomited for three days, so perhaps I'm going to weather my little storm too!

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

19 June 1961

Dear Jock

All right—let it be *They Asked for a Paper.*¹⁴²
Yours
Jack

Lewis and Arthur Greeves spent 22–24 June together at The Kilns. It was a poignantly satisfying meeting of old friends, the last time they were to see each other. Greeves scribbled on the margin of his next letter from Lewis that, when they met in Oxford, ‘He was looking very ill.’

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns etc

24 June 1961

Dear Mary Willis

I was, before, a little afraid that a *volte face* of this sort might possibly occur, but I hadn't envisaged it taking such an extreme form. J. does seem to be next door to a lunatic: perhaps almost hypnotised by this man. Was she unbalanced from her earliest years? For the moment, can't you seek refuge in some convent? Surely there are charitable orders that will do something for the destitute and oppressed? My heart is sore for you.

In great haste.

Yours

Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

27 June 1961

My dear Arthur

My trouble has been diagnosed as one v. common at our time of life, namely an enlarged prostate gland. I shall soon be in a nursing home for the necessary operation.

How I did enjoy our two days together!

Yours

Jack

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

27 June 1961

Dear Mac

I shall soon be in the doctor's (and, what's worse, the surgeon's) hands having my prostate gland whipped out, so my immediate future is all question marks. If I shd. be in London in July I'd love to meet, but I don't think I shall. Thanks for the cuttings.

Yours

Clive

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns
30 June '61

My dear Arthur

The trouble turns out to be (what's v. common to our age and sex) a distended prostate gland. I go into the Acland Nursing Home on Sunday for the operation.

Our little re-union was one of the happiest times I'd had for many a long day. I hope the cool of the moor-lands will soon set *you* up.

Yours

Jack

TO MRS BRIAN SARRE (P):¹⁴³ TS

398/61

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,

Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
30th June 1961.

Dear Mrs Sarre,

Many thanks for your most kind and encouraging letter of the 23rd; and I hope I need not tell you how great satisfaction it gives me to learn that anything I have written has been of service to you.

With all good wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO K. C. THOMPSON (W):[144](#)

The Kilns

1 July 1961

Dear Mr. Thompson

Under the stress of examining I'm afraid I quite forgot to send you this at Whitsun.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

Lewis went into the Acland Nursing Home on 2 July 1961 to be operated on for a distended prostate gland. This would normally have been fairly straightforward. It was complicated, however, by the fact that Lewis also had a kidney infection. Meanwhile, the doctors refrained from surgery because they feared his heart was not strong enough. To prepare him for a possible operation they put him on a low-protein diet. While Lewis waited to see how the matter would turn out, Warnie helped him with his correspondence.

On 12 July 1961 Warnie wrote to Mary Willis Shelburne:[145](#)

49/61

*The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.*

12th July 1961.

Dear Mrs Shelburne,

I've opened your letter of 6th addressed to my brother, who is, I'm sorry to say at present in hospital and unable to deal with his own mail. I saw him yesterday and mentioned that a letter had arrived from you, and he asked me to explain why there will be no answer to it for quite a time.

With kind regards.

yours sincerely,

W. H. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Acland Nursing Home
[Oxford
18? July 1961]

Dear Jock

I'm in here awaiting an operation wh. can't be done till my kidneys are fit for it, and no one knows when that will be. You must abandon all hope of any copy from me and get on with your volume on what you already have. Sorry.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Acland Nursing Home
[Oxford]
23 July [1961]

Dear Jock

The question is whether in my study at home—now as inaccessible to me as the Moon—my long-suffering brother can find the stuff. I'll ask him to try. Sorry about all this.

Yours

Jack

On 24 July Warnie wrote to Jocelyn Gibb:[146](#)

65/61

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
24th July 1961.

Dear Gibb,

I saw Jack this morning, and also his doctor; the latter was of course as cagey as these chaps always are, but I did dig out of him that they are pleased with Jack's progress. Which is good so far as it goes.

Jack asked me to send you a packet which I would find, 'enclosed under elastic' on his desk. I hope this is it.

Yours,

Mycroft

W.H.L.

Lewis was unable to do much more work on They Asked for a Paper, and in the end he did not 'merge' parts of 'The Funeral of a Great Myth' or any other essay into 'Is Theology Poetry?'. As a result 'Is Theology Poetry?' appears in They Asked for a Paper exactly as it did in The Socratic Digest.

Finally the doctors decided an operation was too risky, and Lewis was allowed to go home on 4 August.

TO MRS ROY E. KIEPER (W): TS

498/61

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
5th August 1961

Dear Mrs. Kieper,

Many thanks for your kind and encouraging letter of 29th July, and I am so glad that you have enjoyed my books—and that you saw the underlying significance of the Narnian series. No, the background has no hidden meaning.

It is a very odd thing that you are one of the few ‘grown-ups’ who has really understood Narnia—yet I have had literally scores of letters from children, all of whom saw who Aslan was.

With every good wish,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO KATHLEEN RAINE (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
8th Aug 1961

Dear Kathleen

What a lovely letter! It came at an appropriate moment, for I am ill, undergoing blood transfusions & no-protein diet and all sorts of things which are merely preparatory to an operation (must be cooked before I’m carved!) Yes, we are members of a really pretty widely diffused secret society, who can usually recognise one another—but one must beware of the pleasure of esotericism. I am *very* glad you like Narnia. But v. sorry you don’t like Cambridge.

Yours
Jack

On 20 August Warnie wrote to Mary Willis Shelburne:[147](#)

*The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
20th August 1961.*

Dear Mrs Shelburne,

Many thanks for yours of the 14th, which I answer because you ask me to do so. This sounds a little ungracious, but what I mean is that I really have no news to give you. What there is, is good though, thank God. The kidney condition which has been holding everything up is improving rapidly and the doctor is very satisfied with him. His last blood test was excellent. He is, so far as a sick man can be, in the best

of spirits, eating well, hungry and what we all take to be a splendid sign, is beginning to complain of being bored—which is very different from even a fortnight ago when he was quite content to doze away each day.

On his and my own behalf I send you grateful thanks for your prayers.

*Yours sincerely,
W. H. Lewis*

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

6 Sept 1961

My dear Roger

It's a bit tricky. I am awaiting an operation on my prostate, but as this trouble upset my kidneys and my heart, these have to be set right before the surgeon can get to work. Meanwhile, I live on a no-protein diet, wear a catheter, sleep in a chair, and have to stay on the ground floor. I'm quite capable of having a guest, but the trouble is that the date for the operation remains unfixed—it depends on how the weekly blood-tests go. This means that, for all I know, it might come just when you want to be here. So I think you'd better make alternative arrangements, wh. cd. be abandoned in favour of coming to the Kilns if, when the time comes, I shd. be here and not in the Acland. I'd hate to miss the chance of a visit from you if it turns out to be feasible. Is this all too bothersome?

You needn't pity me too much. I am in no pain and I quite enjoy the hours of uninterrupted reading which I now get.

Love to June.

Yours

Jack

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD): PC

Tuesday [19 September 1961]

Thank you both for delightful letters. I have to go back into the Acland for observations and some more blood transfusions, and wd. welcome a visit any time J.

On 20 September Warnie wrote to Jocelyn Gibb:[148](#)

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
20th October 1961.

Dear Gibb

Many thanks for your letter of yesterday:—

Jack's position is that there is a slow—very slow—improvement in the condition of the kidneys, and until they are in a satisfactory state there can be no question of an operation. On the whole, so far as I can make out anything from the verbiage with which doctors put you off in these conditions, they are satisfied with his progress. But I confess to be in great anxiety. The really good feature of the case is that Jack is in no pain, and keeps surprisingly cheerful. He is at the moment back in hospital for some blood transfusions and I've just got back from seeing him, and he promptly sent me out to bring him a bottle of whiskey and complained bitterly of the price! These symptoms did more to encourage me than all the medical jargon.

It was good of you to write.

Yours sincerely,

W. H. Lewis

On 29 September 1961 Faber and Faber of London published Lewis's *A Grief Observed* under the pseudonym N. W. Clerk.

On 7 October Warnie wrote to Mary Willis Shelburne:[149](#)

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry, Oxford.
7th October 1961.

Dear Mrs Shelburne

I have your letter of the 5th addressed to Jack, but I'm sure you will understand why you are not getting a personal reply to it. Not that he is'nt really making a recovery, but the process is very slow, he does get so tired, and so easily, and consequently we don't give him any of his letters to answer unless they are on quite unavoidable business. But he is grateful for yours, and for your kind anxiety.

The position at the moment is this. Jack has had a series of blood transfusions in hospital and the result was that he came home a week ago most definitely improved; with not only the permission but the encouragement of his doctors, he now gets up in the morning and cooks his own breakfast, and every day he goes out for half an hours walk. Better still, he has been put on a more generous diet and enjoys his meals. But perhaps the best sign is that he tells me he is getting very bored with invalid life and is itching to get back to work. As for the impending operation, the surgeon now talks of it as a thing quite in the future—six, or even twelve months ahead he says. Which naturally is an enormous relief to me, for if they are taking this view there cannot be anything very urgent the matter. In fact on the whole I'm a much happier man than I was when I last wrote to you.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

W. H. Lewis

An Experiment in Criticism was published by Cambridge University Press on 13 October 1961.

TO HARVEY KARLSEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
13 Oct. 1961

Dear Mr. Karlsen—

Your letter did not reach me till to-day. Of course I have had and still have plenty of temptations. Frequent and regular prayer, and frequent and

regular Communion, are a great help, whether they *feel* at the time as if they were doing you good or whether they don't. I also found great help in monthly confession to a wise old clergyman.¹⁵⁰

Perhaps, however, the most important thing is to *keep on*: not to be discouraged however often one yields to the temptation, but always to pick yourself up again and ask forgiveness. In reviewing your sins don't either exaggerate them or minimise them. Call them by their ordinary names and try to see them as you wd. see the same faults in somebody else—no special blackening or whitewashing. Remember the condition on which we are promised forgiveness: we shall always be forgiven provided that we forgive all who sin against us. If we do that we have nothing to fear: if we don't, all else will be in vain. Of course there are other helps which are mere commonsense. We must learn by experience to avoid either trains of thought or social situations which *for us* (not necessarily for everyone) lead to temptations. Like motoring—don't wait till the last moment before you put on the brakes but put them on, gently and quietly, while the danger is still a good way off. I wd. write at more length, but I am ill. God bless you.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MURIEL BRADBROOK (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
15 Oct. 1961

Dear Muriel

What a nice thing for a man half drowned in compulsory leisure is an un-birthday present!¹⁵¹ It has set me a problem. I find I get a good deal of pleasure out of many of these poems, but am at a loss to say *why*. One is not getting the 'numbers'—and so far as I can judge from the notes the metres of the originals wd. not much please me. Nor am I much in sympathy with many of the poets' moods. The pleasure is like—at least rather like—what I get out of most translations of Chinese lyric. But that isn't a solution, but merely another problem of the same sort. Anyway, thanks very much indeed.

Another book I've just read is Empson on *Milton's God*.¹⁵² We must congratulate him on making it quite clear that what he objects to is M's theology, not his art.¹⁵³ Most anti-Miltonists are, I believe, in exactly the same predicament but don't admit—or realise—it: so that their criticism is as silly as (*salva reverentia*)¹⁵⁴ Plato's criticism of Homer.

I have hopes of being allowed to come up in January. I won't try to tell you about my complication of maladies—not because it is too dreadful (it isn't) but because it is too boring. Indeed one of the things I resent in an illness is that, like a war, it compels one to attend to such intrinsically uninteresting things.

With many thanks. My love and duty to yourself, and K. Raine, and Joan Bennett.

Yours
Jack

TO CHAD WALSH (W): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Oct 16 [1961]

I have to be cooked before I am carved—i.e. my kidneys, heart, & blood have to be set right and *then* I have to have an operation (prostate). Meanwhile I live on one floor & a low-protein diet. I'd like v. much to see you all but can hardly make any arrangements as I keep on being sent back to the Nursing Home for blood transfusions. All loves!

J.

TO ROGER POOLE (P):¹⁵⁵ PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford
19 [18] Oct. [1961]

I am delighted to hear that you approved the *Experiment*: all the more because I anticipate great unpopularity for it—unless the tide is just on the turn already. I may then rank as a deliverer and be really only a symptom.

I am still (painlessly but obstinately) ill and do not improve: but not too ill to have a talk with you if you are in Oxford. English followed by Moral Sciences (a reversal of my own Greats followed by English) is a fine recipe & I think you are v. wise to take it.

C.S.L.

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): [156](#)

[The Kilns
20? October [1961]]

Dear Jock—

I have already told this man that my Kipling essay is coming out in your volume and therefore is not available for his. If you agree with me—as I expect you do—will you save me (you can say I'm ill) from further importunity by writing to him with a certain civil finality.

Yours

Jack

TO KATHLEEN RAINE (BOD): PC

21 Oct. [1961]

Thanks for lovely letter—(if it *was* from you, for the signature is in one way v. like the peace of God!). I doubt if anything so palatable as praise (from the judicious) can also be medicinal.

My *Experiment* has elicited fan mail from a few Cambridge undergraduates. This was a hopeful surprise—can it be the tide *is* turning at last? I'd write more but I've just had a blood transfusion and am feeling drowsy. Dracula must have led a horrid life!

Yours

Jack

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford
[October? 1961]

Dear Chad,

It does sound as if you had fallen on your feet. Good luck to you. My blood counts showed a marked improvement and there was a short period during which the doctors hoped no more transfusions might be needed. But it didn't last. The only gain is that the blood took longer to slip back than it has done yet.

Thanks for *The Rough Years*.¹⁵⁷ I read it with great interest but with a sort of interest that almost excludes judgement, and that for a reason you probably didn't anticipate. The school life depicted is so unlike anything in my experience that it was, for me, rather like a book about Martians. Yet I perceive that adolescence is a pretty horrid thing whatever the sex, age, or nationality of the patients! (As the Rev. Bowman is aware on p. 161).¹⁵⁸ Also that the arguments against both day-schools and boarding schools are equal and unanswerable.

Bowman is a type we have here, with his naif conviction of 'the spiritual advantages of meeting in a parish house' (p. 224) and his certainty that once you get the gangster there 'the situation' will 'take care of itself' (p. 168). It almost sounds as if he thought the Church existed for the sake of 'togetherness': not for the knowledge and worship of God, from which togetherness would inevitably result. You do satirise him a bit, but (I fancy) not enough. Many of your readers will think you wholly approve. I was also v. surprised at his idea of services in Spanish. I'd have expected the Spanish-speaking people to be all—it's the Latin way—either foursquare R.C.'s or foursquare anti-clerical atheists.

Your story is quite capable of standing on its own merits, so that the preface which makes it appear a glorified text-book seemed to me to do it an injustice.

Yours
Jack

Give my most affectionate remembrances to your wife.

TO VERA GEBBERT (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford
25 Oct. 1961

Dear Mrs. Gebbert

I am sorry and ashamed at the letter I have to write. The truth is I can't at present give you any firm date for a visit.¹⁵⁹ I am just back from 24 hours in a Nursing home having a blood transfusion and am liable to be imprisoned for another at any moment. But *that* date can't be made firm either for it depends on two unknowns—(a.) My condition, (b.) An empty bed in the Home. And to tell the truth, while this sort of thing is going on I am in such a drowsy, muzzy state that you'd find a visit to me quite worthless.

Don't mention all this to my brother. He has been doing nurse and secretary to me all summer and must have his holiday in peace.¹⁶⁰ I will write again when the prospect is clearer and hope I shall then be able to ask you here. I am very, very sorry about all this.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

Dear Charles

Thank you for all the exciting pictures of space ships. I expect they will look very like that. It is a pity they will never look as nice as sea-ships at their best do, isn't it? I wonder will you some day travel in space yourself? I'm sure I never shall.

Yours ever

C. S. Lewis

TO FRANCIS WARNER (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
27 Oct. 61

Dear Warner—

I like *Perennia* v. much better than your satire. Much of the descriptive element is promising. The general danger at present is that of becoming (like early Keats) 'too damn poetical'. You know what I mean? Too much about berries looking like glow-worms¹⁶¹ and 'tiny sounds' etc. Hence the earthier passages (e.g. the creatures in XXII) come as a relief. Pure sugar cloys. Of the metrical irregularities I like some and dislike others. I like

those in the body of III, but not its alexandrine: nor the alexandrine in II where the trisyllabic *meandered* comes in v. oddly. Now for details You mean *Perennia* and *Salacia* as fem. singulars. But remember how *perennis* and *salax* are declined! Your forms cd. only be neuter plurals. This simply must be altered.[162](#)

IV 6. *the sights*. A shade vulgar to my ear[163](#)

V5. Why not *with* instead of *of*?[164](#)

8. *mystic* No, no. In that extremely vague sense the word is utterly worn out.[165](#)

9. *balm*. One feels this is chosen purely for the sake of rhyme.[166](#)

VII 5: *savage*. Surely a gross exaggeration? The sort of river you've been describing couldn't have got savage except in a flood and yours has had only one summer shower.[167](#)

X 3. I presume a cricket has 6 legs. Wd. it ever crouch on only 4 of them?[168](#)

XII *Hespera*. Any authority for this?[169](#)

XIII 9. *shoals* & *schools* are merely different forms of the same word and are still, surely, synonymous?[170](#)

XV 5. *high cries*. Repetition of this vowel (never a v. nice one) is ugly.[171](#)

XVII. 5–6. *to belong in such* etc. I don't get the syntax.[172](#)

XIX 6. Why not *to gaze safely*. Or better *to look safely* (avoiding the repetition of the vowel).[173](#)

XLIII 7 *stark*. Creaks a bit![174](#)

XLV 4. *while away*. The syntax v. obscure. While *who* was away from *where*?[175](#)

LXVI 4. Same vowel repeated 3 times! What a cacophony[176](#)

All the same, there is promise in this.

I am still an invalid and have no one to send out for a large enough envelope to hold your MS, so you can't have it back till you send me one. Why *will* none of you poets get things typed on ordinary quarto-size sheets?

I've told the Board to appoint you a new supervisor, but if I'm well enough to come up in January I'll be happy to resume on C. Agrippa.

With all good wishes. I'm glad you liked the chapter on Myth.[177](#)

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
28 Oct. 1961

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen,

I'm not well enough to answer your letter properly—and W., after having done Nurse and Secretary for me all summer is now away for a well earned holiday, so I have endless letter-writing to do.

The nearest I can put up as a scriptural warrant for prayers for the dead is the place in one of the epistles about people being 'baptised for the dead'.¹⁷⁸ If we can be baptised for them, then surely we can pray for them. I'd like to give you the reference but my concordance is upstairs and—my heart being one of the things that is wrong with me—I'm not allowed to go upstairs.

All good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO LAURENCE WHISTLER (BOD):¹⁷⁹

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

30 Oct 61

Dear Mr Whistler—

I am ill, and one reason for regretting this is that it prevents me from writing such a letter as your kind gift deserves.¹⁸⁰ I was deeply—almost unbearably—moved by much of Pt I. True, I am an unanaesthetised widower and therefore vulnerable, but I don't think we need discount much of my reaction on that score. It might even make one more fastidious on such a theme.

And anyway, there's lots to enjoy in a more sensuous way—the 'music paused on its own carved wind',¹⁸¹ the 'punctual puffs and roofs,'¹⁸² 'the

arches of her dolphins danced'.¹⁸³ *Life is a Rembrandt*, *Veteran Wishes* & *Clinical Note* are absolute corkers. 'Home was now a room'¹⁸⁴ is wonderful.

The unrhymed lyrics in short lines (like *The Choice*) I liked least. Too close to the Tum-tum-tiddle-tum of *Rugby Chapel*¹⁸⁵ and too Eliotically gnomic. I liked *The Failures*.

I spotted your 'fore-rhymes' at once but I bet half your readers won't. I think this technique has possibilities. Perhaps, for weak ears, the rhymes shd. be louder, supported by plenty of consonance. I mean *nuptial* rhyming with something like *upshot* or *language* with *anguish* or *rang with*. Obviously what immediately follows the rhyming syllable is going to have grave importance once rhymes cease to be terminal.

With very many thanks and all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

A Form of Epitaph is also good.

TO CHAD WALSH (W): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
30 Oct [1961]

Good. I look forward to being rung up from the Eastgate and hope we'll be able to meet.¹⁸⁶ I know little modern poetry. Names I *do* approve are Kathleen Raine, Ruth Pitter, Edwin Muir, Laurence Whisler. People in Oxford who might help are J. Bryson (Balliol)¹⁸⁷ & Prof. N. Coghill (Merton).¹⁸⁸ All the best.

J.

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford
30 Oct. 61

Dear Mac

I don't know whether Fontana Books are likely ever to re-print their paper-back of my *Miracles*: but on the off chance—and not having their address—I'd be grateful if you'd send them these corrections: P. 20: para 5. l. 6. *For* original *read* logical P. 65: para 2. l. 13. *For* material *read* metrical P. 144: para 1. l. 19 *For* itself, *The read* itself. The¹⁸⁹

I'm still an invalid but in no pain, reading plenty and sleeping pretty well.

Yours
Clive

TO FRANCIS WARNER (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford

1 Nov 61

Dear Warner

You bowl me middle stump about Salacia & Perennia! I just don't know this 'In Apuleius V.¹⁹⁰ is the mother of Psyche.' Surely you mean the mother of Cupid? The story begins *erant olim rex et regina*¹⁹¹ doesn't it, and P. is *their* daughter? I quite agree about avoiding the (now odious) name of Cupid.

Of course Hesperus = Venus astronomically. I didn't feel sure that 'Hespera' ever occurred for Venus, though. 'Tunes' in II wd. make a better verse, but the word is rather commonplace (especially for some obscure reason, in the plural). I'd rather alter 'meandered' to a disyllable.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

[The Kilns]
12 Nov. 61

My dear Arthur

Yes. The *Imitation* is very severe; useful at times when one is tempted to be too easily satisfied with one's progress, but certainly not at times of discouragement. And of course it is written for monks, not for people living in the world like us.

A good book to balance it is Traherne's *Centuries of Meditations*, wh. I expect you know (Not to be confused with his poems, which I don't recommend.) There is all the gold & fragrance!

Midway between the two I'd put the anonymous *Theologia Germanica* (Macmillan's in the little blue Golden Treasury series).¹⁹² This is curiously like the sort of letters we used to write 45 years ago!

Yours

Jack

P.S. I never read St John of the Cross.

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford
16 Nov. 1961

Dear Mac

I refused the proposal to S.C.B.¹⁹³ and I think I'd better abide by his decision (about Miss Hopkins, I mean).¹⁹⁴ I think it makes a living author rather ridiculous to publish selections from him.

Sorry.

Yours in haste

Clive

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

18 Nov 61

Dear Mr Kilby

Thank you for all the kind things you say.

I don't see how I can help you. My future is too uncertain for me to make any engagements so that it wd. be no use your crossing the Atlantic to see me. Nor have I any material of the sort you are looking for. Of course I've had plenty both of bouquets and brickbats in private letters, but I've preserved neither.

I am sorry to be so unhelpful. With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W): PC

[The Kilns]

24 Nov [1961]

Thanks for review. I always thought Herbert R. an ass, so I don't know whether to conclude that my book is bilge or to revise my opinion of H.R. [195](#)

I don't think the author of the *Imitation* was ever aware of the beauty of nature as we understand it.

Hope you'll soon be better

J.

TO MARY MARGARET WARD (W): [196](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
Nov 24. 61

Dear Mrs. Ward

Thanks for the kind thought, but don't send me a present. There are so very few things I *want* that presents embarrass me, because I know I can't enjoy them as the donors intended.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

P.S. Also, they entail one more letter to write, and correspondence is the bane of my life!

TO LAURENCE WHISTLER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
27 Nov 61

I'm *nearly always* well enough to be visited, but always liable to be whisked off into a nursing home for a blood transfusion. Therefore your best plan will be to let me know of your visit to Oxford about 48 hours ahead and I'll write back if I shan't be in circulation. If I don't write, you can assume I am expecting you. I shd. much like a meeting. Re 'forerhymes', what can be the value of modern criticism when it betrays again and again that the critics read poetry in a way that has nothing to do with the ear?

C.S.L.

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
30 Nov 61

Dear Edward W. had to give up his usual summer holidays to do nurse and secretary for me, so he is now having a v. well earned rest in Ireland. As for me, the operation is not the real issue. The state of my kidneys and heart which the prostatic trouble had set up has to be put right before they can operate and it is not right yet. It looks as if they can't cure it except by doing what can't be done till it is cured! So I'm in a vicious circle—or, as a Cambridge undergraduate said in his Tripos paper, by a happy slip of the pen, 'a *viscous* circle'. But I've no pain and am seldom either bored or depressed.

All good wishes.

Yours

C.S.L.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *CHURCH TIMES*:[197](#)

Magdalene College,

Cambridge.

Sir,—

I do not know whether capital punishment should or should not be abolished, for neither the natural light, nor scripture, nor ecclesiastical authority seems to tell me. But I am concerned about the grounds on which its abolition is being sought.

To say that by hanging a man we presumptuously judge him to be irredeemable is, I submit, simply untrue. My Prayer Book includes an exhortation to those under sentence of death which throughout implies the exact opposite. The real question is whether a murderer is more likely to repent and make a good end three weeks hence in the execution shed or, say, thirty years later in the prison infirmary. No mortal can know. But those who have most right to an opinion are those who know most by experience about the effect of prolonged prison life. I wish some prison chaplains, governors and warders would contribute to the discussion.

The suggestion of compensation for the relatives of the murdered man is in itself reasonable, but it ought not to be even remotely connected with the case for or against capital punishment. If it is, we shall be giving countenance to the archaic, and surely erroneous view that murder is primarily an offence not against society but against individuals.

Hanging is not a more irrevocable act than any other. You can't bring an innocent man to life: but neither can you give him back the years which wrongful imprisonment has eaten.

Other correspondents have pointed out that a theory of punishment which is purely exemplary or purely reformatory, or both, is shockingly immoral. Only the concept of desert connects punishment with morality at all. If deterrence is all that matters, the execution of an innocent man, provided the public think him guilty, would be fully justified. If reformation alone is in question, then there is nothing against painful and compulsory reform for all our defects, and a Government which believes Christianity to be a neurosis will have a perfectly good right to hand us all over to their straighteners for 'cure' to-morrow.

C. S. Lewis

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

3 Dec 1961

My dear Dom Bede

Thank you for your letter of the 27th Nov. Your hand, though not yet nearly so bad as mine, deteriorates! But the bits I could read were very interesting.

The difficulty about Hinduism, and indeed about all the higher Paganisms, seem to me to be our double task of reconciling and converting. The activities are almost opposites, yet must go hand in hand. We have to hurl down false gods and also elicit the peculiar truth preserved in the worship of each. I had just heard of Vinota: but what is an *ashram* or *astram*? Like the man in *The Hunting of the Snark* you 'wholly forget that English is what I speak'![198](#)

Try to time your next letter so that it does not arrive near Christmas. Every year the merciless spate of correspondence makes this season more penitential and less festal for me.

I forget whether you know that my wife died in July. Pray for us both. I am learning a great deal. Grief is not, as I thought, a state but a process: like a walk in a winding valley which gives you a new landscape every few miles.

All blessings. I am tired, and slightly ill, at the moment, or I wd. answer your letter more as it deserves.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
6 Dec 1960 [1961]

Dear Jock

Drat it, I can't find a single copy of WLN¹⁹⁹ either here or at Magdalene. Someone, but I've no idea who, has our only surviving copy on loan. Sorry.

As I have little idea what exactly the two packets I lent you contain, I can't of course make any comment on your preliminary ideas. When they are sufficiently 'choate' (as Churchill wd. say)²⁰⁰ send them back with the packets and I'll apply my mind to the question.

If you and Spencer favour the idea of any poems I'll make a choice. It might or might not include any of those you've got.

Thanks for lovely lunch & that appetising bottle—not yet opened.

Yours

Jack (= C.S.L.)

TO FRANCIS WARNER (P):²⁰¹

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

6 Dec 61

Dear Warner

I've written to the Master of Christ's and sent a copy of my letter to Tom Henn, and I wish you good luck.

Since you ask about myself, the position is that they can't operate on my prostate till they've got my heart and kidneys right, and it begins to look as if they can't get my heart & kidneys right till they operate on my prostate. So we're in what an examinee, by a happy slip of the pen, called 'a viscous circle'. Still it is not *quite* closed. Meanwhile, I have no pain and am neither depressed nor bored.

Who is supervising you now? I told them to put someone on in my place.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *CHURCH TIMES*:²⁰²

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Sir,—

Dr Davis rightly reproves me for using the word society as I did.²⁰³ This hypostatised abstraction has already done harm enough. But I only meant ‘all of us’. The absurdity of the view which treats murder as an offence against a single family is best illustrated by a case in the private speeches of Demosthenes (I can’t turn it up at the moment, but your more scholarly readers no doubt can).²⁰⁴

A man, *A*, set free a female slave, *B*, his old nurse. *B* married. Her husband died without issue. Someone then murdered *B*. But under Athenian law no one could prosecute because there was no injured party. *A* could not act because *B*, when murdered, was no longer his property. There was no widower, and there were no orphans.

I am on neither side in the present controversy. But I still think the abolitionists conduct their case very ill. They seem incapable of stating it without imputing vile motives to their opponents. If unbelievers often look at your correspondence column, I am afraid they may carry away a bad impression of our logic, manners and charity.

C. S. Lewis

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
20 Dec. 1961

My dear Dom Bede—

Thanks. I could read every word of it, and I hope you will be able to say the same of this.

To lose one’s wife after a very short married life may, I suspect, be less miserable than after a long one. You see, I had not grown *accustomed* to happiness. It was all a ‘treat’, I was like a child at a party. But prolonged earthly happiness, even of the most innocent sort, is, I suspect, addictive. The whole being gets geared to it. The withdrawal must be more like lacking bread than lacking cake.

One thing is perhaps worth recording. I prayed that when I buried my wife my whole sexual nature shd. be buried with her, and it seems to have happened. Thus one recurrent trial has vanished from my life—an enormous liberty. Of course this may only be old age—we must not, as Bunyan says, ‘mistake the decays of nature for the advances of grace.’²⁰⁵ But the liberty is a fact. It is wonderful to be able to think unrestrainedly and gratefully of the act of love without the least reawakening of concupiscence.

About Nature—you are apparently meeting, at an unusually late age, that difficulty wh. I met in adolescence and which was for years my stock against Theism. Romantic Pantheism has in this matter led us all up the garden path. It has taught us to regard Nature as divine. But she is a creature, and surely a creature lower than ourselves. And a fallen creature—not an evil creature but a good creature corrupted: retaining many beauties, but all tainted. And certainly not a creature made for our benefit (think of the spiral nebulae). The devil cd. *make* nothing, but has *infected* everything. I have always gone as near Dualism as Christianity allows—and the N.T. allows one to go v. near. The devil is the (*usurping*) Lord of this αἰών.²⁰⁶ It was he, not God, who ‘bound this daughter of Abraham’.²⁰⁷

Even more disturbing, as you say, is the ghastly record of Christian persecution. It had begun in Our Lord’s time—‘Ye know not what spirit ye are of’ (John of all people!).²⁰⁸ I think we must fully face the fact that when Christianity does not make a man v. much better, it makes him v. much worse. It is, paradoxically, dangerous to draw nearer to God. Doesn’t one find in one’s own experience that every advance (if one ever has advanced!) in the spiritual life opens to one the possibility of blacker sins as well as of brighter virtues? Conversion may make of one who was, if no better, no worse than an animal, something like a devil. Satan is an *angel*.

I wonder have any of us taken seriously enough the prohibition of casting pearls before swine?²⁰⁹ This is the point of Our Lord’s remarks after the parable of the Unjust Steward.²¹⁰ We are denied many graces we ask for because they wd. be our ruin. If we can’t be trusted even with the perishable wealth of the world, who will trust us with the real wealth? (The ‘Lord’ in this parable is of course not God but the world, and the Lord who praised the steward is Jesus, who is often called ὁκέρτοιος²¹¹ in St Luke).²¹²

I am rather seriously ill. Prostate trouble, by the time it was diagnosed had already damaged my kidneys, blood, and heart, so that I’m now in a vicious circle. They can’t operate till my bio-chemistry gets right and it

looks as if that can't get right till they operate. I am in some danger—not sentenced but on trial for my life. I know I shall have your prayers. My temptation is not to impatience. Rather, I am far too inclined to snuggle down in the enforced idleness and other privileges of an invalid.

Have you read anything by an American Trappist called Thomas Merton? I'm at present on his *No Man is an Island*.²¹³ It is the best new spiritual reading I've met for a long time.

God bless you.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

22nd December 1961

Dear Mrs van Deusen,

Very many thanks for your kind enquiries and for the photo; from the letter I draw the deduction that you both are flourishing.

As regards myself, though I still have an operation hanging over me, I am very greatly improved in the last couple of months, and am now leading an almost normal life; though I still have to keep to a rather irksome diet. But I feel stronger and more alive than I did in the summer, and am eating and sleeping well.

My brother joins me in sending you our very best wishes for a happy 1962.

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO KAPALI VISWANATHAN (W):²¹⁴ TS

645/61

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

22nd December 1961.

Dear Mr Viswanathan,

Your delightful present of the paper cutter reached me only this morning, forwarded by Mr Ramana who explains that the Anchor Line lost or rather mislaid the package. Hence the delay in acknowledging your kindness. The knife has already found a permanent home on my writing table where it will serve as a perpetual reminder of its donor.

With all best wishes for your prosperity in 1962, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO JESSIE M. WATT (W): TS

414/61

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

22nd December 1961.

Dear Mrs Watt,

Many thanks for your kind letter of 13th December. But, alas, you have been misinformed; I did *not* have an operation in the summer, but have an operation impending, for which I am being built up—or if you prefer it, being cooked before I am carved. However, my general health is far better than it was in the summer, and my doctors are pleased with me, though I still have to have blood transfusions. I am leading a normal, if somewhat invalidish life.

Many thanks for the charming calendar, and for your thoughtfulness in adding the information that the birds are kittiwakes; I in my gross ignorance would have assumed that they were seagulls. What a fascinating story about your friend who used to collect an appreciative audience of seals by playing his violin on the sea shore!

With all good wishes to you all for 1962,
yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO FRANCIS WARNER (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
23 Dec. 61

Dear Warner

I've written to the Master of Caius.²¹⁵ Good luck.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
23 Dec. 1961

Dear Mary Willis

We both seem to be having a sticky time at present? I am much the same: that is, I keep on looking and feeling better but each new blood count shows that I have made no real progress.

I've been greatly impressed by the work of an American Trappist called Thomas Merton—*No Man Is An Island*. You probably know it?

I can't write much at present. All blessings.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
28 Dec. 61

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen,

I've found the passage—1 Cor. XV, 20.²¹⁶ Also 1 Pet. III 19, 20,²¹⁷ bears indirectly on the subject. It implies that something can be done for the dead. If so, why shd. we not pray for them?²¹⁸

Beware of the argument 'the Church gave the Bible (and therefore the Bible can never give us grounds for criticising the Church)'. It is perfectly possible to accept B on the authority of A and yet regard B as a higher authority than A. It happens when I recommend a book to a pupil. I first sent him to the book, but, having gone to it, he knows (for I've told him) that the author knows more about that subject than I.

Thanks for charming photos. Good wishes from both, Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO AUSTIN FARRER (L):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
29th Dec. 61

Dear Austin,

I've read your book²¹⁹ with great enjoyment. You once said that you wrote with difficulty, but no one would guess it: this is full of felicities that sound as unsought as wildflowers...

Of course admiration is not always agreement. I stick at the diagnosis, 'Emotional reaction rather than rational conviction.'²²⁰hellip;How do people decide what is an emotion and what is a value judgement? Not presumably just by introspection wh. will certainly be hard put to it to find a value judgement chemically pure from emotion...I find however that the problem of animal pain is just as tough when I concentrate on creatures I dislike as on ones I cd. make pets of. Conversely, if I removed all emotion from, say my view of Hitler's treatment of Jews, I don't know how much value judgement would remain. I loathe hens. But my conscience would say the same things if I forgot to feed them as if I forgot to feed the cat...

1962

Warnie had returned from Ireland before Christmas 1961 and he was now helping with his brother's correspondence again. On 4 January 1962 he wrote to Edward A. Allen:

62/15

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
4th January 1962.

Dear Ed,

I have not often seen my brother so moved as he was when I took him in your letter and cheque just now. 'How kind, how very kind' he said more than once; and his gratitude for your prayers and those of your Director is deep. But as regards the cheque, he says that to accept it would be to accept money under false pretences. I pointed out to him, that you had envisaged his not needing it and had asked him to pass it on, but he says No, Americans have first call on American money, and he is sure that you can find someone in your town to whom this sum would be a God-send. So I'm returning the cheque. C. S. is a little worried in case you may feel hurt at his action, so it would be a real kindness if you sent a little note to say that you quite understand.

He is, thank God, really very much better, and his recent blood count is much the best he has had yet. So I'm much more cheerful than I was a couple, or even one month ago.

Yes, I went over to Ireland and had some physio-therapy which did me a lot of good; and came back with orders to continue the treatment her[e] in Oxford. But so far I have'nt got round to seeing the local man, and the foot has gone back a bit in consequence; but when it is

possible to get out without snow shoes, I propose to begin treatment again.

Our Co-Operative Societies here have very much the same scheme as your 'trading stamps' and, like you, I don't think much of it. With us, you get an annual dividend based on the amount of your purchases in the past 12 months; which is all very well, but many people tell me that it is paid by selling goods which are not up to the standard of the ordinary shops. However, women believe that they are getting something for nothing, and just love it. I heard a case the other day of a poor woman who went to the local Co-Op. and asked them if they could let her have an old crate for kindling wood. The manager found her one, and when she asked how much it cost, he said it was free gratis. She would'nt have this at any price; 'if I don't pay for it', she said, 'I won't get any dividend on it'. And he had to charge her a shilling because it proved impossible to make her understand that a free crate was a better bargain than paying a shilling for perhaps a penny dividend in twelve months time.

We have'nt any central heating here, but for the moment have plenty of good coal fires, and a thermostat in the bathroom; but unless the freeze breaks we shall soon be short of coal. Already fresh vegetables have doubled in price, and the shops warn us that very soon we shall have no veg. except out of tins or packets. Which is a gloomy prospect, for we are normally large consumers of vegetables.

The only person who is enjoying the weather is young Doug. We have a pretty large pond in our garden, frozen solid of course, and he and his pals spend most of the day skating. Short haired dogs do suffer considerably in this sort of weather; our Boxer does'nt get more than six inches from the fire if he can help it.

With love to your mother from both of us, and all best wishes for 1962 for yourself.

*yours as ever,
Warren Lewis*

TO A. E. WATTS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

4 Jan 1962

Dear Mr Watts

Forgive me for not having hitherto acknowledged your kind gift of the Propertius:¹ I was not very well when it arrived.

I don't think we are likely to get a better version than yours. I am parted from my copy of the original at the moment but can remember enough to see that you are usually at once very close to the Latin and unforcedly English. Possibly you are a shade too neat, so that if one didn't know one might think P. to be a shade more like Ovid than he really is. But I expect this is unavoidable—or avoidable only at an exorbitant cost.

I have spotted only one misprint. On p. 50 l. 19, for *giant's* read *giants*. Why is it so much easier to see these things in anyone's book than in one's own?

The bit from Herbert is very suitable.² Another possibility wd. be from Byron 'There's no sterner moralist than pleasure'³

With very many thanks and all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO KATHLEEN ANDREWS (BOD):⁴

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

5 Jan 1962

Dear Miss Andrews

Thank you for your very kind offer of three MacDonaldis. I already have *The Marquis* and *Donald G.*, but I should greatly welcome a copy of *Malcolm*.⁵ It is really very good of you to take all this trouble. I only hope that the task of putting up a parcel is not so arduous for you as it is for me.

It always looks like of bundle of old clothes when I've done it and my fingers are covered with sealing wax.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARTHA ALLEN (W):⁶ TS

62/55

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
11th January 1962.

Dear Martha Allen,

I am so glad to hear that you liked the Narnian books, and it was very good of you to write and tell me that you did. Everyone is pleased, you know, to be appreciated, even elderly authors! With all good wishes to you for a happy 1962, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

17 Jan 62

Dear Mary Willis

I am distressed by all you tell me. Alas! advances in hygiene have made most of us live longer but other things have made old age harsher than it ever was before. It is a pity that the old usually dislike one another. In your position I myself would prefer a 'Home'—or almost anything—to solitude. Your view reminds me of a dipsomaniac retired major I once knew who refused the suggestion that he shd. try A.A. on the ground that 'it would be full of retired majors'!

I am better, but that only means more nearly ripe for a big operation. I still can't write much. With deepest sympathy,

Yours

Jack

TO MARY MARGARET WARD (W): TS

82/108

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
22nd January 1962.

Dear Mrs Ward,

It was nice to hear from you again and I was interested by the clipping which you enclosed. If Miss Pamela is as nice a girl as she looks, Alston seems to have picked a winner. Need I say how grateful I am for your prayers? And I'm sure you will be glad to hear that although I have been seriously ill, the doctors now pronounce me to have 'turned the corner'.

With belated but genuine good wishes for 1962,
yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO MARTIN HOOTON (BOD):⁷ TS

62/130

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
26th January 1962.

Dear Hooton,

Many thanks for your last letter of the 24th, and I'm glad to be able to say that at last there is a definite improvement in my condition; in fact the doctor said (and not to me) that he thought I had turned the corner. Yes, starting afresh after a quarter of a century must be trying; I felt something of it on leaving Magdalen, Oxford, though not for retirement.

I look forward to that drink one of these days.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis⁸

TO LORIS E. WILES (W):⁹ TS

62/133

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
26th January 1962.

Dear Mrs Wiles,

Many thanks for your most kind and encouraging letter of the 9th, and naturally I am very pleased to hear that you have found some interest in my books—particularly *Surprised by Joy*. As I now have two schoolboy stepsons I'm learning a great deal more about the family side of life myself than I did when I wrote the book!

With all good wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis¹⁰

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
29th January 1962.

Dear Mrs. Gebbert,

I'm afraid you will be beginning to think that we have all completely forgotten you, and the fact that you are now only sixty miles away from us. But in fact we've often thought of you and made a provisional plan to tempt you to a visit, and then something—generally a slight relapse on my part—has happened and we have had to drop the scheme. No later than a week ago we were going to ask you down when, alas, I got the bad news that my blood count had fallen back; which means another course of blood transfusions. But when I'm once more on the up-grade I have great hopes of a meeting.

I'm sorry to see from the papers that you cockneys are in trouble again—tube strike, bus strike and so forth. I'm coming to suspect that these are not industrial troubles at all, but communist-fomented outbreaks intended to dislocate our economy. However, this is no weather for travelling, and I suppose you are all sitting contentedly at St John's Wood.

Has the Tycoon sampled an English school yet? And if so what does he think of it?

With love to you all from us both,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

62/177

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
2nd February 1962.

Dear Jock,

Would you please send me two copies each of LION, WITCH AND THE WARDROBE, PRINCE CASPIAN, THE VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER, THE SILVER CHAIR, and the HORSE AND HIS BOY.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
8 Feb. 62

Dear Jock

Let us by all means make an agreement never to send one another Christmas letters or cards. There is no time of the year at which the post is such a burden.

The book is lovely—the best of yours I’ve seen—except for the blurb.¹¹ *Brooks at* (= objects to) is surely not English?

I’d like copies sent to

The Librarian, Magdalen, Oxford

The Librarian, Magdalene, Cambridge

Mrs. Bennett, Church Rate Corner, Cambridge¹²

A. O. Barfield, Danes Inn House, 265 Strand, W.C.2.

J. Wain, 15 The Keep, London S.E.3.¹³

Lor' bless you, my diet is a low-protein one, not T.T.¹⁴ I can drink all the generous liquors but you mustn't tempt me with Oxo or Wincarnis.¹⁵

Forsyth's play¹⁶ is—as any attempted dramatisation of *Screwtape* was bound to be—an ordinary play of his own invention *plus* the devils who aren't much more than commentators. No one now-a-days seems capable of recognising an essentially non-dramatic work when they meet it.

All the best.

Yours

Jack

TO K. C. THOMPSON (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
11 Feb. 62

Dear Mr. Thompson

Thank you very much for the book¹⁷ and for the far too kind inscription. A great many of the little religious books people send me seem to be very unhelpful but yours was really needed for it does tackle (with great lucidity) questions that people really ask. To me cap 5 was the most illuminating, especially p. 59. Also pp 82–3 on *what* precisely was offered in sacrifice. And pp 88–9.

I'm not quite sure that the second sentence of the second para. on p. 28 will convey to most readers what you want it to. Many people think that the Incarnation consisted in *substituting* the Second Person of the Trinity for the soul in the animate body of Jesus, so that He had no human soul at all, and they may take your words 'a Divine, not a human, person' to confirm this. Of course you didn't mean that, you were only stressing the unity of the two natures in one person. But possibly *incidis in Scyllam cupiens vitare Charybdim!*¹⁸ But then, as an R.C. friend comically said to me, this is a subject on which nearly every statement anyone can make always turns out to be heretical and 'the only safe thing is not to think about it at all'!

With, once more, many thanks.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO SYDNEY PRICE (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
14th February 1962.

Dear Sydney Price,

First of all I want to congratulate you on your good hand-writing, and then to tell you how glad I am that you liked my books; and it was very good of you to take the trouble to write and tell me that you did.

I'm afraid I've said all I had to say about Narnia, and there will be no more of these stories. But why don't you try to write one yourself? I was writing stories before I was your age, and if you try, I'm sure you would find it great fun. Do!

With all best wishes,
yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis¹⁹

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
17 Feb 62 My dear Cecil

You will be very welcome whenever you come. The last blood count was better. Possibly these ups and downs are the foot-hills that prelude a real ascent. Love and duty to Marguerite and Sylvia.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford
19 Feb. 62

Dear Jock

Thanks. What I'm 'glued to' at present is Molière—what a man! I love Chad but will wait till the book's out before I read it.²⁰ Otherwise he might

feel I shd. write something about it and I've written far too many blurbs and don't do it at all well Yours

Jack

TO KATHLEEN ANDREWS (BOD): TS

62/25

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
19th February 1962.

Dear Miss Andrews,

I was delighted to see amongst my mail this morning your copy of *Malcolm*, a present which I value greatly and which I'm now looking forward to reading. It is really very kind indeed of you to have so solaced a temporary invalid. I anticipate several hours pleasure from the book.

With many thanks and all good wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis²¹

TO CHARLES GEBBERT (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
21st February 1962.

My dear Tycoon,

We both enjoyed the drawing, and many thanks for sending it. We *hate* Deisels, no doubt because we grew up with steam engines; but this is not to say that you have'nt made a very good job of picturing one.

Yes, I know that theatre at Stratford, and I once had a very good lunch in the theatre itself.²² Perhaps you too discovered that you could eat in the building? Indeed we will meet some day, and we would have met long since if it was'nt that my brother has been ill. Please tell your mother that it is'nt a relapse he has had, but something quite different—a touch of gastric 'flu. However he's coming along nicely now.

With best of luck to you from both of us,
yours ever,

The Lewis Brothers

They Asked for a Paper was published by Geoffrey Bles of London on 26 February 1962.

TO LOUISE RAYNOR (W):²³ TS

62/257

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
28th February 1962.

Dear Mrs. Raynor,

Many thanks for your very kind and encouraging letter of the 10th, and I need not say how pleased I am to know that you get something out of my books. Letters like yours are on[e] of the rewards of a writer's labour. According to the old saying, it is only mountains that never meet!

With all good wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO SIR HENRY WILLINK (MC):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford

3 March 62

Dear Master

I'd have answered sooner but I've been completely laid out till to-day by an attack of gastric flu. I have just written to Barfield directing him to send you a cheque for £100. Naturally I don't want the young man to know who is the donor.

There begins to be talk of my being able to come up next term—but going v. slow, still catheterised, and still on a low-protein diet.

Yours
Jack

TO LAURENCE WHISTLER (BOD):

The Kilns
4 March. [1962]

The kindness was all the other way round and I hope you will repeat it.

I don't think you cd. be expected to spot me.²⁴ There are small stylistic disguisements all the way along. Yes, of course this phase also wants to be talked over with the very person it is all about.

C.S.L.

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

4 March 62

Dear Mr. Kilby

I'm afraid I never answered Miss Nott. Dorothy Sayers and I both went to a three cornered debate with her but Miss Nott was ill and couldn't attend.²⁵ I haven't seen Mr. Cooke's article.²⁶

Thank you very much for your prayers. I am better, but not yet well.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

62/112

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
5th March 1962.

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen,

Many thanks for your kind enquiries on the 27th of February. I am thankful to say that I'm considerably better, and it now appears probable that I may escape an operation; but on the other hand I appear to have been condemned to my low diet for the rest of my life! But on balance, I consider the news good.

If John cares to write to me again I shall of course be very glad to hear from him—merely stipulating that he must not think me churlish if my replies are short ones. But I'm sure he will make allowances for an unfit man.

With all best wishes to you both,
yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns etc

13 March 62

Dear Jock

I know and like Dell but I hope he won't waste his time on any such attempt.²⁷ Biographies of the living, especially when dozens of people know them far better than the biographer, are folly: above all when the subject is a bad life, for when he dies there will be opportunity for a real *Life* and the attempt will be superseded. Nor can I promise any help. I will not waste *my* time on 'research' into myself!

When you have finished with the press cuttings²⁸ I'd be glad to see them.

I am much better and may be able to go up next term.

Yours
Jack

TO MEREDITH STEVENS (P):²⁹ TS

62/296

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,

Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
13th March 1962.

Dear Mr Stevens,

Many thanks for your most kind and encouraging letter of the 14th February; and I need hardly tell you what pleasure it gives me to learn that anything I have written has been of some service to you.

With all good wishes,

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis³⁰

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

[The Kilns]

17/3/62

Thanks. And please send me another copy of the book itself. Someone gave me the Hussein book.³¹ Extremely interesting, tho' the translation is pretty bad.

TO CECIL ROTH (T):³²

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

20 March 62

Dear Roth

Thank you very much for your kind, and most cheering letter. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your kind interest in the whole matter. If David opens out and gives me the least encouragement I'll try to say something such as you suggest. Otherwise it wd. be like trying to open an oyster with a paper-knife.³³

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO WAYNE SHUMAKER (L):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

21 March 62

Dear Mr Shumaker

Thanks for the article on *Paradise Lost*. I think I agree with all you say, especially your distinction between what is common to all the myths and what is peculiar to *Paradise Lost*. Possibly that kind of distinction should be pressed even further. Thus the child is not like the savage *simpliciter* but like a savage in close contact with and subject to civilisation: controlled, protected, corrupted and elevated by it at every turn. Again, does not a myth built into a systematic and *fully* believed theology differ, by that very fact, from a myth told by primitive man (usually in explanation of a ritual)? For I doubt whether primitives stand to their myths in a relation of full credal affirmation such as one finds in Christianity and Islam. All this had happened to the Fall story long before Milton. Indeed M's great success lies in practising the credal affirmation without losing the *quality* of myth. M *does* lose this (for me) in Books XI and XII, I'm afraid.

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W): TS

62/15

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
22nd March 1962.

Dear Ed,

Many thanks for yours of the 18th which came in this morning, and which it falls to me to answer; not that C.S. is'nt in pretty good trim, all things considered. But, though he won't admit it, he still tires very easily and I intercept his mail, leaving him only business letters. But please, you must not picture me saying 'Oh, dash it all, here is Ed writing again and I suppose I must answer him'. It is a pleasure to hear from you *and* to write

to you. But C.S. has of course seen your letter, which he enjoyed and asks me to thank you and send you and your mother all his best love.

We are grateful to you for the confidence you show in us by telling us the tragic story of your father—came as a great surprise, because without knowing anything about it, I had always supposed your mother was a widow. I've often pondered, as I expect you have too, on what can be God's purpose in the cards he deals out to different people; what for instance was accomplished by keeping your father 31 years in an asylum? Even more of a puzzle, what can be his reason for sending a soul into this world and then taking it back again after a life of say ten of [or] fifteen days? Well, I suppose we shall know the answers some day; or will we *never* know them?

Though our conditions are nothing like yours, we too are having one of the toughest winters we've had for a long time; frost every night, thaw about ten a.m., and repeat; this has been the programme all this month. Still, the sun generally shines, and the crocuses are making a fine show outside my window as I write.

The world doesn't seem to improve, does it? And amidst the columns of wars, war rumours, murders, robberies with violence etc. I saw one item last week which fairly sickened me. Has your press carried the news that an American company is in process of building a 200 room luxury hotel—where? On the *Mount of Olives*!³⁴

Well Ed, must stop now. With lots of love to both of you from
LEWIS BROS. INC. p.p. Warren Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

The Kilns
23/3/62

Thanks for all the books. In future I'd be glad if you'd arrange with all French, Italian & German translators to send each 1 copy only, and with all other translators to send *none*. The house is getting constipated with translations in languages I can't read a word of!

J.

TO FRANCINE SMITHLINE (W):³⁵

The Kilns,

Headington Quarry,

Oxford
[23 March 1962]

Dear Francine

I was at three schools (all boarding schools) of which two were very horrid. I never hated anything as much, not even the front line trenches in World War I. Indeed the story is far *too* horrid to tell anyone of your age. So glad you like the Narnian books. With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns

25 March 62

My dear Roger—

I have re-read *The Wood* and am on the whole *more* impressed by it than I was the first time.³⁶ The later chapters are splendidly conceived. The idea—almost the epigram—that Elena can reach heaven only by recovering earth, comes from a depth that does not make itself felt in anything else of yours that I've seen.

About the proposed collaboration, however, a good many difficulties exist. A. Can I do it? Have I still got the vitality? B. Could you endure my doing it? This story is v. deeply entangled with a crisis in your own youth—tho' you probably didn't see that as clearly when you wrote it as you do now. And could I bear to do it? It feels like an indecency. I'd hate to sink from the role of friend into anything like a *directeur* or a psychotherapist. (Of course the story strikes roots in my past too: but not such deep ones, and in a remoter past, so that I'm less involved). The defect of the book as I see it is that [it] is not a children's story and masquerades as one. In the later chapters the presence of the children seemed to me to be an encumbrance.

The two alternatives that float before my mind are these. A. Re-write as a straight romance about people living no one knows where or when and cut out the children altogether. B. Re-write as a *novel* told in the first person. The narrator describes the old tongue-tied, past-bound Randal. Tells his

surprise at the engagement. But is out of England and never meets the fiancée. Comes home just in time for the wedding and sees her there. Feels her unearthly quality, her flawed spirituality. 'She looked like a newly, and imperfectly, tamed animal.' Later, after the birth of the first child, spends a week end with the couple. ('What had become of the elf in her? She had dwindled into a mother and a housewife. And Randal too had changed. I felt guilty at my own disappointment, for he was clearly happy. He was even putting on flesh'). Then, on the last night, Randal tells your story of the wood as a vivid dream he had before his marriage. Neither R. nor Elena thinks it of any significance. 'I told it to you,' says R 'Because I thought it might do as a theme for your next book.' Wd. you approve of this? Can I (I mean, have I now got the guts) to do it? Wd. you or cd. you, do it yourself?

Thanks for *Prince P. and Prince R.*³⁷ I'd have acknowledged it before, but W. (acting as my secretary) saw the slip 'From the Author', and, observing that he didn't know Lang's present address, acknowledged it to Dents. Only later, when the volume came into my hand, did I realise that they had exercised the royal prerogative of saying *author* when they meant *editor*. Many thanks. I thought it only fairly good. Not a patch on *The R. and the R.*³⁸ The multiplication of senseless marvels is neither funny nor imaginative.

I think I am still mending and hope to be up at College next term. Love and duty to you both.

Yours
Jack

TO HARRY BLAMIRE (BOD):

61/338

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

26th March 1962.

The doctors hold out a hope of my being able to return to Cambridge on 24 April. If I do I shan't be here when you are. I'd v. much like a visit, however. Perhaps you'll be here some time in the Vac?

C.S.L.

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

28 March 62

Dear Joan

(Or are you so old that I should now call you Miss Lancaster?). It was nice to hear from you again. I am a great deal better, but apparently I shall always be rather an invalid: but it doesn't hurt, and anyway I'm 63, so I haven't much to complain of.

The imagery of your poem—what one can picture—is goulish. But the meter is surely too much of a jig for so grave a subject. Nor (forgive me!) do you handle that meter very well. You make me treat 'angel throngs rush' as if it were the metrical equivalent of 'Banbury Cross.' But *throngs* is far too long & heavy a word to be hurried over like that!

I don't know whether Lucifer & Gabriel could really find much ground for reconciliation in the mere fact that they both *exist*. I suppose the reconciliation of dark & light wd. be fog? Don't like fog much myself. Health and disease both exist in me and are now reconciled in mild invalidism. But really, I'd rather that Health had fought and slain his antagonist!

All good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

The Kilns

29 March 62

My dear Owen

I have read *Worlds Apart*.³⁹ My trouble is that [it] is to me so exciting that I can't help reading it far too quickly. I must presently tackle it again and less greedily. Your language sometimes disgruntles me. Why must it be *polyvalence* instead of *multivalence*? And why do you use base as an intransitive verb—'He bases on' meaning 'He bases his argument on' as 'starts from'? Yes, I wondered whether I were any relation to Hunter. Ranger is an attractive boy.

Yours
Jack

TO CHARLES A. HUTTAR (W):⁴⁰

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

30 March 62

Dear Mr. Huttar

Though I am better than I was, my medical future is so speculative that I can make no promises; but I hope to be well enough to see you when you are in England, and it will be a pleasure to do so.

What a pity Chesterton is dead! He would have been the very man for you to meet. In your own country, would Auden be any use? In England, I can think of very few.

Tolkien himself *might* help. But he is the most unmanageable man (in conversation) I've ever met. He will talk to you alright: but the subject of his remarks will be whatever happens to be interesting him at the moment, which might be anything from M.E.⁴¹ words to Oxford politics. It will be only by luck if you get anything relevant to your own problems.

Professor N. Coghill (Merton, Oxon) is genial and forthcoming.

Fr. Gervase Matthew O. P. (Pusey House, Oxford)⁴² would not himself be much good in your topic, but he knows everyone and will put you onto the right people (if there are any).

A. O. Barfield (Dunes Inn House, 265 Strand, London W.C.2) cannot talk on any subject without illuminating it.

I don't think T. S. Eliot would be much good for this purpose, but you might try him. I would say the same of Lord David Cecil.

C. H. Derrick (Magdalen, Oxford, will be able to give you his address), tho' hardly known to the public, would be worth seeing. He's a R. C. layman, a reviewer.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford
2 April '62

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

I am glad to hear about the new harness and, still more, about the improvement in your husband's health. He and I seem to be in much the same state: bad kidneys, too much urea, and too little hemoglobin. (It always suggests hobgoblins, doesn't it). I think you diagnose Genia very well, and am delighted to hear of her progress. Indeed your letter is all good news. Congratulations Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO FRANCIS WARNER (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

3 April 62

Dear Warner

This is much the best verse of yours I have yet seen. There is rather too much bird-music for the time of year, isn't there? Unless you mean it to be miraculous, in which case the point had better be underlined. The bit about

St. Joseph riding and sliding particularly pleased me.⁴³ The use of Pan is very good.

My view of the stanza has never changed—that it is ‘delightful in itself’ but that the idea of using it for a *débat* was an unhappy one. There wd. be nothing inconsistent about saying that the triolet was a delightful form but it was an unhappy novelty to use it for a translation of Lucretius!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W): TS

62/366

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
4th April 1962.

Dear Miss Douglass,

How very nice to get such a charming reminder that you are still in the land of the living!⁴⁴ With all best wishes from us for Easter, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):⁴⁵

The Kilns.

6 April 62

Dear Mary Willis

My news is neither good nor bad. On the one hand they have decided that my kidneys will never be fit for the operation: on the other, that I have developed a tolerance for my present condition and can carry on indefinitely in a semi-invalid way without surgery.

I am sorry to hear you have run into more trouble.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

The Kilns
7 April [1962]

I had already answered V.G.⁴⁶ What puzzled me was that I then got a letter addressed to 'Dear Bob'. All seems straight now.⁴⁷
C.S.L.

TO JOHN BEVERSLUIS (T):⁴⁸

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

12 April 62

Dear Mr. Beversluis—

I have no confident answer to the very interesting question you raise.⁴⁹ It would be difficult to regard *distortion* as a product of disbelief in Christianity, in view of the triumphant distortions we see in medieval sculpture, illumination, and heraldry. But perhaps that was a different kind, with a clear purpose—either comic or symbolical—whereas the modern distortions are outbursts of individual subjectivity?

And is this apotheosis of subjectivity itself a product of unbelief? That is difficult too. Christianity was perhaps the origin of it, through St. Augustine and hundreds of devotional books: and it is as rampant among the Christian, as among the sceptical, Existentialists. But there might be a connection in a different way.

One result of unbelief has been to elevate the Arts—to put Artists on the level vacated by saints and prophets, and therefore to relegate their public to the humble position of disciples. We are afraid now to dismiss any artist as a mere eccentric, lest we should be 'stoning a prophet'. This encourages the artist—and of course Freud and Jung aggravate the encouragement—to pour out whatever is inside him with a total disregard of the needs or capacity of any audience. (He ought, on my view, to regard their needs and capacity as part of his *material* no less than the properties of stone, paint, or words).

And this links up with the general contemporary tendency to look at everything from the producer's rather than the 'consumer's' angle.

As you see, I have only guesses to offer. May we hope that you yourself are going to produce a treatment of the problem? Thank you for all the kind things you say about my work.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO CHAD WALSH (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

21 April 62

Dear Chad

All here return your greetings warmly. Please remember me to your wife. The news about me is rather ambivalent. They don't think my kidneys will ever be ripe for that operation; on the other hand they think that I can carry on without it in an invalid sort of way—always catheterised and always on a low protein diet. I attempt the Cambridge term on Tuesday next.

Congratulations on qualifying for *l'art d'être grand-père!*⁵⁰

Yours
Jack

Lewis's stepson David Gresham had met Rabbi M. Y. Young of Carmel College, Wallingford, on 10 April to discuss his future. David was advised to go to a Jewish school in London to finish his A-level examinations before going to a yeshiva, and on 15 April he became a student at the North West London Talmudical College in Finchley Road, where he was to remain for a year. Following his mother's death, Douglas became a pupil at Magdalen College School, Oxford, and while he continued his studies there he lived at The Kilns with Warnie.

Lewis was still making periodic visits to the Acland Nursing Home for treatment and the doctors pronounced him well enough to return to Cambridge on 24 April to begin his twice-weekly lectures on Spenser's The Faerie Queene.

TO ROBERT D. CARLSON (W): TS

62/413

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
26th April 1962.

Dear Mr Carlson,

Many thanks for your most kind and encouraging letter of the 18th, and naturally it has given me great pleasure to hear that you and your family have enjoyed the Narnian stories. To me the most gratifying result of having written them is that among the scores of letters of thanks I have had from quite young children, not one of them has failed to understand Aslan.

With all best wishes,
yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis⁵¹

TO RICHARD N. RINGLER (W):⁵²

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

29 April 62

Dear Mr. Ringler

Your qualifications to do an edition of the Mutability cantos⁵³ are not in doubt, but the inclusion of this in Nelson's series clearly raises some questions of policy.⁵⁴ I will try to start the ball rolling and we will let you know our decision when we reach it.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

4 May 62

Dear Mary Willis

Thank you all for your kind prayers. You have mine daily. Yes—it is sometimes hard to obey St. Paul’s ‘Rejoice.’⁵⁵ We must try to take life moment by moment. The actual *present* is usually pretty tolerable, I think, if only we refrain from adding to its burden that of the past and the future. How right Our Lord is about ‘sufficient to the day’.⁵⁶ Do even pious people in their reverence for the more radiantly divine element in His sayings, sometimes attend too little to their sheer practical commonsense?

I was charmed with your two Chinese children. It reminded me of an adventure Joy and I had in Crete, when Joy gave a few drachmae to a v. starved looking little girl (She wasn’t begging—just looking at us with a child’s open-eyed curiosity). The girl instantly rushed into a neighbouring thicket and returned with her hands full of fruit for us. (It was a nice fruit wh. we’d never seen before, but all our efforts to find out its name elicited only the word *karpos*, which simply means ‘fruit’!).

Yours

Jack

TO STUART ROBERTSON (P):⁵⁷

As from Magdalene College
Cambridge

6 May 62

Dear Mr Robertson—

On this point as on others the N.T. is highly paradoxical. St. Paul at the outset of an epistle sometimes talks as if the converts whom he is

addressing were already wholly new creatures, already in the world of light, their old nature completely crucified. Yet by the end of the same epistle he will be warning the same people to avoid the very grossest vices.

Of himself he speaks sometimes as if his reward was perfectly sure: elsewhere he fears lest, having preached to others, he shd. be himself a castaway.⁵⁸

Our Lord Himself sometimes speaks as if all depended on faith, yet in the parable of the sheep and the goats all seems to depend on works: even works done or undone by those who had no idea what they were doing or undoing.⁵⁹

The best I can do about these mysteries is to think that the N.T. gives us a sort of double vision. A. Into our salvation as eternal fact, as it (and all else) is in the timeless vision of God. B. Into the same thing as a process worked out in time. Both must be true in some sense but it is beyond our capacity to envisage both together. Can one get a faint idea of it by thinking of A. A musical score as it is written down with all the notes there at once. B. The same thing *played* as a process in time? For *practical* purposes, however, it seems to me we must usually live by the second vision ‘working out our own salvation in fear and trembling’⁶⁰ (but it adds ‘for’—not ‘though’—but ‘for’—‘it is God who worketh in us’).⁶¹

And in this temporal process surely God saves different souls in different ways? To preach instantaneous conversion and eternal security as if they must be the experiences of all who are saved, seems to me v. dangerous: the very way to drive some into presumption and others into despair. How v. different were the callings of the disciples.

I don’t agree that if anyone were completely a new creature, you and I wd. necessarily recognise him as such. It takes holiness to detect holiness.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MURIEL BRADBROOK (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

7 May 62

Dear Muriel

Thanks, but I'm afraid not, *locomotion*, as well as protein, is one of the things I must cut down to the minimum. What day, at about 6 p.m. (not weekends) could you come and drink a glass of sherry with me? Or at 12 noon if that wd. be easier. It will have all the merit, as well as the laboriousness, of 'visiting the sick'. * You can then tell me all about the 'late challenges'. The challenge has not yet reached me, and I am quite in the dark.

Yours
Jack

* But neither soup nor tracts are obligatory.

TO KENNETH R. W. BREWER (W):[62](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

9 May 62

Dear Mr. Brewer

Yes. I corrected in Fontana a mistake I had made in the first edn. I there confused two senses of *irrational*. A. Contrary to reason, like lunacy or invalid argument. B. *Non-rational*, like an inanimate object. By taking my examples from D.T.[63](#) etc. I proved the truism that *irrational* thought is invalid, not that all thought (being based on the *non-rational*) is invalid.

'If you believe an argument to be invalid you can counter it in two ways.' Yes, but the question here concerns not *an* argument but Argument as such. If you believe an act of vision to be unveridical, you can try to prove it so by examining the patient's eyes or comparing what he says he sees with other people's reports. But if you raise the question of Vision itself you get quite a different result: i.e. that colour is not a property of physical objects in themselves and that, in that sense, all our vision is non-

veridical. It is useless to bring [in] the testimony of a million people whose eyes are in good order and who all say grass is green.

Similarly if thoughts are mere natural events, connected as causes and effects, the fact that a million logicians can find no logical flaw in *an* argument wd. show only that the same causal chain of events had taken place in their brains as in the original arguer's. As the theory of vision leaves no room for a 'real' greenness in the grass, but only for identical responses in all optic nerves etc, so Naturalism leaves no room for a ground-consequent selection between cerebral events.

But there might, one says, be a lucky coincidence. Coincidence with *what*? What are the 'Laws of Reasoning' of which natural selection has made us aware? Are they events? If so when or where did they occur? Are they objects? Where in space are they located? You say they are self-existent. But if anything except 'the whole show' is self existent, we have abandoned Naturalism as I defined it.⁶⁴ I doubt if the Life Force will help. Doesn't it mean either A. An H.C.F. abstracted from all organisms, like 'equality' from all instances of equality, or B. A purposive, immaterial power over and above all the organisms in which it is manifested? If A, it is a mere concept, a thought-gimmick. It can't *do* things. If B, it is simply God, or at least *a* god, but we have again deserted Naturalism.

I am much hampered by having no copy of *Miracles* in either version to hand

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MR GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

11 May 62

Dear Mr. Green—

I also once ceased to believe and told others there is no God. In fact you and I both lost our faith and then returned to it. But surely we did not return on our own steam? Surely we were recalled by God? For no man can come,

nor come back, to God unless God sends for him. The grace He has thus shown us for a second time is the proof that He has forgiven us. He has not cast us aside even though we, for a time, cast Him aside.

Don't forget that Bunyan, as he himself tells us, thought that he had at one time committed the unforgivable sin.⁶⁵ Yet he lived to write the *Pilgrim's Progress* and to be a great Christian champion.

It has always puzzled me very much that Our Lord should have told us there is an unforgivable sin and yet not told us what it is. If it is a particular act which could be done at a particular time, the warning does not seem to be any use—like being told that there is a poisonous vegetable but not told which it is. But it may mean persistence in ordinary sin, a final refusal to repent or even to *try* to reform. If so, the warning would then be useful, a reminder that there is a point beyond which return becomes impossible. His purpose would be to fix the danger in our minds, but certainly *not* to set us looking through all our particular sins and trying to guess if some one of them was It.

As far as you (and I) are concerned I have no doubt that the fear you mention is simply a temptation of the devil, an effort to keep us away from God by despair. It is often the devil working through some defect in our health, and in extreme cases it needs a medical as well as a spiritual cure. So don't listen to these fears and doubts* any more than you would to any obviously impure or uncharitable thoughts.

With hearty good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

* Of course, like other evil temptations, they will not be silenced at once. You will think you have got rid of them and then they will come back again—and again. But, with all our temptations of all sorts, we must just endure this. Keep on, do your duty, say your prayers, make your communions, and take no notice of the tempter. He goes away in the end. Remember I John iii, 20 'If (= though) our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart.' Let us sometimes pray for one another.

TO GEORGE WATSON (P):⁶⁶

As from Magdalene

12 May 62

Dear Watson

Thank you very much for sending me your *Critics*⁶⁷ and for the kind inscription. I have really enjoyed this book. There are a sufficiency of plums ('They do not contribute: they interrupt'⁶⁸hellip;'dogmatism based on the uncertainty of its dogmas') and, what matters much more, the solid cake in between is nutritious. I am glad you don't over-rate Dryden. You diagnose Lamb exactly right. And your severities about Arnold and Leavis are just, besides being much better bred than A's own superciliousness or L's yahoo howls.

I don't think Wordsworth really held the theory of metre you blame him for on p. 116. The sentence about 'superadding' the 'charm' of verse is introduced by the words 'Now supposing for a moment'. i.e. *even if* metre were merely something added (like jam on bread and butter) why should I not use it? He supposes, *positionis causa*, a concession he refuses actually to make. His real theory of metre (to my mind the best, perhaps the only valuable, part of the Preface) follows in the next two paragraphs and begins appropriately with the word 'But' ('But various causes...')⁶⁹

On p. 202 where it appears you make it sound as if W. P. Ker had been a Christian?⁷⁰ Was he? I never heard of, nor remotely suspected, it. Even I, by the way, wrote nearly the whole of the *Allegory* book⁷¹ while I was still an agnostic.

There is one passage (p. 29) that completely defeated me. What is snobbish about finding Laodamia 'not wholly free' from artificiality.⁷² Since you italicise the three words it sounds as [if] the charge was based on them. But you can't mean that say 'A is not wholly free from B' is itself snobbish. I don't mean that I disagree with you (which is what people sometimes mean, when they say they don't understand[]). I mean that I am baffled—as I should be if you said 'He showed his pedantry by liking his eggs well boiled'—or his Fascist leanings by using an umbrella—or his Calvinism by taking the 8.30 to London. Have a heart and throw a clue!

But it's a good book.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MRS JOHN R. ROLSTON (W):⁷³

c/o Messrs Faber & Faber
24 Russell Square,
London

14 May 62

Dear Mrs. Rolston

Thank you for writing. We are only two in the huge number of mourners, but it is cheering when two of us thus meet. Let us remember all the others in our prayers. With all good wishes.

N. W.⁷⁴ Clerk.

↑ Sorry about this mess!

TO MARTIN HOOTON (BOD): PC

Mon. 14. [May 1962]

What a lovely idea. If you cd. call at 6 p.m. on Thurs.⁷⁵ 22 May I'd love it.

C.S.L.

TO GEORGE WATSON (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
15 May [1962]

Dear Watson

'He's still not wholly free from his cough.' I.S?⁷⁶

I wasn't v. long in publishing the *Allegory*, but I was the deuce of a time writing it. I was a young tutor desperately trying to keep up with my pupils. A chapter a year was far beyond what I could do. Also, as you'll see if you look at the passage in *S. by J.*, 1929 is the date of my conversion to Theism, not to Christianity.⁷⁷

I now think that all that sort of historiography which reconstructs the story of a book's composition, is sheer illusion. I've seen it done too often by reviewers on books of my friends or my own, and it has *never once* been

right. That's why I wd. never now even listen to any scholar who tells me how *P. Plowman* or the *F.Q.* was written.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MR GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

16 May 62

Dear Mr. Green

I was not only baptised in infancy, but, what seems to me far worse, I was already an apostate when I hypocritically allowed myself to be confirmed and made my first communion—in a state of total unbelief.⁷⁸ You'll find Bunyan's story (about how he thought he had committed the unforgivable sin) in *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. I find also that our chaplain—a v. good young man—once thought that he had done the same thing. He, by the way, took the view that those who had *really* done it would be the very last people to be bothered about it (in this life), for they wd. be hardened, which you—and, I dare to add, I—obviously are not.

There is a lovely passage in Pascal where he represents Our Lord as saying to the timorous soul 'Be comforted. Unless you had found me, you would not be seeking me.'⁷⁹ God bless us both.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO T. S. ELIOT (P):

Magdalene College,
Oxford.

18 May 62

My dear Eliot

Thanks. Apparently I shall always be an invalid, condemned to a catheter and a low protein diet. But I have no pain and feel tolerably well. They told me you also had been ill. I trust you are now recovered.

I can't produce an editor for your Ballads on the spur of the moment but will make inquiries and let you know the results, if any, as soon as I can. I presume you want an introduction wh. will be a good *oeuvre de vulgarisation*, and a glossary? The difficulty is that good *vulgarisation* needs a tip-top man and not all tip-top men want to do it!

That book of mine⁸⁰ is old papers collected—Jock Gibb is the begetter.

I shd. like to go to Bishopthorpe, but I'm rather afraid of the journey—and of stairs.⁸¹

Please remember me very kindly to your wife.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO T. S. ELIOT (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

25 May 62

My dear Eliot

You need not sympathise too much. I am in no pain and (I believe) in almost no danger: and if my condition keeps me from doing some things I like, it also excuses me from doing a good many I don't. There are two sides to everything!

We must have a talk—I wish you'd write an essay on it—about Punishment. The modern view, by excluding the retributive element and concentrating solely on deterrence and cure, is hideously immoral. It is vile tyranny to submit a man to compulsory 'cure', or sacrifice him to the deterrence of others, unless he *deserves* it. On the other view what is there to prevent any of us being handed over to Butler's 'Straighteners'⁸² at any moment?

I'd have to know more about the Greek of that period to make a real criticism of the N.E.B.⁸³ (N.T. which is the only part I've seen). Odd, the

way the less the Bible is read the more it is translated!

Chase and W.T.⁸⁴ and I go on with the Psalms like a house on fire. It's nonsense to say that I understand the English of that period better than you. At our last meeting you (in absentia) caught us all out for using *establish* instead of *stablish*. (Dear old Chase has no feeling for language at all).

Thanks for all the kind things you say.

Don't bother answering my letter about Green and Winy, which you will already have got.⁸⁵

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARGARET E. ROSE (BBC):⁸⁶ TS

62/487

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
30th May 1962.

Dear Miss Rose,

Many thanks for your 03/SB/M/R of the 20th, but I am afraid I must refuse. I am making a slow recovery from a serious illness, and have been warned by my doctor that in future I must refrain from all avoidable exertion.

With regret.

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis⁸⁷

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
Ascension Day [31 May] 1962

Dear Mary Willis

Yes. The doctors allowed me to come back to work this term 'experimentally'. So far the experiment has been a great success. I am better than I have ever been since last June. But I am permanently a semi-invalid on a low-protein diet (it must be good for my soul when there are things I really like for dinner and I mustn't have them!). Like you, I have to

reduce stair-climbing to the minimum. It does make life *complicated*, doesn't it? There's no going back upstairs for something you have forgotten, so that every time one goes down one has to think of everything as if one were planning an expedition to the North Pole or central Africa. But one learns!

All you tell me about China is horrible, and I was shocked to read an article the other day about Portugal. I had got the idea that Salazar⁸⁸ was (as if such a thing were possible!) a *good* dictator. But apparently Portugal is just like all the other totalitarian countries, indeed worse in one way, for the atrocities are done in the name of Christianity. As a verse in our version of the Psalter says 'All the earth is full of darkness and cruel habitations.'⁸⁹

I'm sorry my letters are so short compared with yours, but I'm afraid this is an irremovable difference between the sexes—women love letter writing and men loathe it. And there is so much *other* writing in my day's work!

Something has gone wrong with spring this year and we are still having winter weather. The cuckoo *has* arrived, very late. But I bet he wishes he'd stayed in sunnier climes.

Yours
Jack

TO ROGER SHARROCK (P):⁹⁰ PC

The Kilns
7 June [1962?]

*Vobis parta quies.*⁹¹ *Gratulamur.*⁹²
On 8 June 1962 Warnie wrote to Clyde S. Kilby:

62/261

*The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
8th June 1962*

*Dear Mr Kilby,
My brother asks me to thank you for your kind letter of the 4th, and
to say that while under happier circumstances he would be most*

interested to read the thesis, he is not up to it at present. Though I am thankful to say there has been a wonderful improvement in his condition during the past few months in spite of the worst spring we have had since 1881.

As regards Spirits in Bondage, the only edition was a small one, published by Heinemans in, I think, 1919, and I'm afraid it will be very difficult to find a copy; your best chance is to send out a tracer in the second hand market. I would recommend that you state your requirements either to B. H. Blackwell, Broad St., Oxford, or to A. Rogers, 39, St George's Terrace, Newcastle-on-Tyne 2.

Yours sincerely

W. H. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

8 June 62

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Thanks for your letter of the 3rd. I am particularly glad to read what you say about Genia. She seems to have emerged triumphantly from a good many dangers and difficulties.

My friend Charles Williams had a high opinion of Kierkegaard and on that ground I am ready to believe there must be a lot in him. But I could not find it myself. Perhaps I did not give him a long enough trial. I may yet give him another. I have in my time had to change my opinion about a good many authors!

Yes—the doctors allowed me to come back to Cambridge this term 'experimentally'. So far the experiment has succeeded beyond my wildest hope. I feel more myself than I have done for a twelvemonth. I haven't had a blood count lately, but, to judge from the colour of my hands and from my general sensations, the hemoglobin anyway must greatly have improved.

With very good wishes to all,

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD LOFSTROM (P):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

10 June 62

Dear Mr. Lofstrom—

You are of course perfectly right in defining your problem (which is also mine and everyone's) as 'excessive selfness'. But perhaps you don't fully realise how far you have got by so defining it. All have this disease: fortunate are the minority who know they have it. To know that one is dreaming is to be already nearly awake, even if, for the present, one can't wake up fully. And you have actually got further than that. You have got beyond the illusion (v. common) that to *recognise* a chasm is the same thing as building a bridge over it.

Your danger now is that of being hypnotised by the mere sight of the chasm, of constantly *looking at* this excessive selfness. The important thing now is to go steadily on acting, so far as you can—and you certainly can to some extent, however small—as if it wasn't there. You can, and I expect you daily do—behave with some degree of unselfishness. You can and do make some attempt at prayer. The continual voice which tells you that your best actions are secretly filled with subtle self-regard, and your best prayers still wholly egocentric—must for the most part be simply disregarded—as one disregards the impulse to keep on looking under the bandage to see whether the cut is healing. If you are always fidgeting with the bandage, it never will.

A text you shd. keep much in mind is I John iii, 20: 'If our heart condemns us God is greater than our heart.' I sometimes pray 'Lord give me *no more* and *no less* self-knowledge than I can at this moment make a good use of.' Remember He is the artist and you are only the picture. You can't see it. So quietly submit to be painted—i.e. keep on fulfilling all the obvious duties of your station (you really know quite well enough what

they are!), asking forgiveness for each failure and then leaving it alone. You are in the right way. *Walk*—don't keep on looking at it.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MR GREEN (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

11 June 62

Dear Mr. Green

You are kind enough to say that I helped you. This emboldens me to make a very serious request of you, almost an entreaty. Cancel your order for *Grace Abounding*, or, if it is too late, *don't* read it. I implore you not to. It is a strange request, you will say, since I first directed your attention to the book. But the whole point of that was to convince you that a man can come through all that nightmare about the unforgivable sin and live to be a great Christian.

But for you, who have just got out of it, to go back and steep yourself in another man's sinister nightmare, might do dreadful harm. When a man has just got over malaria one doesn't advise him to go back to a malarial district. I now blame myself—God forgive me—for having mentioned the book at all. A line from you promising not to read it—not for 10 years or so—would be a v. great relief to me.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO KENNETH R. W. BREWER (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

15 June 62

Dear Mr Brewer

It would certainly be 'convenient' to say that universals etc *subsist* if one cd. attach any clear meaning to the word *subsist*. Can one?

Determinism seems to me to have nothing to do with the question. I am quite convinced that my acts of thought (when I'm thinking logically) are not free but determined. E.g. if the truths $A > B$ and $B > C$ are both present to my mind I *must* think $A > C$. I have no choice. The question is whether the determinism is that of Ground and Consequent or that of Cause and Effect.⁹³

Your view is that by a statistically improbable event C-E trains of cerebral events happened in some brains to coincide with GC chains of propositions. But *what* is this other connection with which they coincide? Another series of C-E events? If so, what and where? We can't simply mean that some of the CE trains led to a correct anticipation of some experiences, because false reasoning from false premises can sometimes do that where sound reasoning from false premises can lead us astray.

And if one presses the point that in an immense area of space and time even the most statistically improbable coincidence will turn up sooner or later, has one any criterion left for supposing anything whatever about the history of the universe? Is this card about every possible event turning up sooner or later ever played except to defend some position which has on other grounds become almost desperate? At the very least, surely it ought to be a last resource?

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

18 June 1962

My dear Arthur—

Some months ago they had decided that I should never be ripe for that operation but must just carry on, always wearing a catheter, on a low-protein diet, and being v. careful about stairs. They let me go up to Cambridge at the beginning of last term, reluctantly, and ‘as an experiment’. The experiment has however been a far greater success than was hoped and I am now definitely better than I have been since the trouble began. There begins to be a faint chance that I may be able to have the operation after all and, if so, some day to resume a more or less normal life. But there can be no question of journeys, hotels etc at present. I need to be near a life-line (the plumbing often goes wrong).

I had v. much hoped there wd. be a chance of seeing you *here* this summer, but I gather you are an invalid too—you don’t make your condition v. clear.⁹⁴ This is sad news. If you can get away I shall be here all summer, and W. away a good deal of it. Blessings.

Yours
Jack

TO MR GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

18 June 62

Dear Mr. Green

Dismiss from your mind all idea that the book⁹⁵ contains any *facts* from which I wish to shield you. Bunyan’s crisis, as anyone can see to-day, was far more pathological than spiritual. The way he got into the trouble and the way he got out of it were both irrational. The one need not alarm, and the other can hardly help, any sane person. What I feared for you was the mere *infection* of steeping yourself in a very vivid account of all the emotions felt by a man in a condition from which you have so lately emerged yourself.

There *is* something to be learned from the book, *and I will now tell it you*. It is this: that the habit of taking isolated texts from the Bible and treating the effect which they have on one in a particular mood at a

particular moment as direct messages from God, is v. misleading. It fills some people (who are in one state) with morbid terror, and fills others (who are in a different state) with presumption. This, I say, *can* be learned from B. but I don't think that is what *you* wd. get from him at present. No very introspective book—no book in which a man is wholly preoccupied with his own spiritual state—would be very safe reading for you just now. Convalescents need a careful diet! You need something that will direct your attention away from yourself to God and your neighbours.

I suggest G. K. Chesterton's *The Everlasting Man* and George MacDonald's *Sir Gibbie* (if you can manage the Scotch dialect).

Be regular in prayer and the Sacraments: do all the good to those you live among: and trust to God. May He bless us both.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MR GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

21 June 62

Dear Mr. Green

The words underlined are AND I WILL NOW TELL IT YOU.⁹⁶ I then go on 'It is this:' and tell it. I can't tell it in fewer words than I used in the letter. The 'telling' goes on till the word 'misleading'. I don't understand your difficulty.*

My dear chap, I'm not at all afraid of your 'pestering' *me*. I'm afraid of your pestering *yourself*.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

* Is it merely my bad handwriting? If so, I don't blame you! I'm old and stiff and my hand now just *won't* shape the letters as I would like it to.

TO SHELDON VANAUKEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford

30 June 62

My dear Van Auken

It was nice to hear from you and nicer still to hear that there is some hope of seeing you again.

The splitting up of love into four species,⁹⁷ I agree, is a trifle excessive. I *did* admit that Affection mixes with all the other sorts, and they would not for any length of time be much fun without it.⁹⁸ And I think I shall have to admit that one aspect of Eros—the absorbed appreciative love—is found also in young friendship. (I did mention ‘hero-worship’ as a form of appreciative love, though).⁹⁹ ‘Charity’ is often used in spiritual writers to mean man’s love for God, and I agree that this is like Eros, or can be. The occasion you describe in your love for your wife can possibly be got in, in my classification, as moments in which Appreciation is predominant. But we murder to dissect.¹⁰⁰

I am now as convalescent as (apparently) I am ever likely to be. Loneliness increases as health returns. One must have the *capacity* for happiness in order to be fully aware of its absence. We must talk of 1000 things when you come.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO WALTER HOOPER (UNC):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
2/7/62

Dear Mr. Hooper

Certainly I shall be happy to see you when you visit England. But I feel very strongly that a man is ill advised to write a book on any living author.¹⁰¹ There is bound to be at least one person, and there are probably several, who inevitably know more about the subject than any ordinary research will discover. Far better write about the unanswering dead! Also, there is a book already—*C. S. Lewis: Apostle to the Skeptics* by the Rev Chad Walsh of Beloit.

If you won't be dissuaded from your project—which I deprecate solely on your account, for I don't want you to waste your time—you would be wise to get into touch with him,

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
3/7/62

Dear Mary Willis

Yes, we do seem to be having a certain amount of experience in common! Perhaps if we had done more voluntary fasting before God wd. not now have put us on these darn diets! Well, the theologians say that an imposed mortification can have all the merit of a voluntary one if it is taken in the right spirit.

We are also both ruled by cats. Joy's Siamese—my 'step-cat' as I call her—is the most terribly conversational animal I ever knew. She talks all the time and wants doors and windows to be opened for her 1000 times an hour.

Yes, and one gets bored with the medicines too—besides always wondering 'Did I remember to take them after breakfast?' and then wondering whether the risk of missing a dose or the risk of an over dose is the worst! All my sympathy. In haste.

Yours

Jack

TO MR BEIMER (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
9/7/62

Dear Mr. Beimer

Certainly it is at first sight far simpler to accept the universal Cause-and-Effect nexus (call it CE). But there is a snag. Leave out for the moment the question of our *acts*, and consider only our *thoughts*. In valid reasoning each step must be related to the previous one in the logical relation which is called Ground and Consequent (call it GC). But under universal CE the steps in our thinking are in the CE relation. But this applies just as much to the steps in a maniac's thought as to those in a scientist's, and lunatic thinking, examined by a good psychologist, will exhibit the CE connection as perfectly as any other series of events. It is not on that account of any value and the conclusion it reaches will be true, if at all, only by a lucky accident.

Therefore *either* there is no reason to suppose that human thinking is of any value at all and therefore no reason to believe in CE or in anything else: *or* the particular chains of events we call 'logical thinking' are sufficiently free from the CE nexus to be determined by the quite different GC nexus.

But, if so, it must equally be possible that the particular events we call moral choices can be sufficiently free from the CE nexus to be determined by some different kind of nexus—i.e. to be *self-determined*. Hence the absolutely universal conviction that we are free to choose need not be an illusion. And since it is implied in all our moral judgements (just as the exemption of our logical thinking from CE is implied in all our claims to know anything by means of thinking) it is reasonable to accept the universal conviction. (Rider. As logical thinking occupies a comparatively small part of our mental activity—we are more often just day-dreaming—so free action occupies a small part of our active life. Nine times out of ten we *do* behave in obedience to our conditioning, like animals).

Prayers invoking other people's behaviour do not necessarily imply that God will infringe other people's freedom. He can suggest or encourage action without compelling them. I myself have felt a curious nagging in my mind to go and see a particular person. I believe I *could* have resisted it, but I didn't. And when I arrived on his door-step his first words were 'Oh—I was praying you might come to-day.'

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO BETTY T. BALKE (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
20/7/62

Dear Mrs. Balke

Thank you for your most kind and encouraging letter. I have noticed that particular books turn up in people's lives when they are most needed: and [at] that privileged moment even a very inferior book may 'do the trick'!

You are obviously very happy and much to be congratulated at present. But don't count on its *lasting* like that. In the *Pilgrim's Progress* 'the plain called Ease' lasted for only a short bit of the journey. So when you get into rougher or duller country again, you mustn't think this proves that your conversion was all imagination With very good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *CHURCH TIMES*:¹⁰²

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

Sir,—

Twice lately in the *Church Times* I have seen protests of an inexplicable warmth against the practice of transliterating Greek words. This is said to be (a) useless to those who do not know Greek, and (b) irritating to those who do.

But: (a) When I meet a Hebrew word transliterated I can remember it and use it, just as I would remember and use an English word that was new to me: but my visual memory is not good enough to retain, for further recognition, the Hebrew characters. I presume that many Greekless readers have the same experience about Greek words.

(b) Why should it 'irritate' anyone? There is no sacrosanctity about the Greek types used in modern England. Those used in the seventeenth

century were very different. Plato could not have read either.

C. S. Lewis

TO WALTER VAN DER KAMP (W):[103](#)

The Kilns,

Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
28/7/62

Dear Mr. Van der Kamp

Thank you (and all of you) for your kind and cheering letter. I think Nock's article ignores one point.[104](#) The prophet, as he says, must not water down his message to suit those who are, in a spiritual sense, 'the masses': but in a civilisation like ours, where there are such different levels of culture, he must often *translate* it into terms which those who are *educationally* 'the masses' can understand. For if the trumpet gives an unintelligible call, who will put on his equipment?[105](#)

I sometimes think that all entrants for the preaching office shd. be faced with an exam. in which they are set a passage from some standard theological work and told to translate it into language that the People can understand. Or perhaps the office of the prophet and that of the translator belong to different men? If so, I am a translator.

I don't think I ever called anyone 'a stiff necked free-Kirker'.[106](#) The people with whom I find it hardest to be in charity—and who find it so hard to be in charity with me that they soon give up the attempt—are neither extreme Protestants nor R.C., nor even atheists, but those who are called 'liberal Christians'—all the Bultmann, Niebuhr, Norman Pittenger class.

Thank you for your prayers. Please continue them. I am bereaved, old, and ill. You too have taken a hard knock. God bless us both.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
30/7/62

Dear Starr

I am delighted to hear that there is a chance of seeing you and your wife next year.

I am likely to be more or less of an invalid for a long time, but I am very much better, and it doesn't hurt.

Leavis built a pillory for another man and then put himself in it.¹⁰⁷ Like you, I don't think much of Snow either as a novelist or a thinker. But Leavis silences all adverse criticism of him among decent people—just as Hitler silenced all criticism of Jews and the Boers now make one reluctant to breathe a word against any native African. One must always remember that Leavis has a very bad digestion!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ROSAMOND CRUIKSHANK (HAR):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
31/7/62

Dear Miss Cruikshank

I fancy you are a more widely read Arthurian than I. I don't know either Pyle¹⁰⁸ or Deeping.¹⁰⁹ The bit Jane reads at St Anne's is my own.¹¹⁰

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

P.S. I don't remember saying anything about 'speaking to their frame of reference.'

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
31/7/62

Dear Mary Willis

Yes, it *is* strange that anyone should dislike cats. But cats themselves are the worst offenders in this respect. They very seldom seem to like one another.

I have a notion that, apart from actual pain, men and women are quite diversely affected by illness. To a woman one of the great evils about it is that she can't do things. To a man (or anyway a man like me) the great consolation is the reflection 'Well, anyway, no one can now demand that I should *do* anything.' I have often had the fancy that one stage in Purgatory might be a great big kitchen in which things are always going wrong—milk boiling over, crockery getting smashed, toast burning, animals stealing. The women have to learn to sit still and mind their own business: the men have to learn to jump up and do something about it. When both sexes have mastered this exercise, they go on to the next.

In your present *ménage* you seem to be getting a foretaste of this! If I were you I wouldn't 'do all you can'. It probably only bothers the other lady and, as you say, makes you ill.

I think I continue to improve physically. As I get better I feel the loss of Joy more. I suppose the capacity for happiness must re-awake before one becomes fully aware of its absence.

Yes, one gets sick of pills. But thank God we don't live in the age of horrible medicines such as our grandparents had to swallow.

All blessings.

Yours

Jack

About this time Lewis completed The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature, which would be published by Cambridge University Press. According to his Preface, dated July 1962, 'This book is based on a course of lectures given more than once in Oxford'(p. ix). Known as his 'Prolegomena Lectures', these began with a series of lectures in 1931 on 'The Prolegomena to Medieval Poetry'. In 1939 he lectured on 'The Prolegomena to Renaissance Poetry', in 1944 on an 'Introduction to Renaissance Literature' and in 1954 the last lectures he gave at Oxford were a 'Prolegomena to Medieval Literature'. Many of these lectures were repeated in Cambridge during 1955–61, and he probably began writing The Discarded Image soon after delivering a series on medieval literature in the winter of 1961. Lewis corrected the proofs during April–May 1963 and the book was published on 7 May 1964.

TO DOM BEDE GRIFFITHS OSB (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

4 Aug 62

Dear Dom Bede

By being an invalid I meant that even if the operation comes off and delivers me from the catheter and the low protein diet, I shall have to be careful about my heart—no more bathing or real walks, and as few stairs as possible. A very mild fate: especially since nature seems to remove the desire for exercise when the power declines.

Syriac too? I envy you the wide linguistic conquests you have made, though I hardly share one of the purposes for which you use it. I cannot take an interest in liturgiology. I see very well that some ought to feel it. If religion includes cult and if cult requires order it is somebody's business to be concerned with it. But not, I feel, mine! Indeed, for the laity I sometimes wonder if an interest in liturgiology is not rather a snare. Some people talk as if it were itself the Christian faith.

I am deeply interested in what emerged from that Hindu—Christian debate, but not surprised. I always thought the real difference was the rival conceptions of God. A ticklish question. For I suppose we, by affirming three Persons, especially, say that God is not *a* Person. Wd. it be fair to say that He is revealed to us as *super*-personal, which is v. different from being *impersonal*?

I am delighted to hear that there is some chance of seeing you in England again.

Yours always
C. S. Lewis

TO MARGARET CLARK (P): [111](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

4 Aug 62

Dear Miss Clark

Sorry, but the answer's still No. When I look at it squarely I see there is nothing I want to say about G. McD. and haven't said elsewhere. If I tried to write that monograph, the creak of the pump-handle would be heard throughout.

With regret.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

Oxford 62963, The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
[Postmark: 8 August 1962]

Dear Ruth

This day week (Aug 15) wd. do me fine. I am ashamed not to be able to ask you to a meal, but our domestic arrangements hardly make that possible at present. What I shd. like, if it suits you, would be that you should come about 11 in the morning—I can manage elevenses—and leave in time to be home for your own lunch: I suppose about 12.45.

Your taxi-man must find Kiln Lane. Then, off Kiln Lane, Netherwoods Rd. Don't go up *it*. But immediately beside it—about 14 yards East of it—there's an entry under trees with no gate. That's mine Yours

Jack¹¹²

TO CHRISTOPHER DERRICK (WHL):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
10 Aug [1962]

Dear Derrick

Yes, I jolly well have read Gombrich¹¹³ and give him alpha with as much plusses as you please. The writers on art have hopelessly outstripped the writers on literature in our period. Seznec,¹¹⁴ Wind,¹¹⁵ and Gombrich are a very big three indeed. I am much better: still dieted and—well, plumbed, but otherwise almost normal.

C. S. Lewis

TO RUTH PITTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

20 Aug 62

Dear Ruth—

I enjoyed *We Cannot Take Less*—a gallant action

*To praise the thing whose praise it is
That all which can be praised is it*¹¹⁶

(Do you know Patmore? Within his own narrow field often a great poet).

The drug visions are a curious phenomenon. I can't say with you that *while they last* they aren't 'a patch on the natural kind'. To me, the difference is that they leave nothing behind: whereas the real ones, though equally transitory, 'are yet the future light' etc. Patmore again—

*A fiend, my Psyche, comes with barren bliss:
A God's embraces never are in vain.*¹¹⁷

We all have been enjoying the wine. It is, not better or worse, but v. different from George Sayer's. And why shd. we expect the elder-berries of Worcestershire and Oxon to be more alike than the vines of Burgundy and Bordeaux?

Remember me most kindly to Miss O'Hara. Your visit was a great pleasure.

Yours
Jack

TO BETTY PROVAN (BBC):[118](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

23 Aug 62

Dear Madam

I agree to the fee of 45 guineas for the talk on *Pilgrim's Progress*.[119](#)

Yours faithfully

C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN LAWLOR (P): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

31 Aug 62

I have been ill for a long time but am now v. much better, tho' still sternly dieted and cautioned about stairs. But quite well enough to read a book by you, even about P. Plowman.[120](#)

J.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

3 Sept 62

Dear Mary Willis

Our situations are curiously reversed: you live in fear that an operation may be necessary, and I in hope that one may become possible. (At least it ought to be *hope*, but sometimes the flesh is weak!). Nausea is horrible,

isn't it? Worse than all but really severe pains: at least it dominates the mind and the emotions more.

I am surprised that you shd. doubt your forgiveness for sins from which you have doubtless long since received absolution. Especially as what apparently troubles you is not malice but the unforeseen results (or things only possibly the result) of behaviour whose intention was innocent. No doubt, as I know only too well, the knowledge that one's acts have, contrary to one's intention, led to all sorts of dreadful consequences, is a heavy burden. But it is a burden of regret and humiliation, isn't it?, rather than of guilt. Perhaps we all dislike humiliation so much that we tend to disguise it from ourselves by treating blunders as sins?

Miss Price is an R.C. and struck me as an intelligent young woman. She is not the first co-religionist of yours in Washington whom I have asked to get into touch with [you], but she is the first who has done anything about it.

Of course you always have my prayers.

My idea of the Purgatorial kitchen didn't mean that anyone had lately been 'getting in my hair'. It is simply my lifelong experience—that men are more likely to hand over to others what they ought to do themselves, and women more likely to do themselves what others wish they would leave alone. Hence both sexes must be told 'Mind your own business,' but in two different senses!

Yours

Jack

P.S. There is no question at all of my going to America at present.

TO DENISE HOWES (W):[121](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

8 Sept 62

Dear Denise

I am delighted to hear that you liked the Narnian books, and it was nice of you to write and tell me. There *is* a map at the end of some of them in some editions.¹²² But why not do one yourself? And why not write stories yourself to fill up the gaps in Narnian history? I've left you plenty of hints—especially where Lucy and the Unicorn are talking in *The Last Battle*.¹²³ I feel I have done all I can!

All good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO J. B. PRIESTLEY (TEX):¹²⁴

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
12 Sept. 62

Dear Mr. Priestley

I've been slower than I should in acknowledging your extremely kind and unexpected present:¹²⁵ partly because I wanted to read it first—and you know better than I how carefully one does not so treat 90% of the presentation copies one gets!—and partly because I had to wait till I cd. get into Oxford and consult *Who's Who* for your address. Drat modern publishers for no longer printing their own addresses in each book.

I enjoyed *Margin Released*—there was just the right mixture of the same and the other in our experiences. Especially, there were the shared hatreds. I feel still just as you do about 'the Enemy'—all the brass-hats and the Base Wallahs. And I also did a little broadcasting in the Second War—those unfathomable cellars under B.B.C. House, and that subterranean canteen (which contributed something to Orwell's 1984) and the Home Guards with fixed bayonets at the studio door. It is dream-like now.

I too knew George Gordon.¹²⁶ A good conversationalist. Almost too good for my taste. I mean, he was a God-send if people were talking about something that didn't interest you: but if it was something you did care about, why, less so. The perfection of the technique rather killed the *matter*—like having one of your favourite old foods improved out of recognition by a great chef.

But one cd. go on forever, and you were long since sated (even I am) with fan-mail. Very many thanks and good wishes.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO KEITH MANSHIP (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

13 Sept 62

Dear Mr. Manship

You state the problem very clearly, and the fact that you can do so really shows that you are very much on the right road. Many don't even get so far.

The whole problem of our life was neatly expressed by John the Baptist when he said (John, chap 3, v. 30) 'He must increase, but I must decrease.' This you have realised. But you are expecting it to happen suddenly: and also expecting that you shd. be clearly aware when it does. But neither of these is usual. We are doing well enough if the slow process of being more in Christ and less in ourselves has made a decent beginning in a long life (it will be completed only in the next world). Nor can we *observe* it happening. All our reports on ourselves are unbelievable, even in worldly matters (no one really hears his own voice as others do, or sees his own face). Much more in spiritual matters. God sees us, and we don't see ourselves. And by trying too hard to do so, we only get the fidgets and become either too complacent or too much the other way.

Your question what to *do* is already answered. Go on (as you apparently are going on) doing all your duties. And, in all lawful ways, go on *enjoying* all that can be enjoyed—your friends, your music, your books. Remember we are told to 'rejoice'.¹²⁷ Sometimes when you are wondering what God wants *you* to do, He really wants to *give* you something.

As to your spiritual state, try my plan. I pray 'Lord, show me just so much (neither more nor less) about myself as I need for doing thy will *now*.'

Don't worry. All is going quite nicely.
Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

13 Sept 62

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

A letter from my brother must have been already in the post when you wrote and you probably have it by now. It will tell you all our news, of which, by God's mercy, there is little—you know the saying 'Happy are the people who have no history.'

You are always in my prayers. As regards this particular matter, I sympathise both with Van's dislike of noise and your dislike of moves. I suppose one thing we must do about these minor crises is to get them into perspective. At the moment when the nuisance of the move is worst, remember that (at that precise moment) people are dying in pain and others are at their bedside, and in China children starving and men in prison camps and some of them being tortured I was delighted to hear of your good time with Genia. There is solid good which ought to outweigh the upheaval!

The fact that you *consciously* mind the noise less might quite well mean that it is really doing you more harm. And you may *like* the new house!

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

William Gresham, Joy's former husband, was suffering from cancer, and on 13 September 1962 he checked into the Dixie Hotel, New York City. There he took an overdose of sleeping pills, and was found dead on 14 September. His wife informed Lewis, who then had to tell David and Douglas the sad news of their father.

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

15 Sept 62

My dear Roger

Mon 29 Oct it is and thrice welcome you will be. Meet in the B & B, as usual, I presume.

Thanks for the offprint wh. contains much useful information.¹²⁸ Onp. 100 l. 12 for ESTORT read ESTOIT? I don't think *fée* instead of *une fée* bears the weight you put on it.¹²⁹ Isn't it just ordinary French idiom? I mean, one says, *était soldat*, not *un veuf* or *un soldat*. I never realised the *Märchenland* f. was the enemy of the native variety, but you are obviously right.¹³⁰ The wings of the Milton angels (both kinds) come from the Bible and from Christian art, don't they?¹³¹

Love to June; I trust she and the Badgers are now smoking the peace-pipe over the deep grave of the hatchet!

Yours
Jack

TO J. B. PRIESTLEY (TEX):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

18 Sept 62

Dear Doctor Priestley

Yes. By the same post there was a letter from someone (also called Priestley) at Heinemann's. I don't doubt that you had nothing to do with it. You must have suffered more than I from this detestable practice by which,

once a man has a selling-name, he is never allowed to read a new book without being roped in as an unpaid blurb-writer.

I doubt if I am a Tory. I am much more nearly a political sceptic.

The actual history of Eng. Lit. as a 'Subject' has been a great disappointment to me. My hope was that it would be primarily a historical study that wd. lift people out of (so to speak) their chronological provincialism by plunging them into the thought and feeling of ages other than their own: for the arts are the best Time Machine we have.

But all that side of it has been destroyed at Cambridge and is now being destroyed at Oxford too. This is done by a compact, well-organised group of whom Leavis is the head. It now has a stranglehold on the schools as well as the universities (and the High Brow press). It is too open and avowed to be called a plot. It is much more like a political party—or the Inquisition.

Leavis himself is something (in the long run) more fatal than a villain. He is a perfectly sincere, disinterested, fearless, ruthless fanatic. I am sure he would, if necessary, die for his critical principles: I am afraid he might also kill for them. Ultimately, a pathological type—unhappy, intense, mirthless. Incapable of conversation: dead silence or prolonged, passionate, and often irrelevant, monologue are his only two lines. And while he is in fact the head of the most powerful literary Establishment we have ever had since Boileau,¹³² he maddeningly regards himself as a solitary martyr with his back to the wall.

The embarrassing thing is that he and I often do find ourselves together in a minority of two on the Board of the Faculty! But that is because we do share *one* conviction: i.e. that Meetings should be as few and short as possible.

If I am ever in Stratford, I shall take you at your kind word. But I am a semi-invalid now, and go about very little.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO KATHARINE FARRER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry

21 Sept 62

Dear K,

Fame indeed! I go to Cambridge on 8 Oct. and any day before then a ring-up to say you are visiting me that afternoon wd. be extremely welcome.

Do you, or Austin, or anyone know where the line *Nomina mille deum vatem defendite vestrum* comes from?¹³³

Yours
Jack

TO LAURENCE HARWOOD (BOD):¹³⁴

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
24 Sept. 62

Dear Lawrence

Very many thanks. As for myself, I am, in general, unbelievably better, but till that darned operation (for which they still give no date) comes off I live on a v. restricted diet and wear a catheter. This is not, as you wd. expect, painful when *in situ*, tho' when it is drawn out and replaced by a new one from time to time, it hurts a bit. The real trouble is that every tap they put on it sooner or later develops a leak, and anxiety about this becomes rather a large ingredient in one's daily consciousness and even in one's dreams!

You must come for dinner-and-bed next term sometime. It begins on 10 Oct. Wd. you care to suggest a date? *Not* a Sat. or *Sun*: and Mon. 29 Oct is engaged.

Yours
Jack

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W): TS

62/261

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,

Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
2nd October 1962.

Dear Mr Kilby,

Many thanks for so kindly sending me the copy of THE CRISIS IN PSYCHIATRY,¹³⁵ which I am looking forward to reading.

With all best wishes.

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis¹³⁶

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

2 Oct 62

Dear Mary Willis—

What a horrible treatment! One easily gets to dread the doctors more than the diseases. And I can sympathise with you about old Mrs. H. I saw a great deal of a woman like that at one time. *One* trouble about habitual liars is that, since you can't believe anything they say, you can't feel the slightest interest in it. One has to keep on saying 'But for the Grace of God, there go I.' Let us pray that we never become like that. I am v. glad V.P. has got in touch with you, both because it may be some solace to you and because it is a good sign in her. She is not the first co-religionist of yours in Washington whom I have asked to go and see you, but she is the first who has actually done it (Do people never read the terrible parable of the sheep and the goats?).¹³⁷

I am glad to hear you have rehabilitated a displaced cat. I can't understand the people who say cats are not affectionate. Our Siamese (my 'step-cat') is almost suffocatingly so. True, our ginger Tom (a great Don Juan and a mighty hunter before the Lord)¹³⁸ will take no notice of *me*, but he will of others. He thinks I'm not quite socially up to his standards, and makes this v. clear. No creature can give such a crushing 'snub' as a cat! He

sometimes looks at the dog—a big Boxer puppy, v. anxious to be friendly—in a way that makes it want to sink into the floor.

I never could find out what the VIIth Day Adventists believe, tho' I had a long talk with one the other day, a professor of electrical engineering from your country. I fear it is very mixed up with attempts to interpret the prophecies in the Book of Daniel—not, to my mind, a very profitable undertaking. But he was a grand young chap, sweet as a nut and absolutely sincere. No fool, either.

Prayers as usual!

Yours

Jack

TO GEORGE WATSON (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

9 Oct 62

Dear Watson

I must stay out of this, for I am not in favour of the change you want to encourage!¹³⁹ The Moralists Paper is about the only island left in our vast sea of 'criticism'—*deerant quoque litora ponto*.¹⁴⁰ To me, all criticism that is not based on reading authors as they wished to be read—e.g. reading Hooker & Mill for what they have to say—is chimerical. Those who are not interested in an author's matter can have nothing of value to say about his style or construction. Weapons can be judged only by soldiers.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene

18 Oct 62

Dear Jock

Thanks very much—the port needs ‘discussion’ in quite a different sense of that word!

Wd. 12 noon on Wed 31—talk first, lunch after—suit you? I shall assume it will unless I hear from you to the contrary.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

26 Oct 62

Dear Mary Willis

I do most thoroughly agree with your father’s principles about alms. It will not bother me in the hour of death to reflect that I have been ‘had for a sucker’ by any number of impostors: but it would be a torment to know that one had refused even *one* person in need. After all, the parable of the sheep & goats makes our duty perfectly plain, doesn’t it. Another thing that annoys me is when people say ‘Why did you give that man money? He’ll probably go and drink it.’ My reply is ‘But if I’d kept [it] I should probably have drunk it.’

The old negro sounds delightful. Is the Catholic University Encyclopedia the same as the ‘New Catholic Encyclopedia’ to which I was lately asked to contribute the article on Medieval Romance?¹⁴¹ (I didn’t: more work than I can manage now).

I am sorry to hear of the little dog’s death. The animal creation is a strange mystery. We can make some attempt to understand human suffering: but the sufferings of animals from the beginning of the world till now (inflicted not only by us but by one another)—what is one to think?¹⁴² And again, how strange that God brings us into such intimate relations with creatures of whose real purpose and destiny we remain forever ignorant. We know to some degree what angels and men are *for*. But what is a flea for, or

a wild dog? What you say about the VII Day Adventists interests me extremely. If they have so much charity there must be something very right about them.

I had a letter from Miss Price. Strange, isn't it, that such a pretty and interesting woman shd. have remained single so long. I wonder what the *fiancé* is like.

And what is a 'wall can opener'? It suggests either opening a tin by means of a wall or opening a wall by means of a tin, and both soundv. strange operations.

Well, now to the other letters. Always, prayers.

Yours

Jack

TO W. L. STAFFORD (P):[143](#)

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
28 Oct. 62

Dear Mr. Stafford

I still disagree. Socrates did not claim to be Zeus, nor the Buddha to be Bramah, nor Mohammed to be Allah. That sort of claim occurs only in Our Lord and in admitted quacks or lunatics.[144](#) I agree that we don't 'demand crystal perfection in other men', nor do we find it. But if there is *one* Man in whom we *do* find it, and if that one Man also claims to be more than man, what then?

I can throw no light on the experiences of matadors! And Zen is, so far, utterly opaque to me.

I got 'anfractuosity' from Dr. Johnson.[145](#)

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN LAWLOR (P):[146](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

7 Nov 62

Dear John

I am touched by your suggestion. If I've done my arithmetic right, 1966 will be the year of my retirement. Of course I'd enjoy so great an honour, but the really important question is whether there are a sufficient number of people who want to write something and wd. find such a *Festschrift* a good vent for it. If it is that way round, if the occasion acts as midwife rather than as father to the essays, a F. may be a useful book. But if it's t'other way, if people have to find a subject *because* they are asked to contribute to the F., then it leads scholars to waste their time. You see? So I can only leave the matter entirely to you. A dinner wd. be better for the others, but not for me who am allowed to eat almost nothing. I suppose the head of F. R. Leavis in a charger wd. be rather too costly?

Whatever comes of it I shall always value myself the more because you had the idea. I hear praise of your P.P. book.¹⁴⁷

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

8 Nov 62

Dear Mary Willis

Yes, I can well understand how you long for 'a place of your own'. I nominally have one and am nominally master of the house, but things seldom go as I would have chosen. The truth is that the only alternatives are either solitude (with all its miseries and dangers, both moral and physical) or else all the rubs and frustrations of a joint life. The second, even at its worst seems to me far the better.

I hope one is rewarded for all the stunning replies one thinks of and does not utter! But alas, even when we don't say them, more than we suspect comes out in our look, our manner, and our voice. An elaborately patient silence can be very provoking! We are *all* fallen creatures and *all* v.

hard to live with. It is not only Episcopalians who behave as if they had never read St James.

I do hope the operation will turn out to be unnecessary.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
11 Nov. 62

Dear Mary Willis

Sorry. I've never heard of the book you mention.

Yours

Jack

TO MURIEL BRADBROOK (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
12 Nov. 62

Dear Muriel

Could you come and dine with me here on Wed. 28th? Old clothes: 7.30 for 7.45. The only other guests will be the Bennetts. Do.

Yours

Jack

TO MURIEL BRADBROOK (W): PC

Coll. Magd.
Fri. [16 November 1962]

I have a cold fit of fear that I may have given you the wrong date. I *meant* Wed. 28 Nov. If I also *said* Wed 28 Nov, then all is well, and don't bother to reply.

C.S.L.

TO MARY MARGARET WARD (W):

As from Magdalene College,

Cambridge
19 Nov. 62

Dear Mrs. Ward

I will certainly pray for Mr. Dudson. The book trade, including that in second-hand books, is, I think, rather bigger here than in U.S.A., and I believe your best chance of getting some MacDonald is to write to an English bookseller and ask both what is still in print and what can be got second hand. Try Blackwell's, Broad St, Oxford, and Rogers, Booksellers, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

Good hunting!

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

19 Nov 62

My dear Arthur

I am v. sorry to hear you are ill. Especially the heart trouble. I know now what it's like—gasping like a new-caught fish which no one has the kindness to knock on the head.

I wonder does this put the boots on a scheme which was just beginning to form in my mind—that of coming over next summer, if I'm spared, bringing Douglas with me (I can't carry my own bag & there are almost no porters now) and you and I and he spending 10 days or so in a hotel somewhere? You wouldn't find him a nuisance; he'd be out all day once we'd settled in. Any chance? Of course you and I wd. take it v. slow. At need, we cd. even hire someone to drive us to the place.

The talk on Bunyan was a tape-recording—I was actually booming away in my arm chair here!¹⁴⁸

I'm back at Cambridge now but home every week end, and very much better. But still catheterised and still on a low protein diet. There is no

question of being really cured without the operation; about which they are persistently vague. Blessings.

Yours
Jack

TO J. R. R. TOLKIEN (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

20 Nov 62

Dear Tollers

What a nice letter. I also like beer less than I did, tho' I have retained the taste for General Talk. But I shan't be at the Festschrift dinner.¹⁴⁹ I wear a catheter, live on a low protein diet, and go early to bed. I am, if not a lean, at least a slippered, pantaloon.¹⁵⁰ All the best.

Yours
Jack

TO CLYDE S. KILBY (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

20 Nov 62

Dear Mr. Kilby

I never accepted Anthroposophy at all.¹⁵¹ And the Fox¹⁵² expresses *neither* Anthroposophy *nor* my views, but Stoicism. But I hope your decision about the thesis will not depend on this information from me. It wd. hardly be fair to go behind the written work of the candidate and the subject since one can't do this with candidates who write about the dead! Oh Lord, what hay their ghosts could make of all our critical theories!

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
21 Nov. 62

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Thank you for your letter and the enclosures. The article on the Narnian stories was not only (of course) pleasing to me personally but was, I think, a really good bit of workmanship. A great many professional critics splash about in a larger number of words and get in less.

There is a mysterious sentence in your letter, but you intended it to be mysterious. So I will make—can make—no comment unless you shd. at any future date wish to say more.

I think I share, to excess, your feeling about a move. By nature I demand from the arrangements of this world just that permanence which God has expressly refused to give them. It is not merely the nuisance and expense of any big change in one's way of life that I dread. It is also the psychological uprooting and the feeling—to me, as to you, intensely unwelcome—of having ended a chapter. One more portion of oneself slipping away into the past! I would like everything to be immemorial—to have the same old horizons, the same garden, the same smells and sounds, always there, changeless. The old wine is to me always better. That is, I desire the 'abiding city'¹⁵³ where I well know it is not and ought not to be found. I suppose all these changes shd. prepare us for the far greater change which has drawn nearer even since I began this letter. We must 'sit light' not only to life itself but to all its phases. The useless word is 'Encore!'

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
26 Nov. 62

Dear Mary Willis

My stuff about animals came long ago in *The Problem of Pain*. I ventured the supposal—it cd. be nothing more—that as we are raised *in* Christ, so at least some animals are raised *in* us.¹⁵⁴ Who knows, indeed, but that a great deal even of the inanimate creation is raised *in* the redeemed souls who have, during this life, taken its beauty into themselves? That may be the way in which the ‘new heaven and the new earth’¹⁵⁵ are formed. Of course we can only guess and wonder.

But these particular guesses arise in me, I trust, from taking seriously the resurrection of the body: a doctrine which now-a-days is v. soft pedalled by nearly all the faithful—to our great impoverishment. Not that you and I have now much reason to rejoice in having bodies! Like old automobiles, aren’t they? where all sorts of apparently different things keep going wrong, but what they add up to is the plain fact that the machine is wearing out. Well, it was not meant to last forever. Still, I have a kindly feeling for the old rattle-trap. Through it God showed me that whole side of His beauty wh. is embodied in colour, sound, smell and size. No doubt it has often led me astray: but not half so often, I suspect, as my soul has led *it* astray. For the spiritual evils wh. we share with the devils (pride, spite) are far worse than what we share with the beasts: and sensuality really arises more from the imagination than from the appetites: which, if left merely to their own animal strength, and not elaborated by our imagination, would be fairly easily managed. But this is turning into a sermon!

Yours
Jack

TO ERICH HELLER (W):¹⁵⁶

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
27 Nov. 62

Dear Professor Heller

Please allow a total stranger to offer you his thanks and congratulations for *The Disinherited Mind*.¹⁵⁷ In many regards I am quite unqualified to judge it, but I recognised at once, and increasingly so as I went on that here, at last, was a book dealing with the real and the important. How rare that is in the welter of amateur psychology, amateur sociology, and expert perversity, which is now called ‘criticism’! By perversity I mean chiefly all

the ‘ambiguities’—the discovery of the mare’s nest by following the trail of the red herring.

What interested me most of all were your *obiter dicta* on (I suppose we must call it) epistemology: your definition of ‘common sense’ on p. 16,¹⁵⁸ or the reference to man’s ‘decision to have different experiences’¹⁵⁹—and other passages on pp. 19, 145, 235–7. This has helped me a great deal, for in recent years I have become increasingly aware how far changes in man’s model of the universe respond, not (as we were taught) to the invasion of new phenomena but to a subjective demand for a new model. Not, to be sure, that evidence (in a sense *true* evidence) for the new model is not produced. But nature speaks chiefly in answer to our questions: and here, as in the law courts, the pattern suggested by the witness’s answers is largely pre-determined by the shape of the examination.

How obvious, yet how badly needed, is your reminder on p. 133 that one can’t use thoughts without thinking them!

The comparison of Kafka’s *Castle* to a fairy-tale (p. 177) is laughable enough.¹⁶⁰ But is it ‘perverse’? Is it not rather a startling *naïveté* revealing a neglected (tho’ in that context irrelevant) truth? This truth is that the mythopoeic, tho’ it can be the vehicle for the most diverse and opposite contents, is nevertheless a *genre* in its own right which manifestly is, regardless of content, strongly attractive to some minds and equally repellent to others. This comes out clearly when you hear people, not writing criticism, but (far more important) talking about books casually, and off their guard. Your criticaster has met the mythopoeic, outside Kafka, chiefly in *märchen* and responds to *its* common flavour in both. Naturally this can lead him to nothing of value about Kafka as such, Kafka in his *Kafkeitas*. But childish rather than perverse, I submit.

On p. 15 *sir b* needs correcting.

But I begin to ramble. Indeed, I have written too soon, for I am still thoroughly excited by your book, which I shall soon read again.

My colleague Dick Ladbrough, who knew you here, asks me to send his greetings. I need not add that, if you ever revisit England, it would be a vivid pleasure for me to meet you.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO KATHY KRISTY (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
30 Nov. 62

Dear Reader

Thanks for your very kind letter and greetings. I was 64 yesterday. I am so glad you like my books.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO FR GEORGE A. RESTREPO SJ (BOD):[161](#)

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

1 Dec 62

Dear Father Restrepo

Thanks for your most kind letter and for your prayers. My wife was an American and I had hoped to visit the States with her. But now she is dead and, since then, I have had a long illness myself which has left me more or less a permanent invalid: so it is unlikely I shall undertake any more travels before the Great Journey!

Yes, God has been v. good to me and allowed my work to reach more people than I would have dared to hope. But I always remember that He can preach thro' *any* instrument—Balaam's ass* is the example I keep in mind.[162](#)

Utique oremus pro invicem.[163](#)

You beat me in Plautus.[164](#) I can't scan those ghastly iambs.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

* Can't you get it canonised?

TO ARNOLD V. MILLER (P):[165](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
8 Dec. 62

Dear Mr. Miller

I have a fear you may be right, and that perhaps I have seen Hegel too much through the spectacles of English Hegelians like Bradley and Bosanquet.[166](#) I realise of course that Hegel himself would claim to be the Christian philosopher *par excellence*:[167](#) but I supposed that his extreme immanentism vitiated the claim. We mustn't embark on a controversy—for when did any two people agree on what Hegel really adds up to? But I will certainly say no more about him unless I have time to reconsider the whole question. (Probably I am unduly informed by my detestation of his views about the State and about the *Antigone*.) Thanks for writing.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD A. ALLEN (W):

The Kilns

10 Dec 62

Dear Allen

Thanks for your letter and card. I couldn't agree with you more about the whole commercial racket of 'Xmas', wh. has almost snowed under our Christian feast of the Nativity. Perhaps it 'helps trade'. But I can't think that the waste of material, time, & skill in producing annually millions of articles suitable for 'gifts' (because no sane person ever bought such stuff for his own use!) is not v. good long-term economics. The complaint is older than I thought. I discovered only the other day that Christmas presents had begun in the time of St. Augustine, and he called them 'diabolical' because they originated not in Christmas but in the Pagan Saturnalia. *Diabolical* is a bit strong: perhaps 'a darn nuisance' wd. be more accurate.[168](#) I was delighted with your saying that Orientals are 'just like us

but have been that way longer'. I feel that's true. Yet I wonder why longer? Certainly not in the sense that they have existed longer. We have as many generations of ancestors as they, I presume. The particular trait wh. you mention is, anyway, world-wide: it was a favourite proverb of my father's that 'people never forgive kindness'.

Congratulations on the 'teeth' patent. And blessings, with warm greetings-to-all.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELburnE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
10 Dec. 62

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for your letter and the amusing enclosure. What *is* a Magna Charta badge?—quite a 'new one on me'.¹⁶⁹ About ancient lineage (I haven't any myself), my feeling is that all such things can legitimately be enjoyed provided one takes them lightly enough. Like tinsel crowns worn for private theatricals! And the prig who considers himself *above* enjoying his tinsel crown is perhaps as far astray as the paranoiac who mistakes it for gold. This goes for things like beauty, talent, fame, etc. as well as for blood (Of course a great deal of so-called 'democratic' feeling against the claims of blood is really based on a desire to make the claims of money all important: and of all claims to distinction money is, I suppose, the basest).

There is much that is cheering, along with much that isn't, in your letter. One must get over any false shame about accepting necessary help. One never *has* been 'independent'. Always, in some mode or other, one has lived on others, economically, intellectually, spiritually. Who, after all, is *less* independent than someone with 'a private income'—every penny of which has been earned by the skill and labour of others? Poverty merely *reveals* the helpless dependence which has all the time been our real condition. We are members of one another whether we choose to recognise the fact or not.

I get on fairly well. My chief trouble is a difficulty in sleeping at night and keeping awake by day. Perhaps I am turning into a nocturnal animal.

Bat? Wolf? Owl? Let's hope it will be owl, the bird of wisdom (and I always *was* attracted by mice!) Yours
Jack

TO ALASTAIR FOWLER (BERG):

The Kilns
H' Quarry.

11 Dec 62

Dear Alastair

Thanks v. much for the book, but if we're both alive next Christmas don't do so no more! I have a non-aggression pact about Christmas Boxes with all my real friends. Leave that to relations! St Augustine, by the way, said that Christmas presents were 'diabolical'!

Can we resume our Thursdays? I hope so. Ring me up on this point.

Yours
Jack

TO VERA GEBBERT (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford. 14th December 1962.

My dear Mrs Gebbert,

The chief trouble about Christmas is that there are so many letters you *must* write that it is hard to find time for those you *want* to write; for I'm afraid that in consequence this will not reach you by 25th of the month. So I will insure against that by saying that we both hope that you have had a happy Christmas and are about to have a happy New Year. (And now, dash it, I see I've worn out my typewriting ribbon and will have to start afresh). There, I hope you notice the improvement.

We often wonder how it feels for you people to be back home after taking a course of Europeanization; do you ever regret England and France? Probably not, for they are both uncomfortable countries to the average

American—tho' I've met a few who have no intention of ever returning to America if they can by any means avoid it. But I don't think you would be enjoying things here and now; wet snow, east winds, smoking chimneys etc.

What a storm in a teacup this Dean Acheson business has been, has'nt it? I've seen nothing of this 'universal indignation' the papers talk about, for after all we are a very different island to what we were fifty years ago.¹⁷⁰ Not our fault I admit, but why go on pretending that we are still on top of the world when it is obvious that we are a second-class power? We *were* on top from 1713 to 1914, and that is an innings which ought to satisfy any power.

C.S.L. keeps wonderfully well, and we both regret that you should have been over here when he was so very poorly. As you know I was very anxious indeed about him, and his recovery has been an immense relief to me. He kept his full autumn term at Cambridge without any difficulty, and indeed I think the intellectual companionship actually did him good.

We've been having a bit of comic relief over here in the political world. There is a bye-election for Parliament going on at Rotherham, a Yorkshire town, and some smart Alec in the army, and not liking it, discovered that you are entitled to a discharge if you are a parliamentary candidate. Everyone in all three services with a chip on his shoulder caught on to this, and now the electors of Rotherham have their choice of 185 candidates—or had last week, for the infuriated Town Clerk has announced that in future the number will no longer be announced daily, but weekly. The joke is that only an Act of Parliament can end this farce, and that cannot be passed until well on into 1963—by which time doubtless many other seats will be vacant.¹⁷¹

What a relief it was when the Cuba business went off the boil; for a day or two it looked to us over here—and I expect to you too—as if World War III might start at any moment.¹⁷²

With all love and greetings to you all from us both, yours ever,

Warren Lewis and C.S.L. his mark X

TO WALTER HOOPER (UNC):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

15 Dec. 62

Dear Mr. Hooper

The bibliography arrived yesterday. It must represent an immense amount of work. You are now a very much better C.S.L. scholar than I am! Your list contains a good many things I had wholly forgotten.

On p. 5. a question-mark has dropped out of the titles *Is English doomed?*¹⁷³ and *Is Theism important?*¹⁷⁴

On p. 8 for *Spartan* read *Spartam*¹⁷⁵

On p. 7. *Abecedarium P.* shd be 'in collaboration with A. O. Barfield'.¹⁷⁶

Addendum. An essay called 'The Anthropological Approach' in *English & Medieval Studies presented to J. R. R. Tolkien*, ed. N. Davis & C. L. Wrenn. Allen & Unwin 1962

There will also soon appear a volume of Oxford essays on Malory in wh. I'll have an essay called 'The English Prose *Morte*'. Unfortunately I don't yet know what the exact title of the volume is to be¹⁷⁷

I expect to be at this address nearly the whole of June and shall be happy to see you. I'll look at the chapters if you wish but will make no comment except about sheer matters of fact. Otherwise it wd. be too like collaborating on a book on oneself!

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
18 Dec. 62

My dear Arthur

I am very glad to hear you have a housekeeper again; may she be a success!

I shouldn't like the Ship Inn at all, and except for one night (if that happened to be necessary) it wd. be a bad place for Douglas.¹⁷⁸ If we can get no further I'd like one of the little places up the Antrim coast.

All blessings.

Yours

Jack

David Gresham had settled down at the North West London Talmudical College, but Douglas was unhappy at Magdalen College School. He wrote in his autobiography:

It became evident to Jack and Warnie that Magdalen was of absolutely no use to me, nor I to Magdalen. Jack decided to send me once again to a crammer, this time for the General Certificate of Education exams. It was my intention to go on to an agricultural college, and five ordinary-level G.C.E passes were required as part of the entry qualifications.¹⁷⁹

Lewis found a place for Douglas at a private school, Applegarth, in Godalming, Surrey, but the school could not take him until about April 1963. Lewis turned to his godson, Laurence Harwood, for help.

TO LAURENCE HARWOOD (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

19 Dec 62

My dear Lawrence

Toujours Douglas! It is quite possible that there may be a hiatus of a term before the grinder¹⁸⁰ we have in view can take him, and anything wd. be better than another term at Magdalen. He himself has suggested a term of practical work on a farm.

I wonder could you, thro' your contacts, find him such a place? (He was born 1945—good health—lazy only about book-work, otherwise v. serviceable). If there were any choice, the lonelier the place—the further from cinemas, pubs etc—the better. Not that he (in any sinister sense) 'drinks': but he is desperately social and time-wasting!

Your father reports that you describe me as talking 'about brass trays'. This is a fragment of my own conversation which I seem to have missed!

Yours
Jack

TO FRANCIS WARNER (P): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
23 Dec 62

Unto us a child (and a thesis)* are born!¹⁸¹ Hurrah! Warmest congratulations. And thanks for a copy—in anticipation (it is not yet arrived).¹⁸²

Do come and see me next term. I am much better. I never was in any pain—one of those kind illnesses which merely produces extreme lassitude. One was reduced to the not wholly unpleasant twilight life of a lotus-eater. I hope your wife and the *bambina* (if it does change in the feminine?) are both doing well.

C.S.L.

* Sorry. It *has* arrived and is the poem not the thesis. I'm in a storm of Christmas mail at present.

TO J. R. R. TOLKIEN (P): PC

The Kilns, H. Quarry,
Oxford.
24 Dec 62

Thanks for your most kind letter. I know one can at best only wound, not kill, the dragon. All my philosophy of history hangs upon a sentence of your own 'Deeds were done which were not *wholly* in vain.'¹⁸³

Is it still possible amid this ghastly racket of 'Xmas' to exchange greetings for the Feast of the Nativity? If so, mine, very warm, to both of you. (St Augustine says that Christmas presents are *diabolical!*) Jack

TO PAULINE BAYNES (BOD): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford.
27th December 1962.

Dear Mrs Gasch,¹⁸⁴

How very kind of you to remember me: and may I say that I appreciate your enduring White Witch even more than the transitory joys of the Turkish Delight.

With hopes that you will survive this seasonable weather, and all best wishes for 1963,

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

P.S. Congratulations on the *Bombadil* pictures!¹⁸⁵

TO COLIN ECCLESHARE (CAM):¹⁸⁶ TS

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

28 December 1962

**AN INTRODUCTION TO MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE
LITERATURE**

Dear Mr Eccleshare,

The catch about this book, between ourselves, is that people are likely to regard it as following (for the Middle Ages) the path blazed for the Elizabethans in his *Elizabethan World Picture*.¹⁸⁷ The real relation is almost the reverse. The lectures (*Prolegomena to Medieval Poetry*) on which this is based were what started M.W.T. up, and he asked my advice about a similar introduction for his Elizabethans. If he were alive he would be the first to say this for us—he was no poacher. But it would leave a bad taste if we now put the facts as bluntly as I've put them to you. Perhaps you could say that my book and *World Picture* were *both* the progeny of discussion between him and me, away back in the '20s?

The book hopes to have a triple appeal. The chapters on ‘Selected Materials’ may contain some things worth the attention of scholars. The main body of the book is more for students. But, thirdly, the general reader may perhaps find my treatment is of larger interest, for I am concerned with this old ‘image’ of the universe not merely as a curio, nor even merely as ‘notes’ to the literature, but also for its emotional and aesthetic impact. This leads me in the end to reflections on the character of *all* cosmic images, including our own, which I believe people ought to consider.

Can you make a blurb out of all this?

I shall be giving copies to Magdalen and Magdalene College Libraries and about half a dozen friends. I can’t at the moment think of anyone in America you should send to except Rosamund Tuve,¹⁸⁸ Douglas Bush¹⁸⁹ and Professor Heller.¹⁹⁰ I suppose it would be polite to send copies to Universities which have given me Hon. Doctorates: St Andrews,¹⁹¹ Laval (Quebec),¹⁹² Manchester¹⁹³ and Dijon.¹⁹⁴

I have no list of translations, but I think they are all of my non-scholarly work. Curtis Brown and the Clarendon Press might be able to tell you more.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
29th December 1962.

Dear Joan,

Time? Wait till you reach my age and you will find that time does’nt go ‘fast’ but at space speed! I see from my index that we have been corresponding since 1954 however, which is quite a respectable time, is’nt it? Attached to your card is a photo of yourself in those days, and no doubt you look very different now. You have one consolation which I have not; for you, from now onwards and for many years, times will get better and better.

How exciting to be both an opera singer and a cellist. And what a gift it will be for your Press Agent—‘It is not commonly known that Miss Joan

Lancaster, the world-famous opera singer, could have been a brilliant success in quite another section of the entertainment world...'

I shudder at the subjects you have to take in High School, and some of them I could not even begin to attempt—Algebra and Calculus for example. I don't know anything about the University of Toronto, but have heard that it is good; I should however have thought you could have found what you wanted nearer home.

Every place seems to have had a severe cold wave this winter. I saw in the paper yesterday that there is skiing in Barcelona and snow on the peach blossom in Sicily. Looks as if one would have to go down to the latitude of Brazil or thereabouts to get warm. All the same, I'm astonished at conditions in Florida, where I thought it was always mild. Here we are having our hardest winter for fourteen years, and it is doing my old bones a bit of no good.

With all hopes for your success, and best wishes for 1963,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis¹⁹⁵

1963

TO THE EDITOR OF *ENCOUNTER*:¹

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

I have been reading John Wain's *Sprightly Running*,² and find there a good many references to myself. Many of them are extremely kind, and all are inoffensive: but there is one passage which I must contradict on merely factual grounds. Whether the matter it deals with is at all worth recording, is doubtful: but if it is to be recorded, let us get it right.

On page 183 Mr. Wain is talking about a very informal club that used to meet in my rooms,³ and says he was 'surprised by the alliances it was capable of forming.' He thinks Dorothy Sayers was an ally 'because she was a Christian and liked Dante' Roger L. Green, 'because he was an authority on fairy-tales' and Roy Campbell, 'because he was a Roman Catholic' and 'anti-socialist.'⁴

The truth is:

1. Dorothy Sayers, so far as I know, was not even acquainted with any of us except Charles Williams and me. We two had got to know her at different times and in different ways. In my case, the initiative came from her. She was the first person of importance who ever wrote me a fan-letter. I liked her, originally, because she liked me; later, for the extraordinary zest and edge of her conversation—as I like a high wind. She was a friend, not an ally. Needless to say, she never met our own club, and probably never knew of its existence.

2. Mr. Green was never more than a casual acquaintance to any one of us except me. In the friendship between him and me, he took the initiative. It was at first a wholly bookish friendship; and to the present day, religion has seldom been mentioned between us, and politics never. He was, and is, a friend, not an ally. We meet solely because we like one another.

3. I loathed and loath Roy Campbell's particular blend of Catholicism and Fascism, and told him so. I got to know him before I knew who he was. He was for some weeks a mysterious stranger in a pub whose skyscraping

and hair-raising stories made me feel as if I had blundered into a picaresque novel. My appreciation of a human flavour quite new to my social palate had nothing to do with approval or agreement or even belief. Mr. Wain might as well think that Alcinous and his court were inspired by diplomatic considerations when they listened with delight to the amazing yarn that Odysseus spun them.⁵ And when at last the stranger let out that his name was Campbell, and I (at a long shot) said ‘Not Roy Campbell?’ I thought it right, before taking his hand, to ask whether he knew that hand had already lampooned him in print.⁶ He said he did. There is here no question of alliance. Nor did he ever become a friend in any deep sense: not as Mr. Green, or Mr. Wain himself, are my friends. Campbell was more like a tumble in the ring.

The whole picture of myself as one forming a cabinet, or cell, or coven, is erroneous. Mr. Wain has mistaken purely personal relationships for alliances. He was surprised that these friends were ‘so different from one another.’⁷ But were they more different from one another than he is from all of them? Aren’t we always surprised at our friends’ other friendships? As at all his tastes? One may even discover (not without horror) that one’s friend prefers bottled beer to beer or processed cheese to cheese. We have to face it.⁸

C. S. Lewis

TO MRS LEON EMMERT (W):⁹

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

2 Jan 63

Dear Mrs. Emmert

Thank you for your kind and most interesting letter. Yes—how one’s view of one’s parents begins to change when one has discovered the beam in one’s own eye!¹⁰ I have had that experience too. And when one has grasped the right view of marriage, how all the current gabble about ‘sexual morality’ is reduced!—as if it did not consist almost entirely in applying to

sexual behaviour the same principles of good faith and unselfishness which have to be applied to all behaviour.

A good many of my books might not interest you. Write for the list* to J. Gibb, 52 Doughty St., London W.C. 1. MacDonald is nearly all out of print.

You are all facing a terrible situation out there; may God support and protect you.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

* But note which ones are already included in *Mere Christianity* or you might buy the same book twice!

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

2 Jan 63

Dear Mary Willis

I was glad to get your favourable account of Casey. The age and behaviour sound right. Doesn't Shakespeare say 'Let still the woman take an elder than herself'?¹¹ In Jane Austen the usual marriage seems to be between a man of 27 and a girl of 19 or 20. (What a huge population of widows there must have been!) As for looks—do most women value *beauty* in a man at all? My experience is that they rather distrust & dislike it.

We are having something more like an American winter than we've had for nearly a century, and as we are not prepared for it (v. little central heating, no snow-ploughs, etc) it hits us v. hard. There will be real famine conditions in a week or so if a thaw doesn't come. This, with the ghastly drudgery of Christmas mails—they get heavier every year—has left us in a v. chastened and un-festive frame of mind! Let's hope 63 will be a better year for us all!

Yours
Jack

TO LAURENCE HARWOOD (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

4 January 63

Dear Lawrence

What a pest I am! *Ces pères de famille sont capables de tout.*¹² There now does seem a chance—tho' drat it, not a certainty—that the grinder we have in view will be able to take Douglas in the second week of this month (it depends on the grinder's last G.C.E.¹³ results which are not in till then). When I wrote to you I was trying to insure against a whole wasted term. Which, you see, *may* still be necessary, and which, anyway, will not amount to the 4 months you specify. So there seems after all nothing you can do just at the moment. I may have to pester you again some time. His preference is for dairy farming and *my* preference is for him to live *en famille*.

Are you enjoying 1963 so far? We are not!

A thousand thanks, and apologies.

Yours
Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns

8 Jan 63

Dear Mary Willis

I don't mind betting that the things which 'had to be done' in your room didn't really *have* to be done at all. Very few things really do. After one bad

night with my heart—not so bad as yours, for it was only suffocation, not pain—my doctor strictly rationed me on stairs, and I have obeyed him. Of course it is hideously *inconvenient*: but that can be put up with and must. What worse than inconvenience wd. have resulted if you had left those ‘things’ undone? Do take more care of yourself and less of ‘things’!

Still snow-bound.

Yours

Jack

TO GEORGE SAYER (W): PC

The Kilns

9 Jan 63

Achtung! On Sat leave your car in the road & walk (or wade) up the drive. It took 40 minutes to dig a car out of that drive the other day

Jack

TO DONOVAN AYLARD (W): TS 74/63

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

11th January 1963.

Dear Mr. Aylard,

Many thanks for your card which only reached me this morning. My stock of cards is long since exhausted, so I send you this line of good wishes as a substitute.

A happy 1963 to you.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO REV. R. D. BOWDEN (W): TS

78/63

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

12th January 1963.

Dear Mr. Bowden,

Many thanks for your most kind and stimulating letter. Need I say that I am pleased that you yourself should have liked the books, and proud that they should have given pleasure—through your instrumentality—to a wider circle. Letters such as yours are very gratifying.

With all best wishes for 1963,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO T. S. GREGORY (BBC):[14](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

17 Jan 63

Dear Mr. Gregory

I am afraid I am not well enough to undertake a talk at present. With thanks and regrets.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MERRILL ROGERS (P):[15](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
20 Jan. 63

Dear Mr (?) Rogers

I am not a good enough Grailologist (to coin a dreadful word) for your purpose, for though I am very interested in the Arthurian romances as extant works of art, I have never been much concerned with what we may call the ‘pre-history’ of their various ingredients. I am therefore unable to tell you whether you have been anticipated in the Hermetic and alchemical hypothesis to which Jung has led you. If not—and someone like Loomis will be able to tell you—I think your theory is well worth putting forward. But I

wd. advise you not, at first anyway, to advance on too wide a front. By linking your theory up with the Graves-Podro axis¹⁶ you raise v. much larger issues. These will produce support and opposition on irrelevant grounds and your original point will be obscured.

Speculations about the Grail have a strange way of causing people who have found *something* to claim that they have found *everything*! Take warning by Lady Flavia Anderson whose *The Ancient Secret* begins by being a theory of the Grail and ends by finding pretty nearly a key to the whole universe in a cave in Somersetshire.¹⁷

Good hunting! You will have great fun.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford
21/1/63

Dear Mac,

Thanks for enclosure and kind words. There *are* no literary essays straining at the leash just now. All good wishes for the new year—a pretty bloody one so far!

Yours

Clive

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD): PC

The Kilns
24/1/63

I've been flu' bound and snow bound, but hope to reach Cambridge next Monday. Are you going to have one of our (now happily, usual) journeys, dinners & nights this term? And have you a date in mind? Love to all Jack

TO JAMES MORE (P):¹⁸ TS

141/63

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

24th January 1963.

Dear James,

Many thanks for your letter. I'm so glad to hear that you like the Narnian books, and it was very good of you to take the trouble to write to tell me that you did.

No, I'm afraid there will be no more stories of Narnia. If you want any more you will have to try your hand at writing one yourself!

With all best wishes to you and your brother,
yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis¹⁹

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns
26/1/63

Dear Mary Willis

That wedding party wd. have half killed me! And I am afraid it was very bad for you. I too am having bad nights. I find the best sedative if one is wakeful in the middle of the night is—simply FOOD. Have a few biscuits on the table by your bed.

I'd a queer night a week ago. Something (not dangerous but a little painful) went wrong at about 1.30 a.m. and needed the surgeon so rang up for ambulance.²⁰ But as our drive is impassable to wheeled traffic with the snow drifts I had to go out & wait for said ambulance in the road: from about 2 to 2.20. Nice to *look* at: full moon on snow. But I thought my ears wd. have dropped off with the cold! Got back to bed about 6 o'clock.

Your young friend can get the *P. of Pain* in a paper-back in America. Mails perfectly frightful just now. I suppose the snow keeps people indoors and that encourages them to write letters! In haste Yours

Jack

TO LAURENCE HARWOOD (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
26/1/63

Dear Lawrence

Yes, thank all good stars, we've got Douglas with a grinder at Godalming.²¹ I like the man's letters and he seems to think that D. now at last means business. But he has meant it so often before! Thanks very much for all your pains—you're more like a godfather (fairy type) than a godson. I may bother you about vacational work later on: we don't know any dates yet.

We struggle on. Not all pipes have stood up to it. Do you find it begins to make you very comatose—as if man were meant to be a hibernating animal? All the best for the New Year.

Yours
Jack

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD): PC

as from Magdalene College,
28th January 1963.

Good. Mon 11 March it is. But note that our *causeries de lundi*²² are now permanently transferred to the Lamb & Flag.²³ We were sorry to break with tradition, but the B & B had become too intolerably cold, dark, noisy, and child-pestered. I hope you got a cutting from *Encounter*?²⁴ Love to all J.

TO KATHLEEN ANDREWS (BOD): TS

172/63

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
1st February 1963.

Dear Miss Andrews,

It was indeed most kind of you to send the copy of *Annals of a quiet neighbourhood*,²⁵ and I appreciate it greatly; not many people would have taken so much trouble. As it happens I already have a copy of this book, but do not think therefore that your kindness has been wasted. Macdonalds are,

in the jargon of the day, in very short supply, and I have a friend who will welcome the Annals and treasure it.

With all best wishes, and again thanks,

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis²⁶

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W):²⁷ TS

183/63

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
6th February 1963.

Dear Miss Douglass,

Many thanks for your very kind and sympathetic note of the 2nd, in which you offer me the only consolation which is to be found in such a loss as mine. It was good of you to write, and I assure you that your message is greatly appreciated.

We are now on the 42nd day of our Arctic spell, and this morning it has begun to snow again.²⁸ No doubt the papers have told you the state we are in and when one is beginning to get on in years it is very, very trying. But 'even the weariest river winds somewhere to the sea'²⁹ and I suppose we shall see the end of this in God's good time.

With all greetings,

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis³⁰

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
8 Feb. 63

Dear Mary Willis

I'm not surprised at Son Suez's reaction.³¹ She couldn't possibly know that this inexplicable arrest, exile, and imprisonment had a kind intention. It suggests the comforting thought that the strange and terrifying things which happen to *us* are really for our benefit. That's an old platitude of course: but

seeing it the other way round, in relation to the cat, somehow brings it to life.

Still snow!

Yours

Jack

TO BLANCHARD MARSHALL (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
16 Feb 63

*Dear Mr. Marshall, thank you for your interesting letter,
I liked your kind remarks to me and liked your verses better.
You caught a glimpse of England and you counted it into rhyme.
But I regret to tell you that you caught it just in time
For day by day it vanishes—the woods are going down,
A horrible suburbia is linking town to town.
The narrow, winding roads grow broad and straight, the kindly earth
With contraceptive tarmac is forbidden to give birth;
The sorcerers of chemistry are poisoning the soil,
The bays and rivers are defiled with refuse and with oil,
And every day some liberty the subject once enjoyed
By order of the government is stealthily destroyed.*

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM L. KINTER (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

19 Feb 63

Dear Mr. Kinter

Thanks for your kind and encouraging letter. I have no recollection of an article by me in the *N.Y. Times*, so I suppose it has not been reprinted.³² Mr Battaglia, if and when he decides on coming here, had best work through the ordinary 'channels' by writing to the Secretary of the Board of the Faculty of English, enclosing copies of any of his works he thinks advisable. In that case, I might be one of the people chosen to give an opinion on them. An opinion volunteered to the Board by me in my private capacity might not do much good. They'd feel they were being 'got at'.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM I. ELLIOTT (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.
22 Feb. 63

Dear Mr Elliott

Thanks for your very kind letter. I am glad to hear that I shall have such an excellent translator.³³ My natural reaction to your suggested preface to *Miracles* was to ask myself 'What should I say if I wrote it?' But I couldn't think of anything I wanted to say. A new audience might well justify a preface, but not from me—who knows nothing about that new audience. So I ask to be excused. If I tried, you wd. hear the creak of the pump-handle.

My compliments to Mr N. Yagy and warn him to use the paper-back (Fontana) edn. of *Miracles* which supersedes the hard-backed first edn. One chapter has been almost entirely re-written.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

3 March 63

My dear Arthur

On July 28 W, Douglas, and I will be at the Glenmachan Towers Hotel, and on the 29th W. will go to Eire. Can Doug and you and I go off somewhere for a week or two beginning on that date? If you don't feel up to driving us to wherever we go, I'll hire a car & driver for the journey. Wd. Castlerock or Glens of Antrim be any good? Portrush only as a last resource. But we want to be pretty quick about booking 3 rooms (it *must* be 3) and about berths for Doug & me on our return journey to England.

I saw snowdrops for the first time last week.

Yours

Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):[34](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

7 March 63

Dear Jock

Thanks for cheque (£1625-2-0). It did occur to me that perhaps I have already got all the plums out of those sermons.

If you are going to do any poems of mine, I'd like two of wh. I have no MS. Both in *Punch*. One is a set of Sapphics beginning 'All the world's wiseacres', and the other is 'The Country of the Blind'.[35](#)

Yours

Jack

I'd want a preface: chiefly on metrics.

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford

10 March 63

My dear Arthur,

Good man! There are 3 hotels at Port B³⁶—the other two being Ballintrae House and Beach Hotel. If you can't get 3 rooms in Bayview you must locate 2 of us in one hotel and 1 in another or even (as a last resource) one in each of the three. Doug & I will aim at sailing on Mon Aug 12. The *times*, as you point out, are by no means ideal, but we can't manage Sept.

Keep our fingers crossed & keep on saying D.V.

Yours

Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

15 March 63

My dear Arthur

I don't see how to change, for berths, which now a days need fixing as far ahead as hotels, are all fixed, and also all the hotels in the Eire part of our holiday. I can manage stairs now, provided I take them in bottom gear. So do try again. Your letter, forwarded by W., has only just reached me. How difficult it is to *do* anything.

Yours

Jack

TO SHERWOOD E. WIRT (P):³⁷

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

18 March 63

Dear Mr. Wirt

I shall be happy to answer any questions if I know the answers, and I'd much rather do it by word of mouth than by pen.

From April 16 I shall be at Magdalene College, Cambridge.

Thanks, I shd. value the new *Smoke on the Mountain*.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

19 March 63

Dear Mary Willis

I'm sorry they threaten you with a painful disease. 'Dangerous' matters much less, doesn't it? What have you and I got to do but make our exit? When they told me I was in danger several months ago, I don't remember feeling distressed.

I am talking, of course, about *dying*, not about *being killed*. If shells started falling about this house I shd. feel quite differently. An external, visible, and (still worse) audible threat at once wakes the instinct of self-preservation into fierce activity. I don't think natural death has any similar terrors.

I am thrilled to hear that Son Suez has a sweater! Is this part of the *démarche*³⁸ (it's in all our papers) which a body of American women are making to the President to get animals properly clothed 'in the interests of decency'? Can it be true? If so, not only what insanity, but also (as in all super-refinements) what fundamental foul-mindedness! But also, what fun! The elephant looks as if he wore trousers already, but terribly baggy ones.

What he needs is *braces*. The Rhino seems to wear a suit much too big for him: can it be ‘taken in’? What sort of collars will giraffes wear? Will seals and otters have ordinary clothes or bathing suits? The hedgehog will wear his shirts out terribly quickly, I shd. think.

The reason I stood out waiting for the ambulance was that the 200 yards of avenue wh. lead up to this house were under such deep snow-drifts that wheeled traffic couldn’t reach the house. You get arctic winters much more often than we, but you have no idea what they are like when they do fall in a country where no-one is prepared for them. But it didn’t do me the slightest harm. In my experience colds and coughs come from infection far more often than from exposure.

Yes, private communions (I shared many during Joy’s last days) are extraordinarily moving. I am in danger of preferring them to those in church.

Blessings & prayers.

Yours

Jack

The religious world of Britain was suddenly caught up in a mood of heady novelty. On Sunday, 17 March 1963, the Observer newspaper published a special article extracted from a book entitled Honest to God by the radical Bishop of Woolwich, John Arthur Thomas Robinson.³⁹ It was a media sensation, and almost a million people bought a copy of the Observer to read the extract—‘Our Image of God Must Go’. Adrian Hastings commented on it in his History of English Christianity 1920–1990:

It went through four impressions that March and nearly a million copies were sold within three years. Only the Bible could rival it. English religion of the 1960s will always remain more associated with Honest to God than any other book...Robinson had sensed quite correctly that the 1950s religious revival...had really not got through to the ordinary modern pagan at all...His intention was a missionary one. Christianity, if it is to mean anything in the future to more than ‘a tiny religious remnant’, has got to change its style radically, and learn a new language in which ‘the most fundamental categories of our theology—of God, of the supernatural, and of religion itself—must go into the melting’. Perhaps we are even called to a ‘Copernican

Revolution' in which 'the God of traditional theology' must be given up 'in any form'.⁴⁰

Seizing what seemed to him a good opportunity, Edward Dell, editor of The Episcopalian, wrote to Lewis on 16 April 1963:

Bishop J. A. T. Robinson's book Honest to God is about to break upon the American scene. I believe it is an important book. It will certainly be a storm center among laymen who are ill prepared to receive or understand it. It cannot and will not go unnoticed, however. Since its subject is really the semantics, images and the mythology of the language of Christians I wonder whether you would care to undertake a 1500–2000 word introduction to and critique of the Bishop's book for this magazine.⁴¹

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W): TS

183/63 The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
21st March 1963.

Dear Miss Douglass,

Many thanks for the leaflet and its intriguing pictures. My favourite is No 8, the very primitive tank!

Weather has been almost a dirty word over here lately—sixty-six days of frozen snow without a break! Sorry to hear yours is bad too.

With all greetings,

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis⁴²

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

22 March 63

My dear Arthur,

Bravo! As you say, not ideal, but the main object is to have some days together.⁴³ We're both too old to let our remaining chances slip!

Yours
Jack

TO HUGH KILMER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

26 March 63

Dear Hugh

I didn't say 'it is wiser never to day-dream'. I said we needn't discuss whether it was. The whole passage is much more ironical than you allow for. The brutal plain English is 'Your Academic literary Pharisees make demands on humanity wh. neither you nor anyone else has ever met or can.'⁴⁴

The Sacred Heart ikons can't ever be beautiful, can they? For their v. essence is to take heart (metaphorical) and equate it with heart (anatomical).⁴⁵ Isn't this as if you drew a picture of Our Lady as literally an ivory tower with battlements etc.? Of course I come as near this as possible when I make 'the Lion of Judah' into Aslan. But I'm working in *words*, and you can do all sorts of things with them which can't be done with pictures.

Don't get any more girls to write to me, though, unless they really need any help I might be able to give. I have too many letters already. Remember me to the family.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO PATRICIA MACKEY (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

26 March 63

Dear Miss Mackey

Your letter was cheering, for *Till We Have Faces* has attracted less attention than any book I ever wrote. The name was just 'made up'. I expect some Jungianisms do come in, but the main conscious framework is Christian, not Jungian. Divine Love gradually conquers, first, a Pagan (and almost savage) soul's misconception of the Divine (as Ungit), then, shallow 'enlightenment' (the Fox), and, most of all, her *jealousy* of the real God, whom she hates till near the end because she wants Psyche to be entirely hers.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

27 March 63

Dear Joan

I see you've grown into a pretty woman. It must be a nice thing to be. The first poem is too rhapsodical—too much in the Whitman tradition—for me, but then I'm a square. The best are 'Do I the weak' and 'And all is fair.' So you are, like me, in love with syllables? Good. *Sheldar* is a boss word. So are Tolkien's *Tinuviel* and *Silmaril*. And David Lindsay's *Tormance* in *Voyage to Arcturus*. And *Northumberland* is glorious; but best of all, if only it meant something more interesting, is *silver salver*.

Nietzsche was a better poet than a philosopher. I give Plato better marks on both papers.

All the best.
Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MRS DUNN (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

3 April 63

Dear Mrs. Dunn

Yes, a very puzzling passage.⁴⁶ I think it *is* a moral allegory enforced by an actual miracle. It wd. be shocking if a man, or even a beast, were destroyed just to point a moral. But a vegetable? After all, every tree that dies (and they all die) anywhere in the world does so by God's will. 'Not a sparrow falls to the ground etc'.⁴⁷ Mustn't we face the fact that He wills deaths as well as lives? He has made the natural world to depend partly on death—'unless a seed die'.⁴⁸ At least, that is how I look at it.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MICHAEL EDWARDS (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

5 April 63

Dear Mr Edwards

By all means. But I leave for Cambridge on Easter Tuesday and it wd. be v. difficult to fit in. Unless, then, you happened to be in Cambridge next term, it wd. be easier to postpone your visit till the first week of the Long Vac.

Till then.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MICHAEL EDWARDS (BOD):⁴⁹ PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
13 April 63

Will 2.15 Sat. June 8 suit you? The house is hard to find, and I add map.

TO SHERWOOD E. WIRT (P):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

13 April 63

Dear Mr. Wirt

Monday mornings happen to be always occupied. Wd. Tue. May 7 suit you? If so I shd. be happy to see [you] at 1 o'clock. Thanks for the copy of *Decision*.⁵⁰

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD T. DELL (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

22 April 63

Dear Dell

I'd rather keep off Bishop Robinson's book. I should find it hard to write of such a man with charity, nor do I want to increase his publicity. But thanks for the offer.

Yours ever
C. S. Lewis

Lewis had begun writing a book on prayer in 1952. However, as we know from his letter to Sister Penelope of 15 February 1954, he had found himself unable to finish it. Now, in March 1963, he found the form—a series of imaginary letters—for what he had to say and Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer was completed in April. Shortly before mentioning the book in the following letter to Mary Willis Shelburne, he sent the manuscript to his agent, Spencer Curtis Brown.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns, 22 April 63

Dear Mary Willis

What in Heaven's name is 'distressing' about an old man saying to an old woman that they haven't much more to do here? I wasn't in the least expressing resentment or despondency. I was referring to an obvious fact and one which I don't find either distressing or embarrassing. Do you?

Didn't the flowers all say 'Good morning, Lawd!' in the (excellent) film of *Green Pastures*.^{[51](#)}

I've finished a book on Prayer. Don't know if it is any good.

I'm glad you can still enjoy a new dress. I can still *dislike* a new suit.

In haste.

Yours
Jack

TO KATHY KRISTY (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

23 April 63

Dear Kathy

Congratulations on keeping house!

By the way I also wd. say 'I got a book.' But your teacher and I are not 'English teachers' in the same sense. She has to put across an idea of what the English Language ought to be: I'm concerned entirely with what it *is* and how it came to be what it is. In fact she is a gardener distinguishing 'flowers' from 'weeds': I am a botanist and am interested in both as vegetable organisms.

All good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO DANIEL STONE (P):[52](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

26 April 63

Dear Daniel,

I am delighted to hear that you like the Narnian books, and it was nice of you to write and tell me. It sounds as if you had all of them except the very first one (*The Magician's Nephew*). I shall not write any more of them: seven are enough. I am amused you should think 'my hand must be good at making things'. In reality I'm the clumsiest and most ham-handed person in the world! I can't *make* anything—words are the only tools I am any good at.

Good wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO EDWARD T. DELL (P):[53](#)

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge
29 April [1963]

My dear Dell

I'm afraid I must stick to my position. Even if I wanted to abandon it—and I don't—I could hardly do so now that you have mentioned the fee! What would you yourself think of me if I did? There will be implicit answers to some of Robinson's nonsense in parts of a book on prayer which I've just finished, and I can 'do my bit' much better that way.⁵⁴

A great deal of my utility has depended on my having kept out of all dog-fights between professing schools of 'Christian' thought. I'd sooner preserve that abstinence to the end. I wd. like to oblige you personally, if I could, but I don't feel this is a way in which I can. Forgive me.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

6 May 63

Dear Padre

You ask me in effect why I am not an R.C. If it comes to that, why am I not—and why are you *not*—a Presbyterian, a Quaker, a Mohammedan, a Hindoo, or a Confucianist? After how prolonged and sympathetic study and on what grounds have we rejected these religions? I think those who press a man to desert the religion in which he has been bred and in which he believes he has found the means of Grace ought to produce positive reasons for the change—not demand from him reasons *against* all other religions. It wd. have to be *all*, wouldn't it?

Our Lord prayed that we all might be one 'as He and His father are one'.⁵⁵ But He and His Father are not one in virtue of both accepting a (third) monarchical sovereign.

That unity of rule, or even of *credenda*,⁵⁶ does not necessarily produce unity of charity is apparent from the history of every Church, every religious order, and every parish.

Schism is a v. great evil. But if reunion is ever to come, it will in my opinion come from increasing charity. And this, under pressure from the increasing strength & hostility of unbelief, is perhaps beginning: we no longer, thank God, speak of one another as we did even 100 years ago. A single act of even such limited co-operation as is now possible does more towards ultimate reunion than any amount of discussion.

The historical causes of the 'Reformation' that actually occurred were (1.) The cruelties and commercialism of the Papacy (2.) The lust and greed of Hen. 8.⁵⁷ (3.) The exploitation of both by politicians. (4.) The fatal insouciance of the mere rabble on both sides. The spiritual drive behind the Reformation that ought to have occurred was a deep re-experience of the Pauline experience.

Memo: a great many of my closest friends are your co-religionists, some of them priests. If I am to embark on a disputation—wh. could not be a short one, I wd. much sooner do it with them than by correspondence.

We can do much more to heal the schism by our prayers than by a controversy. It is a daily subject of mine.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD): PC

The Kilns

11 May [1963]

Full Term ends on June 7. *Either*, then, dine & sleep here (after meeting as usual in Lamb & Flag) *or* come to me some earlier Monday. Either plan wd. suit me excellently.

J.

TO HSIN-CHANG CHANG (BOD): PC

Magdalene

16 May [1963]

Dear Chang

I've just received 2 copies of a Japanese translation of one of my children's stories. They are, naturally, mere curiosities for me. Do you know any one to whom they cd. be of any use?⁵⁸

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

16 May 63

Dear Jock

I took C.U.P. proofs to C.U.P. only yesterday.⁵⁹ Next week-end I hope to start on the copy for the paper-back. MS. of *Letters to M.* is now with the typist. I'm very bad at estimating length of books, but I *think* it is about equal to *The Four L.* One letter⁶⁰ will have to be re-written when I get the TS. back, so you won't get copy just yet. Sorry all this is so inconvenient for you, but I couldn't help it.

Yours
Jack

TO JOHN H. MCCALLUM (P):

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

19 May 63

Dear Mac,

My old pensioner Mrs. M. W. Shelburne (103 6th St. N.E. Washington 2, D.C.) is in a spot of extra trouble. Will you please send her 150 dollars and debit it against my next royalties? Thanks.

Yours
Clive

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns

19 May 63

Dear Mary Willis

Sorry to hear of all your expenses. I have directed Harcourt Brace to send you a little extra. No time to write: my brother is ill and of course the mails have chosen that moment to be unusually heavy.

Yours
Jack

TO EVELYN TACKETT (W):[61](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

23 May 63

Dear Miss Tackett

I shall be giving a course on medieval literature (Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12 noon—or 11, I'm not yet sure which) next term, and next term begins on Oct 8. First lecture Oct 10. If you are still in England then and think it worth while to come to any of these lectures, I shall be happy to give permission to you both. In fact, this letter is the permission.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (P):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

28 May 63

Dear Starr

Good! I shall also be in Ireland in July, and the idea of a meeting there is tempting, but my movements are uncertain and, it will probably be easier for me to meet after Aug 12, when I shall be at The Kilns, Headington Quarry, Oxford (Te. Oxford 62963) Glad to hear you are over a nasty bout. No, I'm not at all like Antaeus.⁶² Much more like Anchises⁶³ or Teiresias⁶⁴ or one of those old ditherers.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

Lewis arrived home from Cambridge on Friday, 7 June, and that afternoon he gave tea to Walter Hooper, who taught English Literature at the University of Kentucky, and who was in Oxford for the summer. Lewis invited Hooper to a meeting of the Inklings at the Lamb and Flag on Monday, 10 June. After that the two men generally met three times a week, Mondays at the Lamb and Flag, Wednesdays at The Kilns with a pint afterwards in The Six Bells pub, and Sundays at The Kilns when Hooper accompanied Lewis to church.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

10 June 63

Dear Mary Willis

I am sorry to hear of the acute pain and the various other troubles. It makes me unsay all I have ever said against our English 'welfare state', which at least provides free medical treatment for all.

God's purposes are terribly obscure. I am thinking both of your sufferings and of the removal of such a Pope at such a moment.⁶⁵ And the horrid conclusions which some bigots on both sides will probably draw from it.⁶⁶

My brother is away in Ireland recovering (I hope) from one of his bouts. This throws a lot of extra work on me, besides condemning me to—what I hate—solitude. God help us all.

Yours
Jack

TO MISS H. COFFEY (P): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
11 June 63

Sorry, but I'm out of photos. Which is perhaps just as well, for I look awful. Imagine a marsh-wiggle gone fat and red in the face. And deaf and bald. I talk far too loud. I'm so glad you liked the Narnian series. All good wishes to both.

C. S. Lewis

TO JAMES BURLESON (W):

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

11 June 63

Dear Mr. Burleson

I never knew any of Dorothy S's relatives, and our chief common friend, Charles Williams, is now dead. One of her friends whom I have got to know since her death is Miss Barbara Reynolds, who finished her version of Dante. I don't know this lady's address. Possibly 'c/o the Faculty of Modern Languages, Cambridge' might find her.

I expect one or other of D.S's publishers wd. be able to tell you who her literary executor is, and he might help. I never had a photo of her. Sorry to be so unhelpful.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):[67](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

17 June 63

Dear Mary Willis

This is terrible news. The doctor who refused to come wd., I think, be liable to criminal prosecution in this country.

Pain is terrible, but surely you need not have fear as well? Can you not see death as the friend and deliverer? It means stripping off that body which is tormenting you: like taking off a hair-shirt or getting out of a dungeon. What is there to be afraid of? You have long attempted (and none of us does more) a Christian life. Your sins are confessed and absolved. Has this world been so kind to you that you should leave it with regret? There are better things ahead than any we leave behind.

Remember, tho' we struggle against things because we are afraid of them, it is often the other way round—we get afraid *because* we struggle. Are you struggling, resisting? Don't you think Our Lord says to you 'Peace, child, peace. Relax. Let go. Underneath are the everlasting arms. Let go, I will catch you. Do you trust me so little?'

Of course, this may not be the end. Then make it a good rehearsal.

Yours (and like you a tired traveller near the journey's end)

Jack

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W):

The Kilns

20 June 63

Dear Mrs. Van Deusen

Warren is on a holiday in Ireland and at the moment ill in hospital there. This means I have all my own secretarial work to do single handed, so I'm

sure you will forgive [me] for cutting this letter short. It is the fifth since breakfast and there are lots more in the pile. The boys are both well and far away, so I am alone in the house—a thing I loathe.

Blamires—not Blamise, as you spell him!—is an old pupil of mine.⁶⁸ I was very pleased with his work.⁶⁹ It was badly needed. You'd think, wouldn't you, his name rhymed with 'aspires', but he pronounces it Blamers (rhyme with TAMERS).

I am glad all goes well. My love to Genia.

Yours most sincerely

C.S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

25 June 63

Dear Mary Willis—

Tho' horrified at your sufferings, I am overjoyed at the blessed change in your attitude to death. This is a bigger stride forward than perhaps you yourself yet know. For you *were* rather badly wrong on that subject. Only a few months ago when I said that we old people hadn't much more to do than to make a good exit, you were almost angry with me for what you called such a 'bitter' remark. Thank God, you now see it wasn't bitter: only plain common sense.

Yes: I do wonder why the doctors inflict such torture to delay what cannot in any case be v. long delayed. Or why God does! Unless there is still something for you to do. As far as weakness allows I hope, now that you know you are forgiven, you will spend most of your remaining strength in *forgiving*. Lay all the old resentments down at the wounded feet of Christ. I have had dozens of blood transfusions in the last two years and know only too well the horrid—and *long*—moments during which they are poking about to find the vein. And then you think they've really got in at last and it turns out that they haven't. (Is there an allegory here? The

approaches of Grace often hurt because the spiritual vein in us hides itself from the celestial surgeon?). But oh, I do pity you for waking up and finding yourself still on the wrong side of the door! How awful it must have been for poor Lazarus who had actually died, got it all over, and then was brought back—to go through it all, I suppose, a few years later. I think he, not St. Stephen, ought really to be celebrated as the first martyr.

You say too much of the very little I have been able to do for you. Perhaps you will very soon be able to repay me a thousandfold. For if this is Good-bye, I am sure you will not forget me when you are in a better place. You'll put in a good word for me now and then, won't you?

It will be fun when we at last meet.

Yours

Jack

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

27 June 63

Dear Father Milward

Come, come! You show yourself lacking in the spiritual tact which is so conspicuous among my Jesuit friends in Oxford. Trying to goad a man into controversy when he has already declined it is not the way to convert him. Leave that to the Tee-Totallers and Pacifists who honour me with frequent letters. Don't you realise that if I were anxious for a *disputatio* I have among my friends many learned and delightful masters of your Church and even of your order, with whom the matter could be discussed at any length in comfort over a pot of tea or a pot of beer. It is not likely I shd. prefer the manual labour (half my life is spent answering letters anyway) of a vast correspondence with a man at the other end of the world. Don't you realise that my friends here wd. know the *mollia tempora fandi*⁷⁰ a great deal better than you.

My stories were not influenced by any of the authors you mention. The first impulse came, I believe, from H. G. Wells. More important was David Lindsay's *Voyage to Arcturus*.⁷¹ To Chesterton I am much indebted as a controversialist, but not to fiction, tho' I like his fiction. I don't share the widespread admiration of Berdyaev. Surely he says the same thing over & over in different words. Orwell I read much later. I give *Animal Farm* full marks: *1984* is far below it.

Ransom is so called because of the sacrificial role he plays in Perelandra—his incurable wound to the heel.⁷² I don't know that I ever thought about the relation between my S.F. and my Narnian books. Of course they are alike, for both are fantasies and both by the same man.

I don't know Guardini.⁷³ Dawson I know only as a historian.⁷⁴ I've a love-hate relation to Belloc.⁷⁵ I love his humour: but all that Pan-Latinism seems to me too like Hitler's dream of a *Herrenfolk*.⁷⁶

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns
Fri. 28 June 63

Dear Mary Willis

It was anaemia that endangered my life the winter before last, but of course trifling compared with yours. I think the best way to cope with the mental debility and total inertia is to submit to it entirely. Don't *try* to concentrate. Pretend you are a dormouse or even a turnip.

But of course I know the acceptance of inertia is much easier for men than for women. We are the lazy sex. Think of yourself just as a seed patiently waiting in the earth: waiting to come up a flower in the Gardener's good time, up into the *real* world, the real waking. I suppose that our whole present life, looked back on from there, will seem only a drowsy half-waking. We are here in the land of dreams. But cock-crow is coming. It is nearer now than when I began this letter.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

28 June 63

Dear Jock

I've thought and thought about the blurb⁷⁷ but find I just can't write it—apparently I can hardly write the words either! I'd like you to make the point that the reader is merely being allowed to listen to two v. ordinary laymen discussing the practical & speculative problems of prayer as these appear to them: i.e. the author does *not* claim to be teaching.

Wd. it be good to say 'Some passages are controversial but this is almost an accident. The wayfaring Christian cannot quite ignore recent Anglican theology when it has been built as a barricade across the high road'

I wouldn't stress your point about my not having given tongue v. recently. It can't *feel* like that to the public. They must get the impression that I bring out a book once a fortnight. And your denial, however true in fact, will, like the sculptor's fig-leaf, only draw attention to what it wd. fain conceal I enclose a new passage for the last letter. This will make that letter unusually long but that's legitimate in a finale. Anyway, I like the new bit.

Yours
Jack

TO HUGH MONTEFIORE (WHL):⁷⁸

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

2 July 1963

Dear Mr Montefiore

I'm afraid I'm not up to it.⁷⁹ I am pretty well an invalid now and professional lectures are all I can manage. But indeed I had other reasons for giving up preaching, even before my illness. I write better than I talk, and reach more people and at a less cost of nervous energy. Also, at less moral danger. I was beginning to be histrionic: an unmistakable red light.

The need in Cambridge is indeed frightful. But what little I can do to meet it can, I am convinced, be better done in other ways.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

P.S. I am very glad to hear you are going to the University Church.

TO JOHN BEVERSLUIS (T):⁸⁰

As from Magdalene College,
Cambridge

3 July 1963

Dear Mr. Beversluis

Yes. On my view one must apply something of the same sort of explanation to, say, the atrocities (and treacheries) of Joshua.⁸¹ I see the grave danger we run by doing so; but the danger of believing in a God whom we cannot but regard as evil, and then, in mere terrified flattery calling Him 'good' and worshipping Him, is a still greater danger. The ultimate question is whether the doctrine of the goodness of God or that of the inerrancy of Scripture is to prevail when they conflict. I think the doctrine of the goodness of God is the more certain of the two. Indeed only that doctrine renders this worship of Him obligatory or even permissible.

To this some will reply 'Ah, but we are fallen and don't recognise good when we see it.' But God Himself does not say we are as fallen as all that. He constantly, in scripture, appeals to our conscience: 'Why do ye not of yourselves judge what is right?'⁸²—'What fault hath my people found in Me?'⁸³ And soon.

Socrates' answer to Euthyphro is used in Christian form by Hooker. Things are not good because God commands them; God commands certain things because He sees them to be good. (In other words, the Divine will is the obedient servant of the Divine reason). The opposite view (Ockham's & Paley's)⁸⁴ leads to the absurdity, if 'good' means simply 'what God wills' then to say 'God is good' can mean only 'God wills what He wills.' Which is equally true of you or me or Judas or Satan.

But of course having said all this, we must apply it with fear and trembling. Some things which seem to us bad may be good. But we must not corrupt our consciences by trying to feel a thing as good when it seems to us totally evil. We can only pray that *if* there is an invisible goodness hidden in such things, God, in His own good time will enable us to see it. If we need to. For perhaps sometimes God's answer might be 'What is that to thee?'⁸⁵ The passage may not be 'addressed to our (your or my) condition' at all.⁸⁶

I think we are v. much in agreement, aren't we?

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):⁸⁷

The Kilns

6 July 63

Dear Mary Willis

All one can say about Lorraine is that if she is really so brainwashed as you think, she is then no more morally responsible than a lunatic. I fully admit that as regards her husband you have been set as difficult a job in the forgiving line as can well be imagined.

Do you know, only a few weeks ago I realised suddenly that I at last *had* forgiven the cruel schoolmaster who so darkened my childhood.⁸⁸ I'd been trying to do it for years: and like you, each time I thought I'd done it, I found, after a week or so it all had to be attempted over again. But this time I feel sure it is the real thing. And (like learning to swim or to ride a bicycle) the moment it does happen it seems so easy and you wonder why

on earth you didn't do it years ago. So the parable of the unjust judge comes true, and what has been vainly asked for years can suddenly be granted.⁸⁹ I also get a quite new feeling about 'If you forgive you will be forgiven.'⁹⁰ I don't believe it is, as it sounds, a bargain. The forgiving and the being forgiven are really the v. same thing. But one is safe as long as one keeps on trying.

How terribly long these days and hours are for you. Even I, who am in a bed of roses now compared with you, feel it a bit. I live in almost total solitude, never properly asleep by night (all loathsome dreams) and constantly falling asleep by day. I sometimes feel as if my mind were decaying. Yet, in another mood, how *short* our whole past life begins to seem!

It is a pouring wet summer here, and cold. I can hardly remember when we last saw the sun.

Well, we shall get out of it all sooner or later, for

even the weariest river

*Winds somewhere safe to sea.*⁹¹

Let us pray much for one another.

Yours

Jack

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns

9 July 63

Dear Mary Willis

I can well understand with what mixed feelings you received what is obviously, in the ordinary medical sense, very 'good' news. Aren't you a trifle fierce about the Doctor? It can't be much fun attempting to explain the details to 100 bio-chemical patients who have no knowledge of bio-chemistry and who, one knows, won't really understand, however hard one tries. I was always only too glad to let mine off with the merest skeleton account of my own state—I found it such a boring subject. Also, aren't your

doctors (like ours) hideously overworked? I know my specialist, when I was in hospital, had a working day which had begun at 8.30 a.m. and was still going on at 9.45 p.m. Doesn't leave much elbow room Our hearts, by the way, must be different. When yours is worst you have to lie flat. When mine was worst I had to *sit* up—night and day for months.

By the way, as you come out I may possibly go in. Swollen ankles—the Red Light for me—have returned. I see the doctor about this to-morrow. My fear is that he will forbid me to go to Ireland on Monday as I had arranged, and put me back in hospital.

Our friends might really get up a sweepstake as to whose train really will go first! Blessings.

Yours
Jack

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W): PC

The Kilns.
11 July 63

Alas! I have had a collapse as regards the heart trouble and the holiday has to be cancelled. Let me know how much you are out of pocket for our cancelled bookings at Port Stewart and, as is only fair, I will send you a cheque for that amount.

I don't mind—or not much—missing the jaunt, but it is a blow missing *you*. Bless you.

Jack

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford

11 July 63

Dear Joan

You *are* having a time! I think the poetry is developing alright. You'll be enchanted with imaginary names for a bit and probably go too far, but that will do you no harm. Like having had measles. I don't think Joyce is as good at them as David Lindsay (*Voyage to Arcturus*) or E. R. Eddison in *The Worm Ouroboros*. His *silvamoonlyake*⁹² is spoiled for me by the spelling which links it up with an advertisement slogan that we're all sick of here 'Drinkapintamilkaday.' For spelling counts as well as sound. I was astonished when someone first showed that by writing 'cellar door' as *Selladore* one produces an enchanting proper name. Conversely, I can't enjoy *velvet* as a sound, lovely though it is, because I hate the stuff.

Zoroastrianism is one of the finest of the Pagan religions. Do you depend entirely on Nietzsche for your idea of it? I expect you wd. find it well worth time to look at the old sources.

Thanks for the photo. I hoped you were the centre one, it wd. have been horrid if you were Morna Glaney.

I'd write a better letter if I had not got a splitting headache.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO KAREN HOUSEL (W):⁹³

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry
Oxford

13 July 63

Dear Miss Housel

I can give you no assurance as to what I shall be doing by the end of August. After a long illness I am now suffering a relapse and at present waiting to be admitted to hospital as soon as there is a vacancy. One of my complaints is anaemia. This, tho' painless, has a most debilitating effect on the mind: so that even if I were technically 'well' again, you would find yourself confronted with, almost, an imbecile. Thanks for the kind things you say, but look for no help from me. I am but a *fossil* dinosaur now.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

For some weeks Walter Hooper had been accompanying Lewis to Holy Trinity Church on Sunday mornings. However, when he arrived at The Kilns on Sunday morning, 14 July, he found Lewis in his dressing gown and looking ill. He said he had cancelled his trip to Ireland, and that he would be going to the Acland Nursing Home the next day for a blood transfusion. He needed help with his post, which grew larger by the day, and he asked Hooper if he would resign his job at the University of Kentucky and become his private secretary, beginning immediately. Hooper accepted the offer on condition that he should return to the United States at the end of the summer to teach one final term, and come back to Oxford in January 1964.

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
15th July 63

Dear Mary Willis

I go into hospital this afternoon. Think any sudden change in my state is v. improbable. Last time, the repeated blood-transfusions got me past the danger point, tho' they took much longer to do it than the doctors expected. This time they will either take even longer, or else they will fail to do it at all. I'm so sleepy and tired that I feel v. little concerned. The loss of all mental concentration is what I dislike most. I fell asleep 3 times during your letter and found it v. hard to understand! Don't expect to hear much from me. You might as well expect a Lecture on Hegel from a drunk man.

Yours
Jack

At 5 p.m. on Monday, 15 July, a few hours after writing the above letter, Lewis arrived at the Acland Nursing Home. Minutes afterwards he had a heart attack and went into a coma. The doctors informed Austin and Katharine Farrer that he was dying, and they contacted Douglas Gresham and Walter Hooper.

At 2 p.m. on 16 July the Rev. Michael Watts of the Church of St Mary Magdalen gave Lewis extreme unction, the Church's practice of anointing with oil when a person is thought to be dying. An hour later Austin Farrer and Walter Hooper were told by the staff of the nursing home that Lewis had come out of the coma 'and asked for his tea'. They hurried to see him.

'Noticing our worried looks,' Hooper recorded in his dairy, 'he said "Why do you look so anxious?" "You've been asleep for quite a long time," replied Dr Farrer, "We were concerned about you." "I do not think," said Lewis, "that it could be argued that I am a very well man!"'⁹⁴

Realizing he might be there for some time, Lewis arranged for Dr Farrer to bring him the Sacrament the next day, and he sent Hooper out for writing supplies. From 17 July Hooper would appear at the Acland every morning with Lewis's letters, and Lewis would dictate his answers. George Sayer visited Lewis on 18 July and reported:

Lewis asked me if I had met Walter Hooper. 'I've engaged him as my secretary,' he said. 'I want you to like him. I want all my friends to like him. He is a young American. Very devoted and charming. He is almost too anxious to please, but no fool. Certainly not a fool. I must have someone in the house when I go home. Warnie has deserted me and David and Douglas have gone away. There will be hundreds of letters. I must have a secretary.'⁹⁵

A few days later Sayer went to Ireland in search of Warnie, who since the middle of June had been a patient at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda. The nuns told Sayer that Warnie, who was free to do as he liked during the day, was in Dublin. Warnie knew nothing about what was happening to his brother. 'They undertook,' said Sayer, 'to break it to him gently, so that, by the time he was fit to travel, he would know about Jack's coma.'⁹⁶

Many old friends visited Lewis during the three weeks he was to stay in the Acland. They included Douglas and David Gresham, Professor Tolkien, John Walsh, Alastair Fowler, and Lady Dunbar. Some of them saw Lewis during a brief period in which he suffered from hallucinations. At other times he could not recognize anyone.

On 27 July Walter Hooper wrote to Mary Willis Shelburne:⁹⁷

As from the Acland Nursing Home
Oxford
27 July 1963

Dear Mary Willis

Jack asked me to tell you that letter writing is physically impossible, his fingers jerk and twitch so. His physical crisis has greatly disordered his intelligence and he is vividly aware of living in a world of hallucinations. I am afraid it seems very difficult to communicate to one another the high comforts. One strange and beautiful reason is that I myself suffer so little by their withdrawal. I have no physical pain—only extreme lethargy and some sense of absurdity.

God bless you.

Yours

Jack⁹⁸

The following day Hooper wrote to Karen Housel:⁹⁹

As from the Acland Nursing Home
Oxford
28 July 1963

Dear Miss Housel,

Professor C. S. Lewis was very pleased to receive your cheering letter. However, Professor Lewis is seriously ill and unable to write you himself. He sends you his warmest regards.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

Walter Hooper

On 1 August Hooper wrote to Roger Lancelyn Green:¹⁰⁰

c/o Prof. C. S. Lewis,
The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
1 August 1963

Dear Roger,

As you probably know, Jack has been seriously ill for almost three weeks. He had a relapse a few days before he intended to go to Ireland. On 15 July he entered the Acland Nursing Home. As soon as nurses are found he will return to the Kilns. There have been good days as well as bad ones.

Major Lewis is expected home in a fortnight. Until that time I have been handling Jack's correspondence.

When I was with Jack yesterday he brought up the subject of 'Lewisiana', knowing that both you and I are collecting his works. Even though the thought never occurred to me, Jack felt that I should write you in order to determine whether, as he says, we are 'competitors or collaborators'. I can only say for myself that I have been collecting Jack's works because (1) I greatly enjoy everything he writes; (2) I admire Jack immensely; and (3) Because I thoroughly enjoy collecting.

It has been in the back of my mind to someday, perhaps, turn my collection over to the University of North Carolina. These, really, are all the 'cards' I have to put on the table. I trust Jack's judgement (as well as yours) and it is at his suggestion that I write you.

Let me say again how very much I have relished your books and what an honour it was to meet you at the Lamb and Flag (17 June).

With every good wish, I am

Yours faithfully,

Walter Hooper

Hooper wrote to Green again on 5 August:[101](#)

*c/o Prof. C. S. Lewis,
The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
5 August 1963*

Dear Roger,

I appreciate so much your very kind letter. You were probably as puzzled as I was over the bit in my letter about collecting but Jack asked me to write. He is satisfied now and I will of course let you know all I can about Jack's publications in America.

Please believe how dreadfully sorry I am that you did not hear of Jack's illness sooner. I assumed that others had written you. This is how it happened.

Jack began to lose his strength due to what we thought to be anaemia, about the 12 of July. He went to the Acland Nursing Home on 15 July at 5.00 p.m. and immediately had a heart attack. On the morning of the 16th Austin and Katharine Farrer came to tell me that he was dying. He lay under an oxygen mask most of the day. At 2.00 p.m. Austin Farrer, a priest as you know, gave him Extreme Unction. Then at 3.00 p.m., much to the amazement of the doctors and nurses, Jack woke from his coma and asked for his tea. For the next two days he brightened and then slipped into what he calls his 'black period'—a nightmare of dreams, illusions and some clear moments. This lasted for about a week. The entire week (past) has shown an enormous recovery.

In fact, tomorrow he is coming home, bringing a night nurse with him. So he does seem to be out of danger's way.

I'm certain Jack would like a letter from you. Meanwhile I will remind him of your offer of a visit and write you his response.

Again, let me say how sorry I am not to have written sooner. You may be certain that I shall keep you informed about Jack's health.

Major Lewis is returning from Ireland on the 14th of August. With kindest regards, I am

*Yours faithfully,
Walter Hooper*

In preparation for his return to The Kilns on 6 August, the doctors forbade Lewis using the stairs, and a bed was placed in the common room downstairs for him. Once he knew what plans were being made, Lewis asked Hooper to move to The Kilns. Hooper was trickily placed as he was taking part in the International Summer School at Exeter College. The Director of the Summer School thought it appropriate that he leave the course to help Lewis, and on 26 July Hooper moved to The Kilns, where he occupied the upstairs bedroom that had been Lewis's. The Acland hired a male nurse, the Scotsman, Alec Ross, to accompany Lewis when he returned home. Ross's job was primarily to be on hand in case Lewis was taken ill during the night, and this could best be done if he were in the 'music room', across the hall from the common room. This had been Douglas's bedroom,

but Douglas moved into the bedroom beyond the kitchen. Ross was to remain at The Kilns for about six weeks.

TO MISS HARLAN (P):[102](#)

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
8 August 1963.

Dear Miss Harlan,

I am not quite clear what your question is. Except for I John 2:3^{[103](#)} all your passages lay down ‘confession’ of previous sins as the first step in reconciliation. But whether confession here means auricular confession to a priest or pastor or confession to the human parties whom one has offended or simply confession before God in the heart is, I suppose, one of those points on which Christian authority has given different answers in different times and places.

The other passage (‘He who has not the Son’)^{[104](#)} must mean, I think, he who wholly lacks the Spirit of the Son. Those who do not recognize Him as the Son of God may nevertheless ‘have’ Him in a saving sense—as the ‘Sheep’ had in the parable of the sheep and goats.^{[105](#)}

I would write you a better letter if I were not ill.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

On 10 August Hooper wrote to Mary Willis Shelburne:^{[106](#)}

*The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford,
10 August 1963*

Dear Mrs. Shelburne,

I am Professor C. S. Lewis’s secretary writing to tell you some of the facts of Professor Lewis’s present state of health. He felt that you

were entitled to this history. I trust that you will not mind it coming from my hand; but so it must.

Professor Lewis had a relapse the second week in July. On the 15th of July he entered the Acland Nursing Home. During the last hours of the night he had a heart attack from which it was not expected by his doctors that he would emerge. He lay in a coma for nearly 24 hours breathing only because of an oxygen mask. As the Professor was incapable of receiving the Sacrament his priest administered Extreme Unction (2:00 p.m., 16th July). Contrary to the expectations of the medical staff, [the] Professor regained consciousness at 3:00 p.m. (16th July) and asked for his tea. His state was still critical even though he revived somewhat during the next two days. Then followed a 'black period' of dreams, illusions, and some moments of tangled reason. I hope it is clear to you that he was incapable of the normal exertions of correspondence.

During the third week in the Nursing Home, Professor Lewis regained, very slowly, his rational faculties and, even slower, his strength. Last Tuesday (6 August) he was allowed to come home, accompanied, of course, by a nurse. Even though he is enjoying more ease and comfort at the Kilns Professor Lewis is, by no means, capable of writing letters or receiving visitors. He has with regret, but love for his College, resigned his Chair and Fellowship at Cambridge.

Professor Lewis regrets that he is unable at this time (and probably for a long time) to answer your letters. He is much concerned for you and prays that you may have courage for whatever may be yours both in the present and future.

I am, with prayers and affection,
Yours faithfully,
Walter Hooper

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD): [107](#)

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,

11 August 1963

Dear Roger,

I can't blame you for [not] knowing I had been so ill, seeing how I didn't know myself until it was all over. I am now unofficially [officially?] an extinct volcano, i.e., I have resigned the Chair and the Fellowship. I hope very much you can come and dine and sleep here on the 26th of September. If Geronimo is mad again by then (I was for a bit) someone will warn you in time.¹⁰⁸ Love to June.

Walter, who is staying with me and behaving like an angel, sends his regards.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCK BURNET (MC):¹⁰⁹

12 August 1963.

Dear Jock and/or Dick¹¹⁰

The bearer, Walter Hooper, will leave on the shelves in my room all the books that I want sold. You, Jock, had better have a look and remove the College furniture before my own furniture is sold. As you are both expert bookmen, would you very kindly have a look at the books and get in touch with what you would think very likely booksellers. (If either of you sees anything he would like as a keepsake let him pocket it.) And when the books are disposed of suppose you whistle in furniture dealers. I am ashamed to ask all this of you but Walter has to return to America almost at once and my brother is still away, so I am at my wits end what to do.

Yours
Jack

TO JOCK BURNET (MC):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

13 August 1963

Dear Jock,

I am afraid I must accept your offer of help and that to a degree I am ashamed of. My temporary secretary can stay in Cambridge only a few days and I dare not send my brother because of his infirmity. (1) My secretary will stack on the floor of my south room (the dark-panelled one) the books I want sent to Oxford. (2) The books I want sold will be left on the shelves. Could you see about the selling?

If you or Dick see anything either would like for a keep-sake please take it. (3) The furniture is all to be sold except, of course, a bathroom chair and carpet which belong to College. And also the oil painting of an old gentleman¹¹¹ which has to be packed and sent to the Parish Hall,

Dundela,
Belfast.

This is, I'm afraid, a dreadful amount of trouble but my situation is rather desperate.

Tell all my colleagues I am fit to be visited and should welcome it.

Yours

Jack

On 14 August Walter Hooper and Douglas Gresham went to Cambridge to clear out Lewis's college rooms and to sort out his books and papers. Lewis wanted Hooper to occupy his bedroom in Magdalene College, but they arrived to find that the floor had fallen in. This necessitated their crossing from one part of Lewis's suite of rooms to the other via a plank. They stayed at the Blue Boar Hotel during their three days in Cambridge. There was much to do, Lewis having given Hooper seven pages of instructions about the care and disposal of every book in his library. The only order respecting his manuscripts and books was 'All my own books W.P.B. or apply to your own use.' Lewis was keen that no 'relics' be discovered in those rooms, and Douglas spent hours tearing into small pieces old examination papers.

Lewis had suggested the college choose a 'keep-sake' from his belongings and they chose Lewis's Complete Works of Shakespeare, which can be seen today in Magdalene College Library. The thousands of books Lewis chose to keep were put in a lorry and Hooper and Douglas went with them to Oxford on 16 August.

TO JEANNETTE HOPKINS (P):[112](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
16 Aug. 63

Dear Miss Hopkins

I think *Beyond the Bright Blur* (certainly not *The Bright Blur* by itself) wd. be best.[113](#) I don't return the TS for I have [not] been very well and am not fit for proof-reading, but I could see no mistakes in it.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO PAUL PIEHLER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

27 Aug 63

Dear Piehler

Both your projects are very desirable, but of course of v. different weight. The allegories I hope you will get on with at once.[114](#) The encyclopedia, I take it, will need a v. large team and may hardly be completed in your own life-time. No matter for that: 'leave time to dogs & apes'[115](#) I fear experiment is the only way to find out what publishers can be interested.

I wd. once, I hope, have written you a more useful letter, but I'm now an extinct volcano. In July I was not expected to live and I am now an invalid, retired from all my jobs. Quite cheerful & comfortable, but not much of me here!

All the best possible wishes.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

P.S. They'll soon be thinking of a successor to my Chair at Cambridge. So watch the announcements if you think of applying. It might be worth a try.

TO CECIL HARWOOD (BOD): PC

The Kiln
29 Aug [1963]

Thanks. But there was no operation and the whole experience (the Nurses took it for granted I wd. die) was very gentle. It seems almost a pity, having reached the gate so easily, not to be allowed through—I shd. welcome a visit whenever it is convenient.

Jack

TO JOHN WARWICK MONTGOMERY (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

29 Aug 63

Dear Mr. Montgomery

I am afraid the days of my lecturing and travelling are over. Last July my death was hourly expected, and tho' I didn't get through the gate I have had to resign all my posts and settle down (not unhappily) to the life of an invalid Your two lectures did me good and I shall constantly find them useful.¹¹⁶ Congratulations. The only criticism I'd venture wd. be that you have possibly a little bit over-called your hand about *Kyrios*. Admittedly, like Lat. *Dominus* and English *Lord*, it may represent JHVH: but like them it can also mean a human superior. The vocative *Κύριε* often needs to be translated 'Sir' rather than 'Lord'. Otherwise I don't think it could be bettered.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):

The Kilns etc

30 Aug 63

Dear Mary Willis

Thanks for yours of the 27. I am quite comfortable but v. easily tired. B.B.[117](#) is still away so I have all the mail to do. So you must expect my letters to be very few and very short. More a wave of the hand than a letter.

Yours
Jack

TO WALTER HOOPER (UNC):

The Kilns

3 Sept 63

Dear Walter

Thanks, all goes well, and my mind seems to be recovering—I did a review for the Sunday Telegraph the other day,[118](#) so there's life in the old dog yet. Warnie is behaving very badly and is still in Eire, but we manage pretty well without him. I've got Paxford to come and sleep in the house in case I was 'taken bad' in the night.

I have had a visit from Dick Ladborough who sang your praises as loud as you sang his: in fact you have won 'golden opinions from all sorts of people'.[119](#) The books are all on shelves now but not yet sorted. I need not say you are missed. If I *could* forget you Mrs. M.[120](#) wouldn't let me!

Yours
Jack

TO NATHAN COMFORT STARR (W): PC

The Kilns etc.
4 Sept 63

Term will never again begin for me. Last July I was thought to be dying, oxygen-tent and Last Unction and everything *en régle*. I am now retired and immobilised on one floor of this house. But glad to be visited (an hour or so) if such an extinct volcano as I now am is worth visiting. Almost any date will do. The early afternoon is the best time. This house is hard to find. Tell the driver that my entry is a gateless opening under trees off Kiln Lane immediately beyond Netherwoods Rd.

C.S.L.

TO JOAN LANCASTER (BOD):

The Kilns

7 Sept 63

Dear Joan

Your letter is full of things that I'd like to reply to properly, but I'm not up to it. Last July I was thought to be dying. I am now an invalid, retired from all my jobs, and not allowed upstairs. My brother is away and I have to cope with all the mail. Forgive me.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MICHAEL P. PERROTT (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
8 Sept 63

Thank you very much. To know that one has been so used always gives pleasure—pleasure of a rather awe struck kind. I remind myself frequently that any one, or any thing, may be used: e.g. Balaam's donkey! With all good wishes.

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

11 Sept 63

My dear Arthur

Last July I had a 'coma' of about 24 hours and was believed to be dying. When I recovered consciousness my mind was disordered for many days and I had all sorts of delusions. Very quaint ones some of them, but none painful or terrifying.

I have had to resign my Chair and Fellowship at Cambridge and now live here as an invalid; not allowed upstairs. But quite comfortable and cheerful.

The only real snag is that it looks as if you and I shall never meet again in this life. This often saddens me v. much.

W., meanwhile, has completely deserted me. He has been in Ireland since June and doesn't even write, and is, I suppose, drinking himself to death. He has of course been fully informed of my condition and more than one friend or more has written him strong appeals but without the slightest result. But Paxford and Mrs Miller look after me v. well and if it weren't for the horrid amount of letter writing I now have to do, we could really get on v. well without him.

Tho' I am by no means unhappy I can't help feeling it was rather a pity I did revive in July. I mean, having been glided so painlessly up to the Gate it seems hard to have it shut in one's face and know that the whole process must some day be gone thro' again, and perhaps far less pleasantly! Poor Lazarus! But God knows best.

I am glad you are fairly well and have a housekeeper. But oh Arthur, never to see you again!...

Yours
Jack

TO MRS FRANK L. JONES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

19 Sept 63

Dear Mrs. Jones

Thank you for your most undeserved kindness in sending me a book. I shall try it soon, but I'm now a feeble reader and a still feebler letter writer. In July I was thought to be dying—*not at all* an unpleasant experience, but I have had to resign from all my jobs and live on a diet and not even go upstairs. In a word, I'm rather an extinct volcano, but quite cheerful. Forgive me this short and inadequate scrawl—I can't really manage more.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO FATHER PETER MILWARD SJ (W):

[The Kilns
September? 1963]

Dear Father Milward

A few months ago I was not expected to live and received supreme unction. My mind was also disordered for a week or so. It is doubtful whether I shall ever again write any more of a letter than this.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

While Hooper was staying at The Kilns, Lewis told him in various conversations of his greatest worry: that, if he died first, Warnie would have nothing to live on. This led to a friendly argument between Lewis and Hooper. In short, Lewis believed his royalties would dwindle to almost nothing three years after his death; Hooper believed that on the contrary, 'because his books were so good' and 'because his readers were not stupid', his books would increase in popularity. On receiving the letter that follows, Hooper reminded Lewis of this argument.

TO WALTER HOOPER (UNC):

[The Kilns]

20 Sept 63

My dear Walter

We get on reasonably well, tho' we all greatly miss, not only your utility, but your companionship. No one has ever so endeared himself to the whole household.

The noble Arthurian volumes continue to arrive, [121](#) but are not yet on the shelves. The work of arranging all my books in their new homes, tho' delightful, goes on v. slowly, for I am not strong enough to do more than a little each day.

Now, about the future.

It is entirely reasonable that you shd have a salary and a darn good one, and I feel I have been rather sponging on your kindness. But what it may be proper for you to ask may also be impossible for me to do. I dare not at present increase my expenses. In this country one is taxed each year on the income of the previous year. One's first year in retirement is therefore very alarming. And if, on top of the drop in income, there are the expenses of an illness, and some rather heavy and unexpected expenses for David—well you see. I am v. ashamed, not of confessing the situation, but of refusing the wholly just demand from a man to whom I already owe more than any money could repay. But you see, having you as a paid secretary wd. be a *luxury*, and I've no right to imperil those who depend on me for the sake of a luxury to myself.

On other grounds, I couldn't recommend you to come in January. Mrs Miller and I talked it over and both concluded that an English house in an English winter wd. be misery for you. Our central-heating apparatus is v. primitive (nothing like yours) and we can afford to use it only during *very* cold snaps.

If you can afford to come in June, you will be thrice welcome. W. is still away. I fear he'll kill himself if this goes on much longer.

Our plums are splendid this year.

With all our loves.

Yours
Jack

TO FRANCIS ANDERSON (P):[122](#)

Magdalene College,
Cambridge.

23 Sept 63

Dear Mr. Anderson

I don't think Tolkien influenced me,[123](#) and I am certain I didn't influence him. That is, didn't influence *what* he wrote. My continual encouragement, carried to the point of nagging, influenced him v. much to write at all with that gravity and at that length. In other words I acted as a midwife not as a father. The similarities between his work and mine are due, I think, (a) To nature—temperament. (b) To common sources. We are both soaked in Norse mythology, Geo. MacDonald's fairy-tales, Homer, *Beowulf*, and medieval romance. Also, of course, we are both Christians (he, an R.C.).

The relevance of your problem to 'Higher Criticism' is extremely important.[124](#) Reviewers of his books and mine, both friendly & hostile, constantly put forward imaginary histories of their composition. I do not think any *one* of these has ever borne the slightest resemblance to the real history. (e.g. they think his deadly Ring is a symbol of the atom-bomb. Actually his myth was developed long before the atom bomb had been heard of).

You see the moral. These critics, in dealing with us, have every advantage which modern scholars lack in dealing with Scripture. They are dealing with authors who have the same mother tongue, the same education, and inhabit the same social & political world as their own, and inherit the same literary traditions. In spite of this, when they tell us how the books were written they are all wildly wrong! After that, what chance can there be that any modern scholar can determine how Isaiah or the Fourth Gospel—and I'd add *Piers Plowman*—came into existence? I shd. put the odds at 10,000 to 1 against you all. (Especially when, as I am sure is *not* your case,

many have become Higher Critics without first learning to be critics. They don't know by the *smell*, as a real critic does, the difference in myth, in legend, and a bit of primitive reportage). I suspect that a few centuries hence the whole art of Higher Criticism will seem as strange an aberration of the human mind as Astrology.

You may well be right about my parentheses.¹²⁵ Parenthesis is such a common feature of conversation (including children's conversation) that I had thought a reader aloud could easily represent it by his voice—in fact that the visible brackets or dashes were a road-sign meaning 'To be said a little lower and quicker.' But I fully admit that the proof of the pudding is in the eating and 'What the cook thought' is no defence. He's 'not paid to think'

The Narnian series is not exactly allegory. I'm not saying 'Let us represent in terms of märchen the *actual* story of this world.' Rather 'Supposing the Narnian world, let us guess what form the activities of the Second Person or Creator, Redeemer, and Judge might take there.' This, you see, overlaps with allegory but is not quite the same.

I don't think a marsh-wiggle is like a hobbit. The hobbit is essentially a cheerful, complacent, sanguine little creature. If Puddleglum is like any of Tolkien's characters, I'd call him 'a *good* Gollum'

Thanks for all the kind things you say.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford
31 [30] Sept 63

Dear Miss Douglass,

Thanks for your kind note. Yes, autumn is really the best of the seasons: and I'm not sure that old age isn't the best part of life. But of course, like Autumn, it doesn't *last*!

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO SISTER MADELEVA CSC (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

3 Oct 63

Dear Sister Madeleva

Thank you for your most kind letter. I will direct Fabers to send you a copy of the little book, but it may shock your pupils. It is 'A Grief Observed' from day to day in all its rawness and sinful reactions and follies. It ends with faith but raises all the blackest doubts *en route*.

Since my wife's death I have been very ill myself and last July I was, while unconscious given extreme unction. It wd. have been such an easy death that one almost regrets having had the door shut in one's face—but *nella sua voluntade è nostra pace*.¹²⁶

I am now retired from my work and live as an invalid, but am quite contented and cheerful. I am afraid laziness has more to do with this than sanctity! All blessings.

Yours most sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO DEREK BREWER (P): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

8 Oct. [1963]

Yes, certainly.¹²⁷ All good wishes. I had to retire (they thought I was dying last July) but I'm quite comfortable and cheery.

C.S.L.

TO WALTER HOOPER (UNC):

The Kilns

11 Oct 63

Dear Walter

No, you don't seem 'cool and calculating' in any save an entirely honourable and creditable sense.

I don't see how getting into a College—presumably as a Research Student—wd. help either your pocket or mine. This simply adds to ordinary living expenses those of fees etc.

Of course I can provide board, lodging, washing and (v. inadequate) heating. W. is now home. This means that you and I can write off the study with its stove.¹²⁸ I don't think we can manage a fire in the middle room upstairs.¹²⁹ It is a v. old fashioned and uneconomical grate wh. we have never used. There is an electric heater for that room, but that will do only for autumn & spring: not for winter. This means that you and I wd. have to share the Common room fire. No objection to that. But there's only one table. This means if we both want to work, we must do so by the dining room fire, which of course has to be cleared every lunch-and dinner-time.

Now about money. It's not so much that I can do nothing as that I am ashamed to offer to a scholar and a gentleman what a servant wd. reject as an insult. I could go (forgive me—I can hardly bear to write it down) to £5 a week.

Well, there it is. And I still think you'd be much wiser not to come till, say, April at the earliest. Not only the heating problem. There's always the chance W. might resent your presence (if he did, *you* wd. never know. He is the politest of men). Also, that he might *welcome* it as finally excusing him from all responsibilities to me, and so go more often on the binge.

All this my *prudence* says. Don't ever doubt that the day of your return, whenever and on whatever conditions, will be one of rejoicing to me. Your absence makes a cavity like a drawn tooth!

Yours
Jack

TO JEANNETTE HOPKINS (P):¹³⁰

The Kilns etc

12 Oct 63

Dear Miss Hopkins

Thanks for your letter. The statement that I hold the Chair at Cambridge is a mistake. I had to retire from it, on grounds of health, last July.

I think that to keep people guessing about Malcolm is better publicity than any answer wd. be!

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO LORNA WIGNEY (P):¹³¹ PC

[The Kilns]

15 Oct. 63

I think, don't you?, the Pevensey children picked up the rather old-fashioned way of talking from living with old Professor Kirk, who was of course a Square: perhaps even a Cube?

C. S. Lewis

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford.

15 Oct. 63

Dear Miss Douglass,

Thanks for the delightful *Horn-Book*—where I find some old friends in pleasant surroundings.¹³² I'd write more, only I'm not very well at present.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY WILLIS SHELBURNE (W):¹³³

The Kilns

17 Oct 63

Dear Mary Willis

Perhaps I might be able to make up what is lacking of your hospital coverage. How much wd. it be?

In great haste. The papers, drat 'em, have all published a bit about my illness & retirement with the result that I have countless letters of sympathy (some from total strangers) to answer. As if hours of loathsome letter-writing every day were a good rest-cure for a sick man. How *can* people indulge their sentimental 'kindness' by such actual cruelty?

Yours
Jack

TO THOMAS CONGDON (P):[134](#)

The Kilns
Headington Quarry
Oxford

17 Oct 63

Dear Mr. Congdon:

1. I nearly died last July and am just crawling back to life. I'd like to have a try at that article but I must warn you I may fail.[135](#) Is this any good to you, or is it for practical purposes no better than a refusal?

2. It wd. be impossible to discuss the 'right to happiness' without discussing a formula that is rather sacred to Americans about the 'right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness'.[136](#) I'd do so with respect. But I'd have to point out that it can only mean 'the right to pursue happiness by legitimate means', i.e., 'people have a right to do only whatever they have a right to do.' Would your publisher like this?

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO JEANNETTE HOPKINS (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

18 Oct. 63

Dear Miss Hopkins

Thank you for the letter in which you kindly undertook to pay an allowance out of my royalties to my stepson (DAVID L. GRESHAM, MESIVTA RABBI CHAIM BERLIN, 350 STONE (or STOBE?) AVE, BROOKLYN 12, NEW YORK).¹³⁷ I have now had two successive letters from him explaining that he has received nothing: the second quite frantic, as is not unnatural in a youngster who finds himself increasingly piling up debts in a wholly strange city. I am nearly out of my mind about the business myself.

May I implore you to send him 67 dollars at once and to let me know at once that you have done so? And after that, 37 dollars on the 1st of every calendar month till further notice.

I am sorry to be importunate. Invalids, you know, are fussy.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD):

The Kilns

18 Oct. 63

Dear Jock

The *Letters to C.*¹³⁸ will not be dedicated to anyone. HB¹³⁹ had no business to assume that they would.

If any of my corrections in the page-proofs contradict those in the HB text, disregard HB. Some future Research Beetle can then write a thesis on the textual problems. And if you destroy this correspondence as soon as it has served its turn he can have all the more fun with it!

I hope I have committed no enormity in correcting the HB proofs—they were only galleys—as soon as they arrived? Neither your rights, nor theirs, nor Spencer's, seemed to me to be involved. Mac's successor at HB (Miss Hopkins) is perhaps rather a fuss-bag and I just let her have her head.

Yours

Jack

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):

The Kilns,

Headington Quarry,
Oxford

18 Oct 63

Dear Nan—

Of course I remember you. And rejoice to find you still the same. With *formidabilior fera Camilla*¹⁴⁰ and *κάροδαμα βλέπουσα*.¹⁴¹ You wd. not be easy to forget. For when you invited me I was not the only ‘fruity’ person present. And still impenetrably wrong about Statius? And still unaware that the objection to the form *Scotch* is a modern fact, quite unknown to Sir Walter?¹⁴²

If you’re ever in these parts come and see me and we shall go at all things hammer and tongs in the old style. My mind has not, I trust, decayed so badly as my handwriting. I’ve just re-read the *Iliad* and never enjoyed it so much. All one’s doubts about its unity came, I now see, from reading it too slowly.

God bless you. You are the liveliest and learnedest of my daughters.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO PAUL PIEHLER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

18 Oct 63

Dear Piehler

No, I don’t now feel up to being a sponsor.¹⁴³ I nearly died in July and am now retired and living as an extinct volcano. In particular, my memory is very much impaired. I couldn’t now go beyond vague eulogy, couldn’t *characterise* your work in the way that really works. I would be most glad

to if I could—but better not to do this at all if I can't do it well. *Solve senescentem*.¹⁴⁴ You'll do better without me, Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO COLIN BAILEY (W):¹⁴⁵

The Kilns,
Oxford
18 Oct. 63

Thanks for your kind words. *Perelandra* is my favourite too.
C. S. Lewis

TO CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS (CAM):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

19 Oct 63

Dear Sir

A few days ago I discovered your cheque of April 30 for £112-10-0, which had been mislaid during the general disorganisation occasioned by my illness. It will be lodged in Barclay's Bank this morning.

With thanks and apologies.

Yours faithfully

C. S. Lewis

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD): PC

21 Oct [1963]

Yes, I'd welcome a visit whenever you are in or near Oxford. But for the present I will 'allow Gomme to rejoice'.¹⁴⁶ Have you tried E. Nesbit on your young Hector?

C.S.L.

TO BASIL WILLEY (BOD):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

22 Oct 63

My dear Basil

Yes, I would like to have seen much more of you than I did. But at our age terms flash past like telegraph posts seen from an express.

I am finding retirement full of compensation. It was lovely to reflect that I am under no obligation to read Rowse on the Sonnets.¹⁴⁷ I have re-read the *Iliad* instead. Even the Bishop of Woolworth's I needn't read.¹⁴⁸ I am like the dead man in Henry More's poem—

Horse-hoofs that knock upon his grassie door

*He answers not.*¹⁴⁹

I have an idea that Cambridge ten years' hence might suit us both [better] than the Cambridge we have known. Some of the younger men express great dissatisfaction at the rule of Downing.¹⁵⁰

I hope your success will follow you, in giving lectures that support the Moralists paper.¹⁵¹ That, though a theoretical absurdity, has always seemed to me in practice the great sheet-anchor. If it goes, then our English school, with its neglect of language, becomes purely a school of literary criticism. And criticism, thus isolated, seems to me a positively mischievous instrument of education.

I delight to be visited—the sooner, and oftener, the better.

Yours

Jack

TO WALTER HOOPER (UNC):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,

Oxford
23 Oct. 63

Dear Walter

Prudence having had her say, honour is now satisfied and I can settle down to enjoy the result which was the one I always hoped for.¹⁵² We look forward to seeing you on Jan 3rd or 4th.

The d____d newspapers have all published paragraphs about my illness and retirement, as a result of which I am inundated with letters of condolence. Otherwise all well

Yours

Jack

TO ELIZABETH MCCULLOUGH (P):¹⁵³ TS

414/63

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
23rd October 1963.

Dear Miss McCullough,

It is always gratifying to be remembered by old pupils, and especially when they write in such warm terms as you do. It gives me much pleasure that you should have taken the trouble to write, and I'm glad to say that the doctor tells me I'm getting on satisfactorily.

With all good wishes.

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis¹⁵⁴

**TO THE MASTER AND FELLOWS OF MAGDALENE
COLLEGE (MC):**

The Kilns
25 Oct. 63

Dear Master and Colleagues,

The ghosts of the wicked old women in Pope 'haunt the places where their honour died'.¹⁵⁵ I am more fortunate, for I shall haunt the place whence the most valued of my honours came.¹⁵⁶

I am constantly with you in imagination. If in some twilit hour anyone sees a bald and bulky spectre in the Combination Room or the garden, don't get Simon to exorcise it,¹⁵⁷ for it is a harmless wraith and means nothing but good.

If I loved you all less I shd. think much of being thus placed ('so were I equall'd with them in renown')¹⁵⁸ beside Kipling and Eliot. But the closer and more domestic bond with Magdalene makes that side of it seem unimportant.

Thank everyone.

Yours always,

Jack

TO PAULINE BANNISTER (W): PC

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry, Oxford
25 Oct 63

Thank you for your kind and interesting letter. My troubles have been the merest trivialities compared with yours, and when, last July, the doctors expected my death at any moment, the experience, so far as I was concerned, was entirely painless: even pleasant. Retirement, too, has its consolations. I very much hope better times are now in store for you.

C. S. Lewis

TO NANCY WARNER (P):¹⁵⁹

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
26 Oct. 63

Dear Mrs. Warner

Thank you for your most kind letter. I feel like purring!

Please remember me to your third son. I was very sorry the course of events separated us. He is not only a very promising scholar but the best mannered man of his generation I have ever met.

I suppose your philosopher son¹⁶⁰—what a family you have been privileged to bring into the world!—means the chapter in which Puddle-glum puts out the fire with his foot. He must thank Anselm and Descartes for it,

not me. I have simply put the 'Ontological Proof' in a form suitable for children. And even that is not so remarkable a feat as you might think.¹⁶¹ You can get into children's heads a good deal which is quite beyond the Bishop of Woolwich.

I don't know how you discovered that I am N. W. Clerk. If it was from internal evidence, you must be a good critic.¹⁶² Please don't tell people. I mean, in general. A confidential whisper in any particular case where you think it wd. do good, is another matter.

No. Francis told me nothing of your story. A nice girl might possibly tell her tutor a thing like that: a nice boy wouldn't, you know.

With most cordial good wishes.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JANE DOUGLASS (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
26th October 1963

Dear Miss Douglass,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 23rd. I too hope that moderate health will remain to me so that I shall be able to go on writing and do all the things I've wanted to do, but been too busy to tackle. So far however since my retirement almost my whole day has been occupied in answering letters of condolence!

I'm encouraged by my doctor's latest report; he tells me that he is quite satisfied with my condition.

With all best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis¹⁶³

TO RUTH BROADY (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
26th October 1963.

Dear Ruth Broady,

Many thanks for your kind letter, and it was very good of you to write and tell me that you like my books; and what a very good letter you write for your age!

If you continue to love Jesus, nothing much can go wrong with you, and I hope you may always do so. I'm so thankful that you realized to [the] 'hidden story' in the Narnian books. It is odd, children nearly *always* do, grown ups hardly ever.

I'm afraid the Narnian series has come to an end, and am sorry to tell you that you can expect no more.

God bless you.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis¹⁶⁴

TO DELMAR BANNER (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry
Oxford
29 Oct. 63

My dear Banner

Thanks for your kind letter. Perhaps you and I were nearly dying at the same time? My adventure was in July—a long coma from which I was not expected to emerge. If your experience was anything like so gentle as mine you possibly share with me the feeling that, having reached the gates as sweetly as those who travelled by the ships of Phaeacia,¹⁶⁵ it is rather a pity to have found them shut and have the job all to do over again some day, and some not very distant day, and perhaps (who knows?) far less agreeably.

This sounds as if I were unhappy, but I'm not. I live the life of lotus-eater with, for once, a clear conscience. I doubt whether I can ever leave this house again and I am not even allowed upstairs. What then? I've just re-read the *Iliad* and never enjoyed it more, and have enjoyed to the full some beautiful autumn weather. I hope you are as comfortable as I.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO KATHY KRISTY (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
29th October 1963.

Dear Miss Kristy,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 23rd, and I'm sorry that the one you wrote me in the summer miscarried. How am I? I'm pretty well for a man who has become a permanent invalid, and if I cannot make much use of my legs I can still use my head, and am able to continue to write.

I hope you are enjoying your work on the newspaper, and that the savings programme will continue; there is no holiday so good as the one you have to save up for.

With all good wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis¹⁶⁶

TO JOCELYN GIBB (BOD): PC

The Kilns
30 Oct. 63

Crisis! Did I make on p. 155 (para 4. 7) the indispensable correction—?

for mirage even on a power
read mirage even, of a power

If not, save us before it is too late.¹⁶⁷ With apologies J.

TO MR YOUNG (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
31 Oct. 63

Dear Mr. Young

1. I believe in the Virgin Birth in the fullest and most literal sense: that is, I deny that copulation with a man was the cause of the Virgin's pregnancy.

2. It is not easy to define what we mean by an 'essentially human body'. The records show that Our Lord's Risen Body could pass through closed doors, which human bodies can't: but also that it could eat. We shall know

what a glorified body is when we have one ourselves: till then, I think we must acquiesce in mystery.

3. When Scripture says that Christ died ‘for’ us,¹⁶⁸ I think the word is usually ὑπέρ (on behalf of), not ἀντί (instead of). I think the ideas of sacrifice, Ransom, Championship (over Death), Substitution etc. are all images to *suggest* the reality (not otherwise comprehensible to us) of the Atonement. To fix on any *one* of them as if it contained and limited the truth like a scientific definition wd. in my opinion be a mistake.

4. All ascriptions of human passions to God are analogical. The wrath of God: ‘something in God of which the best image in the created world is righteous indignation’. I think it quite a mistake to try to soften the idea of anger by substituting something like disapproval or regret. Even with men real anger is far more likely than cold disapproval to lead to full reconciliation. Hot love, hot wrath.

5. I never heard of the IVF movement. I know of the SCM but have made no study of it which wd. justify me in passing judgement on it.¹⁶⁹ Your questions are not in the least offensive.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO JEANNETTE HOPKINS (P):

The Kilns etc

4 Nov 63

Dear Miss Hopkins

Thanks very much for your kindness. He is rather a corker, isn't he?¹⁷⁰ Give him a reminder about acknowledging each payment the moment he gets it. He is not dishonest but he can be rude! I am, and shall continue to be, most grateful for any countenance you can show him.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO KATHLEEN RAINE (BOD):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
7 Nov. 63

Dear Kathleen

Yes. Once one goes in for Blake (or Milton or Kipling) one meets, disguised as literary critics, a great many dissentients of quite a different sort. But you'll knock 'em all down like a second Camilla. Plenty of fact, reasoning as brief and clear as English sunshine, and no personal comment at all.

P. Caspian, was it? Sales show that it is *longo intervallo*¹⁷¹ the least popular of the Narnian books.

I am, as you say, house-bound—even floor-bound: but no reason why *you* shouldn't come and see *me* whenever you are in these parts With my duty, Yours
Jack

TO BONAMY DOBRÉ (W):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford
7 Nov. 63

Dear Dobrée

Thanks. I am, as you say, being 'very good'. But so far I rather like it. It was lovely to feel that I need not read Rowse on the Sonnets! Instead I re-read The Iliad, the *Daisy Chain*, *Bleak House* and *In Memoriam*: a good balanced diet. I hope you are now quite out of the woods?

Thank you for your kind words about my OHEL volume. Poor Wilson had a far more difficult assignment, and I'm afraid it weighed on him.¹⁷²

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO KATHY KRISTY (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,

Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
11th November 1963.

Dear Miss Kristy,

Thanks for your note of the 5th, and I hope you will enjoy the Screwtape Letters which has been the most popular of all my books.

I sympathize with your 'maddening experience', but I can assure you that this is one of the occupational risks of authorship; the same sort of thing has happened to me more than once. There is nothing to be done about it!

With all best wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis¹⁷³

TO MARY VAN DEUSEN (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry
Oxford.
16th November 1963.

Dear Mary,

Many thanks for your letter of the 9th, but I don't understand how it comes about that you have'nt heard from us since August. Warren tells me that he had a letter from you on 20th October which he answered on the 24th of the same month. So there now, what do you say to that? He I'm glad to say is completely recovered, and as regards myself, I am thank God, very much better; but I had a bad time in the summer. I'm afraid I'm condemned to an invalid life for the rest of my days—not allowed to go upstairs for one thing, and on a strict diet for another—but when I look around me and see how much worse off many other people are, I am grateful for my condition. I am able to write, and my friends are very good about coming to see me.

I was glad to hear about Paul, though from your account he is like the curate's egg—good in parts;¹⁷⁴ but let us hope that as he grows older he will become less of a problem. I can sympathize with you, for in this house we too have to try to cope with the problem of adolescence; the elder of the boys is now at a Jewish college in New York, and is writing me much more maturely than he did a year ago, so I have hopes for him. The younger is

passing through an unsettled stage at a crammers, where he is trying to get his 'O Level' certificate—a thing without which there is no entry into the white collar class. Sometimes I doubt if he is even ambitious to do so, and I fear that he was attracted by the idea of getting into the big money on the assembly line at the motor factory, where pay packets of £25 or £30 a week are quite common.¹⁷⁵ However after all, it is *his* life, not mine which trembles in the balance.

Like you, we have not much news. Indeed I think I have told you all I can. It becomes more and more evident every day that we are certain to have a Labour government in a few months time, which I suppose means back to the old scheme of austerity for everyone and extravagance for the government. Worse still, we expect them to get in with a majority which will take at least ten years to break down.¹⁷⁶ So it looks as if Warren and I had seen our last Conservative government.

I am glad you are still in love with Hendersonville, and envy you your autumnal colouring. Ours is I think poor this year, and those who have been to your country in the fall tell me that ours, even at its best, is not to be compared with that of America. Near here they are about to demolish part of a lovely beechwood in order to straighten the main London Rd, drat them. There are times when I wonder if the invention of the internal combustion engine was not an even greater disaster than that of the hydrogen bomb!

With love from both of us,
yours ever,
Clive

TO MRS FRANK L. JONES (W): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
16th November 1963.

Dear Mrs Jones,

Many thanks for your card. There was certainly nothing unpleasant, that is to say, *painful*, about my spell in hospital this summer, but I learnt afterwards that it was touch and go whether I survived. But thank God I pulled through, and can now say I'm as well as I ever shall be again. I must

resign myself to an invalid life for the future, coupled with a strict diet; but when I look around me and see how many worse troubles afflict others I have great cause for gratitude. I can still write, and my friends are very good about visiting me; in short, things might be very much worse.

It is like your usual kindness to offer to send me some luxuries, but if you did, they would probably turn out to be forbidden fruit; for I am allowed no *meat* of any kind—flesh, fowl, or good red herring! But though I am unable to take advantage of your offer, I am none the less grateful to you for making it.

From a man in my condition, what news can you expect? I rarely venture further afield than a stroll in the garden. Once a week I attend a reunion of old friends at one of the Oxford taverns.¹⁷⁷ (*Beer* thank goodness is not on the list of things denied me). Sometimes some kind person takes me out for a run in a car.¹⁷⁸ Otherwise I write, read, and answer letters; one day is like another. But you are not to think of me as unhappy or bored.

Our papers at the moment are filled with nothing but politics, a subject in which I cannot take any great interest. My brother tells me gloomily that it is an absolute certainty that we shall have a Labour government within a few months, with all the regimentation, austerity, and meddling which they so enjoy. Perhaps however it will not be so bad this time, for Sir Stafford Cripps, the late nursery governess of England is dead.¹⁷⁹ But if they get in with a big majority, it will take ten years to break it down—which means that both of us have in all probability seen our last Conservative government.

One of my stepsons is now in New York, a student at a Talmudical College there. The younger one is at a crammers where he is trying to pass ‘O Level’ and if you fail to get this certificate, the ranks of the white collar class are closed to you. A fact which does not seem to worry him in the least. However that is his affair; it is his own life he has to live, not mine!

With all best wishes to you both, from us both,
yours ever,
C. S. Lewis

TO MURIEL BRADBROOK (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

18 Nov. 63

Dear Muriel

That'll be fine. Sat. 8th Dec. wd. do me excellently. If you come about 4 o'clock you shall have tea and scones in the kitchen: if you prefer it, it's sherry or whiskey in the study.

I'm ashamed to tell you that I *don't* mind being retired. It is lovely to see ghastly new books announced and know one needn't read them. You of all people live where the shelling is heaviest. But I liked your account of Tom's MS, all tarry, misty, and heathery.¹⁸⁰ Robbinism must be pretty horrid—I got out at the right moment.¹⁸¹

Yours

Jack

TO NAN DUNBAR (BOD):

The Kilns,
Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.

21 Nov 63

Dear Nan

Your territory (H. QUARRY, in postal language but not in conversation) is bounded on the W. by Windmill Rd, on the North by the London Rd, and on the E. by the Southern By-Pass wh. runs S. from Cowley.

When you have crossed this (with much caution) you will face a row of villas called Green Rd. Turn right (= E) up Kiln Lane. First Netherwoods Rd on your right (= S) and continue about 10 yds. along Kiln Lane. You will then see on your right a tiny library and, immediately beyond it an entry under trees (with no gate) turning due S.—labelled The Kilns and Tewsfeld. Then you will be here. Thurs. Dec. 14 at about 11. a.m. wd. suit me well.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO PHILIP THOMPSON (BOD): TS

The Kilns, Kiln Lane,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
21st November 1963.

Dear Philip Thompson,

To begin with, may I congratulate you on writing such a remarkably good letter; I certainly could not have written it at your age. And to go on with, thank you for telling me that you like my books, a thing an author is always pleased to hear. It is a funny thing that all the children who have written to me see at once who Aslan is, and grown ups *never* do!

I have'nt myself read the Puffin reprint you refer to,¹⁸² so of course missed the fault; but I will call the publisher's attention to it.

Please tell your father and mother how glad I am to hear that they find my serious books of some value.

With all best wishes to you and to them,

yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis¹⁸³

Lewis's beloved brother, Warnie, now picks up the story:

Once again,—as in the earliest days—we could turn for comfort only to each other. The wheel had come full circle: once again we were together in the little end room at home, shutting out from our talk the ever-present knowledge that the holidays were ending, that a new term fraught with unknown possibilities awaited us both.

Jack faced the prospect bravely and calmly. 'I have done all I wanted to do, and I'm ready to go,' he said to me one evening. Only once did he show any regret or reluctance: this was when I told him that the morning's mail included an invitation to deliver the Romanes lecture.¹⁸⁴ An expression of sadness passed over his face, and there was a moment's silence: then 'Send them a very polite refusal.'

Friday, 22 November 1963, began much as other days: there was breakfast, then letters and the crossword puzzle. After lunch he fell asleep in his chair: I suggested that he would be more comfortable in bed, and he went there. At four I took in his tea and found him drowsy

*but comfortable. Our few words then were the last: at five-thirty I heard a crash and ran in, to find him lying unconscious at the foot of the bed. He ceased to breathe some three or four minutes later.*¹⁸⁵

It was inevitable that news of Lewis's death would be somewhat overshadowed by the death the same day of President John F. Kennedy. He would not have minded at all: it was his hidden friendship with God he treasured most. His funeral took place in Holy Trinity Church, Headington Quarry, on 26 November—three days short of his sixty-fifth birthday—and was conducted by Father Ronald Head, with a lesson read by Austin Farrer. Following the service Lewis was buried in the churchyard of Holy Trinity Church.

*Too devastated to attend the funeral, Warnie nevertheless had a stone made for his brother's grave, inscribed with a treasured family quotation from King Lear.*¹⁸⁶ *The stone, which would cover not only his brother's grave but—ten years later—his own as well, reads:*

*In Loving Memory of
My Brother
CLIVE STAPLES LEWIS
Born Belfast 29th November 1898
Died in this Parish
22nd November 1963*

Men Must Endure Their Going Hence

*WARREN HAMILTON LEWIS
Major Royal Army Service Corps
Born Belfast 16th June 1895
Died in this Parish
9th April 1973*

SUPPLEMENT

This Supplement contains letters not included in Volumes I and II. The letters to Owen Barfield were omitted from Volume I for reasons of space. It was later decided to include in the Collected Letters as many of Lewis's letters as possible.

After three unhappy years at Wynyard School, Watford, Hertfordshire—the 'Belsen' of Surprised by Joy—Warnie Lewis won his freedom and in 1909 he became a student at Malvern College, Malvern, Worcestershire. He was very happy there, and in May 1913 he became a school prefect. Jack Lewis, after two equally unhappy years at Wynyard School (1908–10), spent one term at Campbell College in Belfast, after which he was sent in January 1912 to Cherbourg School, a preparatory school in Malvern. It was only yards from Malvern College, and besides having his elder brother close by, he made a great deal of progress. At the time Jack wrote the following letter to his father, Albert Lewis was worried about Warnie who in May 1913 had been degraded from being a prefect after he was caught smoking.

TO HIS FATHER (LP IV: 36):¹

Cherbourg.
22/6/13.

My dear Papy,

I am sorry you should be so worried about Warnie: I think I knew about it a day or two before you. However, I hope he will be more cautious in future.

On Wednesday, in consideration of the scholarship we went for a sort of an expedition to a place near here, which was rather enjoyable. We had a match, which we won, against the Old Boys on Tuesday. It is rather a pity that the Parents Match scheme has fallen through. Much as I admire the spirit of true and generous humour which has led you to spare neither physical exertion nor cab windows for the edification, instruction, and recreation of the people of Malvern, I cannot but think that you would add in no small degree to your own reputation as a comedian, and the pleasure of

the spectators, by joining in a cricket match. The weather is still very hot here. Thank you very much for the 10 shillings. Only about 5 more weeks now.

your loving
son Jacks.

TO HIS FATHER (LP IV: 40–1):

Cherbourg.
Gt. Malvern.
29/6/13.

My dear Papy,

We—that is the top form—went to Worcester to see a county match the other day: and, although I am not interested in county cricket, we had a very pleasant outing. The weather is still very oppressive here.

I am glad, very glad, to hear that you have got rid of our offensive friend Harry. ² Perhaps, as you say, the new men are worse, but as long as they don't always work in front of the windows, I shall prefer them. There are only four more weeks on Tuesday. We had two matches this week, one of which we won and the other lost. I am afraid there is no more news.

your loving

son Jack

Warnie left Malvern College in June 1913. He was followed home by Jack, who before leaving Cherbourg won a scholarship to Malvern College. Warnie hoped to enter the Royal Military College at Sandhurst and pass from there into the Army Service Corps. For this he would need to pass the entrance examination, and Albert Lewis decided to have him tutored by his old headmaster, William T. Kirkpatrick,³ who was now living at Great Bookham, Surrey, and taking a few private pupils. Warnie reported to Gastons, Mr Kirkpatrick's house, on 10 September, and Jack arrived at Malvern College on 18 September, expecting to be very happy at a place his brother liked so much. He was given a room in School House.

TO HIS BROTHER (LP IV: 72):⁴

[Malvern College
20 September 1913]

My dear W.,

The new pres. ⁵ this term are Stone, ⁶ Browning, ⁷ and Bourne. ⁸ We have got study 24, the one next the pres. room. In it are Hardman II, ⁹ whose brother you knew, Anderson, Lodge (whom I detest), and myself.

This letter is being written only to stave off Jacks. ¹⁰ I shall write to you more fully at my leisure. Tassel, ¹¹ on hearing my name, inquired angrily if I were the brother of 'that other one'. Is not recruit drill a great game? You must be having a pretty plugging time at Kirk's? ¹² Cheer up however, it is only for a short time. Smugy¹³ inquires more tenderly for you, and I hear from home that Kirk writes of you with great affection. I shall have to stop now as it is Hall. ¹⁴ So far Malvern has gone well.

your affect.

brother Jack

TO HIS FATHER (LP IV: 73):

[Malvern College]

22/9/13.

My dear P.,

I am very sorry to have to write for so many things, but it can't possibly be helped. Could you please send me 7/-, as we have just had to pay for a study 5/6 each, and games and other subscriptions which will amount to about 3/-when all paid. How are things at home?

your loving

son Jack

TO HIS BROTHER (LP IV: 74):

[Malvern College
September 1913]

Dear W.,

Thanks for the letter which reached me during Monday breakfast. I am writing this in the seclusion of a newly bought study, and am consequently very bucked. I have asked Jacks about the pictures and he's going to 'see about' them. I left 12/6 at home for the 'History'. [15](#) On the last day of the hols. P. forced me to tell him where the attic key was. I really had no alternative but to comply. So far everything has gone quite well here. There are a good many enquiries about you and your estate. Can't write more now.
your affect.

brother Jack

TO HIS FATHER (LP IV: 80):

[Malvern College
5 October 1913]

My dear Papy,

I was very glad to get a second letter from you last week. I think it would be best if you were to write to the Old Boy¹⁶ about my giving my drawing.

The winter has set in here already, and we have had heavy rain yesterday at a match against the Aston Old Edwardians¹⁷ which we won. I am writing the account of it which will appear under Hichen's¹⁸ name in the Malvernian¹⁹—a curious but not disagreeable duty.

I have heard again from W. very cheerfully. I do hope he will get through this exam all right. However, even if he doesn't pass now, he will have another chance in the summer.

I have not heard from Tubbs²⁰ yet this term, but I suppose I shall later on. Jimmy made rather a good speech to the school on the first Monday morning re his leaving. However, I don't think he will be a great loss to us. I wonder whom we will get to replace the Old Boy? That will be rather a case of 'after a well grace actor leaves'.²¹

We had a long Mission meeting in the Gym. last Sunday, in which some person whose name I could not catch, spoke remarkably well. You must have had an intolerable time of it that Sunday. Poor W. complains bitterly that his only afternoon off is taken away from him by 'kind' people who force him to play tennis. If I had my way, every 'kind' person in Europe would be broken on the wheel.

your loving

son Jack

TO HIS FATHER (LP IV: 85):

[Malvern College]

13/10/13

My dear P.,

I should have liked very much to be an intelligent fly on the wall during R. Ponsonby's²² visit to Leeborough. ²³ How much did your amusement cost you? ²⁴

Yesterday there was an entertainment in the Gym, a dramatic recital by W.'s friend who did the Jew scene from the 'School for scandal'. ²⁵ This time he was very good in a Jacobs story, ²⁶ some bits of Kipling, and a satire on the trials of modern travelling. On the whole it was a very good show, although he overdid the thing in his serious bit, the 'Ballad of John Nicholson' by Newbolt. ²⁷

In our form this week we had a most exciting thing; one of the questions in our weekly exam was to draw a picture illustrating an incident in the book of Cicero which we're reading. My picture was marked top and pinned up on the form room door for several days. The James²⁸ came down and said it was 'spirited'—which may mean anything. This week we have got to make a translation of an ode of Horace into English verse. I ought to be able to do something there. ²⁹

'Antony and Cleopatra' is a hopeless play when you get into it. Smugy thinks so too; but 'Romeo and Juliet' which we are reading out of school for the Lea Shakespeare is good. ³⁰ I cannot write any more now as we have got to go to chapel.

your loving

son Jack

TO HIS FATHER (LP IV: 94):

Gt. Malvern.
Postmark: 2/11/13.

My dear P.,

Yesterday we had an event of great interest, the match of the Cherbourg Old Boys against Cherbourg. It was, of course, very pleasant to see the place and the people again, and I enjoyed it very much.

There has been another event this week also which pleased me, in the form of the classical orchestral concert, which was really exceedingly good. Among other items was a thing of Handel's from 'Berenice', [31](#) which I had never heard before and which I liked, and the flower song from Carmen. [32](#) The singer, Hubert Eisdell³³ broke down in the middle of the concert and could'nt go on. I felt very sorry for the man, as one must feel awful under such circumstances.

I suppose my half term report will reach you some time during this week. Write and tell me what it is like. I think Smugy knows that I am working, although I am very weak on some points. I cannot write more now as it is time for Chapel.

your loving

son Jack

TO HIS BROTHER (LP IV: 116):

Sunday,
Dec. 14th [1913]

Dear W.,

Write soon please and tell me when exactly you are coming down. I have'nt yet heard whether you passed your exams or not, but I should think you have. ³⁴ Anyway don't despair. Come down as soon as possible, say Wednesday. Can't write more now.

your loving

brother Jack

P.S. Don't be impatient about the sound box. I'll explain my plans later on.

TO HIS FATHER (LP IV: 120):

Saturday.

Postmark: 20/12/13

My dear P.,

I am very sorry that you got worried about me this week. I really have not had twenty minutes to myself since Sunday: we have been busy with exams etc. W. says he is coming down here on Saturday, and we are travelling on Tuesday.

Thanks for the questions about the books. The only thing I can think of at the moment is Gray. [35](#) He is the only English poet of any standing that we have'nt got, and so will 'fill a long felt want'.

I am very glad this term is over and am looking forward hugely to Wednesday morning. When shall we know about W's. exam? This suspense becomes tedious. I can't really write any more now, but I hope soon to talk with you in person soon. So good bye for a few days.

your loving

son Jack

TO HIS FATHER (LP IV: 141–2):

[Malvern College]

Postmark: 24/2/14

My dear Papy,

Judging by the descriptions enclosed lately in your letters of the social whirlwind at home, things are more than usually 'merry and bright'. Perhaps I am better off in that way now than in the holydays—now that that fact compensates for the various other disadvantages of life in England.

Well, the poem³⁶ was duly shown up. Although not 'sent up for good', it came out top, Smugy observing that he was tired of that metre; ³⁷ so that you see my fears were not without foundation. However he shall not have the same complaint to make again, and it is to be hoped that 'our muse' flows in other rhythms as well.

Last night one Dr. Levick, who had chased the pole with Captain Scott, ³⁸ came to lecture upon that subject. ³⁹ Among other interesting facts we heard of their cutting up their dinner of seal meat with a geological hammer, because it was frozen so hard. And each fragment, as it was cut, leaped across the hut: behaving, in short, just as stone would under the circumstances. Carving in their latitudes has many aspects of art and difficulty unknown to us. But, on the whole, it was not a good lecture. He had a good many interesting things to tell, but could not tell them, and what is more, did not seem to be interested in his own story. The slides were excellent.

Last Sunday I think I told you that I was asked to go up to Cherbourg. At the risk of repeating myself I must tell you that I accepted and had quite a pleasant afternoon. But while I was there, I suddenly realised that it wouldn't do to go back, although I have often felt wishes in that line. It is funny to think that you can quite drop out of the atmosphere of a place in a few months.

your loving

son Jack

TO HIS FATHER (LP IV: 184–5):

[Malvern College]

Postmark: 14/6/14

My dear Papy,

Thanks very much for the postal order which I was glad to get. But I had little pleasure from the sight of that alarming and disagreeable type written letter. I hope that there is nothing serious the matter, and that if there has been, it is now on the mend. ⁴⁰ Mind that you see a really competent doctor if the thing keeps on being troublesome, not Squeaky. ⁴¹ What exactly is the trouble? As soon as you are able to write, don't forget to let me know all the particulars of the case, as master Willy's type is not a very comforting or reassuring missive. ⁴² Here, next morning ushers in Speech Week, with its gaiety and 'patriotic' rejoicings: we shall soon be singing sentimental songs about the 'dear old limited company', while some of us pretend and others are actually made to imagine that we like being here. What artificial nonsense it all is! I have read the 'Prologue' for speech day (composed by Smugy), a neat, epigrammatic poem of some 50 English heroic coup-lets. ⁴³ But after that, how can anyone read these eulogies of our late headmaster with feelings other than contempt? Also the warm welcome to Preston? ⁴⁴ Would they not have bestowed them with equal cordiality on anyone else if he had been our headmaster? Even if he had practically ruined the school, we should still go on talking complimentary drivel and telling lies about the great things he never did.

This week you will get the half term report. And I think I may say with confidence that there will be a considerable improvement. The Greek Grammar and other 'bêtes noirs' have been going much better this term, and Smugy waxed quite complimentary on the subject. ⁴⁵

I do hope that by the time you read this you will be a good deal better: in any case, take care of yourself and don't be rash.

your loving

son Jack

TO HIS FATHER (LP IV: 202):

[Malvern College]

Postmark: 20/7/14.

My dear Papy,

I need hardly say how very sorry I was to hear from Aunt Annie⁴⁶ that you had got a relapse of your illness and were again confined to bed. I suppose the cause of it was that you were worried about business affairs, and went back to the office before you should have. You must be more careful next time: no matter what the state of affairs is. For as you yourself have often said, we shall always have enough to keep the wolf from the door: 'and after friends have done with hunger' as the shepherd says in Euripides, 'if they have but each other and the good green earth, who is happier than they?' ⁴⁷ Annie has again written me a very kind and useful letter about your health: she is really very good over this business, both, as you tell me, doing all she can for you at home and at the same time trying to do her best for Warnie and me abroad.

On Thursday night Preston invited myself and two other people to dinner, and it was really quite a pleasant function: Mrs. Preston especially, is a remarkably nice woman. Of course the usual questions about the political crisis in Ulster. ⁴⁸ I must confess that I am getting tired of playing the journalist to every one I meet in England. One is always more or less on trial on such occasions and it is hard at a moment's notice to make any adequate answer to such a wholesale question as 'What do you think about the Ulster business?' And the most difficult part is that you know that the people to whom you are talking are not really in sympathy with our party at all, but merely spying out the nakedness of the land.

The ordinary work of term ends this week and we begin the eternal nuisance of exams. I feel that they are really very inefficient tests of one's knowledge, since I have often done very well on a subject that I have made a mess of in the term and vice versa. But, whatever their intrinsic worth, they are always very welcome as a signal of the end of term. I am glad to say I shall see you again, all being well, on Wednesday week. So will you please book the berth for the night of Tuesday week. I hear you will have W. home this week, so we shall all be together again.

Hoping that you are a good deal better, I remain,

your loving

son Jack

Lewis was so unhappy at Malvern that his father agreed he should leave at the end of July 1914. On 19 September 1914 he arrived at Great Bookham to be tutored by William T. Kirkpatrick.

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Hillsboro, [49](#)
Western Rd,

Headington
Jan. 24th 1926

My dear Barfield,

It was a kind, if uneconomic, thought to send a copy to a certain purchaser. ⁵⁰ Many thanks. I have now read it through. Prior to any other criticism, you will be glad to know that I found it *all* interesting and enjoyable, I was nowhere inclined to skip, or anxious to get on to the next chapter. In other words it fulfils the first elementary condition of a good book: the basis without which higher merits are of no avail. It is completely and certainly *readable*.

Perfect clearness, at a first reading, I cannot claim for it: but this was hardly to be expected. I shall be able to say more about this when I have read it again. I don't mean, of course, any serious ambiguity or culpable difficulty: certainly no obscurity in *any* particular passage—only the parts are much clearer than the whole. By the bye, a good deal of this may be due to my knowing more about your outlook than I have (quâ reader) a right to know, and getting muddled because I am always trying to link up your statements with that background: *almost* all of it may be due to that. Or perhaps I want to end up with a *unity* (of mental growth) which the knowledge we possess does not really admit. In a way, too, this slight inconclusiveness or 'higgle-de-piggledyosity' of one's final impression, is not a drawback: it leaves me very anxious to go further: and possibly this power of suggestion has to be purchased by some little weakening of statement.

Suggestive it is nearly everywhere. No one can fail to get the feeling you had when you wrote it or feel windows opening in all directions. You have quite definitely succeeded in that way. The occasional levities (so dangerous) have all 'come off': specially the one about 'the oldest and safest of human occupations'. ⁵¹ The passage about early Christianity and the significance of persecution is admirable, and perhaps the best 'episode' (epic sense) in the book. The advance of the Aryans was well done, too, but we all expected it to be. Of course I disagree with your account of Plato and Aristotle and may have to explode it in a footnote some day, but there's no good thinking about that now. 'I said it very loud and clear, I went and shouted in your ear' ⁵²hellip;and you wouldn't listen—
Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή ⁵³

I have seen only one review (a good one) in The Observer, [54](#) but you probably have them all thro your agency. Dyer^{[55](#)} goes to the typist this week. Kindest regards to Mrs. Barfield.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM FORCE STEAD (W): [56](#)

Hillsboro
[1926]

Dear Stead—

I found your gallies this afternoon when I went into College and have just finished reading the book. [57](#) I have been forced to deal with it more hastily than I should wish and I feel in many ways incompetent to deal with it.

There is first the temperamental difference: and then the difficulty of a literary method which I have never practiced and have hardly studied at all. I hardly know by what canons to judge this sort of loosely connected and highly subjective mixture of anecdote and description: I don't care for it as done by Yeats & others and yours seems to me about as good as theirs. I am afraid this will seem less a compliment than a testimony to my utter incompetence.

I am much more interested in the philosophical part: it seems a very good gathering together in a popular form of several of the more wholesome trends of contemporary thought. It was a pity that determinism had to come in: because on the popular level both 'determinism' and 'free will' are nonsense, aren't they, and both really the same in the end. But you couldn't help that. [58](#)

I am more worried by an apparent inconsistency wh. you seem to remain in—like most of us. On the one hand the spirit is (to you) out of time: on the other, evolution in time is (to you) a thing of real spiritual significance. You say, indeed, that the spirit itself does not evolve, and I'm glad you do. But I don't feel that you have done very much towards reconciling the timelessness of the spirit with the value of its *apparent* adventures in time. Mind, I don't say they are incompatible, only that you have not reconciled them.

Again, in your pantheistic conclusion, should you not show that you are aware of some of the moral difficulties? I mean, if the spirit grows in the grass etc, and in the cancer and the murderer, if it does everything, must it not be simply the neutral background of good and evil? [59](#) Of course if you held that the spirit was in time you might make some play with the notion that the bad processes represented less developed grades of her activity—but you are debarred from that. I take it your spirit has no history. However, we all end in difficulties. On this side I think the book will be useful as a channel by which the Bergsonian evolutionism and idealistic metaphysic

(even if you have rather tied them up in a bag together than fused them) may reach the weaker brethren and protect them against ‘astronomical intimidation’. [60](#)

Thinking it over again tho’, I am a little startled at the various ingredients of the cordial you are giving them: Bergson, Croce, [61](#) Roman Catholicism-up-to-a-point, and ‘High Thoughtism’ as represented by Coué. [62](#) But I daresay it’s alright.

As to the narrative and descriptive passages with wh. you sweeten discourse, I can’t say much. I don’t understand this method, as I said, and can only humbly warn you of the dangers. It is dreadfully hard to convince a reader (tho’ of course your personal assurance would convince me as a man) that you kept on feeling appropriate and significant things at the rightful places. If a malignant reviewer wrote

*‘Who is the happy tourist, who is he
That every globe-trotter would wish to be’,*

could you defend yourself? Don’t be offended: I am not saying that: but I feel you are on terribly thin ice in Notre Dame, at Lourdes and at St. Peters’

The only particular (i.e. the only useful) criticisms I have to offer, are these 1. I shd. like all the passages about ‘this age’ or ‘our own time’ excised. Don’t sneer at contemporary thought, when your great merit is to be a representative of some of its most characteristic tendencies. *Particularize* on contemporary vices and follies if you like: but don’t talk as if you were ‘born out of due time’[63](#) while you are writing a book that couldn’t have been written except in the C 20th.

2. I shd. like the passage about the French kings cut out. I suggest that it is merely a re-emergence of something you legitimately felt at sixteen: at your age, talking about serious subjects, it only awakens distrust and alienates the reader.

3. Your barque on Oxford canal I can’t accept. Once again, if as a *man*, you tell me this happened, far be it from me to give you the lie in the throat. But if as an *artist* you tell me as *reader* that you arrived independently at the argument of the Kantian deduction of the categories, all in a flash, because someone asked you the time—*incredulus odi*. [64](#)

Please neglect anything wh. I have said if it is based on misunderstanding. So much for the book on the higher level, as a serious bit of thinking. On the [65](#)

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Hillsboro,
Western Rd,
Headington,

Oxford
[April 1926]

Dear Barfield,

Oh heavenly! I've no business to come and it means leaving in the lurch a brother who will be here, but damn it, this once, come what may—I'm going to take a moral holiday and come.

From 9th April (i.e. arriving at rendezvous on evening of 8th I hope) to the 11th, (i.e. leaving you on Monday) will be the best I can do. ⁶⁶ From the 2nd–4th wd. be much better for me, but I suppose you can't manage that? I vote for Newbury etc. as against the Cotswolds—and the more Savernake you can put into it the better.

I have 'puffed' your work in a lecture. Dymer has been accepted by Dents. Said it gave them 'extraordinary pleasure'. Let me know about all arrangements as soon as possible.

Yrs
C. S. Lewis

TO WILLIAM FORCE STEAD (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Wednesday
[9 June 1926]

Dear Stead

Thank you very much for the book. ⁶⁷ Your publishers deserve a word of thanks for something which will make such a handsome addition to my shelves. I have not, of course, had time to read it through again, but I have looked at some of the poems which, pursuing the argument, I rather neglected when you showed me the proofs. I think Thames Valley in Winter⁶⁸ and the Graveyard Among Mountains⁶⁹ are my favourites, tho' the blank verse Ponte Santa Trinita⁷⁰ ends with a very fine image. ⁷¹ Perhaps it is only my home-staying ignorance that guides my preferences to those that deal with England or (as in the Graveyard) with things that everyone can imagine in his own terms.

I will certainly do what little I can for the book but there are very few among my friends who are not either too hard up to buy any new books except by those who are already their favourite authors, or too utterly remote from your point of view to come within skirmishing distance. I enclose a parody which I am thinking of sending as a leg pull to T. S. Elliot's paper. ⁷² Please let me know if it would do. Yours, with very many thanks & best wishes for success C.S.L.

P.S. Please return the enclosed, after judgment, and don't give me away.

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Hillsboro,
Western Rd,

Headington
24th Aug. 1926

My dear Barfield,

This is splendid. I shall be free on Thursday (probably) and after Thursday (certainly). If, as I suppose, you are both at Long Crendon⁷³ we all hope you will both come over and lunch and tea here. Choose your day and let us know. If you are alone, come alone.

Harwood first told me of Mrs. Dewey's⁷⁴ death—you know I don't read the papers. Please tell your wife how sorry I am. One says that the death of the old is no tragedy and so on, but I fancy they were great friends, more than parents and children usually are. It must have been a nasty knock.

We have had a wonderful walk beyond the end of the known world. I have seen the baby and met the omniscient baron. It will be delightful to see you: on top of the walk it seems almost more luck than I can digest.

Yrs
C. S. Lewis

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Sept. 15th [1926]

My dear Barfield,

The *meet* will be at Beckley pub—the one at the bottom of the hill—on Friday next at 1.0. p.m. ⁷⁵ You had better pick me up at Hillsboro in the morning and we can go to the rendez-vous together. Please notify. The passage re cats was ‘They say I rub their fur the wrong way, but I say why can’t the cats turn round.’ ⁷⁶

As for that feeling of not being a great man always remember 1. Guid sheltrom is in humilitie⁷⁷

2. Even so, all language etc.

Yrs
C.S.L.

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Magdalen
[October 1926]

My dear Barfield—

How tiresome about the letter. I had trusted to acquire fame by it. The chief points were;— (a) That this is, so far, a great poem⁷⁸—in the unequivocal sense—the sense which those words ordinarily bear in literary criticism. It challenges comparison with the Prelude, ⁷⁹ and keeps its end up. I think spiritually it is not as high as the Prelude (it does not cover so large nor so momentous an experience): on the other hand it is more consistently poetical. I noted only one passage where you came near prose. ‘Trivial reasoning won his grave assent Provided only its conclusion mocked etc’. I have no doubt at all that you are engaged in writing one of the really great poems of the world. All this was accompanied in the letter with all sorts of devices to convince you that I really meant what I was saying: but I can’t bother to do them all again and you’ll have to take it neat. Of course I know I am saying a v. big thing, and one can’t be sure that I am not mistaken.

(b) What I particularly admired—what makes it unique—is the success with which you have combined *res olim dissociabiles*.⁸⁰ You have contrived to keep all the time within the labyrinthine fidgety world of the inner mind, and yet not lost the soaring, winged *movement*—the *cantabile*, as of Milton or Marlowe. I don’t know anything else where this is so fully attained. The whole of the love section, the change from sunrise to noon (no more singing Osirian secrets), the climax at ‘not climbing in But falling out: henceforth seek earth on earth, Heaven in heaven’, and the finale about personal passion like a creature that lives after its back is broken—all this is wonderful in its songfulness maintained thro’ philosophical matter. That section alone puts you, for me, among the very great people. But indeed you gave me the authentic thrill all over the place. There are things I shall never get out of my head: such as ‘If discs of gold should lie, Never so far between, along the floor Of that infernal pilgrimage’—‘His soul in him like a seagull’s cry’—‘Nailed stoutly to the hopes of little joys’—‘Their mineral passion’.

(c) Two parts as a whole seem inferior. The first is the opening section. I can’t feel you have entirely solved the problem of dealing with emotions at once primitive and reticent without being mawkish. Need the man think of his child (whether born or unborn) primarily as ‘my image’? Again it opens with a picture—the sky etc. Pictures (I mean the more completely picturable kind of image) are not really your long suit: and this, with its aureole etc.

remains to me literary and uninteresting. And the fact that it is a *leitmotif* wh. has to reappear in a later section makes it more unfortunate. I should advise a complete breaking up and rewriting of this section with the powers you now have. The next is (I am sorry to say) the peqipéseia⁸¹ of the whole poem: his enlightenment in the reading room of the B.M. ⁸² The first paragraph about there being no Eureka cry but 'Sun Turns himself over' is excellent. So is the third about the man who 'moves about Within the quiddity of light and sees Seeing itself, and that our eyes are veils Not windows'. But just in between those the thing itself has to come—and it doesn't. The old and not v. profound image of the light in a dark cave is inadequate. You see, the discovery that consciousness is a voyage of exploration, on the purely logical level, needn't lead to any spiritual consequences at all. Apparently it meant something to that man at that moment wh. it needn't mean universally to any philologist who happens to agree with it. That something you have, I am afraid, just *left out*. This sounds extremely disappointing, I know: and I have no idea what you can do. Some really living metaphor or simile—something suggestive and mythopoeic, still hovering just outside your consciousness, must come in here and flood the thing with light. You had better fast and pray.

After this week I shall be in College, and of course delighted to see you. I can put you up for a night but I am afraid our monastic system will not allow your lady wife. Let me know what day you think of coming. Dymer is out about three weeks. I have had no good reviews yet, but a letter from l'Anton Fausset saying that he has reviewed it for the T.L.S. and as the review may not be printed for some weeks he thought he would write and tell me etc. He is v. eulogistic. ⁸³ So is Quiller Couch (whose opinion, between ourselves, is valueless) in a letter to Dents. I suppose you are too much out of the journalistic world to help me now? Hoping to hear from you about your visit, Yrs

C. S. Lewis

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Feb. 2nd 1927.

My dear Barfield—

Advice wanted urgently. Do you know anything of a thing called the Panton Arts Club? They want me to join over the head of Dymer. Now ten to one this is merely a catchpenny stunt for gulls. On the other hand they say they allow only 100 members in the literary section, admitted on the value of work published. So it may, for all I know, be a *real* honour. If you know or can find out which it is, please send me a line as soon as possible. I have been having a heavenly time since—the bogies are in full retreat and I have been almost dizzy with real joy several times a day. In fact, a sort of remarriage of the Spirit. I have also got the poetic and the other mind settled now. It all comes in Aristotle De Anima III v. 2. There are two elements the νοῦς ποιητικός⁸⁴ and the νοῦς παθητικός. ⁸⁵
Καὶ ἔστιν ὁ μὲν τοιοῦτος νοῦς τῶ πάντα
γίνεσθαι, ὁ δὲ τῶ πάντα ποιεῖν – καὶ τοῦτο μόνον ἀθάνατον καὶ
αἰδίων. οὐ μνημονεύομεν δέ, ὅτι τοῦτο μὲν ἀπαθέξ ὁ δε παθητικὸς
νοῦς φθαροτός

Yrs
C. S. Lewis

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Hillsboro.
Sept. 10th [1927]

My dear Barfield—

I have finished a first re-reading of the *Tower*. The great passages—VI, VII, X—stand absolutely where they did. The later cantos I have enjoyed much more than I did before: but of course this is chiefly due to my increased understanding of and sympathy with the matter.

As to the poem as a whole, I am afraid I feel now a rather serious break between the two periods of composition. Oddly enough it seems much *shorter* than I remembered, and much less of a ‘just’ narrative—more a series of impassioned lyrical monologues loosely connected by the identity of the hero. In fact it is only with the love affair that the unity begins. I don’t know how far you are thinking of ever working on it again. If you do, I shd. (reluctantly) chuck II, III and IV right out. V and the *danceable duet* wd. have to be saved: but I shd. like the *bristles of mechanic thought* etc. to come after the love-tragedy. I quite realize the reply that if they hadn’t been there before the tragedy wd. not have effected him as they did. But the *masses* of the design wd. be much better grouped if they emerged into consciousness only *after* it: one must simplify a bit or the reader gets the impression that wherever he opens the poem the hero will be always in some damned ‘situation’ or other, and gets into the ‘What is it *this* time’ state of mind. I shall read it again—some things I liked seem to have disappeared. (I don’t think it wd. be at all admirable to work it up into ‘just’ narrative. A few *prose* glosses at the beginnings of cantos, if really well written, wd. be admirable. In the text, I think a single week’s work could introduce a lot more *clarity* & make an enormous improvement).

Tolkien says ‘any day’ after the 13th—so reply fixing me as soon as possible. I read the Livingstone Lowes at a gulp—it is really excellent, including the scholia. It wd. have been worth reading for ‘Why don’t the cats turn round?’ alone. I have just read Edith Sitwell’s *Sleeping Beauty*. [87](#) Without any attempt to place her exactly, I say she is clearly one of the English poets in the general sense wh. includes Milton, Longfellow, Hood [88](#) & Southey. [89](#) There’s no good denying it, yrs

C.S.L.

At nihil eorum quae superscripsi prohibet quin constet inter omnes humanam sermonem esse Orphicum carmen. [90](#)

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
[1928]

You might like to know that when Tolkien dined with me the other night he said *à-propos* of something quite different that your conception of the ancient semantic unity [91](#) had modified his whole outlook and that he was always just going to say something in a lecture when your conception stopped him in time 'It is one of those things,' he said 'that when you've once seen it there are all sorts of things you can never say again.' We went on to observe on the paradox that tho' you knew much poetry and little philology the philological part of your book was much the sounder.

Jam and powder you see
C.S.L.

Beside the fact that Barfield's literary works were not providing sufficient income, in 1929 his father, Arthur Barfield, lost the services of his brother in their London law office, Barfield & Barfield. Pressure was put on Owen to help, and after reading for a degree in law he moved with his wife to London where, for the next thirty years, he worked as a solicitor.

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

[1929]

My dear Barfield—

There's one thing about your novel⁹²—you do really succeed in producing the atmosphere of real conversation among young men of the thoughtful type—specially those revealing moments after the fire has gone out. I have never seen this or anything remotely like it in a novel. It is as if reality was actually thinking itself in the pages of the book. These are the best parts by miles.

I am more concerned than ever about John. He seems to me too improbable. His sensibilities are so dam fine that when he hears something he disapproves on the wireless he smacks the set. On the other hand they are so blunt that he hasn't the vaguest glimmering how a woman like Margaret feels after being disappointed of motherhood, and supposes, in the conversation that reveals *her* agony, that she is considering *his* feelings. He is so keen on liberty that he writes your Ioldobaath poem (your John *could* not have written it) and also so brutally tyrannical that in the same conversation he sweeps aside his wife's claim to elementary spiritual privacy. His life is turned upside down by a ceremony with a candle—and he has almost forgotten the child a few days after the birth. He is so unselfish that he never stops talking about the fate of humanity: and he is so selfish that at the v. moment when the possibility of his wife's death is brought before him, his reply to the suggestion that Gerald shd. take her away is 'We shan't have much time to talk.' That this grumble should cross his mind at such a moment is bad enough, but intelligible. *Peccavimus omnes.*⁹³ But the man in whom it would not be strangled at birth—in whom it would reach the stage of words—is surely intolerable.

Then his mere behaviour! People who have been brought up as he has do *not* really violently shake their wives (shortly after childbirth) and smash the furniture—unless you mean him to be definitely in a nervous breakdown. Have you yourself ever met anyone who acted at all like this? And what value remains in the noble aspirations about the world in general when you have shown us his savage egoism towards those parts of the world wh. he is immediately in touch with? Surely the sort of character whose heart is always bleeding for Europe and who can't reach even the forbearance of common civility towards his wife is more proper for bitter comedy (like *Tartuffe*)⁹⁴ than for your novel?

Excuse haste, but I am really v. deeply bothered about this.

Yrs
C.S.L.

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Oct. 21st 1929.

My dear Barfield

Thanks for letter. I wolfed Part IV of the novel with great excitement and must, of course, re-read it before my criticism can be of much value. What I think I can be pretty certain of is that it is thick strewn with evidences of real greatness and that (at least) Humphery, Janet and Gerald must remain in the mind of any fair reader as entirely original and living characters. Whether besides having greatness in it it is part of an actually great novel, I am not prepared to say: and the disjointed fashion in which I have read it wd. make it absurd for me to judge it as a whole.

On the bad side, as you probably feel itself, there is in this last part a problem you have not (I think) completely solved. You hold a belief about the world, invoking big secret powers in the background: most of your readers don't. That in itself wouldn't matter. Unfortunately, however, your readers are familiar with the use of secret & satanic societies as *machines* either in good semi-fantastic recreational fiction (e.g., Sard Harker)⁹⁵ or in frankly commercial shockers. As a result the average reader will complain that Part IV transfers to a different convention what began as a v. serious naturalistic novel. Your problem was how to show that for you at any rate such things were on the same level of reality as ordinary London life. You have not completely failed, but I doubt if you have completely succeeded.

It is v. unfortunate that we are introduced to that side of the story by the device of unintentional eavesdropping—very *usé* and associated with fiction of quite a different type. It also depends on two improbabilities *a*. A moon light enough to read by, wh. is rare in England. *b*. A man who feels afraid lest a face shd. look in through the window & then immediately sits down to read *in* the window with his back to it—surely the last thing you'd do in that mood. I think these improbabilities in mere mechanism don't as a rule matter much to anyone but professional critics: but they do matter when your whole difficulty is to persuade the reader that the scenes which they serve to introduce are as serious as the rest of the book. But perhaps this just has to be faced...I wonder could you have let it in more gradually, so that the reader found himself accepting it before he realised what he was in for? Perhaps when I read the whole I shall find that you have done this.

You understand that my criticism here is not concerned with the *truth* of these things. Assuming them true, remembering that they are already frequent in fiction of a certain type, how are you to convince readers—that is the whole question.

*Long at lectures
On Monday morning
I work till one! Hoihe!!
Piddling pupils
I in taking am engaged!!
Can your car
So swiftly over
Earth's back wander
From Oxford to London between one and 5.45?
Walawei! Hoo-ruddy-rah!!!!
Ho-hai!!!!
!!
?!!!!
If so, call
For me at Magdalen
Were wisest rune
On Monday at one!
If you lie
On Tuesday night
In Magdalen's ancient College
You will meet Dyson
Dining with me
Of men the justest!!
[The whole scene explodes]⁹⁶*

I'm afraid my car is no go. I feel so much pleasure that I doubt if it can be innocent C.S.L.

TO A. M. DAVISON:⁹⁷

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept. 29th 1929

My dear Nurse Davison

Excuse me. I cannot address you by any other name. Remember you? I should think I do. Do you remember the night Warnie and I came home very late and got into trouble and were sent to bed without supper, and you brought us in bread and jam in our little room—opposite my father's bedroom? Do you remember the night you went to the *Mikado* with Warnie and I wasn't allowed to go? Do you remember the first night before my poor mother's operation when you both sat and talked about operations and I said 'Well you *are* gloomy people.' And now it has all happened again with my father. I thought of you a lot during his illness and wished you could have been with him. He constantly mentioned you and your photo has been on the mantelpiece at Little Lea for a great many years.

Thank you for your sympathy. I thought I had perhaps got a bit used to people I cared for dying while I was at the front, but it doesn't seem to make much difference. He was such a very strong personality and had been the background of my life for so long that I can hardly believe its all over. One keeps on thinking 'I must tell him that' when some little episode happens, and then [one] remembers. I suppose we get used to these changes in time. Thanks awfully for writing. It is *really* comforting to be taken back to those old days. The time during which you were with my mother—and I remember that much better than my own little operation—seemed very long to a child and you became part of home. We must try to meet when I'm in Ireland again. Probably we have often passed each other in the street without knowing.

Yours very sincerely

Jack Lewis

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Jan 16th [1930]

My dear Barfield

(1) Thanks for letter: I can't undertake correction alone, and as long as *Ficino & Fichte* are hanging over us we can't send it to Blackwell.

(2) All our labour about Στέφανος⁹⁸ has been thrown away as that chump Harwood had *never heard* 'King Stephen was a worthy peer. ⁹⁹So much for the facile assumption that one's friends have as much literature as oneself. However it is some consolation to know that he puzzled his head over the poem for several hours and could not construe it.

(3) Addendum:

*Et Pterodactylum par nobile, parque draconem,
Et dinus saurus, dinaque saura sua.*¹⁰⁰

(4) 'The imagination knows no proportion.' Whose imagination?

(5) I got really bothered about your attack on Ogden & Richards. ¹⁰¹ Do you really mean that all thought is bound by the original 'metaphors' in the words? If so—*Tantamne rem tam negligenter*. ¹⁰² So as I had to write a paper for the Junior Linguistic I took this subject, and it has come out to the conclusion that in speaking of mogsas ¹⁰³ the only alternatives area. To revive the buried 'metaphors'. i.e. really to think of breath when you say *spirit*.

b. To invent conscious, new metaphors all the time. c. To talk without meaning. (6) I have had a cut at Jacob Boehme. ¹⁰⁴ Chapter II of the *Signatura Rerum* is the most serious attempt ever to show the Many coming out of the One. Unfortunately I can't understand it. I don't *like* it entirely. But we must worry it out. You can buy it in Everyman and had better get to work at once. ¹⁰⁵ Love to all, and respects to any who won't have love—such as Sandy & Basil. ¹⁰⁶

Yrs
C. S. Lewis

When Albert Lewis died on 25 September 1929, Warnie was in China and did not return to England until 16 April 1930. This left Jack to deal with the contents of the family home, 'Little Lea', in Belfast. Jack wrote to Warnie on 12 January 1930 that their aunt, Mary Tegart Lewis (1868–1941), had heard that Little Lea was to be sold and

that she supposed I knew about the two book cases of Uncle Joe's that P. has 'stored' for me: that she very much wanted to have them: could she send and have them taken away at once...The minute I read it I knew in my bones that it was our little end room bookcases. I replied: that I should certainly not hold a sale without giving my relations the chance of mentioning to me any articles which did not belong to you and me...but that I should very much prefer not to start dismembering the house before you returned.¹⁰⁷

In the end, the bookcases were overlooked, and were shipped to Oxford with other items from Little Lea.

TO JOSEPH TEGART LEWIS (P):¹⁰⁸

Hillsboro,
Western Rd.,
Headington,
Oxford.
[January 1930]

My dear Ted

We were considerably dismayed at the arrival of the two bookcases on this side, which was the result of a misunderstanding of our orders. The cost of returning them was rather a poser: and since our own library is already overflowing, this charge would have to be followed immediately by a further outlay of two new bookcases.

Consequently, since hearing from Condlin¹⁰⁹ that they are wanted for your own house and not for Sandycroft, ¹¹⁰ we have been wondering whether we could not come to some less costly arrangement that might suit equally well. We understand that you owe us (i.e. my Father's estate) some money. Would you feel disposed to cry quits with us over that and the bookcases? I need hardly say that if we thought the real market value of the bookcases equal, or nearly equal, to the money, we should not make such a proposal: for we very gratefully and gladly acknowledge our heavy debt to you, in another kind, for all your goodness last summer. ¹¹¹ Let me take this opportunity of thanking you on Warnie's behalf and my own. I should be glad if you would let me know, as the Americans say, your 'reactions' to this idea.

Please give our love to Aunt Mary and to all our cousins of all generations. I hope that your wife and you are keeping well. The fair librarian, no doubt, has long since outgrown both me and her last year's library—things change so quickly at that age. If not, give her my profoundest salaams. Wretched weather here and plenty of work.

Yours ever

Jack Lewis

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

[April 1930]

No-to-morrow would be a bad day—a most inconvenient, footling, scarcely possible occasion—for a walk. But I could manage Saturday if you could come then. In the meantime may I tender ‘brief thanksgiving’ for your labours—rather say your father’s labours—in the matter of the mortgage.

Hope my walking stick is proving in your walks a good companion, serving (though indeed you stole it—boned it, bagged it, scrounged it, stole it) serving as a stout reminder of the beautiful Quirinal painted like the vault of heaven and the lovely derivation and the history semantic and the long phonetic story of the mystic word caboodle—Dum-de Dum-de Dum-de Lewis. [112](#)

TO T. S. ELIOT (P):[113](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

May 21st 1930

Dear Sir

I am requested by the Michaelmas Club of this College—a society for literary, philosophical and political discussion—to invite you to read a paper before it this term. Any date which you choose before June 5th we will endeavour to conform to: and we hope that, in spite of such short notice, this may make it possible for you to come.

If you are able to do so, it will give me great pleasure if you will dine with me in hall before the meeting and be my guest in College for the night.

Yours faithfully
C. S. Lewis

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
June 18th 1930

My dear Barfield,

I approach you with some fear. Last week Griffiths spent a night with me and, of course, asked about you. I told him that you were thinking of editing Coleridge. As Griffiths has recently been turned inside out by Coleridge he was naturally very interested and hoped very much that it would materialise. Now comes the occasion of my fear. I said that the scheme depended partly on endowment by an American University, and that if that failed you would probably seek more remunerative employment. [114](#)

Was this a breach of confidence? The trouble is that what follows makes the whole conversation so much more important than it seemed at the time. I very much hope that you will not think I deserve to be 'avoided as a blab': 'the mark of fool set on my front' [115](#) I can face with more composure. At the time, in its context, it seemed a harmless thing to say—but I suppose that is what blabs all feel after the event. If you think I was wrong, I can only offer an *ad misericordiam* [116](#) appeal for pardon.

Anyway, in a few days, came the enclosed, which you will deal with as you think fit. What ever view you take of my action, I hope you will feel as I do at discovering the race of Calverts is not extinct. A third of £800 a year is not an income wh. most men wd. feel moral scruples about.

I shall be extremely anxious till I hear from you.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

P.S. I suppose you got *Death* with covering letter? [117](#)

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
[1930]

My dear Barfield,

If you don't know it already I think this will interest you. Had you, like me, always been struck with the oddity of the Greeks having a craft-conception for 'raw material' ($\tilde{\upsilon}\lambda\eta$, forest > timber > what you make things of) whereas the Latins have what seems a vital one—*materies*? Well, apparently, the claims of *materies* to vitalism are v. shaky: for the possibilities are (a.) That it is older 'Dmater' < $\sqrt{\delta\mu\alpha}$ —to build, make (b.) If from *mater*, then according to one school (which seems incredible) *mater* itself is not vital. For if it comes from $\bar{m}\bar{a}$ (v. Monier Williams Sanskrit Lexicon)¹¹⁸ $\bar{m}\bar{a}$ means to measure > to divide up > to prepare > to make. Thence $\bar{m}\bar{a}tri$ (*nomen agentis*) = measurer (and as such a name for the moon) also maker. $\bar{J}\bar{a}-\bar{m}\bar{a}tri$ = offspring maker, hence merely $\bar{m}\bar{a}tri$, mother. It wd. be v. strange if a fact like mother had so early been given an ahrimanic twist. Another school refuses to connect $\bar{m}\bar{a}tri$ with $\bar{m}\bar{a}$ at all (but then what do they make of $\bar{m}\bar{a}tri$ = moon?). J.A. thinks the-tri is not *nomen agentis* at all but the mark of one-of-a-pair, as in $\tilde{\epsilon}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\zeta$,¹¹⁹ other etc. As Humpty-Dumpty says, there's glory for you.

Yrs
C.S.L.

TO OWEN BARFIELD (W):

[1930]

My dear Barfield

Alas!—I'm in bed: so our meeting will have to be put off. What about Friday week?—or next Wednesday? Please let me know. The Essay was terrifically exciting & really fine in places, but I think needs a little more dovetailing & riveting—some of the transitions of thought are not at all easy.

This present trouble is only a bad cold with temperature. In *spirit* I'm on the pig's back & am trying to read the Hymns to the Night. [120](#) What on earth is the meaning of '*riss das Band der Geburt des Lichtes Fessel*'. [121](#) The Crab couplet is fine. I'm glad you liked the lyric.

What with one thing and another I feel the earth might go up in sky rockets any moment. The bit about *Schlaf gegentritting* out of *alten Geschichten* in the article of *himmelöffnung* struck me—as you may imagine. [122](#) But I don't fully understand all your (& Novalis) view about Sleep—I remember your poem long ago about the Sister.

About the Essay—don't think it has failed either *per se* or in its effect on me. It is bathed in a golden cloud & drips with honey—*well* worth doing a good bit more on. Damn it all you can't utter things that have been kept hid from the foundation in a parenthesis. But I often feel that having a talk with you is not like *going up in* a balloon but like trying to *hold* a captive balloon.

I've re-read Middlemarch.

yrs
C. S. Lewis

Isn't it *ex vi termini*¹²³ not *vi termini*? Where does that remark from Pythagoras come from? (Ans: from Pythagoras. Ans: Ass!) **TO T. S. ELIOT (P):**

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
April 19th 1931

Dear Sir

It is now some six months since I submitted to you the MS of an article entitled 'The Personal Heresy in Criticism'. [124](#) In this article I contended that poetry never was nor could be the 'expression of a personality' save *per accidens*, and I advanced a formal proof of the position. As I believed that you had some sympathy with the contention, and that, though often asserted, it had not before been proved, I had anticipated a fairly early reply. I supposed that if the proof seemed to you invalid you would immediately reject the paper: if it seemed valid, you would think it worth publishing. I still think that your decision on such a purely argumentative piece of work would be a matter of very little time, if once you read it: and as my MS has never yet been acknowledged, accepted, or rejected, I conclude that it has—no doubt very naturally and venially—been submerged in the inevitable silt of a busy office. I hope it will not strike you as an impatience if I now remind you of it. I do not—naturally—wish by any pressure on you to reduce my own chances of reaching a public on a subject about which current views exasperated me beyond bearing: but equally naturally I should welcome a decision of some sort in the near future.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

P. S. Owen Barfield offered some time ago to remind you of the MS, but we decided to try the effect of more waiting—with the result of my present letter!

TO T. S. ELIOT (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
June 2nd 1931

Dear Sir

Thank you for your letter. My own position is as follows: I have very little doubt that I could get my essay printed in some much more academic publication, but as, in such a publication, it would be merely entombed, I prefer to reach the periodical public, and I do not know of any audience more likely to be affected by it than that of the *Criterion*. I should therefore have no objection to waiting nine months: what I should like to be more assured of is the prospect I have at the end of the nine months. I do not mean that it would be reasonable for you to bind yourself to accept, at that time, an article which you may not by then clearly remember, and about which you may legitimately change your mind. In other words I am quite prepared for the risk of your 'corrected impressions'. What I am less ready to be at the mercy of is the mere richness or poverty of suitable contributions—the fulness or emptiness of your drawer—nine months hence, which nobody can predict. That is, if you will keep a place for it (subject, of course, to special emergencies) I am quite prepared to wait and to abide by your second, and unfettered, decision as to my suitability to fill that place. Perhaps you would let me hear from you on the subject. ¹²⁵ The essay does, as you have divined, form the first of a series of which I have all the materials to hand. ¹ The others would be

2. Objective Standards of Literary merit.

3. Literature and Virtue (This is not a stylistic variant of 'Art & Morality': that is my whole point).

4. Literature and Knowledge
5. Metaphor and Truth

The whole, when completed, would form a frontal attack on Crocean aesthetics and state a neo-Aristotelian theory of literature (not of Art, about which I say nothing) which *inter alia* will re-affirm the romantic doctrine of imagination as a truth-bearing faculty, though not quite as the romantics understood it.

I am sorry to burden you with another letter to answer yours faithfully
C. S. Lewis

(1) It is mainly a question of giving them a less technically philosophical form.

TO MARY SHELLEY (T):¹²⁶

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

June 18th [1931]

Dear Miss Shelley

Yes, rather. When I got the letter from Miss Seaton¹²⁷ I did not know that the pupil mentioned was the Dysonian one—nor, I think, did Mr Dyson mention your name when he spoke about you to me.

Now as to work. If you are staying up over the week end and could call on me on Saturday morning we could discuss this. If this is impossible my present advice is;— Doing Chaucer and Shakespeare in the same term seems to me a hazardous experiment, unless there is some special reason which I don't yet know. Our usual plan here is to spend a term on Chaucer and his contemporaries.

As regards reading for the Vac, my general view is that the Vac. should be given chiefly to reading the actual literary texts, without much attention to problems, getting thoroughly familiar with stories, situation, and style, and so having all the data for *aesthetic* judgement ready: then the term can be kept for more scholarly reading. Thus, if you were doing Chaucer and contemporaries next term I shd. advise you to read Chaucer himself, *Langland* (if you can get Skeat's Edtn: ¹²⁸ the selection is not much good) *Gower* (again Macaulay's big edtn if possible, not so that you may read every word of the *Confessio* but so that you may select yourself—not forgetting the end wh. is one of the best bits)¹²⁹ *Gawain* (Tolkien & Gordon Edtn)¹³⁰ *Sisam's XIVth Century Prose & Verse* (all the pieces of any literary significance). ¹³¹ If you can borrow Ritson's *Metrical Romances*, ¹³² so much the better.

But perhaps you have read all these before. If so, and if there are other special circumstances, we must try to meet. If Saturday is impossible ring me up on Friday and I will squeeze in a time somehow or other.

It is I who shd. apologise for my muddle rather than you for your 'importunity'—the latter, being in any case, the more flattering offence. I shd. be obliged if you would explain all to Miss Seaton. The (unnamed) 'Dysonian' pupil was one of the people I was leaving room for by my refusal to take 'a pupil' from her. In fact you were being crowded out by *yourself* among other people.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO HIS BROTHER (BOD): [133](#)

Magdalen College,

Oxford
Oct. 26th 1931

My dear Warnie

With regard to the Transfer to ourselves of the mortgage on 'The Kilns' which Mrs. Moore executed on October 2nd, this confirms our verbal agreement that in spite of anything to the contrary that may seemed to be implied thereby, your interest in the said mortgage is of the value of £500 and my interest is of the value of £1000.

Yours

Jack

TO EDMUND BLUNDEN (TEX):[134](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
[1933]

Dear Blunden—

Thank you for your kind note. [135](#) I am particularly gratified at your liking that poem for, though it is not my own favourite, you are the first reader to notice at all! Dents agreed with you about the title being bad, and no doubt it is: but as the periodical press on which alone sales depend is managed entirely by Mr. Sensible and young Mr. Halfways between them, I don't think a mere trifle like a title will interfere with my success. There are some things (Icelandic snakes, for example) beyond the reach of interference.

What do you think of the possibilities of my new kind of alexandrine without a break in the middle (see p. 253 etc)? [136](#) I don't mean what do you think of the poems written in it: but (a.) Does it seem to you to be verse at all? (b.) Do you think it wd. be a good metre for translating Virgil. Don't bother to reply—we can discuss it when we meet.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

Thanks. I have made a date with 'little Musgrove'
C.S.L.

TO EDMUND BLUNDEN (P):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
March 26th 1935

Dear Blunden

*The examiner sits into Quarrie
Using the blude-red ink
'Now who ill tae fair Edinboro' gae
A' o'er the text to swink?'*

*Then up and spake child Blunden
Ane harper guid was he
'Oh I ill tae fair Edinboro' goe
Those manuscripts to see'[137](#)*

But perhaps this is optimistic. But short of going to see the MSS, I agree there is nothing to do yet.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

**TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES LITERARY*
SUPPLEMENT:[138](#)**

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

Every student must have read with delight those opening pages of Dr. J. Dover Wilson's 'Manuscript of Hamlet' [139](#) in which the author drives us back from the temptation of immediate tinkering with the texts to more and more fundamental problems in bibliography. We have hardly had in modern times a more beautiful example of what might be called τὸ προαπορῆσαι καλῶς. [140](#) It is no criticism, it is rather a eulogy, of this process to follow the impetus thus given, and to ask whether we can stop even where Dr. Wilson stops. It appears to me that we ought to raise an even more abstract question which is prior to all the bibliographical questions. What do we *mean* by the genuine texts of an Elizabethan play?

When the author defines his 'main purpose' as being 'to recover Shakespeare's manuscript' (Vol. I, p. 51) no such question need arise; for this remains a legitimate object whether we regard the playwright's manuscript as the genuine text or not: but we have the whole question on our hands when he says (p. 5) that the genuine text is that which corresponds with 'what Shakespeare intended to write.'

It will be allowed that the meaning of 'genuine text' varies according to the kind of work under discussion. Thus the genuine text of 'Paradise Lost' is certainly 'what Milton intended to write,' for we know that Milton's intention was to write a new poem of which he was the sole author. The genuine text of a traditional ballad, however, means something quite different; for here we cannot be certain that any individual ever intended to 'write' a poem for which he would be exclusively responsible, and if there has been a succession of authors, the lines made by the last are just as 'genuine' as those made by the first: nothing, in fact, is 'corruption' except errors of transcription and printing. I submit, therefore, that we do not know what we mean by the genuine text of *Hamlet* until we have decided between the two following alternatives. Did Shakespeare primarily 'intend' to 'write'

a dramatic poem, or did he 'intend' to 'write' to take part in the composite activity of producing a play—*i.e.*, a show? In other words, was the end which he set before him a book (for which he would be solely responsible) or a show (for which he would necessarily share responsibility with actors, 'producer,' manager, prompt man, musicians and even audience)?

Now Dr. Dover Wilson, as it seems to me, has answered this question quite clearly. He tells us (on p. 9) that Shakespeare 'always thought in terms of the stage and never so far as we know contemplated any other kind of publication for his plays than that which stage performance gives.' If this is admitted, it follows that Shakespeare's manuscript, so far from being the genuine text, is, so to speak, an 'ante-text,' an embryo: one of the elements (though doubtless the most important) out of which, when it has been combined with others and modified to any extent that may prove necessary, the play or show will be made. It is, as Dr. Dover Wilson says on Chapter 1, a 'draft.'

If that is so, we must be very critical in our reading of such a statement as the following: 'Mommson demonstrates that the FI¹⁴¹ *Hamlet* displays unmistakable signs of having been deformed and contaminated by playhouse influences, that it contains a number of small verbal additions made by the actors, that it has been moulded throughout to suit the purposes of some particular theatre.' The danger here is lest we should treat everything whereby the concrete performance differs from the playwright's 'draft' as 'contamination': for, on the view which has been expressed above, the concrete performance is the play, and it no more 'contaminates' the draft than birth 'contaminates' a baby. The real question is which peculiarities (if any) of the prompt-book version can be called corruptions.

Certainly not those peculiarities which fit it to 'some particular theatre.' If Dr. Dover Wilson is right in his picture of Shakespeare at work (Chapter 2), then we may assume that Shakespeare never had any end in view except performance in a particular theatre. If he intended such performance, he must also have intended such performance to be possible; he must therefore, in general, have intended such modifications of the draft as would render it possible, however much he may have neglected the detail of those conditions in the heat of composition. And this would seem to apply, if we follow Dr. Dover Wilson, not only to the reduction of man power but even to the straightening out of verbal tangles. 'Shakespeare,' he well says, 'probably troubled his head very little about his tangles. If he remembered them, he

might go back and straighten them out himself; if not, there was always the prompter to clean up after him, *and it was part of his job to do so*' (page 24, italics mine). The process here described is plainly not corruption but delegation; and every such cleaning up by the prompter, unless it can be shown that Shakespeare explicitly rejected it, surely becomes part of the 'genuine text.' The actors' additions are really in the same position. Shakespeare intended performance, and not even performance *simpliciter* but performance by these actors: the detail of their treatment he could not fully foresee, but toleration (or, for all we know, approval) of their interpretation in general must have been implicit from the moment he put pen to paper. We have no evidence that would entitle us to say 'If Burbage groaned in his death scene, the groan was a corruption.'

It would be tempting to say that those modifications which Shakespeare himself first thought of are genuine, while those suggested by any other member of his company are spurious. But such a criterion would be arbitrary. Shakespeare produces a 'draft' which is too long. If he and another experienced man (or three others) look it over, surely the places for cuts will be fairly obvious, and it is largely a matter of chance who first condemns a given passage. The 'genuineness' or 'spuriousness' cannot depend on the accident. We cannot even say that those changes which Shakespeare agreed to reluctantly (supposing we can identify them) are corruptions: no man, perhaps, ever finishes a work of art without omitting much that he would gladly have retained, nor does the knife always hurt less in the author's own hand than in another's.

The conclusion would seem to be that we must do one of two things. We must either reject the conception of a Shakespeare who 'thought in terms of the stage' and replace it with that of a literary author to whom performance was as accidental as to Milton or Tennyson: or we must define the 'genuine text' to be 'the whole performance in so far as Shakespeare did not explicitly disclaim it.' If we do the first, then the manuscript is the genuine text: if we do the second, we must cease to talk of theatrical 'contamination': we must start with the assumption that the prompt-book is genuine, and the *onus* will lie on anyone who says that it is corrupt. I need not add that I am not attempting to criticize Dr. Dover Wilson's history of the text—a task which gratitude and discretion equally forbid—but to criticize a fundamental assumption which he sometimes countenances and sometimes implicitly

rejects, as is natural in a writer intent on much more difficult and concrete problems.

Yours,
C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT*:¹⁴²

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

Dr. Dover Wilson in his kind notice of my letter has really settled the question. If the identity of the genuine text is a problem that ‘can only be decided on aesthetic grounds’—that is, on what Dr. Dover Wilson calls ‘no other principle than that furnished by the good taste and judgement of the editor’ (Manuscript of *Hamlet*, Vol. I, p. 7)—then we are thrown back here, as in other departments of thought, on the testimony of the *uqó milof*.¹⁴³ And that is a role which no one, least of all myself, will dispute Dr. Wilson’s right to fill. My own concern in the matter is not the defence of F, but the (implicit) defence of certain private propositions about literary theory which need not be stated here. I embrace gladly the doctrine that the ‘genuine text’ can be identified with the (aesthetically) best text; and my satisfaction would be complete if I felt sure that Dr. Dover Wilson would agree to two corollaries:— (a) That the methods of the bibliographical school, of which he is such a distinguished member, are primarily useful not for finding the genuine text (which can be found only by taste), but for other purposes: *e.g.*, dating?

(b) That certain excellent emendations (such as *et tua conjunx* or *a’ babbled of green fields*)¹⁴⁴ are parts of the genuine text in virtue of their aesthetic merits whether Virgil and Shakespeare wrote them or not.

The second corollary may seem audacious; but I think it can be avoided only by the following *distinguo*: ‘Best text does not equal genuine text, but *best* is presumptive evidence of *genuine*.’ But this conceals the premises, ‘The author always wrote the best’—a proposition which is neither certain nor probable and which, in its negative application, will force us upon the methods of Pope, who ‘by a very compendious criticism’ (says Johnson) ‘rejected whatever he disliked.’¹⁴⁵

I am, Sir, yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO ELIZABETH HOLMES (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Nov 6th 1936

Dear Miss Holmes

I have already ordered your book¹⁴⁶ and should have done so before but for an inability to read the *Lit. Sup*¹⁴⁷ (once my delight) which—with increasing baldness and a double chin—is the most distressing symptom of vanished youth. If I have any comments at all likely to be helpful after reading it, I shall take the liberty of writing.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ELIZABETH HOLMES (P):

Magdalen
Nov 10th [1936]

Dear Miss Holmes—

Well: I have now read *Margaret*, all with interest and a good deal with keen enjoyment. It does not, I think, begin well. The death of the brother on p. 4—unless I have missed the point—has no poetical significance, being one of those things which would be important in a real biography only because it was true, & is therefore otiose in a poem.

On the bottom of p. 6 and the top of p. 7 comes the passage that really engaged my whole imagination. On p. 8 the bit beginning *o whip ship* is good. *Suburb-house* on p. 9 I think bad. It is not real prose English (wh. would be *suburban house*) nor is it ‘poetical’ in the other style: i.e. it makes the worst of both worlds. p. 11, *this island fact—at length* is v. nice. *The fluting ray* on p. 11 is excellent—a truly poetic, and not merely fashionable, use of the Sitwellian technique.

I *think* the Love lies bleeding poem is good, but can’t be sure till I’ve read it several times: but I’m sure about the *yellow drops of tree’s wine* etc on p. 15: that’s fine—and almost the whole of p. 16.

On p. 19, try to excuse me for saying ‘Souls—Ideas—Universals’ is thoroughly bad. I fear you were among the Clevers when you wrote that. Don’t you see that you are merely asking us to write your poem for you—giving us the conceptual skeleton instead of presenting the concrete imaginative and emotional experience. Of course on that skeleton I can reconstruct the experience: but when I buy a poem I expect to have something more done for me than I could do alone whenever I chose. I want to be *forced*.

Bottom of p. 20 is nice: bottom of 21 (*Until--reach*) I happen to know the experience so well that I can hardly judge whether you have brought it off. [148](#) P. 22 last line but one *e’en*. Do you like this? The Oratory v. good, I think, specially the part on p. 26: and the part about brass in cots and brass in *Hyperion* is interesting and new. First paragraph of *The Book* is excellent, except for the line *of beauty*: but more of that anon. P 32 Repeat *children still will be* three times aloud before an imagined audience and see how you like it! Not only the sound but the false archaism of *still* for always and the whole apologetic air. P 35 *For sleep...God’s* memorably said. The whole of the *Apple Tree* poem is good. *The Capture*, good: but is it good enough? *The Prospect*: I wonder would you agree that *At mystery* and all that follows it is

a failure. I wish you would banish words like *Mystery & Beauty*. The *Lure* tho' a good piece is crippled by 'Beauty'.

Surely Beauty is an abstract universal, a comparatively new inhabitant of the mind: it has no roots like such universals as *Death* or *Love*: it is a fatal non conductor to the imagination. As well—are you at all certain that what you are talking about is 'beauty'?—surely that is not part of your experience but only a theory *about* your experience, and not a very profound or stimulating theory at that. It makes you write like Masefield (not that he can't be good—but that is when he is writing about ships or foxes or something real—not about 'Beauty'). P. 44 the second poem, very good. P. 45. *dead Desdemon*: the same penitential exercise as for *children still will* may be advised here! *Prince of Darkness* all good. Congratulations. P 50 *dredged...desiring* splendid: so also nearly all *The Surrender*: and the bird symbol on p 54.

Part II opens v. well: it may even be great, but I'd never say that of any poem till I had lived with it. p. 59 lovely and the para. *She heard-without fire* (p 61) bites like anything: then on to *The Retreat*. You are really getting going here: the whole thing from p 57 to 64 is most moving. What a falling off in *New Heaven & Earth*. The top of p 66 (versified literary history) is (forgive me) just dreadful: and all the similar bits henceforward. You are doing so very little *more* imaginatively, and so much *less* intellectually, than a good prose critic.

Part III begins magnificently. The Miltonic adaptation on p 74 (a bit of modern technique used really well) and 'She walked...were one' particularly went home. The *Dream* excites and moves me: but I'm easy prey to that sort of poetry so don't take my word for it that it's good! Bottom of p 87 and top of 88 a very good simile. Bottom of 88: something very prosaic in the midst of poetry often works, but not always. ¹⁴⁹ The moderns are getting into the habit of thinking they can use this device *instead* of poetry. I think you have fallen into this trap. 'Nothing seems to matter' will pass in conversation: but I know nothing more from it in your poem than I should know from it in conversation: it has none of the divine *precision* of poetry. *In the Middle of the Night*, first stanza, good. Now on p. 98 *This door's shut fast. It cannot be undone* is a good example of the prosaic *rightly* used, and very moving (Because, this time, it is not the substitution of conversation for poetry but merely conversational syntax applied to something really imagined) The dream of Andrew Marvell doesn't, to me, come to life at all until the middle

of p. 121. Perhaps I am missing the whole point. Oh—I'd nearly forgotten *The Retreat*, which I liked.

This letter is too long and, I fear, possibly too frank. But I shall await your next book with great interest, and I think I should certainly have liked this even if I'd picked it up by accident: i.e., I don't think I'm being deceived by one's wish (both thro' gratitude and vanity!) to like the books of those who like one's own books. The best things in it are really very good, and tho' many 'influences' can be traced you have made them all your own. Your short lines are a danger: it needs almost superhuman skill to give them real metrical vitality (that is the one really good thing in Eliot) Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY NEYLAN (L):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
[1938?]

Dear Mrs Neylan

...Of course Shaw is not a scientist and the attack is not on science as such. But there is a sort of creed which might be called 'scientific humanism', tho' many of its votaries know very little science (just as some people go to Church who know very little theology), and which *is* shared by people so different as Haldane, Shaw, Wells, and Olaf Stapledon...cf. Shaw's Lilith's 'Beyond' with Haldane p. 309. 'It is possible that under the conditions of life on the outer planets the human brain may alter in such a way as to open up possibilities inconceivable to our own minds.' [150](#) (On p. 30 one of these alterations, the elimination of pity, had already occurred). All tarred with the same brush in fact...

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):[151](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
June 15th 1938

My dear Arthur

I agree that it's risky to put it off till September, specially if you may be going to America.

I propose therefore, if I may, to cross on Monday July 18th and leave you on Monday July 25th. Thanks very much, and please convey my thanks and love to Mrs Greeves. I look forward to it immensely.

Yours

Jack

‘Oh my dear Miss Woodhouse, what *do* you think? Such a singular thing has happened—Jane Fairfax’s letter to my mother has crossed my mother’s letter to Jane Fairfax. As soon as I began reading Jane’s letter to my mother, I had to lay it down. “My dear Madam”, I said “You will never believe it. Such a singular thing has happened. I protest our letters have crossed.”’

Well, what shall we do. You see my fixtures are not in favour of any date before July 12th. Can I come in September—or in the latter part of July and lump your not being so free?

TO I. A. RICHARDS (MC):[152](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
March 11th 1939

Dear Richards

Thanks for the very delightful surprise packet¹⁵³—an unexpected present of a book is one of the things that still gives me the kind of pleasure that all presents gave in childhood. I have nearly finished it, with more agreement than I anticipated and with absorbed interest whether I agreed or not.

On p 126 I think we need a little more explanation about the Hopkins passage. I am afraid that many readers who don't know O. E. Húse and have forgotten *unhousel'd* in *Hamlet*¹⁵⁴ will think that you think—or that you think that Hopkins thought—that *housel* is a newly coined diminutive of *house*: whereas I suppose the most you claim is that he availed himself of the resemblance between the two words, helping it out with 'low-latched'. Yet I'm not sure what he means (in the dictionary sense) by 'latched'. Too much of this.

We all enjoyed your visit very much. Thanks for the book and remember me to your wife.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO FRANK KENDON (CAM): [155](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Feb 14th 1940

Dear Sir

Please forgive my childish inability to read your signature!—and I can't get your name from Blunden because he's ill.

I am afraid most of the poems I have which might suit you are earlier than 1935. I don't know their dates, but I think the ones I would have sent you are about 1930 to 1933. I suppose this rules them out?

I approve very strongly of your proposed anthology without names: it will be good for people to have to read a poem just as a poem. Wishing the venture every success, I remain yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford.
Dec. 27th 1940

My dear Arthur—

I'm afraid I am in your debt this long time and I don't even remember how up to date with our news you will be. The main items are (1.) That W. is back ever since August i.e. they decided they didn't need officers of his seniority in the R.A.S.C. [156](#) and put him back on the retired list, greatly, of course, to his delight and ours.

(2.) Maureen got married in August to a music master called Blake, [157](#) a very small, dark, ugly, silent man who hardly ever utters a word—wh. is perhaps just as well for anyone married to such a chatterbox as Maureen. You will laugh at the idea of her being married, and indeed so do I, for she is as childish as ever.

(3.) We have not so far had any bombs in Oxford, though we got a good many alerts. At first we used to go out to the dug out and sit and freeze in the dark and the cold, but we now take no notice of them.

(4.) I am, save the mark!, a Home Guard and spend one night in nine mooching about the most depressing and malodorous parts of Oxford with a rifle. Otherwise I am living a normal life. I think a great deal of nonsense is talked about the food shortage: at least I have never yet had a meal from wh. I rose unsatisfied.

(5.) I have published another book, only a little thing called the *Problem of Pain*. At least I thought it little, but I expect you'd find it 'too long drawn

out'!

I had a long and most interesting letter from Janie McNeill: please thank her and tell her I will reply in the next few days. I quite agree with the contrast you drew in your last letter between our complete indifference during the last war (parts of wh. were probably among the happiest days in our lives) and our present hanging on the news. Is it because this is so much more serious, or because we are older?

Janie says you are not very well—nothing serious, I hope? I often picture you going the old walks and living the old life (But I suppose you are now usually to be found splitting a bottle or having a game of billiards with the present master of Glenmachan. He must be a great addition to the neighbourhood—quite carries on the fine old roistering tradition of Bob!)¹⁵⁸

Minto bears up pretty well, tho' terribly overworked. I don't know that I've read anything you wd. care about lately except (what I started yesterday) Charlotte M. Yonge's *Heir of Redclyffe* wh. is a good old fashioned novel about large families in nice houses in the good old settled, pious, comfortable days.

Oh Arthur, why didn't we live a century earlier? Still, we must console ourselves by being glad that we didn't live any later, that we had at least acquired our habits of mind before everything went bust. How is Reid? I was re-reading *Apostate* not long ago, with real enjoyment. ¹⁵⁹

It is an exquisite frosty morning. Please remember me to your Mother and Chahn. ¹⁶⁰

Yours

Jack

TO THE EDITOR OF *THEOLOGY (EC)*:[161](#)

Sir,

In an admirable letter contributed to your October number Canon Quick remarks, ““Moderns” of every kind have one characteristic in common: they hate Liberalism.’ [162](#) Would it not be equally true to say, more shortly, ““Moderns” of every kind have one characteristic in common: they *hate*?” The matter deserves, perhaps, more attention than it has received.

Yours faithfully,

C. S. Lewis

TO MARY NEYLAN (*L*):

Magdalen.
Jan. 4th 1941

Dear Mrs Neylan

Congratulations...on your own decision. I don't think this decision comes either too late or too soon. One can't go on thinking it over for ever; and one can begin to try to be a disciple before one is a professed theologian. In fact they tell us, don't they, that in these matters to act on the light one has is almost the only way to more light. Don't be worried about feeling that, or about feeling at all. As to what to do, I suppose the normal next step, after self-examination repentance and restitution, is to make your Communion; and then to continue as well as you can, praying as well as you can...and fulfilling your daily duties as well as you can. And remember always that religious *emotion* is only a servant...This, I say, would be the obvious course. If you want anything more e.g. Confession and Absolution which our church enjoins on no-one but leaves free to all—let me know and I'll find you a *directeur*. If you choose this way, remember it's not the psychoanalyst over again: the confessor is the representative of Our Lord and declares His forgiveness—his advice or 'understanding' tho' of real, is of secondary importance.

For daily reading I suggest (in small doses) Thomas à Kempis' 'Imitation of Christ' and the 'Theologia Germanica' (Golden Treasury series, Macmillan) and of course the Psalms and N.T. Don't worry if your heart won't respond: do the best you can. You are certainly under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, or you wouldn't have come where you now are: and the love that matters is His for you—yours for Him may at present exist only in the form of obedience. He will see to the rest.

This has been great news for me I need hardly say. You have all my prayers (not that mine are worth much).

TO DEREK BREWER (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
April 8th 1941

Dear Mr. Brewer

Congratulations on your Demyship. [163](#) The answer to your question depends a little on whether, as is most likely, you are liable to Military Service and what the calling-up age is likely to be by October. In the meantime, however, as a basis for any English studies, the following cd. hardly be wrong.

1. Greek is largely irrelevant, but if you know any Latin keep it up. I shd. make large use of the Loeb Library (you know—with Lat. & Eng. on opposite pages) getting the hang of things from the Eng. & turning to the Latin for the important bits. The most *relevant* books are the *Aeneid*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Boethius *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, & Cicero *De Republica* (the part at the end about Scipio's Dream). If you can't scan hexameters, learn how to.

2. A fairly sound biblical background is assumed by most of the older Eng. writers: if you lack this, acquire it. The most relevant books are the historical books of the O.T., the Psalms, & the Gospel of (say) St Luke. (The Vulgate is very easy Lat. & reading it is a good way of keeping up the language & getting knowledge at the same time.) 3. Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton are certainties whatever shortened course or ordinary course you take. Next to these in importance come Malory, Spenser, Donne, Dryden, Pope, Swift, Johnson, Wordsworth. After that it becomes more a matter of taste. The great thing is to be always reading but not to get bored—treat it not like work, more as a vice! Your book bill ought to be your biggest extravagance.

Write freely again if I can help.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR HAZARD DAKIN (PRIN): [164](#)

Magdalen College,

Oxford
Aug 3rd 1941

Dear Mr. Dakin—

I have sent under a separate cover copies of the three letters I had from Paul E. More. ¹⁶⁵ Please forgive me the delay. I have been so busy for many months now that I hardly know whether I am on my head or my heels. Now for such recollections as I can furnish.

I once told Paul Elmer More that while it would be an exaggeration to call him my spiritual father, I might call him my spiritual uncle. By this I meant, in the first place, that one had in his presence that sense of comfort and security and well-being which a child has in the presence of grown up relatives whom it likes. I began to feel it almost at once. It was something I am not sure we would gather from his books—a real homeliness, almost an affectionateness, the very reverse of that rarefied quality which some people may associate with American ‘Humanism’.

In the second place, I meant that quality which a good uncle often has of giving, without the slightest offence, advice and even correction which the child would resent if it came from the father. In our very first conversation he corrected a false Greek accent, and the misuse of a scientific term, which I had perpetrated in print, in a way which ought to be common among old men but is actually rather rare. On the other hand it was so done that even the vainest young author could not have objected to it: on the other, there was no nonsense about all being in the same boat, or ‘you don’t mind my mentioning it’ or anything of that kind. It was quite definitely and undisguisedly the ripe speaking to the unripe—authority without egoism.

At this distance of time I cannot remember much of our conversation. He found that I agreed with him about the futility of much academic ‘research’, and this led him to tell with great humour, and also great tenderness, the story of a young woman he knew who had refused to marry a man she loved because her ‘work’ (a thesis on some unspeakably obscure poet) ‘must come first’. Apparently More had saved the situation and got the little fool to the altar alright. (By the bye, ‘Pandarus moralised’—I mean Chaucer’s Pandarus¹⁶⁶—wouldn’t be a bad description of one side of More’s personality. He had a good deal of Pandarus’s shrewd humour and avuncular playfulness). He talked also of a ‘fundamentalism’ to which, in his opinion, the Church of Rome was committed.

But most of our time together was spent in close argument. You saw at once he was the sort of man who welcomed attacks on his own favourite beliefs and who was ready to give his whole attention to what you said without any irrelevant consideration of who you were. He was very fair and patient in discussion and talked for truth not victory. And all the time, however abstract the theme, the homely and human quality—sometimes manifested in the choice of an illustration, sometimes in the mere twinkle of his eye—was always in evidence, making one quite sure that his philosophy had roots in the earth. It is not, I think, what I should have expected. My impression is that the man was bigger than his books—there was *more of him*. Anything less like the popular idea of a ‘don’ or a ‘philosopher’ would be hard to find. Perhaps the extremely rich and flexible voice (he spoke from the chest) had something to do with it.

With renewed apologies for the inconvenience I must have caused you by my delay.

Yours faithfully
C. S. Lewis

TO CHRISTOPHER DAWSON (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Aug 30th 1941

Dear Dawson (if we might both drop the honorific now?)—I am working at absolutely full pressure lecturing the R.A.F. and fear I can't review Williams's excellent little pamphlet. [167](#) Also, he and I have reviewed each other once and if it goes on it is not easily distinguished from that species of collusion by wh. most of the big bubble reputations of our day have been produced! Would Fr Darcy (who is also a member of the Dante Society) do it?

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MR COLQUHOUN (P):

Magdalen College,

Oxford
March 2nd '42

Dear Mr Colquhoun

The Talks will be published as a little book in due course, but it is too early for me to be able to give date or price. [168](#) Thanks for kind letter.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO THEODORA BOSANQUET (HAR): [169](#)

Magdalen College,

Oxford
Aug 27th 1942

Dear Miss Bosanquet—

Yes. The *one* right man to review this is A. O. BARFIELD, who lives at RED ROOFS, BURTON'S LANE, CHALFONT ST. GILES, BUCKS. He will say that he hasn't time and has quite got out of the way of reviewing: but tell him why I refused and that I say he *must* (*salus populi suprema lex*).
[170](#) Thanks for the verse about Shanks & Squire.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

Not Eliot at any price. He couldn't understand one word of C.W.'s book. [171](#)

P.S Are you kin to the philosopher? [172](#)

TO ROSAMUND RIEU (P): [173](#)

As from Magdalen,

Oxford
Sept 28th 42

Dear Miss Rieu—

Speaking in a Church I assumed: (1.) Belief in the divinity of Jesus. (2.) Belief in the general historicity of the New Testament and hence: (3.) That if *any* miracles *could* be true, these ones would be. [174](#)

My argument only attempted to prove that the existence of the supernatural was certain and its irruption into the Natural Order not improbable. If the argument was valid you could quite logically accept it while reserving judgment on the question whether the New Testament miracles were facts or not, since their particular probability depends on my (1.) and (2.) which you don't grant. Just as a person might admit *in principle* that a miraculous birth is not an absurdity and yet, if the housemaid has a baby and claims to be a virgin, disbelieve it. Of course, if evidence for the housemaid's virtue and angelic sanctity were overwhelming and if the child turned out to be like no other child—why, then, one would be well advised to reconsider one's first view and ask the girl's pardon for your misunderstanding.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO SISTER PENELOPE CSMV (BOD):

[The Kilns]
Dec 22nd 1942

Dear Sister Penelope

I have been an unconscionable time answering your last letter, half hoping we might have seen more of St Athanasius by now. [175](#) I am so glad the *cognoscenti* approve of it: you will have done a most useful work and, so far as I could judge, done it rather better than well.

Perelandra will reach you, I hope, early in January: I have deterred the artist from putting his idea of Tinidril (you can imagine!) on the cover. [176](#) I have been very busy with one thing and another: there aren't the days and hours there used to be, are there? The minute hand used to go as the hour hand goes now!

How does one feel thankful? I am thinking of the improvement in the war news, and I don't mean (rhetorically) 'How can one be thankful enough?' but just what I say. It seems to be something which disappears or becomes a mere word the moment one recognises one *ought* to be feeling it. I always tell people not to bother about 'feelings' in their prayers, and above all never to *try* to feel, but I'm a bit puzzled about Gratitude: for if it is not a feeling, what is it?

A funny thing how merely formulating a question awakes the conscience! I hadn't a notion of the answer at the bottom of the last sheet, but now I know exactly what you are going to say: 'Act your gratitude and let feelings look after themselves.' Thank you. (Do *all* theoretical problems conceal shirkings by the will?) Commend me to Reverend Mother and Mother Annie Louie and my special Mother (the 'cube') and to Sister Janet about whom I feel guilty, though I didn't see how to help it at the time. [177](#) I hope you are well.

I have 'sinitis' [178](#) (it feels like toothache but isn't) but not very badly and it is, I think, going away. I have to sit for 20 min. every evening with my face in a jug of Friars Balsam, like a horse with a nose-bag, and the family say all sorts of things and I can't *answer*, tho' it is 'pain and grief to me'! [179](#)

God bless you all for Christmas: you are in my daily prayers as I know I am in yours.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO HELEN TYRRELL (P):[180](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
March 1st [1943]

Dear Miss Tyrrell

I have got back from Newcastle[181](#) so knocked up with lecturing and travelling on a bad cold and cough that I must 'rat' again to night. [182](#) Please make my apologies.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MRS SACHER (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
May 13th 1943

Dear Mrs. Sacher

Thank you for your most kind and encouraging letter—nothing could have given me more pleasure. Find room for me sometimes in your prayers.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

Jan 30th/44

My dear Arthur,

(1.) I'm afraid I don't know anything about theatrical agencies, nor indeed agencies of any kind. Nor do I know any theatrical people.

(2.) Probably the best *single* book of modern comment on the Bible is *A New Commentary on Holy Scripture* edited by Gore, Goudge and Guillaume, and published by the S.P.C.K. (Northumberland Avenue, W.C.2.)—a very fat, ugly volume in double columns, but quite readable print. [183](#) Of course for separate commentaries on particular books of the Bible, their name is legion. [184](#) The Clarendon Bible (Clarendon Press) is not bad. [185](#)

(3.) The starting point for interpreting Chas. Williams is *He Came Down from Heaven* (Methuen) where Florence will find some of his main ideas explained directly—i.e. not in imaginative form. If either Florence or you wd. like a copy of his book on Dante (*The Figure of Beatrice*) I have a spare copy wh. I wd. gladly give. It might help.

As for the man, he is about 52, of humble origin (there are still traces of cockney in his voice), ugly as a chimpanzee but so radiant (he emanates more *love* than any man I have ever known) that as soon as he begins talking whether in private or in a lecture he is transfigured and looks like an angel. He sweeps some people quite off their feet and has many disciples. Women find him so attractive that if he were a bad man he cd. do what he liked either as a Don Juan or a charlatan. He works in the Oxford University Press. In spite of his ‘angelic’ quality he is also quite an earthy person and when Warnie, Tolkien, he and I meet for our pint in a pub in Broad Street, [186](#) the fun is often so fast and furious that the company probably thinks we’re talking bawdy when in fact we’re v. likely talking Theology. He is married and, I think, youthfully in love with his wife still. That’s about all I can think of.

You needn’t ask me to pray for you, Arthur—I have done so daily ever since I began to pray, and am sure you do for me.

Yours

Jack Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

Magdalen College
Oxford
22 Feb./44

My dear Arthur—

I wonder does your cousin [187](#) differ from me as much as she thinks? I don’t want to deny the sense in wh. Heaven enters wherever Xt enters, even in this life: and I don’t suppose she wants to deny the resurrection of the dead and the full & final ‘redemption of the body’ [188](#) wh. so obviously has not yet occurred.

About *unselfishness*, whatever dictionaries say, *you* know perfectly well what I mean, and I expect we’ve often talked about it—people going about making martyrs of themselves and annoying everyone else by doing things

nobody wants under pretext of ‘unselfishness’. [189](#) But we cd. explain it better in conversation.

Yes, I will indeed pray for ‘yours’ as well as you.

All best wishes.

Yours

Jack

TO MR OFFER (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
May 9th 44

Dear Mr. Offer

I think I shd. answer thus.

The words from the Cross ‘Why hast thou forsaken me’ [190](#) suggest that Our Lord entered into the human experience to the degree of complete dereliction and at one point no longer realised His own Deity nor foresaw His own Resurrection.

The gift was never withdrawn. Christ is still Man. Human nature has been taken up into the Divine Nature (see Athanasian Creed) and remains there. [191](#) Our *bridgehead* is secure.

What do these people *want*? Do they actually visualise Him for 3 hours nailed to a stake—flayed back glued to unplanned wood—Palestinian sun—cloud of insects round head, hands, & feet—the face a mask of bruises, pus, spittle, blood, tears & sweat—the lungs gradually tearing owing to the position—and then complain ‘This doesn’t hurt enough?’ If so...!

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO CECIL HARWOOD (P): PC

[13 May 1944]

Thanks for letter tho’ I fear many most judicious remarks are embedded in the mysteries of your handwriting. Now when can you come and spend a week night in April? Days that *won’t* do are 2nd

3rd

5th

17th

18th

26th

'Even Steiner,' addressed to people who wd. take the orthodox scientific view means of course 'and (what you wd. think less likely) Steiner.'

Love to all

C.S.L.

TO JOHN ROWLAND (TEX): TS

REF. 299/44

Magdalen College,

Oxford.

9th June 1944.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your courteous letter. I think the lie which took you in was made (it is certainly often repeated) by an anonymous scribbler. What I really said was that I *became* an atheist at the age of fourteen! No offense.

Yours faithfully,

C. S. Lewis

TO HELEN TYRRELL (P):[192](#)

[Magdalen College

Oxford]

July 24th 1944

Miss Tyrrell was my pupil while reading for the Final Honour School of English in this university. She was a sound scholar and (what perhaps is more important) had a most penetrating intelligence. I have seldom met a woman of her age who was so lucid, cogent, and resourceful in discussion—in fact a real 'sparring partner'. I think she ought to prove a most stimulating teacher, specially for upper forms where the pupils are ready to be waked to a spirit of inquiry. She has a sound sense of humour and no conceit.

C. S. Lewis

Fellow & Tutor of Magdalen College, Oxford.

TO MARGARET DENEKE (BOD):[193](#)

As from Magdalen Col.

Oct 3rd 1944

Dear Miss Deneke

It will give me great pleasure to come to lunch at one o'clock on Oct. 30th. I will not try to express my sympathy to Miss Benecke¹⁹⁴ when we meet—such things are often merely embarrassing. You, I am sure, will not doubt that she has it. The gap in College is terrible. Already (and yet it is only a few days) I have twice found myself setting aside a problem 'to ask Benecke about it' and then realised with a pang that there is no more of that. His image haunts every room in Magdalen. I hear his imagined voice again and again: so vividly, when crossing Magdalen bridge this morning, that I almost wondered if there were not some objective reality in the experience. I can hardly explain how his funeral affected me. I have heard that service read in that chapel so often for those who have not believed a word of it and who (had they been alive) wd. have mocked, that my feeling was almost one of *relief*. Here at last was a dead man not unworthy of the service. ¹⁹⁵ In some queer way it enormously strengthened my faith, and before we filed out of chapel I really felt (do not misunderstand me) a kind of joy—a feeling that all was well, just as well as it cd. be.

I count it among my great good fortunes to have known him. As far as human eyes can judge he was—is—a saint: but oh!, we *still* need him here so very badly.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

**TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES LITERARY*
SUPPLEMENT: ¹⁹⁶**

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

Is there not some danger that fine stylistic questions about the Basic English version of the New Testament¹⁹⁷ may distract attention from something much more obvious? The first thing we demand of a translator is that he should translate: questions of elegance come later. In Colossians I, 15 the Basic version renders *πάσης κτίσεως* by 'all living things.' ¹⁹⁸ Whence came the word 'living'? Obviously not from the Greek; and if it came from the Authorised Version ('every creature') it suggests a rather elementary mistake. Critics are in one sense unkind, and, in another, too kind

by half, when they apply the highest standards of translation to work which does not satisfy the lowest.

Yours, etc.
C. S. Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

Dec. 11th 1944

My dear Arthur—

I was delighted to hear from you. The statement you read in the papers about the Cambridge professorship was untrue; so far from having accepted it, I haven't even been offered it! Which just shows what newspapers are.

Your view of the divinity of Christ was an old bone of contention between us, wasn't it? [199](#) But I thought when we last met you had come down on the same side as me. I don't think I can agree that the Churches are empty because they teach that Jesus is God. If so, the ones that teach the opposite, i.e. the Unitarians, would be full wouldn't they? Are they? It seems to me that the ones which teach the fullest and most dogmatic theory are precisely the ones that retain their people and make converts. While the liberalising and modernising ones lose ground every day. Thus the R.C.'s are flourishing and growing, and in the C. of E. the 'high' churches are fuller than the 'low'. Not of course that I wd. accept popularity as a test of truth: only since you introduced it, I must say that as far as it is evidence at all it points the other way.

And in history too. *Your* doctrine, under its old name of Arianism, was given a chance: [200](#) in fact a v. full run for its money for it *officially* dominated the Roman Empire at one time. But it didn't last.

I think the great difficulty is this: if He was *not* God, who or what was He? In *Mat* 28.19 you already get the baptismal formula 'In the name of the Father, the Son, & the Holy Ghost.' Who is this 'Son'? Is the Holy Ghost a man? If not does a man 'send' Him (see *John* 15.26)? In *Col.* 1.12 Christ is 'before all things and by Him all things consist'. What sort of man is this? I leave out the obvious place at the beginning of St John's Gospel. Take something much less obvious. When He weeps over Jerusalem (*Mat.* 23) why does He suddenly say (v. 34) '*I* send unto you prophets and wise men'? Who cd. say this except either God or a lunatic? Who is this man who goes about forgiving sins? Or what about *Mark* 2.18–19. What man can announce

that simply because he is present acts of penitence, such as fasting, are 'off'? Who can give the school a half holiday except the Headmaster?

The doctrine of Christ's divinity seems to me not something stuck on which you can unstick but something that peeps out at every point so that you'd have to unravel the whole web to get rid of it. Of course you may reject some of these passages as unauthentic, but then I cd. do the same to yours if I cared to play that game! When it says God can't be tempted I take this to be an obvious truth. ²⁰¹ God, as God, can't, any more than He can die. He became man precisely to do and suffer what as God he cd. not do and suffer. And if you take away the Godhead of Christ, what is Xtianity all *about*? How can the death of one *man* have this effect for all men which is proclaimed throughout the New Testament?

And don't you think we shd. allow *any* weight to the fruits of these doctrines? Where are the shining examples of human holiness wh. ought to come from Unitarianism if it is true? Where are the Unitarian 'opposite numbers' to St Francis, George Herbert, Bunyan, Geo. Macdonald, and even burly old Dr Johnson? Where are the great Unitarian books of devotion? Where among them shall I find 'the words of life'? ²⁰² Where have they helped, comforted, & strengthened us?

I'm glad our prayers have been answered and things are a bit better with you. They're pretty bad with us. Minto had a v. slight stroke some months ago. Maureen (her husband teaches at Worksop) is going to have a baby²⁰³ and is staying with us. I long to see you again. Remember me to all our friends. Tell Jane *her* book is in the printer's hands but prob. won't appear till June. ²⁰⁴ All good wishes.

Yours
Jack

TO MISS WALKER (P): TS

REF. 531/45.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
1st February 1945.

Dear Miss Walker,

Thank you for your kind and encouraging letter of the 28th January:— I have a new novel, 'That Hideous Strength' which will shortly be published

by John Lane, and ‘The Grand Divorce’, now appearing serially in the ‘Guardian’, will eventually be produced in book form by Geoffrey Bles. [205](#)

With all best wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

**TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES LITERARY*
SUPPLEMENT: [206](#)**

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

If Mr. Hooke assures us that the Basic translation of *πάσης κτίσ-εως* has an origin quite different from that which I conjectured, I accept his word. But I do not think that the opposite interpretation was, in me, gratuitous, for even now that Mr. Hooke has explained the Basic rendering, I do not in the least understand his explanation. Young’s Concordance [207](#) shows no restriction of *bara* to the creation of animate beings. To what end did the Basic translators introduce the word *living* into Colossians 1, 15? From what error were they trying to guard their readers? To what truth were they trying to lead them? The end of verse 16 (*πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ . . . ἔκτισται*) [208](#) makes it quite clear that St. Paul regards Christ as prior to all beings, both animate and inanimate. Readers who do not understand that *all things* includes all *living things* will not be helped by anything we can do for them; and in view of verse 16 I do not know what Mr. Hooke means by saying, that ‘the inanimate creation was not in question.’ Even if it were not, why was it so important to induce English readers to exclude the inanimate creation by interpolating the word *living*?—an exclusion which, if it did anything, would be likely to make them attribute to the author some idea of an ‘emergent’ Christ coming into existence later than the inorganic world.

Yours, etc.
C. S. Lewis

TO STELLA ALDWINCKLE (W): PC

Magdalen College
Oxford

Feb 5th [1945]

Sorry!—I'm just trying to stave off what looks like turning into flu' so I think I had better make it an early night to-night and cut the Socratic Yours
C.S.L.

TO SARAH NEYLAN (W):

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Feb. 11th 1945

My dear Sarah—

Please excuse me for not writing to you before to wish you a merry Christmas and a happy New Year and to thank you for your nice Card which I liked very much: I think you have improved in drawing cats and these were very good, much better than I can do. I can only draw a cat from the back view like this. I think it is rather cheating, don't you? because it does not



show the face which is the difficult part to do. It is a funny thing



that faces of people are easier to do than most



animals' faces except perhaps elephants, and owls. I wonder why that should be!

The reason I have not written before is that we have had a dreadfully



busy time with people being ill in the house and visitors and pipes getting frozen in the frost. All the same I liked the frost (did you?): the woods looked really lovely with all the white on the trees, just like a picture to a story. But perhaps you were in London. I suppose it was not so nice there.

We now have a Baby, about 6 weeks old, living in the house. It is a very quiet one and does not keep any of us awake at night. It is a boy.

We still have our old big dog, he is eight years old. I think this is as much for a dog as 56 is for a man—you find this out by finding what is seven times the dog's age. So he is getting rather grey and very slow and stately. He is great friends with the two cats, but if he sees a strange cat in the garden he goes for it at once. He seems to know at once whether it is a stranger or one of our own cats even if it is a long way off and looks just like one of them. His name is Bruce. The two cats are called 'Kitty-Koo' and 'Pushkin'. Kitty-Koo is old and black and very timid and gentle but Pushkin is gray and young and rather fierce. She does not know how to velvet her paws. She is not very nice to the old cat.

I wonder how you are all getting on? Are you at school now and how do you like it? It must be about half way through term by now, I should think. Do you keep a 'calendar' and cross off the days till the end of term?

I am not going to post this till to-morrow because I want to put in a 'book-token'. You take it to a bookshop and they give you a book instead of it. This is for a kind of Christmas present, only it is very late.

Now I have written you a letter you must write me one—that is, if you like writing letters but not otherwise. I used to like it once but I don't much now because I have so many to write but my Brother does some of them for me on his typewriter which is a great help.

Have you seen any snow-drops yet this year? I saw some two days ago. Give my love to the others—and to yourself Yours affectionate god-father

C. S. Lewis

TO JOHN RICHARDS (BOD): TS

REF. 113/1/45.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
5th March 1945.

Dear Mr. Richards,

Thank you for your kind and encouraging letter of the 3rd:— I can't say I have reached the stage of *loving* that passage: but as all the wise (including even the Pagans) agree on the point, I suppose I shall have to lump it! All the best.

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO EDITH GATES (W): TS

REF. 492/45.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
2nd May 1945.

Dear Miss Gates,

Thank you for your kind and encouraging letter:— I believe my doctrine about troughs to be true because every good writer on the spiritual life says the same. [209](#) (See ‘Theologica Germanica’, the ‘Imitation’, Walter Hilton, Geo. MacDonald’s Sermons etc). And don’t forget that Our Lord Himself experienced troughs: to the point of saying ‘Why hast Thou forsaken me?’ [210](#)

Thanks for the Presbyterian, and all good wishes, yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT*:[211](#)

Sir,—

In ‘Comus’ 977 the spirit announces that he is going to fly to happy climes which are ‘up in the broad fields of the sky’ [212](#) indeed so far up that they enjoy perpetual day, doubtless by being beyond ‘the circling canopy of Night’s extended shade.’ (P.L. III, 556). [213](#) But in 981 he proceeds to locate those climes amidst ‘the gardens fair of Hesperus.’ [214](#) This apparent confusion is not accidental, for it occurs also in the opening speech as originally written in the Trinity MS.: [215](#) there also the spirit claims to have come *both* from the sky (‘regions mild of calm and serene air’)[216](#) *and* from the gardens of Hesperus.

I suggest the following explanation. The connexion between ‘Comus’ and the Platonic Theology of Milton’s day is now generally recognised. The spirit is an aerial genius or daemon (he is called *Daemon* in the Trinity MS.) of the kind described by Henry More and others. The words *aerial* and *air* in ll. 3 and 4 emphasize the fact. These *aerial* beings are distinguished from the *aetherial* beings who live in a higher region. Their airy bodies require nourishment. But how are they nourished? More (*Immortality of the Soul*,

III, p. 9)²¹⁷ answers: 'In the tranquillity of those upper Regions, that *Promus-Condu*s of the *Universe*, the *Spirit of Nature*, may silently send forth whole gardens and orchards of most delectable fruits and flowers, of an equilibrrious ponderosity to the parts of the air they grow in, to whose shape and colours the transparency of these Plants may adde particular lustre as we see it is in precious Stones.'

In the light of this passage I take Milton to mean that his 'Spirit' comes from the upper air at the beginning of 'Comus' and returns thither at the end, but that in the upper air is to be found that reality which the myth of the Hesperian garden erroneously located beyond the 'ocean' (926) at the 'green earth's end.' But 'far above' (1003) in the aetherial region dwells that Divine Love (celestial Cupid) who is the goal of the Platonic quest.

Yours faithfully,
C. S. Lewis

TO DEREK BREWER (P):²¹⁸ TS

REF. 337/1/45

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
19th September 1945.

Dear Brewer,

I think, in view of the book famine, most of your spare time had better be spent in secondhand bookshops picking up all the major English writers you can lay your hands on. If you've sold or lost your original O.E. books, try to replace them at once (Wardale's *Grammar*, ²¹⁹ Sweet's *Primer*, and *Reader*, ²²⁰ Klaeber's *Beowulf*²²¹ or, failing that, Chambers'). ²²² For the rest, just read as much as you can. I'm delighted to hear that you are coming back.

Yours
C. S. Lewis

TO MARGARET 'PEGGY' POLLARD (P) TS

REF. 363/1/45.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
4th October 1945.

Dear Miss Pollard,
Many thanks for your kind and encouraging letter of the 2nd.
I love both goats and Camembert, and am much moved by what you say.
With best wishes,
yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

I'm v. intrigued by the pious ungulate. [223](#) 'Tis the cloven hoof itself redeemed. You're sure it is a goat and not a converted satyr in disguise? Try piping to him or read a little Theocritus. [224](#)

TO MARGARET 'PEGGY' POLLARD (P): TS

REF. 363/1/45.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
11th October 1945.

Dear Mrs. Pollard,

I begin to be rather nervous about this ungulate. Is rationality about to descend on a new species, and, if so, what will become of us? Perhaps we shall be kept as pets.

Its really too bad about the 73 bus: I just gave any number that came into my head, never reflecting that there are Londoners who carried the whole bus service in *their* heads. [225](#) N.B. Higher Critics will use this a thousand years hence to prove that the book is a forgery written far later than the 20th Century, because any *real* 20th Century author would be bound to have known.

My dreams are full of Camembert.

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

**TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES LITERARY*
*SUPPLEMENT***[226](#)

Sir,—

I hope my letter about *Comus* did not give the impression that I was seeking the 'source' of *Comus* in Henry More's *Immortality of the Soul* which was published twenty-two years later! Mr. Wright's suggestion that

the machinery of the Mask comes from the *Phaedo*²²⁷ is certainly worth consideration and might, perhaps, receive additional support from *Il Penseroso* 89, *et seq.*

The real question seems to me to be how seriously Milton took his machinery. The *Phaedo* as it stands is obviously inconsistent with Christian Theology and with the science of Milton's day. If, therefore, his machinery is that of the *Phaedo* we must conclude it to be wholly fanciful and allegorical. If, on the other hand, he had in it a more than poetic faith it is incredible that he should be ignoring that vast work on the reconciliation of Plato with Christianity and scientific discovery which was done not, of course, by the 'Cambridge Platonists' in particular, but the whole body of 'Platonic Theologians', Greek, Jewish, Italian and English.

I think (a) that there are clear traces of their influence in *Paradise Lost*; (b) that the longer a man studies our older poets in relation to the thought of their times the more chary he will be of pronouncing anything whatever to be 'purely' allegorical or fantastic or metaphorical. Consider how different Donne's *Air and Angels*²²⁸ becomes after one has read about the relations between a sphere and an intelligence in Abrabanel's *Dialoghi d'Amore*; ²²⁹ or how *Henry IV*, Part I, iii, I 27 (on earthquakes)²³⁰ changes when one reads in Kepler that the earth is an *ingens animal*²³¹ and *per montium crateres ceuos et nares expirat*. ²³² Such passages are, of course, metaphorical and fanciful: the point is that they are not *purely* so.

C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE SAYER (W):

Magdalen
April 10th 46

My dear Sayer—

Your 'tiger' of a monk must come from Riga, he has such a smile on his face. ²³³ I'd like to go and talk at Ampleforth but things are so tight now that I am refusing nearly everything, and what little I can do must be reserved for the infidel who is my special target.

I am much cheered by what you tell me about *Hideous Strength* for the reviewers have unanimously damned it. But you're right: *Perelandra* is much the best book I've written. When can we meet? Cd. you come & dine & sleep on Tue. April 30th? Do!

Yours

C. S. Lewis

On 16 September 1946 Warnie wrote to Jill Flewett:[234](#)

Magdalen College,
16th September 1946.

My dear June,

Many thanks for your letter of the 11th. The Irish holiday is, alas, one of those pious hopes—a thing that is going to happen ‘next year’. But I am none the less very grateful for your kind offer, which I will pigeonhole for future reference.

What is much more to the point is the good news that you propose to come down here; when? I shall look forward to it greatly. I was much interested to hear about the Guildford Repertory Theatre; Guildford used to be a nice place, but I have’nt seen it since the war. What about the Oxford Rep? They tell me it has a good reputation, but you know more about this than I do; it would be grand if you could get a billet with them.

Anyway I hope you really intend to come down here; the Blakes leave tomorrow if that has any bearing on the point.

Yours,
Warnie

Later that year, Lewis was one of those who signed a letter to the editor of The Times: [235](#)

Sir,—

We ask the hospitality of your columns, believing that many of your readers would be interested to hear of the existence of the Jane Austen Society and its aim. This society was founded in May, 1940, with the object of getting possession of the house formerly known as Chawton Cottage. In this house Jane Austen lived with her mother and her sister Cassandra from 1808 until her death in 1817. All the novels except ‘Northanger Abbey’ were written here in the form in which we have them.

The cottage, besides being of unique interest to lovers of Jane Austen’s work, is well worth preserving in itself. It is an L-shaped brick building of early Georgian date, standing at the junction of the London, Winchester, and Portsmouth roads. A description of it in Jane Austen’s day is found in Chapter IV of the Memoir by J. E. Austen-Leigh. It has

long been divided into three tenements, but apart from a few minor alterations it remains structurally as it was during the Austens' occupation.

It would not be possible to obtain vacant possession of the whole house, nor is it desired; the present tenants would not, under the society's plan, be in any way disturbed; but immediate possession would be assured of a large room on the ground floor which (identified from its blocked-up window) was the Austens' drawing-room. This would house some very interesting relics which have been promised, and form the nucleus of the place of pilgrimage the society hopes to see established.

The society's aim, therefore, is to buy and repair this house, to establish a caretaker, to keep the rest of the premises as living accommodation, but to make certain rooms, particularly associated with Jane Austen, accessible to the public. The owner has agreed to a price of £3,000. Thorough-going repairs are urgently needed. The society therefore has set itself to raise at least £5,000. Further information may be had from the hon. Secretaries, Jordans, Alton, Hampshire. Subscriptions should be sent to Messrs. Sheen, Stickland and Co., 71, High Street, Alton, Hampshire.

We are yours faithfully,

R. A. Austen-Leigh²³⁶

Elizabeth Bowen²³⁷

David Cecil²³⁸

R. W. Chapman

W. Hugh Curtis²³⁹

Dorothy Darnell²⁴⁰

Beecher Hogan²⁴¹

Elizabeth Jenkins²⁴²

G. L. Keynes²⁴³

Mary Lascelles²⁴⁴

C. S. Lewis

Wilmarth S. Lewis²⁴⁵

Edward Marsh²⁴⁶

C. B. Tinker²⁴⁷

Wellington²⁴⁸

Clough Williams-Ellis²⁴⁹

Mervyn Winton

The Jane Austen Memorial Trust bought Chawton Cottage in 1947 and the Jane Austen Society helped with its preservation. It is administered by the Trust and open to the public. As a museum it has a matchless collection of books, furniture, pictures and other memorabilia associated with Jane Austen and the Austen family.

TO THE HEADMASTER OF BANCROFT'S SCHOOL (P): [250](#)
TS

REF. 46/666.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
19th December 1946.

Dear Headmaster,

Thank you for your letter about Reed. [251](#) If he is reading English here the main things I should like him to do are, (a). Keep up any foreign language he knows, especially Latin.

(b). Read as much English in his spare time as he can. Nobody wants him to think of the syllabus yet.

yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO THEODORA BOSANQUET (HAR): TS

REF. 234/47.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
18th April 1947.

Dear Miss Bosanquet,

I have received a kind invitation to a cocktail party on 8th May from your fellow-host (or hostess?), and am replying to you because I cannot make out the signature. I should much have liked to come, but the summer term in post war Oxford does'nt give tutors any chance of breaking away like that.

With regret, and many thanks,
yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO T. H. WHITE (TEX):[252](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford
April 29th 1947

Sir

Tho' very ill supplied by Nature with that Address which is commonly look'd for in those who solicit the Acquaintance of the great, I find I cannot be easie without communicating to you the infinite deal of satisfaction wherewith I have perused your late admirable Work *Mrs. Masham's Repose*.
[253](#) I'm sure 'tis no Flatterie (which I disdain) to say that for the gaiety and invention of the Fable, the justness of the Sentiments, and the Elegance of the Style, I have not read its Equal in late years.

The ludicrous and the Poetical part support and vary each other without any Discord, and it was a very particular Pleasure to me to observe that while the whole Platform of your Tale is in a maner a compliment to the late ingenious Dean yet you are so judicious as not to spare the Follies in which he allowed himself concerning Laputa. [254](#) Where you make merry with my own Profession in the excellent place about Mr. Pope's letter *habetis confitentem reum*, [255](#) and I fairly rolled in my great chair while I read it.

Yet I am not sure that I should have made bold to trouble you with this letter neither if I had not been put out of Patience by the silly, halting notices of *Mrs. M.* in the Press. I will not condole with you, being very sure that you despise 'em and know that amid the disgusting Seriousness of the Age nothing witty and Phantasticall will be truly satisfied and nothing that does not please either government or Fashion be honestly praised.

If your occasions should lead you to these Academick Groves I shall beg leave to make you acquainted with half a dozen Magdalen Fellows that have a freer and more masculine taste. Till then, Sir, may you accept my Gratefull thanks for the Entertainment you have given me and believe me your oblig'd obedient servant

C. S. Lewis

TO ROGER LANCELYN GREEN (BOD): TS

REF. 177/47.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
13th May 1947.

My dear Green,

Heartiest congratulations on your engagement and all such good wishes as an old bachelor can give. [256](#) I'm tied to a house full of sickness and a Sunday party is out of the question for me: you will not think it is because I am indifferent.

You've never turned up to fetch your MS, but I suppose you are not much thinking of it at present.

Thanks for asking me. I hope you'll live happily ever after.

Yours,

C. S. Lewis

TO R. W. CHAPMAN (BOD):

Magdalen College
Oxford
14/6/47

Dear Chapman

The ominous date had by no means escaped the notice of several of us and I have thought and even acted a good deal about it. I found no one even among the barbarians who did not regret our coming loss: but the general feeling that you were tolerably provided for in other ways was too strong and I had to desist. I daresay if your subject had been Stinks, Sedition, or Pornography the result *might* have been better. *Eheu.* [257](#)

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO THEODORA BOSANQUET (HAR):

Magdalen College
Oxford
15/6/47

Dear Miss Bosanquet—

Thank you for drawing my attention to this. I doubt, however, if it cd. be properly dealt with within the compass of a letter.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO J. O. REED (P): TS

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
July 8th 1947

Dear Mr. Reed

The important thing before coming up is not a 'course' but as much reading and book-buying as you can possibly afford without getting tired or bankrupt. Anything between 1400 and 1830 is grist to your mill, and now is the time for any of the long authors: Chaucer, Malory, Sidney, Spenser, Marlow, Shakespeare, B. Johnson, Thos. Browne, Burton, Walton, Donne, Bunyan, Dryden, Addison, Pope, Swift, Thomson, Richardson, Fielding, Johnson, Boswell, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Keats, Shelley, Jane Austen, Lamb, Hazlitt, de Quincey.

Keep up any foreign language you know, especially Latin. If you are ignorant of the Bible, read it (the Latin Vulgate will kill two birds with one stone). *Buy all texts* you can, and borrow critical books. For literary history, all W. P. Ker's books are good on the mediaeval period, [258](#) and all Oliver Elton's on the later. [259](#) On Shakespeare E. K. Chambers, [260](#) Stoll, [261](#) Caroline Spurgeon, [262](#) and Bethell. [263](#) Write freely again if you wish.

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

I am assuming you chose Course 3 which is mainly modern. If you prefer No 1. (mainly philological & medieval) or 2 (a half way house between 1 and 3) let me know.

TO JOSEPH LEWIS COPPACK (P):[264](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford
Aug 19th 1947

Dear Cousin Coppack

Your letter gave me unusual pleasure, fully shared by my (elder) brother who is a keen genealogist and family historian. Naturally, we have no personal recollections of the 'Bishop': [265](#) the furthest we can remember

back to is our grandfather and grandmother²⁶⁶ whom you must often have seen. You probably know that my Father's brothers are all dead now. I always regret that our branch of the family had drifted so far away from Wales for I love the country and always feel at home when I got here.

I remember at a tiny station in central Wales having a philosophical argument with a Welsh porter and thinking how impossible such a thing would be in England and when in 1941 I gave a course of lectures at a College in Bangor²⁶⁷ I was much haunted by speculations as to whether the great old man might also have spoken in those parts.

I shall be 49 in November and I am unmarried, also going bald and beginning to be a little deaf—a failing which, I think runs in our blood. My life has been a very fortunate one on the whole—much more so than I deserve and all the successes of my last ten years came as a sudden surprise. Probably the greatest difference between us is that I was for many years a total unbeliever and was not reclaimed till my late thirties—a sad waste of time (and something worse) tho' it has perhaps enabled me to understand the atheist's point of view better than I cd. have done otherwise and thus to be of more use to others in that position.

I enclose the *Recorder*. ²⁶⁸ My brother joins me in greetings and good wishes and I remain your affectionate cousin

Clive Lewis

TO ARTHUR GREEVES (W):

Magdalen
Aug 19/47

My dear Arthur—

I agree that we don't know what a spiritual body is. ²⁶⁹ But I don't like *contrasting* it with (your words) 'an actual, physical body'. This suggests that the spiritual body wd. be the opposite of 'actual'—i.e. some kind of vision or imagination. And I do think most people imagine it as something that *looks* like the present body and isn't really there. Our Lord's eating the boiled fish²⁷⁰ seems to put the boots on that idea, don't you think? I suspect the distinction is the other way round—that it is something compared with which our present bodies are half real and phantasmal.

When I say that certain graces are 'offered' us only through certain physical acts I mean that is the ordinary public offer certified by scripture & supported by unbroken Xtian experience. ²⁷¹ I don't of course (heaven

forbid!) mean to limit what God may please to do in secret & special ways. In fact 'offer' is the operative word. No doubt He gives more than He offers: but the offer was as I describe.

I feel the better for our meeting still.

Yours

Jack

TO THE EDITOR OF *TIME AND TIDE*:[272](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford

Sir:

Mr Heyworth's letter on the value of 'Old English', [273](#) or Anglo-Saxon, deserves a hearty welcome and underlines a truth not generally known: the truth that while many theorists among the dons of many universities (especially among those who do not teach, or even know, Anglo-Saxon) agitate for the removal of this language from the syllabus, the better students almost invariably find in it both profit and pleasure.

I have only one point to add. Mr Heyworth mentions (though, wisely, he does not accept) the belief that Scotch poverty explains the scarcity of great Scotch artists. Is it not worth while pointing out that at the end of the Middle Ages when English was becoming rich and Scotland was both very poor and mangled with civil war, English poets were writing rubbish while Scotland boasts Douglas, Dunbar, and Lyndsay?

It is only one of the innumerable proofs that economic and political conditions are merely the *materials* both for the art of poetry and for the art of life itself. And the best work in both is often done in the hardest materials. Difficult metres, short rations, rugged language and bad rules, can all be turned to account if the artist knows his job.

I am, etc.

C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF *TIME AND TIDE*:[274](#)

Magdalen College
Oxford

Sir:

I should like the anonymous 'undergraduate' who dislikes his Anglo-Saxon to understand that my letter which, by implication, relegates him to the class of inferior students, was written before I had seen his. I would not like him to think that I intended to mortify him.

One point of his I would like to take up. He says that Anglo-Saxon is easy to mark in exams. I wonder how much examining he has done. My own experience is that translation is more troublesome to mark than any other kind of work: it tests both the examiner and the candidate most severely and discovers more about the literary judgement of both than work which *seems* to be far more directly concerned with this elusive factor.

I am, etc.

C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *CHURCH TIMES*:[275](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

The author of an article entitled 'Old School Ties for All' in your last issue, speaks with confidence of the religious training given at English public schools. I hope he is right; but if he is, his position is so important that it deserves to be defended in some detail against the rather different conclusions (based on wide, immediate observation) in Mr. B. G. Sandhurst's 'How Heathen is Britain.' [276](#) May we hope that this will be done in a second article?

C. S. Lewis

TO T. C. BAIRD (P): TS

REF. 658/47.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

24th November 1947.

My dear Mr. Baird,

Hurrah! That's my favourite bit in the whole book, [277](#) and you are the first person to notice it.

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT*:[278](#)

Sir,—

I would like to express my agreement, if not with the language which Dr. F. R. Leavis holds about your review (Nov. 1) of Mr. Waldock's *Paradise Lost and Its Critics*, [279](#) yet with his general contention that it deserves much more favourable treatment than your reviewer gave it. I agree with very little that Mr. Waldock says, but I think he has given us a strong and clear presentation of a view that should be seriously considered. The tone and temper of his book deserve the praise which Dr. Leavis gives them.

C. S. Lewis

TO DEREK BREWER (P):[280](#)

Dec. 21/47

Dear Brewer

Oh Lor!—I never but once saw anything like this year's class list...but that way madness lies. It has not in the least altered my opinion either of you or of..., [281](#) nor I think will it affect your chances in the Fellowship.

There *may* be something still to do on Gower tho' I'm not quite sure what. But go on nosing a bit. I enclose the formal testimonial wh. is all that is needed. All the best.

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO MARGARET DOUGLAS (W): TS
REF. 735/47.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
31st December 1947.

Dear Miss Douglas,

Accept my deepest sympathy on the death of your mother: for I think the bond between you was unusually close. You have one great consolation which few bereaved people have—a clear conscience towards the dead. It was apparent that you were spending yourself largely upon her. I remember her very vividly, and much admired that blend of the playful and the stately, of which only old ladies have the secret.

I am so glad that you approved of the memoir. [282](#) Professor Tolkien's second Hobbit [283](#) is still unfinished: he works like a coral insect you know!

With all good wishes,

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO KENNETH HOPKINS (PRIN): [284](#) TS

REF. 736/47.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
31st December 1947.

Dear Sir,

Such a number of people seem, in various undefined ways, to be competing for the post of Charles Williams' literary executor that I think the only safe plan is to begin with Mrs. Williams. Her address is 23, Antrim Mansions, London, N.W.3. Thank you for your kind reference to my little memoir.

Yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO HELEN CALKINS (W): TS

Ref. 48/276.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
29th March 1948.

Dear Miss Calkins,

No. I'm very sorry, but I can't. [285](#) I have almost no leisure already, and I get requests like yours very often, so I have had to make a rule never to do it. The merit of the MS (I am perfectly ready to believe all good of it) has nothing to do with this decision. When you lay the last straw on a camel's breaking back, it is no good assuring him that it is the *best* straw! I return Harper's letter. Forgive me, and all best wishes.

yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO CHARLES EDE (W): TS

REF. 48296.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
9th April 1948.

Dear Mr. Ede,

Thanks for your letter of the 7th:— I'm sorry, but I'm suffering under such an accumulation of professional work and private duties that it is impossible for me to undertake anything more for a long time to come.

With regret, and best wishes for the success of the publications, yours sincerely,

C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE OXFORD MAGAZINE*:[286](#)

Sir,—

In his more than usually kind review of *Essays Presented to Charles Williams* J.M.T. has, no doubt inadvertently, included a sentence which may mislead. He writes 'What he (*i.e.* Charles Williams) *thought* was at constant issue with what he *believed*.' [287](#) J.M.T. is here drawing on sources known to himself. Unfortunately the sentence is so placed that a reader might take J.M.T. to be asserting that this contrast between Williams's 'thought' and 'belief' was derived from me. It is not.

Yours, etc.,

C. S. Lewis

TO JONATHAN FRANCIS 'FRANK' GOODRIDGE (P):[288](#)

[Magdalen College
1948]

Dear Goodridge

This is all I can manage to-day. Are you going to try it on the Club? p. 3. 'Choice...may be just appetite'. 'Naked will power...is naked desire.' *Nego*. Choice may be no (morally) better than appetite or will power than desire. But if anyone says they're the *same*, then [I] wd. have to say that a man dying of thirst, with no possibility of getting a drink, *chooses* a glass of water or *wills* to drink. Appetite and desire may exist to the Nth where there is no question of will or choice. (You bring *morals* into the question prematurely. Best rule them out at this stage for simplicity's sake) p. 5. His

organs' obedience consisted in the fact that they didn't pester his reason but waited to 'speak when they were spoken to'. The *judgement* wd. be necessary even if there were no bad passions, if only because one can't do everything at once. Even innocent impulses must wait their turn. You keep on identifying the antithesis Desire><Will with the antithesis Evil><Good. When I control my desire for sleep in order to fornicate, or my laziness in order to plan revenge, I am controlling innocent desire by evil will. The real distinction is between what *happens in & to me* (Desire) and what I *do* (Will).

p. 7. The middle term between total freedom & impossibility is surely *difficulty*. Surely the amount of pain or fear attendant on what one *does* may gradually increase thus rendering the doing hard and finally impossible?

p. 8. A man with no food can hardly choose to starve, can he? In 'resignation' what he *chooses* (or *does*) is to silence his resentment, self-pity etc.

General. Read the introd. Chapter to Alexander's *Space, Time & Deity*.
[289](#) I think you're trying (in his sense) to 'contemplate' what can only be 'enjoyed'. You are really quite aware, aren't you, of the difference between *doing* (acts) and *feeling* (desires)? [290](#)

Yours

C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT*: [291](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

Critics have disputed the meaning of 'her motion blushed at herself' in *Othello*, I, iii, 95. It is perhaps worth asking whether Shakespeare had remembered the description of Pygmalion's statue in Ovid:

Virginis est verae facies quam vivere credas,

Et si non obstet reverentia velle moveri.

(*Met.* X 250)[292](#)

It is relevant that Bentley (*ad loc*) quotes from Shirach the common *Virgines bene educatae prae pudore in virorum conspectu vix audent se movere*. [293](#) Compare also Dante (*Par* xxv, 111) where Beatrice stands *Pur come sposa tacita e immota*.[294](#)

C. S. Lewis

TO MISS JONES (P):

Magdalen College
Oxford
24/7/48

Dear Miss Jones

So far from being as you say 'a nuisance' it is Mr. Bles and I who are being nuisances and you who have been helpful. Thank you very much indeed. The volume will be restored to you in due course, and I hope you will not think it the worse for my correcting one or two misprints. With much appreciation.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO CHRISTOPHER DAWSON (P):

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
Sept. 27th 1948

Dear Dawson

Thank you very much for having a copy of your Giffords sent to me. [295](#) I embarked on it at once and indeed by greedily reading it at lunch and splashing it with gravy have already deprived the copy of some of its freshness.

I have now finished it (for the first time). It was exactly what I wanted, going, of course, far beyond my knowledge but often linking up with the little I do know—always the most exciting kind of reading, I think. It also was strangely 'corroborating'—I don't quite know how or why. So much for subjective reactions. What makes me feel that it must also be good (*simpliciter*[296](#) as well as *mihi*)[297](#) is that on the Humanists, where I am least out of my depth, it seems to me particularly sound. What a lot of error about them is still in circulation! The bit on p. 17 about the secret relation between Hegelianism and Darwinism is most important. [298](#) How many people notice that the two great mythical or poetic expressions of Developmentalism (Keat's *Hyperion* and Wagner's *Ring*) are both pre-Darwinian? [299](#) P. 31 about the most primitive and most sophisticated minds (and the gap in

between) is new to me and excellent. [300](#) P. 93 is a magnificent ending. But I mustn't go on regurgitating plums from your own cake. Thanks very much: you have given me a great treat.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MR PEACOCK (OUP):[301](#) TS
REF. 48/14.

Magdalen College,
Oxford.
6th October 1948.

Dear Mr. Peacock,

Thank you for *Arthurian Torso*, which arrived today. I think it would be wiser *not* to send a Review copy to the Oxford Magazine, as I am in such bad odour there that they will make no scruple of black-guarding C.W. on my account.

As for complimentary copies, I presume you are sending one to Mrs. W. anyway. I should like one to go to the Librarian, Magdalen College: one to Miss McNeill, Lisnadene, 191 Belmont Rd. Strandtown, Belfast; one to Miss S. Stokes, [302](#) c/o of the preceding: and to A. O. Barfield, Polvean, Belmont Rd. Uckfield: and one to Brother George Every S.S.M., [303](#) House of the Sacred Mission, Kelham, Newark, Notts.

yours sincerely,
C. S. Lewis

TO MARY NEYLAN (W):

As from Magdalen
3/4/49

Dear Mrs Neylan

The enclosed is a desperate attempt to do what I am v. ill qualified for. [304](#) After writing it it occurred to me that I might have said all the things that you (knowing Sarah) might know to be particularly disastrous. So I thought you'd better vet it before passing it on. I'm so clumsy.

Blessings on all three—and I'm sorry I can't come. But I'd only have behaved like an ass if I had!

Yours ever

C. S. Lewis

TO SARAH NEYLAN (W):

3/4/49

My dear Sarah

I am sorry to say that I don't think I shall be able to be at your Confirmation on Saturday. For most men Saturday afternoon is a free time, but I have an invalid old lady to look after and the weekend is the time when I have no freedom at all, and have to try to be Nurse, Kennel-Maid, Wood-cutter, Butler, Housemaid, and Secretary all in one.

I had hoped that if the old lady were a little better than usual and if all the other people in the house were in good tempers I might be able to get away next Saturday. But the old lady is a good deal worse than usual and most of the people in the house are in bad tempers. So I must 'stick to the ship'.

If I *had* come and we had met, I am afraid you might have found me very shy and dull. (By the way, always remember that old people can be quite as shy with young people as young people can be with old. This explains what must seem to you the idiotic way in which so many grown-ups talk to you). But I will try to do what I can by a letter.

I think of myself as having to be two people for you. (1. The real, serious, Christian godfather (2) the fairy godfather. As regards (2) I enclose a bit of the only kind of magic (a very dull kind) which I can work. Your mother will know how to deal with the spell. I think it will mean one or two, or even five, pounds for you *now*, to get things you want, and the rest in the Bank for future use. As I say, it is a dull kind of magic and a really good godfather (of type 2) would do something much more interesting: but it is the best an old bachelor can think of, and it is with my love.

As for No 1, the serious Christian godfather, I feel very unfit for the work—just as you, I dare say, may feel very unfit for being confirmed and for receiving the Holy Communion. But then an angel would not be really fit and we must all do the best we can. So I suppose I must try to give you advice. And the bit of advice that comes into my head is this: don't expect (I mean, don't *count on* and don't *demand*) that when you are confirmed, or when you make your first Communion, you will have all the *feelings* you would like to have. You may, of course: but also you may not. But don't worry if you don't get them. They aren't what matter. The things that are

happening to you are quite real things whether you feel as you wd. wish or not, just as a meal will do a hungry person good even if he has a cold in the head which will rather spoil the taste. Our Lord will give us right feelings if He wishes—and then we must say Thank you. If He doesn't, then we must say to ourselves (and Him) that He knows best.

This, by the way, is one of the very few subjects on which I feel I do know something. For years, after I had become a regular communicant I can't tell you how dull my feelings were and how my attention wandered at the most important moments. It is only in the last year or two that things have begun to come right—which just shows how important it is to keep on doing what you are told.

Oh—I'd nearly forgotten—I have *one* other piece of advice. Remember that there are only three kinds of things anyone need ever do. (1.) Things we *ought* to do (2.) Things we've *got* to do (3.) Things we *like* doing. I say this because some people seem to spend so much of their time doing things for none of the three reasons, things like reading books they don't like because other people read them. Things you ought to do are things like doing one's school work or being nice to people. Things one has got to do are things like dressing and undressing, or household shopping. Things one likes doing—but of course I don't know what *you* like. Perhaps you'll write and tell me one day.

Of course I always mention you in my prayers and will most especially on Saturday. Do the same for me.

Your affectionate godfather
C. S. Lewis

TO ALEC CRAIG (TEX):

Magdalen College
Oxford
15/5/49

Dear Mr. Craig—

How very kind of you to send me a copy of your *Voice of Merlin*: [305](#) especially kind since you must have reckoned me a possible purchaser and who wants to waste copies on them?!

The summer term is a whirlwind for tutors now-a-days and it wd. be idle to pretend I have done more than dip or shall be able to for some weeks. But it is clearly all about the things I want to know. I'm glad to find there is still

someone who doesn't think poetry shd. be confined to the same sort of matter we find in leading articles.

With v. many thanks.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *CHURCH TIMES* (EC):³⁰⁶

Magdalen College,
Oxford

Sir,—

If it is not harking back too far, I would like to make two layman's comments on the liturgical articles in your issue of May 6. Firstly, I would underline the necessity for uniformity, if in nothing else, yet in the time taken by the rite. We laymen may not be busier than the clergy but we usually have much less choice in our hours of business. The celebrant who lengthens the service by ten minutes may, for us, throw the whole day into hurry and confusion. It is difficult to keep this out of our minds: it may even be difficult to avoid some feeling of resentment. Such temptations may be good for us but it is not the celebrant's business to supply them: God's permission and Satan's diligence will see to that part of our education without his assistance.

Secondly, I would ask the clergy to believe that we are more interested in orthodoxy and less interested in liturgiology as such than they can easily imagine. Dr Mascall rightly says that variations are permissible when they do not alter doctrine.³⁰⁷ But after that he goes on almost casually to mention 'devotions to the Mother of God and to the hosts of heaven' as a possible liturgical variant. That the introduction of such devotions into any parish not accustomed to them would divide the congregation into two camps, Dr Mascall well knows. But if he thinks that the issue between those camps would be a liturgical issue, I submit that he is mistaken. It would be a doctrinal issue. Not one layman would be asking whether these devotions marred or mended the beauty of the rite; everyone would be asking whether they were lawful or damnable. It is no part of my object to discuss that question here, but merely to point out that it is the question.

What we laymen fear is that the deepest doctrinal issues should be tacitly and implicitly settled by what seem to be, or are avowed to be, merely changes in liturgy. A man who is wondering whether the fare set before him

is food or poison is not reassured by being told that this course is now restored to its traditional place in the *menu* or that the tureen is of the Sarum pattern. We laymen are ignorant and timid. Our lives are ever in our hands, the avenger of blood is on our heels, and of each of us his soul may this night be required. Can you blame us if the reduction of great doctrinal issues to merely liturgical issues fills us with something like terror?

C. S. Lewis

TO DEREK BREWER (P): TS

REF. 284/49

Magdalen College
13th June 1949

Dear Brewer,

Hurrah! I'm glad. [308](#) Yes, I have had a very heavy cold.

Yours,

W. H. Lewis

(for C. S. Lewis ill).

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *CHURCH TIMES*(EC):[309](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

I agree with Dean Hughes that the connection of belief and liturgy is close, but doubt if it is 'inextricable'. [310](#) I submit that the relation is healthy when liturgy expresses the belief of the Church, morbid when liturgy creates in the people by suggestion beliefs which the Church has not publicly professed, taught, and defended. If the mind of the Church is, for example, that our fathers erred in abandoning the Romish invocations of saints and angels, by all means let our corporate recantation, together with its grounds in scripture, reason and tradition be published, our solemn act of penitence be performed, the laity re-instructed, and the proper changes in liturgy be introduced.

What horrifies me is the proposal that individual priests should be encouraged to behave as if all this had been done when it has not been done. One correspondent compared such changes to the equally stealthy and (as he holds) irresistible changes in a language. But that is just the parallel that

terrifies me, for even the shallowest philologist knows that the unconscious linguistic process is continually degrading good words and blunting useful distinctions. *Absit omen!* Whether an ‘enrichment’ of liturgy which involves a change of doctrine is allowable, surely depends on whether our doctrine is changing from error to truth or from truth to error. Is the individual priest the judge of that?

C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *CHURCH TIMES*(EC):[311](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

Mr Every (quite legitimately) gives the word *invocation* a wider sense than I. [312](#) The question then becomes how far we can infer propriety of *devotion* from propriety of *invocation*? I accept the authority of the *Benedicite*[313](#) for the propriety of *invoking* (in Mr Every’s sense) saints. But if I thence infer the propriety of *devotions* to saints, will not an argument force me to approve devotions to stars, frosts and whales? [314](#)

I am also quite ready to admit that I overlooked a distinction. Our fathers might disallow a particular medieval doctrine and yet not disallow some other doctrine which we laymen easily confuse with it. But if the issue is so much finer than I thought, this merely redoubles my anxiety that it should be openly and authoritatively decided.

If I feared lest the suggestions of liturgy might beguile us laymen on a simple issue, I am not likely to be comforted by finding the issue a subtle one. If there is one kind of devotion to created beings which is pleasing and another which is displeasing to God, when is the Church, as a Church, going to instruct us in the distinction?

Meanwhile, what better opportunity for the stealthy insinuation of the wrong kind than the unauthorised and sporadic practice of devotions to creatures before uninstructed congregations would our ghostly foe desire? Most of us laymen, I think, have no *parti pris*[315](#) in the matter. We desire to believe as the Church believes.

C. S. Lewis

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *CHURCH TIMES*(EC):[316](#)

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Sir,—

I hope Mr Every has not misunderstood me. ³¹⁷ There is, I believe, a *prima facie* case for regarding devotions to saints in the Church of England as a controversial question (see Jewel, *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, Pt. II, ch. xxviii, *Homilies*, Bk. II, *Peril of Idolatry*, Pt. III; ³¹⁸ Laud, *Conference with Fisher*, Sect. XXIII; ³¹⁹ Taylor, *Dissuasive from Popery*, Pt. I, ch. ii, sect. 8). ³²⁰ I merely claim that the controversy exists. I share Mr Every's wish that it should cease. But there are two ways in which a controversy can cease: by being settled, or by gradual and imperceptible change of custom. I do not want any controversy to cease in the second sense.

I implore priests to remember what Aristotle tells us about unconscious revolution (πολλάκις λανθάνει μεγάλη γινόμενη μετάβασις τῶν νομίμων, *Politics* 1303 a 22). ³²¹ When such unconscious revolution produces a result we like, we are all tempted to welcome it; thus I am tempted to welcome it when it leads to prayers for the dead. But then I see that the very same process can be used, and is used, to introduce modernist dilutions of the faith which, I am sure, Mr Every and I equally abominate. I conclude that a road so dangerous should never be trodden, whether the destination to which it seems to point is in itself good or bad. To write 'No Thoroughfare' over that road is my only purpose.

C. S. Lewis

TO GEORGE AND MOIRA SAYER (W):

Magdalen etc.
Aug 15th 1949

Dear Moira and George

There's no disguising a Roofer, is there, by any device known to literary skill. So we may well go straight—

Thank you very much for my lovely visit.

I enjoyed it very much. It was very nice—

but then it really *was* very nice to which this ingenuous style seems hardly adequate.

I came back with rather a bump ('the first touch of the earth went nigh to kill' [322](#)—give the context of?) to a world where hills are smaller, beds harder, discourse duller: in fact generally more like that very over-rated arrangement called REAL LIFE by modern critics. (What's there so laudable about being *real*? A microbe is real, a toothache is real, and the wilderness of houses by which I live surrounded is Real Estate). Well—it was all delightful and it is all past and I am very grateful both to you and to the Higher Authorities.

Meanwhile you dream of glaciers and incredible green valleys—how is George getting on with the Forms?

Valete! [323](#)

'Bless'd pair of Syrens' [324](#)

Yours obliged

Jack L.

TO MR SWIFT (P): TS

REF. 452/49

Magdalen College.

Oxford.

23rd. November 1949.

Dear Mr Swift

Thanks for your kind letter of the 21st:—Though it seems ungracious to refuse the compliment of a second request, I am afraid the answer must still be No; the situation this year is if anything less favourable than it was last, and I am overwhelmed with work.

And furthermore, the bucket has gone to the well too often; I must lie fallow for a considerable time before I again have anything to say.

With regret, and all best wishes for the success of the magazine.

Yours sincerely

C. S. Lewis

In 1958 Lewis agreed to become a member of the Commission to Revise the Psalter. The following letters regarding the Commission, part of a correspondence which began with Lewis's reply to Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher of 14 November 1958, arrived too late to fit into the main body of letters. Lewis's letters to various members of the Commission are found in the Church of England Record Centre, Bermondsey, London. [325](#)

TO DORIS ALLAN:[326](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

3 July 1960

Dear Miss Allen

I must very regretfully 'rat' for the meeting at Selwyn. My wife's present condition puts any idea of an absence from home out of the question. Please make my apologies to all.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO MISS BARKER:[327](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

27 June 1963

Dear Miss Barker

I very strongly approve the end Mr Eliot has in view, i.e. that Coverdale's Psalter should continue to be available and, if possible, to be widely known. [328](#) I think the latter will hardly be achieved unless the edn. of Coverdale is very cheap and handy so that parishes which disliked ours would actually use it in church (with characteristic Anglican disobedience). How far this would be commercially possible I don't know. Or wd. there be any chance of a CPB[329](#) *de luxe* in addition to the 'popular price' one, which included *both* Coverdale's Psalter *and* ours as some old edns. include the Paraphrases and Coverdale's.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

TO DORIS ALLAN:[330](#)

The Kilns,
Headington Quarry,
Oxford

7 August 1963

Dear Miss Allan

This is my final and official resignation from the Commission. The red light appeared a few weeks ago in the form of a prolonged coma and I am ordered to give up all my occupations. Please make my farewells to His Grace and all my fellow Commissioners and add my cordial thanks for the great kindness they have always shown me.

Yours sincerely
C. S. Lewis

THE 'GREAT WAR' LETTERS

C. S. Lewis's 'Great War' with Owen Barfield, named after the conflict in which each had taken part between 1914 and 1918, arose from Lewis's efforts to dissuade Barfield from belief in anthroposophy. This is a system of theosophy evolved by Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925) and based on the premise that the human soul can, of its own power, contact the spiritual world. Central to it are the concepts of reincarnation and karma. While it acknowledges Christ as a cosmic being, its understanding is not that of orthodox Christianity. It was condemned by the Catholic Church, along with other forms of Theosophy, on 7 July 1919.¹

Having served in the First World War, Lewis, Barfield and Cecil Harwood arrived in Oxford in 1919. Barfield and Harwood had been at Highgate School together, and were already friends. Barfield matriculated at Wadham College and Harwood at Christ Church. In 1919 they met Lewis, a Scholar of University College, after which the three men were to see a great deal of one another. Lewis took Firsts in Classical Honour Moderations and Literae Humaniores in 1920 and 1922, and during 1922–3 he read the course in English Language and Literature. Barfield took a First in English Language and Literature in 1921 and remained in Oxford to prepare for his B. Litt. thesis on 'Poetic Diction'. After taking a First in History in 1921 Harwood took a temporary job in London with the British Empire Exhibition. It was during Harwood's weekend visit to Oxford in July 1923 that anthroposophy is first mentioned in Lewis's writings. In his diary of 7 July 1923 he records that

Harwood...told me of his new philosopher, Rudolf Steiner, who has 'made the burden roll from his back'. Steiner seems to be a sort of panpsychist, with a vein of posing superstition, and I was very much disappointed to hear that both Harwood and Barfield were impressed by him...I argued that the 'spiritual forces' which Steiner found everywhere were either shamelessly mythological people or else no-one-knows-what. Harwood said this was nonsense and that he understood perfectly what he meant by a spiritual force. I also

*protested that Pagan animism was an anthropomorphic failure of imagination and that we should prefer a knowledge of the real unhuman life which is in the trees etc.*²

Lewis had rejected Christianity some dozen years before, and after he began reading Philosophy at Oxford he came to believe in Idealism. Barfield and Harwood shared with Lewis this belief in the primacy of spiritual reality, which was essentially one of divine immanence rather than transcendence. Idealism reached the common man in the form of a diffused and vague pantheism. Lewis did not understand enough of Christianity to argue with Barfield and Harwood about the heretical qualities of Anthroposophy. He was nevertheless 'hideously shocked'³ and felt 'deserted'⁴ when they became Anthroposophists in 1923. Both met Steiner when he visited England in August 1924. As Lewis wrote in Surprised by Joy,

*Barfield's conversion to Anthroposophy marked the beginning of what I can only describe as the Great War between him and me. It was never, thank God, a quarrel, though it could have become one in a moment if he had used to me anything like the violence I allowed myself to him. But it was an almost incessant disputation, sometimes by letter and sometimes face to face, which lasted for years. And this Great War was one of the turning points of my life.*⁵

It is impossible to be certain, but the 'Great War' letters were probably written in 1927 and 1928. Lewis took up his appointment as Fellow of English at Magdalen College in 1925, and Barfield, who had married in 1923, moved to London that same year to work on the magazine Truth and to further his literary career. In 1929 Barfield's father lost the services of a brother in their London law firm of Barfield and Barfield, and Owen joined the firm in order to help. Even so, between 1923 and 1929 he had six productive years. Apart from his work with Truth, he produced a fairy tale of the Hans Andersen kind, The Silver Trumpet (1925) and a work on the changes in the meaning of words over time, History in English Words (1926), as well as revising his B. Litt. thesis, Poetic Diction: A Study in Meaning, which was published in 1928.

The 'Great War' letters that have survived were written between 1927 and 1928. Originally each man wrote about a dozen letters, but the only ones to survive are ten from Lewis and two from Barfield. All were all

preserved by Barfield, who saved most of the letters he received from Lewis. The two letters from Barfield are drafts of those he sent to Lewis: the first is dated 28 July 1927, and the second, which is undated, opens with the words: 'I begin with a few detailed comments.' For the sake of convenience they will be referred to as *First Letter* and *Second Letter*.

It should be remembered that during this period the Great War was not confined to letter-writing. Lewis and Barfield talked about these matters when they saw one another. Even more important in understanding the letters is Barfield's *Poetic Diction: A Study in Meaning*. Barfield and Lewis had been discussing the manuscript of this thesis for years, but unfortunately Lewis's notes on it have been lost. What he principally took exception to was Barfield's view of imagination as a vehicle of truth. This is one of the main contentions in Series I of the 'Great War' letters. Barfield wrote:

*Seeking for material in which to incarnate its last inspiration, imagination seizes on a suitable word or phrase, uses it as a metaphor, and so creates a meaning. The progress is from Meaning, through inspiration to imagination, and from imagination, through metaphor, to meaning; inspiration grasping the hitherto unapprehended, and imagination relating it to the already known.*⁶

In the letters grouped in Series II Lewis turns from the subjects they have been discussing to warn his friend against Anthroposophy. It is Anthroposophy which is the principal subject of the rest of the Great War documents. They are: (1) Lewis's two-part tractate, *Clivi Hamiltonis Summae Metaphysices contra Anthroposophos* (November 1928), better known as the 'Summa', after St Thomas Aquinas' *Summa contra Gentiles* – 'Clive Hamilton' was Lewis's pseudonym;⁷ (2) *Replicet and Autem* (1929) – 'Reply' and 'Further Observations' – by Barfield; (3) *Replies to Objections and Note on the Law of Contradiction* (1929) by Lewis; (4) *De Bono et Malo* (1930) – 'Of Good and Bad' – by Lewis; (5) *De Toto et Parte* (1930?) – 'Of the Whole and the Part' – by Barfield; and (6) the unfinished *Commentarium in De Toto et Parte* – 'Commentary on 'Of the Whole and the Part' – by Lewis (1931?). As we know, Lewis was converted to Christianity on 19 September 1931, and this marked the end of the 'Great War'.

Barfield was disappointed that Lewis refused to go on talking about 'Great War matters'. 'All that is dead mutton to me now,' Lewis wrote to Daphne Harwood on 28 March 1933:

and the chief points chiefly at issue between the Anthroposophists and me then were precisely the points on which anthroposophy is certainly right—i.e. the claim that it is possible for man, here and now, in the phenomenal world, to have commerce with the world beyond...The present difference between us is quite other. The only thing that I now wd. object eagerly to [in] anthroposophy is that I don't think it can say 'I believe in one God the Father Almighty.' My feeling is that even if there are a thousand orders of beneficent being above us, still, the universe is a cheat unless at the back of them all there is the one God of Christianity.⁸

When, a few years later, Barfield tried to revive Lewis's interest in the 'Great War', he replied in a letter of 28 June 1936: 'When a truth has ceased to be a mistress for pleasure, and become a wife for fruit it is almost unnatural to go back to the dialectic ardours of the wooing.'⁹

The 'Great War' letters are the first part of the 'Great War' to be published. The originals of all the documents are held in the Wade Center, Wheaton College, with copies in the Bodleian Library. For a full and excellent account of the 'Great War' see Lionel Adey, C. S. Lewis's Great War with Owen Barfield (Victoria, Canada: University of Victoria, English Literary Studies Monograph, no. 14, 1978; new edn, Rosley, Cumbria: Ink Books, 2002). Lionel Adey, who has done extensive research into the 'Great War', arranged the letters as they are given below.

SERIES I, LETTER 1

I have got led into an orgy of drawing: the pictures decrease successively in seriousness.

Magdalen College,

Oxford
[1927]

The real issue between us.

1. *Agreed* (by you and me, also by Kant, Coleridge, Bradley etc) that the discursive reason always fails to apprehend reality, because it never grasps more than an abstract relational framework. The question then is whether it is possible for us to know that Concrete in-which alone the thing we have abstracted was *real*.

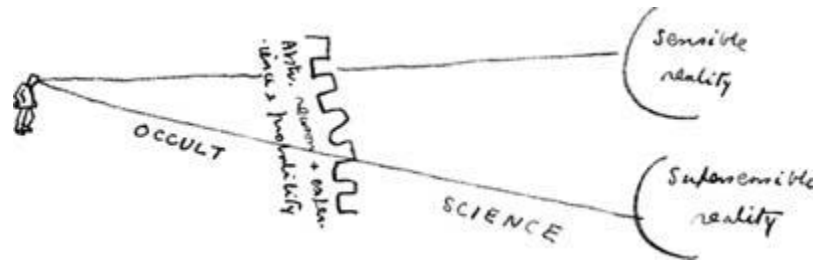
2. *Agreed* (by us both, and many others) that the abstract reason *plus* sense experience *plus* habits etc gives us, in the phenomenal region, a substitute for knowledge which works tolerably well for *practical* purposes.

3. *You* maintain that this reason + experience + habit can and ought to be used to produce a knowledge of the supersensible, as confidently as it [is] used in the sensible.

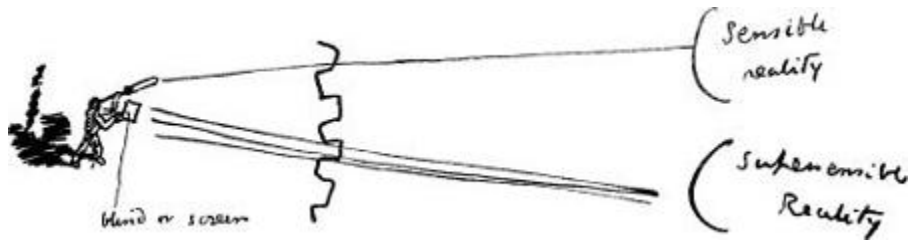
4. *I* maintain that the distinction is between the real & the phenomenal, not the sensible and supersensible. In all cases we are *trying* to know the same reality. In ordinary science etc we see that we fail to know reality because we have not knowledge but only a convenient conventional symbolism: what is grasped by it is a substitute for reality wh. I call the phenomenal.

Your contention, therefore, is that something wh. is admittedly *not* knowledge of reality can be knowledge of reality, wh. is absurd. For whether you apply it to the sensible or the supersensible, such an instrument can't give reality but only as much of reality as survives its lense—i.e. phenomena. Therefore all that your occultism can give us is *not* the Real instead of the phenomenal but simply more phenomena less surely grounded (in the empirical way) than the ones we have already, and less real because they claim to be more. For the highest merit of the phenomenon is to *confess* itself a phenomenon. This is the picture.

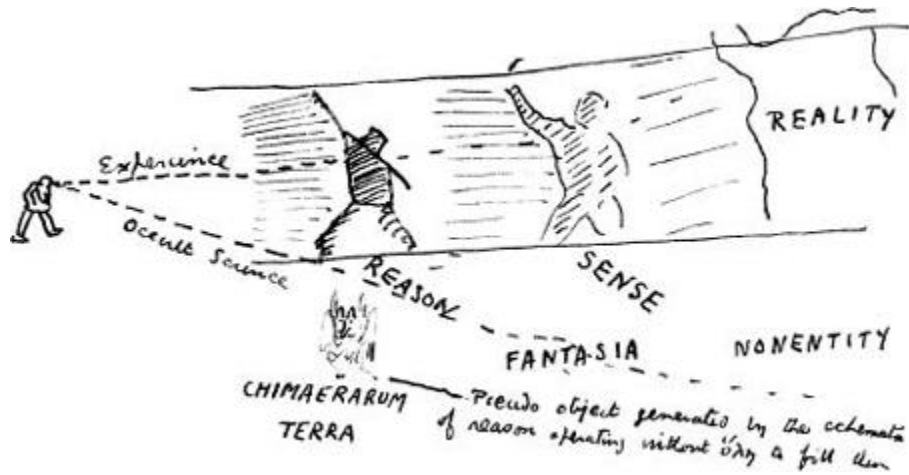
- 1. What you think you're doing.



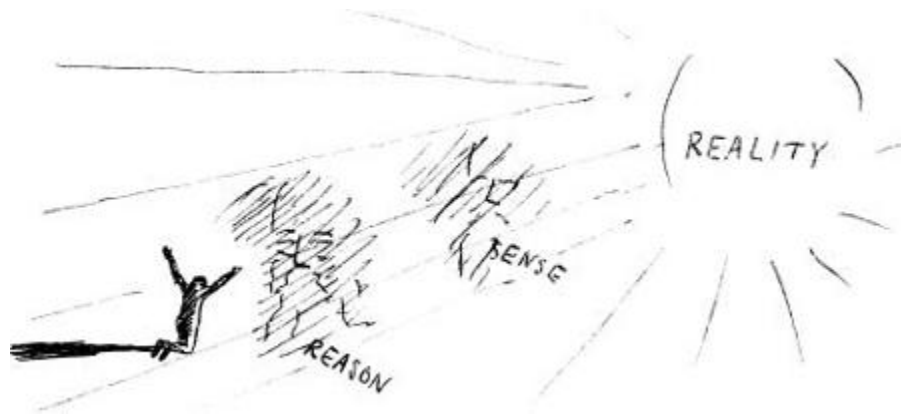
- 2. What you think I'm doing.



- 3. What I think you're doing.



- 4. What I think I'm doing.



Wait a bit: this looks as if we were not part of reality. I put it better on next page.



The clouds behind me are τό ὄν. [10](#) The post to which I am tied so that I can't turn round is finite personality. In front of me is a mirror representing as much of the reality (and such disguise of it) as can be seen from my position. It includes, of course, 'myself' as an empirical object. It is surrounded by a steel frame which represents the finitude and deadness of every mere object. I am studying the mirror with my eyes ([which] equal explicit cognition) but reach back with my hands so as to get some touch (implicit 'taste' or 'faith') of the real.



Here we see a gentleman (not identified) engaged on seeing whether a departure from dry academical methods and a newer, freer theory of knowledge may not get some new images out of the mirror. The mirror seems to be playing up well so far. Meanwhile the clouds have ebbed to his ankles. Something like despairing hands stretches to reach from behind but he doesn't notice them. Overhead I detect a curious figuration of cloud that fancy may interpret as a gigantic face in laughter. The hammer and chisel are occult science, yoga, 'meditation' (in technical sense) etc.



An orful example. Study of a gentleman reaching vainly for the inner reality he has scorned, while he shrinks in horror from the phantom he has created on the black wall from which he has succeeded in chipping off *all* the looking-glass. (Only those who are not poets cd. get as far as this, of course) On a second mirror invisible to him but visible to his neighbours, ambulance, asylum, cemetery appear successively.

Lewis's Series I, Letters 2 and 3 were answered by Barfield's First Letter of 28 July 1927 which begins: 'My dear Lewis, Here goes: however miserable a failure I may make of it, the mere attempt is going to be pure joy after a hideously "logistic" month.'

SERIES I, LETTER 2

My dear Barfield—

I hope to return your sister's plays by next week. ¹¹ I have read Caesar's Daughter twice and am much impressed. The other I have doubts of, but have not yet come to a conclusion. I will try to give you a full critique when I next write. In the meantime I want to continue our own argument.

I must state, first of all, that truth seems to me to imply two terms: the one, an object or fact, the other a mental complex related to that fact in a particular way. ¹² I say a complex because I think that when we know, we

always know 'that etc' (an accusative with the infinitive), i.e. we recognise a whole of parts, or a unity in diversity: of a mere one I do not think there is knowledge, unless you mean knowledge by acquaintance which is different.

Truth, then, is a quality which cannot be attributed to any entity, but only to certain entities. Thus it cannot be attributed to a body. Nor, again, to a passion or emotion as such: for while an emotion can spring from, be accompanied with, or beget, judgements, opinions or expectations which are true or false, it cannot itself (so far as I see) have that sort of relation to an object which truth or falsehood demands. Indeed what would be object with respect of judgement etc. seems to be rather cause or end with respect of emotion. The question is whether poetic imagination is one of the things to which truth and falsehood can be attributed.

Now I take it for granted that truth and falsehood can *not* be asserted of 'imagination' in the common meaning, (φαντασία, [13](#) the *imaginatio* as a psychologist understands it). No doubt images may resemble realities (either individually or in their union) more or less accurately, but that is not truth or error. If it were, we should have to say that a person had truth when he didn't know he had it (as where my images are more like the reality than I suspect), i.e. was in truth and error about the same thing at the same time. All that can be true or false here is my opinion or assumption, if I have one, about whether the images resemble reality or not. Until I have thus referred my images to reality, there is no truth or falsehood: and when I have, the images are not themselves true or false, but merely part of the subject-matter of an accompanying judgement which is true or false. [14](#)

Now for you, if I understand you, poetic imagination is not any image, nor the having of any image: in fact images only appear as poetic imagination ebbs. And I think it would be fair to say that when the images do appear they are not true or false, and in this respect do not differ from the images I have been talking of in the last paragraph. In fact (would you agree?) they do not in their nature differ at all from ordinary images, but only in their origin. That is, the same raw material which in ordinary uamsara is ordered by memory, *association*, and *physiological causes*, is in this case ordered by a cause of a different kind.

It would follow, then, that when poetic imagination has ebbed and left us with its mere slot or track in the image of 'an enchanted boat', [15](#) that image is not false or true: tho' of course we may (or may not) have opinions etc about it wh. *are* true or false. The truth wh. you attribute to poetic

imagination must be located in the imageless state wherein the 'light of sense goes out' ¹⁶ and only there. For if I am right in saying that images in themselves cannot be true or false, this will hold of images however produced.

The image-al sediment left by poetic imagination, then, is not true: not because it is false or untrue, but because the standard true–false does not apply to it at all. The next question I raise is whether in addition to a sediment of images, there is also left a sediment of explicit assertion or belief. It seems to me that there may or may not be: but let us suppose that there always is. This assertion (once the inspiration is gone) will be conscious logical judgment and guilty of abstraction. It may, if it so happens, be true. But I argue that its truth cannot be the same truth which (as you maintain) existed in the moment of poetical imagination.

For (1.) if it were, we should then find that we were apprehending the same fact both during the poetic imagination and afterwards: that is, the poetic imagination could not differ from the subsequent normal judgement as far as concerns the truth grasped, but only in attendant emotion—wh. neither of us would admit.

(2.) It is contended that poetical imagination transcends the abstraction inherent in normal knowing. But the assertion left behind by the moment of inspiration would (by hypothesis, in the words 'left behind') be a specimen of normal knowing and the fact it grasps would be abstract. But if we could by normal knowing grasp the very same that we (as you say) grasped in poetic imagination, then the claim that imagination transcends the abstraction wd. have to be abandoned. I conclude then that if retiring imagination leaves behind it an ordinary assertion or belief, and if that belief happens to be true, its truth is *other* than the truth grasped during the imagination.

But, again, since the imagination was not logical or abstract, it cannot be logically connected with the judgment which it may leave behind. That is, the assurance that I grasped truth during inspiration, furnishes no logical ground for the truth of the assertions I find myself disposed to make when imagination has retreated. Again, since by hypothesis imagination has retreated and we have returned to the logical level, we cannot now effect any supra-logical connection between the present judgment and the past imagination. But since we can effect neither logical nor supra logical connexion, we can effect only infra-logical connection between them, that

is, we unite the judgment with the precedent inspiration only by blind association.

From all this I conclude—and here I am v. anxious to know if you agree with me—that, granting the truth of poetical imagination, we can never argue from it to the truth of any judgment which springs up in the mind as it returns to normal consciousness. Thus I might hold that poetical imagination is true and that in reading the passage on death in Lucretius¹⁷ I participate in poetical imagination; and I might also find myself at the end of the passage spontaneously making the judgement that the soul is mortal: but I could not therefore be sure that that judgement is true. In other words we cannot transfer (at least it is not evident that we *can*) the assurance which the imagination gives of its own supra-logical truth to any normal act of opining or judging which it leads to. It vouches (if at all) only for itself.

It might perhaps be argued that while the judgement left behind by retreating imagination cannot claim the same truth which is claimed for imagination itself, still, as the work of a mind yet fresh from the springs of truth and not wholly subdued to its returning abstractness, such judgments may be at least *nearer* to the truth than those which we make at other times.

I need hardly point out that there is no *â priori* reason why this must be so, for it is just as likely that the crossing of the frontier shd. be marked by confusion of two modes of consciousness (therefore producing something less true than either of them working it its own way) as that it should be still lit up by the mode we are leaving: as when you change the focus of your telescope^(1.) you get, during the transition, not vestiges of the higher power still surviving, but a mere blur and confusion which lasts until you are fully settled to the new focus. However, it *may* be so.

As far as my own experience goes (but I am now speaking with great hesitation) it does not bear this out. For it appears to me that experiences which I regard as being poetic imagination may leave me disposed to make judgments which are incompatible with each other: thus I have returned from what I wd. call inspiration—but v. possibly I have never known it at all, we can only put our furthest north and the pole may be miles away—sometimes convinced of the insignificance of the human spirit in the scheme of things, and sometimes of its divinity as lord of space and time and creator of all that it seems to be enslaved to.

Now, in any ordinary sense, both these judgments cannot be true. Of course we may say that if we cd. recall the inspired moment as it was, we

shd. see how both these abstract opinions are pretty equally adequate symbols of a concrete truth that transcended them both. That is impossible to refute. But it leads to the very point I am now contending for.

If the truth of imagination differs so much from normal truth that ‘The soul is weaker than its world’ and ‘The soul is stronger than its world’ may both be expressions of it, then clearly imaginative vision cannot be invoked as a source of certainty for any one judgment as against another. ¹⁸ What lends its support equally to opinions that are contradictory to normal thought can really lend no support to either of two contending opinions.

So I return to my position, that even if poetic imagination has truth, it vouches only for itself. The explicit beliefs—whether dogmatic or tentative—which spring up in the tracks of retreating vision must be tried on their own merits. If after reading ‘Huge and mighty forms that do not live Like living men, moved slowly through my thoughts By day, and were a trouble in my dreams’¹⁹ I emerge saying ‘Why not? How likely that such things are’: and if the same day I read ‘When all is done, human life is, at the greatest and the best, but like a froward child that must be played with and humoured a little to keep it quiet till it falls asleep, and then the care is over’, ²⁰ and emerge from that thinking ‘Yes. What are all our spiritual activities but a keeping ourselves snug and warm for a few minutes in this steppe of matter’,—then clearly I cannot use imaginative assurance in deciding between these two opinions.

No doubt, you may say that the propositions into which I ‘emerge’ are not the right ones to spring from the imaginative experiences incarnate in the two sets of words. So much the better for my argument: for the point I am making is that the truth of a proposition is not vouched for by the fact that it springs from imaginative experience: which you grant, if you admit that I had such experience and emerged from it into the wrong proposition. (I am admitting, everywhere, that the secret may be that I don’t have what you mean by poetic imagination, in wh. case *cadit quaestio*: ²¹ but we can’t keep on returning to that point and you wd. not be impressed by repeated humilities).

To say all this shortly: the trouble about the simple practice of writing ‘How true!’ in the margins of imaginative books, is that you will have to write it against passages that are (in any ordinary sense) incompatible with one another.

If this argument is grounded (and I invite correction) it would surely follow that, even if we were sure *that* we know in poetical imagination, we could never (except while enjoying inspiration) have any notion *what* we know. Thus you might well say ‘I am certain that there was truth in the experience I had when reading the myth of Persephone’: but you could never say ‘I know that Persephone exists’ ^(1.) or ‘I know that vegetation is not a purely chemical phenomenon’ or ‘I know that the soul is immortal’ or ‘I know that the soul and all other things die to live’: for every term in these propositions expresses not the imaginative moment itself but some part of the residuum of images or conceptions left behind, and, as I have tried to show, not vouched for. [22](#)

And this is one of my chief difficulties: how I could mean anything by being sure *that* I was knowing a moment ago without having any notion *what* I was knowing. But I am far from certain that I *couldn't* mean something. What I feel much more certain about is the illegitimacy of transferring the truth claimed for imagination to any concept or image which has happened (perhaps quite fortuitously) to cling to the moment in which inspiration occurred, whereby we accept the hands of Esau and overlook the voice of Jacob. [23](#) And that is partly why I still hesitate to ascribe truth or falsehood even to the inspiration itself—tho’ I have been granting it here for argument’s sake, and indeed think it quite possible, so far as I can see.

I hope I have incidentally cleared up what seems to be a slight misunderstanding in your letter. You seem to suggest that the only alternative to holding that poetry is veridical is to hold that poetry is ‘fantasy’: by which I think you mean to imply something of falseness or triviality. Of course, in denying that poetry is true, (at present I don’t deny, I only question) I should never dream of asserting that poetry was false: any more than in saying ‘The stars are not moral’ I should mean to assert that the stars were immoral.

It is not a question of something admittedly in the class of things to which such words as true and false apply, of which we are then asking ‘True or false?’. On the contrary it is a question as to whether something, wh. we both admit to be most serious and valuable, does belong to that class of things about which the enquiry ‘True or false?’ can be significantly raised.

If I knew that poetry were in that class I should unhesitatingly pronounce it true: I am certain it is not false. In fact I hesitate to call it

‘veridical’ because I am not yet sure whether it is ‘-dical’ at all or not: because I still think Sidney may have been right when he said that the poet alone never lied because he alone never asserted. ²⁴ What I can never see is that the suggestion of aesthetic experience not being ‘-dical’ should be regarded as equivalent to the suggestion that it is not an absolute spiritual value. You would find no difficulty in attributing such value to moral good, and there the ‘-dical’ element has never (so far as I know) been suggested by any person except one, whom Hume exploded. ²⁵ Why should not the value of poetic imagination differ as much from knowing and doing as they differ from each other? Have you so exhausted in your survey the horizons of the spiritual world that you are sure there can be no other value than that one of Truth with which you seem at present most concerned, and that you can therefore affirm that if Beauty will not be taken in as a door keeper to Truth, or as Truth’s domino, her occupation must be gone? These things may be true. But where did you learn them? Never where you learned your singing. ²⁶ ὅτι ὅτι

From what you have said at various times I gather that your real reason is a fear lest, if the value we find in beauty cannot be claimed as a kind of Truth, it will turn out to be nothing but pleasure under a pompous name. I admit that this fear lest values should be only pleasures is apt to beset us in all cases except that of moral good. I can therefore see a very good case for the Kantian doctrine that morality is the only real spiritual good. ²⁷

But I can see no case, *prima facie*, for erecting Truth into the sole good. It seems to me just as easy to suppose that a man engaged in the pursuit of truth is merely amusing himself as to suppose the same of the man who pursues beauty. It seems just as odd to call a tragedy ‘pleasure’ as to give that name to the labours of study. It is certain that we feel obliged to abandon proffered truth as well as proffered beauty in favour of doing, as often as an interrupting duty knocks at our door. So that the root of your insistence on the-dical (as the presupposition of the *veridical*) character of imaginative experience—or what I take to be the root—seems to me to be an error.

Because imaginative vision is a serious and valuable activity of the spirit, you cannot therefore conclude that it is-dical. I have often wondered whether its value might not even be much more like the moral value than it is like truth: whether, instead of giving us a new cognitive attitude to reality,

it might not give us an enriched and corrected will, so that we returned not to know more, but to do and feel as if we knew more. [28](#)

But this is purely speculative. I am wholly in the dark as to whether beauty is at all like either truth or goodness, or less like one than the other. But it would only darken the matter for you to tell me that if it is not truth it must be fantasy—until you have proved that there cannot be an independent value other than truth: which, for all I know, you maybe ready to do.

I shd just add that, while I have assumed throughout that the really valuable thing is the imageless & wordless state before the images come, I am, as a matter of fact, often doubtful about this.

Yrs
C. S. Lewis

P.S. If you wish to continue the discussion you had better return this with your answer & I will do the same to you, so that I can correct myself & not fall into inconsistencies. I am trying to avoid all mere contentiousness and to be careful not to let anything run away with me.

SERIES I, LETTER 3

[July 1927]

My dear Barfield—

I enclose (1.) your sister's plays (2.) Canto I of the 'Hag'. ²⁹ As to (1.) I must begin by apologies for the unconscionable time I have taken to send them back. I read them almost at once and have since re-read them and have been putting the matter off because I really found it so difficult to make any criticism.

Very roughly, what I have to say is that *Caesar's Daughter* seemed to me a very interesting and amusing play, and that I couldn't understand the *Martyr*: but those are both rather useless remarks to the author. In the *Martyr* I think what chiefly worried me was the character of Miranda. I can't follow her motives and I don't know what sort of person she is. I once or twice suspected her of a purely literary parentage—the hackneyed *buona roba*³⁰ of modern fiction who has the right of acting inconsequently and being credited with profound interest whatever she does: but I am too much in the dark to push the charge.

On *Caesar's Daughter* I have only one serious criticism to make: i.e. that the two most serious scenes—that between Estelle & Claude in Act II and between Claude and Cecily at the end—reach their degree of seriousness rather too abruptly: and that in such passages as 'Reality is a cold thing but it wears well' (you needn't ask if I liked that!) the dialogue seemed too great for the situation. Some hint of that *σπουδαιότης*³¹ underneath all the ordinary comedy-of-manners from the beginning ought to be possible, tho', of course, I am aware how dangerous the attempt to supply it must be. I also felt that Claude's succumbing to Estelle (and Austin's to Miranda) were unconvincing: but I suppose the actors will do all that for you. What unfair advantages a dramatist has!

I am afraid that is all I have to say—unless I add (what is perhaps more important) that I found both plays interesting to read and retain a pretty lively impression of most of the characters: that is, they come alright over the first *fence* that any book has to get over: they didn't bore me.

As to the 'Hag'—you will not, I hope, allow my recent talk of abandoning poetry to influence you in the direction of taking too favourable a view on the ground that I 'need' it psychologically at present. My quarrel with the muses is not likely to last very long. Make any marks or scholia you wish on the MS and return it to me when you can.

I certainly haven't forgotten our argument about imagination: in fact I have only recently stopped watching the posts for your answer. I feel we have got onto the root difference between us now, from which all the others spring, and am very anxious to hammer it out. I think we should continue the controversy by letter with some degree of care and method: that is more likely to lead to a result than chipping away at each other when we meet, when I am alternately swayed by the two opposite tendencies, one, mere contentiousness, and one, the desire to slur things over and assume more agreement than there really is. I am always too implacable at one phase of the conversation and too pliable later on.

By the bye, I think in my letter I used the words 'logical judgment', in talking of the judgment we might make after inspiration had ceased. It has just occurred to me that this may breed misunderstanding. I don't mean necessarily a judgment in the forms given in a book on Logic. We should remember that, after all, 'logic' is the name not of a kind of judgment but of the science which attempts to give a formal account of the faculty of judgment. The question 'is this a logical judgment?' shd. be understood as meaning 'does the formulation of all judgment attempted by logicians cover this case?'—i.e. it is a question not about the nature of this judgment so much as about the success of a science. I think myself that all the judgments we make *can* be got into the forms acknowledged by logicians, but I don't in the least want to discuss that. All I meant really was a *normal* or *uninspired* act of assertive thought: one which could be argued about and proved or disproved by people who have no other qualification than a knowledge of the terms involved and ordinary clearheadedness. ³² One might almost define a 'logical' judgment in the sense I intended as 'any thought which can be equally truly expressed by any number of educated people in any number of modern languages'. I say all this to avoid the red

herring of a discussion as to whether our ordinary thinking is 'logical' or not. That is not our question (as far as I can see). Our problems are 1. Is imagination in the common sense (i.e. the *image*-making faculty) capable of being *true–false* (i.e. is it-dical)?

2. Is imagination in the other sense (i.e. a faculty operating without either images or concepts)-dical?

3. If it were, could we in our ordinary everyday judgments recover (or know or 'say') what imagination had 'said' (or known) or connect it in any way with our everyday judgments?

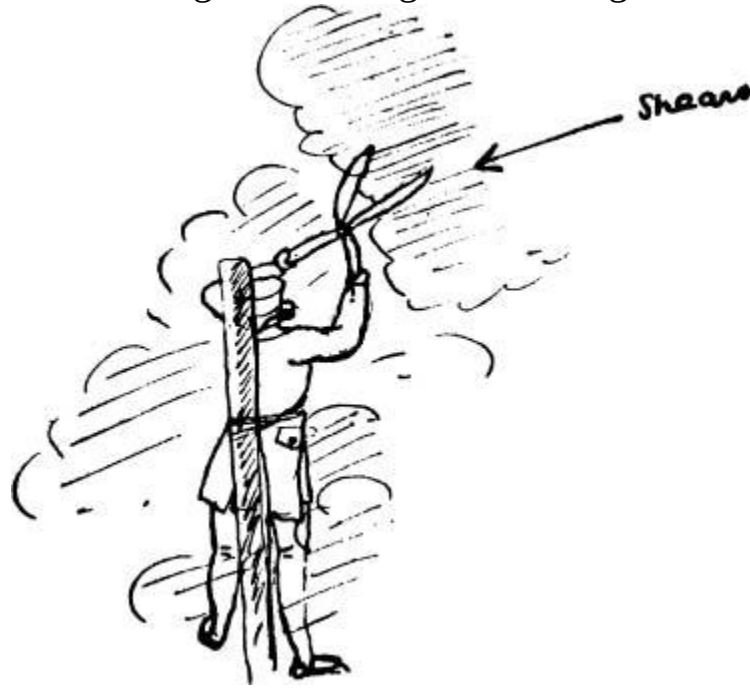
As to my movements:—Mrs. Moore is not well and there was a threat some time ago of an operation (not at all a serious one in itself, but the state of her blood, having once had thrombosis, makes any operation rather serious for her). ³³ We have now some hope that it may not be necessary, but are still uncertain. Secondly, my father is not well, having suffered from rheumatism and lumbago for a considerable time: and when and if Mrs. Moore's trouble is settled I must try to get him to come over to England, and go with him to Droitwich or some such place. ³⁴ (My brother is in China which leaves me the only person to deal with my father).

As you see I shall thus be in the hands of the Categorical Imperative pretty well all this summer: and if any interstices are left, examining and preparing work for next term will fill them up quite comfortably. It is therefore v. unlikely that we shall be able to meet, unless I can come over for a day to see you at Long Crendon sometime.

I envy you the Highlands. It is v. odd (tho quite true) that you should be all for details in landscape while I am all for horizons, while in such things as literary history, or the history of thought, we change places, and you can detect the essential spirit of a thousand complicated years^(1.) while I never dare to go beyond particular writers and characters. I hope it is doing you both good, and that Mrs. Barfield, who was rather run down when we last saw her, has recovered vigour (Antaeus-like) from the native heath. ³⁵ (I can imagine the hills as you describe them with extraordinary ease and clearness).

Yrs
C. S. Lewis

Study of a gentleman connecting what was given in imagination with his



Everyday Judgments

SERIES I, LETTER 4

My dear Barfield,

I was confused the other day about the general and the universal. My first mistake, when I said that in the case of a universal we apprehended necessity, was to confuse the thing with our modes of apprehension. Of course a universal is what it is whether we are so lucky as to see it or not. The green common to many leaves is a universal whether I see why it must be common or not.

My second confusion was between universal propositions and universals. There are, besides universal propositions, general propositions: but we shall look in vain for entities called *generals*. Thus in the worst general proposition (e.g., 'Small men are usually bad tempered') the *things* are universals, μικρότης (?)³⁶ and θύμοζ.³⁷ Now we can get to work.

Universal propositions assert a connection between universals. All bodies occupy space, i.e. To-be-a-body (one universal) involves to-occupy-a-space (another universal). Universal propositions are of two kinds.

(a.) Certain. We cannot be certain of the connection between two universals unless we see necessity, i.e. necessity is not the characteristic of a connection between universals so much as the means by which we apprehend it. (Not a characteristic of connexion because presumably it is [not] a characteristic of anything).

(b.) *Probable* where uninterrupted uniformity in the accompaniment of two universals up to date is taken as *symptomatic* of necessary connexion. E.g. *To-be-a-man* has always been accompanied by *to-be-mortal*. (Of course there is no question that such accompaniment must mean the necessary connexion of *some* two or more universals. What is only probable is that we have pitched on the right ones. Thus it might turn out that *to-be-mortal* was necessarily connected not with *being a man* but with *inheriting original sin* or *failure to take thyroid gland*. The universal propositions of science are only probable because we do not really know *which* universals are really connected and which are merely going about together by accident (i.e. as a result of connections lying farther off.) *General propositions* assert that two universals have been found together *very often*, without even enquiring whether this is symptomatic of necessary connexion or not. The propriety of such propositions depends on the speakers estimate of what constitutes *very often*, and for this reason no proof or refutation is really possible except where the parties agree in their estimate.

N.B. Type (a) is irrefutable and no contrary instance can be found. Type (b) is refutable by a *single* contrary instance. *General propositions* are refutable only by a number of contrary instances which the speaker regards as sufficient to conflict with his estimate of 'very often'.

Maureen is better. Let me know in a week's time when you think of coming to spend a night with me.

Yrs
C.S.L.

Will this do as a definition of Myth?

A *myth* is a description^x or a story introducing supernatural personages or things, determined not, or not only, by motives arising from events within the story, but by the supposedly immutable relations of the personages or things^x: possessing unity: and not, save accidentally, connected with any given place or time.

(A *Legend* is a story attached to a context, in a place and time series accepted as real by the teller, itself believed by the teller to be true, but departing from truth unconsciously, or without full consciousness, in the interests of greatness, the marvellous, or of edification.?) **SERIES I, LETTER 5**

Magdalen College,
Oxford.

Do we still agree on the following points?

(1.) That the images connected with a moment of imagination are not the imagination itself.

(2.) That these images need not be, usually are not, copies of anything existing in *rerum natura*, i.e. their reality is simply that of being real events in the mind of the individual. (i.e. real as errors and hallucinations & emotions are.) (3.) That the concepts suggested by a moment of Imagination are not the imagination itself.

(4.) That these concepts need not be, usually are not, copies of anything existing in *rerum natura* etc.

(5.) That the moment of Imagination does not vouch for the truth of any *assertion* suggested by it + made with the images or concepts suggested by it.

(6.) That therefore no moment of Imagination can be cited as *evidence* for any *assertion* whatsoever, except the assertions wh. follow not from its content but from the mere fact of its occurrence (e.g. it wd. be evidence, of course, for the assertion 'This moment of Imagination occurred.')

If so, the state of the case seems to be as follows.

(1.) B. and L. ³⁸ agree that there is a valuable activity called imagination—wh. is not the same as *imaginatio*, uamsara, the image making

faculty—the exercise of which is necessary for the conaissance of meaning.

(2.) B. and L. *agree* that the exercise of this faculty does not enable us to make true statements or judgments (though of course no statement, even a false one could be made without it, as is shown by (1.)) (3.) B. *maintains* & L. *questions* a doctrine that this faculty produces Truth, tho' not true statements or judgments; and that this is the only veritable Truth, 'true' judgments not being really 'True.'

(4.) B. *maintains* & L. *denies* a doctrine (advanced, I think as interpretation of (3.)) that the mind can become aware of its own activity in thinking as something other than (a.) the content or object of thought.

L. is at present in doubt as to the exact connexion between (3.) and (4.) (a) I'm not saddling you with the view that they are mutually exclusive: better 'that the whole situation called thinking is not exhausted by what-appears-to-thought and a bare awareness, but involves also an activity of thinking, & that we can be aware of this along with, or over-and-above, the what appears.'

The following letter—Series I, Letter 6—was answered by Barfield's Second Letter which begins: 'My dear Lewis, I begin with a few detailed comments.' Before Lewis wrote Letter 6 at least one of his letters was lost.

SERIES I, LETTER 6

My dear Barfield—

I am not sure whether we are wise to raise the question of metaphor as a [πάροργον](#)³⁹ to the present argument: but since you have taken the initiative I will try to follow.

As a reply to your dilemma, that *either* there must be metaphor in which the respect of similarity is undiscoverable by reason *or* poetry must be ornamented prose, it wd., perhaps, be sufficient for me to say that I never admitted that metaphor was the essence of poetry. As a result of reading your thesis and of talks with you I am prepared to admit that I have in the past greatly under-estimated the part played by metaphor in poetry—have, indeed, been curiously unconscious of the amount of metaphor in even my own poetry. But I do not yet think that metaphor is poetry or poetry is metaphor: at most I think that metaphor is one of the most important tools of poetry. The question of how far poetry can go without it, how many lines

of great poetry you could have without stumbling on metaphor other than that inherent in the language, is still for me an empirical question. I can only wait and see. I imagine that some of the greater speeches in the French classical drama wd. furnish interesting examples. [40](#)

Thus far I am speaking polemically in self defence. I will now turn to your question of principle ‘Can all metaphor be reduced without loss of essential meaning.’ The answer is, certainly not: coupled with a vigorous denial of the charge that my view of poetry is asemantic.

Let us take the two propositions (a.) The Lord is my shepherd. [41](#) (b.) The Deity exercises a benevolent superintendence over human affairs. My idea of the difference between them is something like this:—‘deity’ ‘superintendence’ and the like are abstractions or abridgements: symbols which do not (in the rapidity of thinking) evoke any relevant image but which are understood to stand for an infinite number of concrete experiences (or, more strictly, for an element in such an infinite number) any one of which cd. be imagined if we chose.

In fact, they are counters. Or, actual experience (the whole, of which ‘sense’ ‘conception’ and the like are the abstractions—into which it can be split up *ex post facto*⁴² but out of which it cannot be constructed)—actual experience may be compared to real wealth (bread, wine, houses etc), and such terms as ‘deity’ and ‘superintendence’ to the system of credit, or to paper money. As it is impossible to conduct any developed economic operation in terms of the real wealth, so you cannot think without removing yourself from the thing really thought about to its counters or chits. But—just as the credit has no meaning apart from the wealth in the background—so the skeleton-conceptions live only in the light of the real which they represent: a thing v. different from them. It is therefore very necessary to go back now and then, either to an actual experience of the sort they abridge, or to the concrete imagination of such an experience. In so doing we see the *meaning* of the terms: or rather part of the meaning, for the abridgement is usually general while the imagination is individual (I say individual, not particular: it may for all I know attain sometimes to imagination of a concrete universal as an individual: I hardly believe that, but I don’t want to contradict it).

I am so far describing what poetry does in general, not what metaphor does. Poetry is therefore intensely semantic, but not at all assertive. You will easily see that to discover by imaginative energy what a proposition

really means, or (as we say) ‘what it would mean to you’ if it were true, is quite different from discovering whether it is true. We can imagine a man weighing two rival hypotheses, and flooding each of them thus with meaning to its fullest: indeed no serious person does compare hypotheses without doing so. But this is not the same as converting either of them into belief. Only imagination can tell you what it would ‘mean’ *if* there were a god: but that doesn’t say that it tells you whether there is.

The relation between meaning and Truth seems to be this. A thing can’t be true or false unless it means something: but to find out what it means is not to find out whether it is true or false. Poetry can bring out the *quality* or *whatness* of the content of a hypothesis: but the truth of the hypothesis is known not by its content but by its connection with other concepts—by linking it with what is outside itself: and for this process (always a complex one) I think we have to use the credit system. (A good example of this vivifying of two hypotheses by imagination, utterly distinct from the assertion of either, is to be found in Arnold’s poem ‘In Utrumque Paratus.’)⁴³ I hope you will allow that this view leaves poetry something more than decorated prose.

Now as to metaphor. ‘The Lord is my shepherd’ contains one concrete term (the only really concrete term?) and one (shepherd) which tho’ abstract, yet covers a far less variety of experience than ‘superintendence’, and has (owing partly to religious tradition, pastoral poetry etc) a much readier emotional response. In other words, when you think of ‘The Lord’ as my ‘shepherd’ you get at once something of the real flavour of care and protection—a little bit of the whatness wh. was merely symbolised in ‘benevolent superintendence.’ But I think everyone knows (so well that he needn’t say) those *parts* of the shepherd’s activities which provide some of the wealth to wh. ‘benevolent superintendence’ was paper money. We are thinking of the shepherd guarding, helping etc: *not* of the shepherd gelding, selling, driving to market. In other words the metaphor proceeds on a knowledge of the ‘respect’ wh. is tacit because it is so very obvious. And to change the respect is to make a new metaphor, not necessarily to make prose. e.g.

*The Lord is a jealous god—a careful shepherd,
Tenderly (ah how tenderly!) guards my life;
Allows no rival in me, wolf nor leopard,*

–*My throat is sacred to the butcher’s knife.*⁴⁴

Surely that is at least tolerable pessimistic poetry: surely it is metaphor grasping similarity between an (evil) god and a shepherd: surely you understand it, and its difference from the other, just because you see the ‘respect’.

Again, can’t one make poetry out of the mis-taking in my last–i.e. the Lord does not feed *me* like a sheep but feeds *my sheep* like my hired shepherd? The old shepherd, bringing his sheep home from the mountain, hears the cry of a child from a neighbouring precipice. The evening is closing in–dangerous to leave his sheep–but humanity must come first–

‘There’s One above

Must be my shepherd till I come again.’

I’ll go further. In an Arcadian setting when you’ve got the reader accustomed to ‘my shepherd’ meaning ‘my lover’ in the mouth of a shepherdess, couldn’t an Arcadian St. Theresa say

Colin and Hobbin and Cuddie, farewell

–damn! I thought I had it all in my head but it’s gone wrong somehow. However, you see the possibility: you’d better write it yourself.

Well, for most metaphors, this seems to me the plain account. Poetry, in its task of revivifying ‘counters’–of establishing a gold currency–has to use every device (by wh. I don’t mean that all its tools are made logistically) to bring the thing home to your business and bosom. In fact, it has to be more accurate and concrete (less ‘in the air’) than prose. It does this sometimes by throwing at you a special case of the general principle (‘shepherd’–‘benevolent superintendence’): often by telling you what the thing is ‘like’ in the simplest, most sensuous sense (*rosea cervice refulsit*):⁴⁵ by rhythm (*sunt apud infernos tot milia formosarum*):⁴⁶ by telling you, or thrusting on your imagination, something quite different which has a similar emotional effect (‘the fat weed that grows on Lethe Wharf’):⁴⁷ by analogy a:b::c:d (*passim*) etc etc.

Now whether there is any instance of a metaphor wh. we can appreciate without knowing *at all* in what respect the things are alike, I really don’t know. I can’t think of one, but am ready for examples. Surely, in any case whatsoever, you wd. at least know that of several ‘respects’ suggested, some were nearer than others? e.g. does the likeness of *soul & enchanted boat* turn on 1. Non-existence 2. Speed 3. Beauty 4. Rarity 5. Solidity 6.

Ease of movement. 7. Preciousness of cargo. 8. Danger 9. Unlawfulness 10. Probability of sea-sickness 11. Sense of power without effort.

Surely anyone knows that 1, 4, 5, 9, 10 are hopeless; 7 and 8 nearly so; 2 & 3 getting warmish; and 6 and 11 pretty near. However, I say, I really don't know. But whether you can find out the respect or not, you certainly can't (on my view) use a metaphor *in an argument* unless you've got hold of the respect. We have seen in the case of Lord–Shepherd that by changing the respect you change the whole thing. One 'respect' fits it into a pessimistic, the other into a religious view. Again, it is surely only when a metaphor *comes off* that you can dispense with enquiry into the respect. We are not agreed that your vegetable metaphor is a real parallel. How is one to discuss its claims? You must admit that sometimes bad metaphors are used in controversy, or good ones wrongly used. What is your weapon against a suspected metaphor in an argument? How does one discuss it?

About Croce. ⁴⁸ Croce thinks that nothing assertive *or cognitive* can enter an aesthetic experience at all: that at the moment of enjoying a storm you cease to be aware that it is a real or imagined storm: the distinction disappears. ⁴⁹ I think that the knowledge of the object's reality or unreality survives and makes an aesthetic difference: that the fall of Rome differs aesthetically from the fall of Troy just because it is judged to be real. Not that the real is aesthetically better than the imaginary, but just aesthetically different. As a natural corollary, Croce thinks (like you) that there is strictly speaking no aesthetic experience of nature: for in being aesthetically experienced it ceases to be asserted as 'Nature': in fact you make your work of art out of it much as a painter does. This has always seemed to me untrue: the reality of the objects being to me the very differentia of my aesthetic experience of the Θεοδὸς αἰσθητόζ⁵⁰ Again, Croce relegates all so-called experience of nature to a very low level—as incoherent art: and in this I disagree with him. I have never considered my quarrel with the Croceans in connection with *poetry*. I don't suppose these points really interest you much and only give them because you asked me. ⁵¹

To return to the high-road. For heavens sake don't imagine that I think that 'is' means 'equals'. My point was that I thought your argument required it to mean 'equals' in a case where that meaning was even more than usually absurd. I thought you argued that because R grew into R₂, therefore R 'was' R₂ *in such a sense that* to know R was identically the

same knowledge as to know R_2 . Now I still think that if ‘to know R’ was identical with ‘to know R_2 ’ then R and R_2 would have to be the same, merely statically identical thing. In other words, I don’t mean that two things are interchangeable: I accused *you* of implying, or talking as if, they were. (You are guilty, unconsciously, of an infuriating *Tu Quoque*. [52](#) Painfully disguising my scorn, I try to find as polite an equivalent as possible for saying ‘You’re the sort of who thinks that *is* means equals’ and then am answered—but the subject is too painful!) Having thus cleansed my stuffed bosom, I will ask you to attempt to believe the following statements

1. I am aware that a problem about predication arose in Greece: as to how if *sugar* was *sugar* and *sweet* was *sweet*, sugar could be sweet (‘Oh S is S, and P is P, and never the twain shall meet.’)
2. That I am aware of, and agree with, Plato’s ἀμουσοζ καὶ ἀφιλόσ-οφοζ:[53](#) and that I never made a joke about the one and the many to a Scythian policeman. [54](#)

3. That, whether rightly or wrongly, I believe that the problem about the one-and-many in R and R_2 is not the problem you are talking of, at all. [55](#)

The old problem about predication wd. be ‘If the Real is Real, and Known is Known, how can the real be known.’ In other words, how can we explain the unity existing between distincts wh. stand in a subject–attribute (S–P) relation to each other. Or, but differently, if white, square, sweet are many, how can sugar *be* white, square, sweet, and yet be one? But the relation between R and R_2 , i.e. between phases of an individual is not an instance of SP relation at all. If you have a solution of how acorns can be hard, you haven’t thereby got a solution of how acorns can become oaks. You can’t mean that when you say ‘Acorns become oaks’ you predicate ‘oak’ of ‘acorn’ as in saying ‘Acorns are hard’ you predicate ‘hard’ of acorn: and no language that I know wd. allow you to use the same copula ‘is’ in both cases. Whatever may be the true nature of predication, it is something different from the relation of R to R_2 .

Even suppose it were the same: it wd. not serve your purpose. The sort of identity you want is the sort which wd. make knowing R the same as knowing R_2 . But the identity-in-difference, whatever its real nature, between S and P does not fulfil that condition. ‘Socrates is a man.’ But if whenever you tried to know Socrates you succeeded in knowing only Man, that wd. surely mean that you had failed to know the individual Socrates. And if when you tried to know Man you succeeded only in knowing

Mortal, then you wd. have failed to know that special variation of the mortal theme wh. constitutes man.

My answer, then, is (a.) That the relation of R to R_2 is not an example of the 'is' relation at all. (b.) That even if it were, my original objection wd. hold. As to my 'rigid' conception of change, I use the symbols R and R_2 , instead of X and Y, in order to remind ourselves that R_2 is not sheerly 'other' than R, but is *in some sense* the same—that there is an identity in diversity between them. I am not, I hope, trying to saddle you (unfairly, as it would be) with the view that they are just two utterly separate 'things'.^(1.) We are *agreed* that if the change from R unknown to R known were really like the change of a biological individual from one phase to another, then there wd. be identity of some sort between them, there wd. not be mere plurality.

The whole question is whether it wd. be identity of the sort needed to make knowledge of R possible. In the example just quoted we have a specimen of two terms 'Socrates' and 'Man' between wh. there is certainly some identity, but identity of a sort which does *not* mean that if you cd. only know Man you cd. be said to know Socrates. *Quaesitur*, [56](#) whether the identity between R and R_2 is also of that (unsatisfactory for us) sort, or of a different sort. Surely, even if you can say that the vegetable soul *is* the seed, and *is* also the flower (tho' I doubt if you can say even that), still you can't say that the seed or the flower is the vegetable soul? Is there not here a 'one-way' relationship. If you substitute 'becomes' it seems even more so. The soul (w) becomes the embryo, the adolescent and the adult, but they don't become it. Or again, to know w might be to know the phases, to know a phase wd. not be to know w. [57](#) And, I take it, R_2 is a phase: and whether R is parallel to w or only to an earlier phase, I can't say that R_2 would be R, or to have R_2 wd. be to have R.

The point is crucial, because, as I hinted before, the possibility of even *stating* your doctrine depends on some elucidation of the special way in wh. R 'takes the form of consciousness' in the case of knowledge: without that you will surely be up against my original difficulty that 'a donkey' and 'reality taking the form of a donkey' are all one. Any consciousness whatsoever is a specimen of 'reality taking the form of consciousness'. (By the bye, don't be sure that by coming into my room at 3 A.M. you will catch me napping: you wd. certainly say 'This is Lewis', but why? If I

remained in that state for 20 years, wd. you say that the silent figure was me? If you had never come across sleep before, wd. you call it me in any case? Surely you say ‘This is Lewis’ by an ellipsis—as you say, pointing to what is still a mere swell ‘Here comes another breaker’—because long habit has taught you that from this breathing image (strangely unlike me even in face if you hold your candle nearer and use your eyes) you can at will evoke what you call Lewis? If you for a moment doubted that, you wd. not call it me. More philosophically, surely you don’t really think that *any* temporary manifestation of me, sleeping or waking, is Lewis? I am or become all of them: but no one, and no aggregate, of them, is me.) You say that you find no insuperable difficulty in reality existing *δυνάμει*⁵⁸ with respect to one knower and *ἐνεργείᾳ*⁵⁹ with respect to another. You agree that without the clause ‘in respect to one knower—in respect to another’, this wd. be mere staring Bedlamite nonsense? Reality can’t, I trust, really be in itself both *δυνάμει* and *ἐνεργείᾳ*. Surely you can only mean that reality, wh. is always itself, can be differently related to different knowers: as Rose (which is *ἀεὶ τὸ αὐτὸ καθ’ αὐτὸ μονοειδέξ ὄν*)⁶⁰ can be differently related to different trees. And doesn’t this mean that the difference between truth and error, or the change from unknowing to knowing is not in the reality known?

You seem to have misunderstood my taking of the smoked glass metaphor. ⁶¹ I never meant to take the *hills* literally and the other part metaphorically. My scheme was *Hills* = The Real, the great What-What. *Glass* = finite personality, categories, forms of sense, sensuous machinery. *Picture as seen in glass* = *τὰ φαινόμενα ἀνθρώπου*⁶² (at wh. stage, of course, ‘hills’ in the literal sense first appear.) I thought we both believed in the *Ding an sich*, ⁶³ in the sense that if there is appearance there is something that appears. I, at any rate, don’t accept a world of pure smoked glass. What I meant was that if I ever could know the Real (= wipe the smoke off the glass) that wd. be an event or change in me not in the Real (= the hills). If you don’t mean by real (1.) The single and unchanged (I mean *qua* relevant change) source of varying phenomena, varying according to point of view etc (2.) The common source of each individual’s private phenomena (3.) The reservoir of all possible phenomena never exhausted in any—then, I confess, I can’t see what ‘real’ means, except as a eulogistic term applied to those parts of our essentially erratic, subjective experience wh. you happen to like. (But read Dymer Canto VIII).

Many thanks about the Greek jaunt: but it is not a question of money. [64](#)
I have two quite distinct sets of claims upon my (not very extensive) leisure: in fact, two families, one natural, one chosen. Both contain people who are no longer young and who are in poor health. I am always skimping Belfast for Headington & Headington for Belfast, my friends for both, and all for my two distinct works (writing & tutoring). This very difficult adjustment of contending claims (all of wh. I gladly & affectionately accept) cd. hardly be eased by running away abroad for several months. Strange as it sounds, I am rather seriously wanted in more places than one in England whenever I am at liberty. I know that the laziness of an unadventurous man may disguise itself as a claim of conscience: but I have thought that over and one must rely on one's own judgment. So I can't come. I speak of my own affairs with some difficulty, & I don't think it conduces to the right sort of intimacy (male intimacy) to do so v. often: you will understand that this is said in a confidence so strict as to exclude our most intimate 'mutual' (wrong use!) friends: and said at all only because I thought you entitled to a sincere and final answer.

How goes the novel? [65](#) The hag is going fine. The surf bathing (without boards wh are as comfortable companions in rough water as hedgehogs in a nuptial bed) is fine.

Yrs
C. S. Lewis

SERIES I, LETTER 7

My dear Barfield–

Sorry, but I can't see why you compare Theaetetus 156 A, [66\(1.\)](#) τό τε τιμι συνελθόν και ποιούν ἄλλω αὐ προσπετόν πάσχονἀνεφάνη for I can see no comparison. Aristotle (and you and I) were talking about an essential difference between soul doing, and soul suffering.

In the passage in Theaetetus, in the first place, the account is not Plato's own but what the materialists say: and tho' it does help on the argument, it is cited largely *pour rire*. [67](#) For tho' they are κομπότεροι⁶⁸ they are only so, compared with the wholly ἄμουσοι⁶⁹—i.e. he is citing the right wing or the most reasonable part of those who believe in the Heraclitean & Protagorean doctrines.

Secondly, it is all concerned, not with any distinction of one soulelement from another, but with the status of *sensibilia*.⁷⁰ Thirdly, so little of the real difference (from our point of view) between Poetic & 'Pathetic' comes in, that I think, if you work it out, you will find it makes no difference *which way round* you take it. It isn't clear whether the active κίνησις⁷¹ produces αἰσθητά⁷² of which the passive κίνησις is the αἰσθησις, ⁷³ or the active κίνησις exercises αἰσθησις on the κίνησις wh. are passive as 'being seen', 'being touched' etc.

But it does not matter at all. The whole point is that *sensibilia* arise from some kind of co-operation between complementary κίνησεις, and that the organ and the object, apart from that moment of co-operation, can hardly be conceived (νοῆσαι οὐκ εἶναι παγίως). ⁷⁴

That is all he is saying—as part of the criticism against Th's second ~ ay attempted definition of ἐπιστήμη⁷⁵ What that has to do with poetic & logistic, I can't see. And it worries me rather. When you have found out, let me know which of us is escaping his own notice being an ass—for *at least* one of us must be Yrs

C. S. Lewis

SERIES I, LETTER 8

Little Lea
Strandtown,

Belfast
[January 1928]⁷⁶

My dear Barfield—

We certainly seem to be getting visibly nearer to the real point at last. We are agreed that metaphor (and also, I would add, music or in some few cases even rhetoric) may develop a What: and equally agreed that it cannot demonstrate a That.

The question as to its position in argument seems to me extremely subtle and delicate. We are discussing, say, the nature of knowledge. There is no doubt that a metaphor, if you are a good enough poet, may give me the whatness which you conceive to be in knowledge: and that is an indispensable preliminary to our discussion. But our discussion really takes the form (does it not) of a question ‘Is knowledge what you say it is.’

I must first of all find out what you mean by knowledge: but that is only a prelude to finding out whether you are right in meaning so or not. And the question ‘are you right’ is one of Thatness: whether this ‘what’ which you present to me *is* actually given in instances which we should be prepared to call knowledge. Or, to put it in another way, we cannot (strictly speaking) be agreed about a whatness. We can *share* a whatness by sense or imagination, and can then agree or disagree as to whether this whatness is realised in such and such an actual or no. For you will observe that whatness does *not* contain actuality: the bringing before the mind *what* X is, is preliminary to the question *whether* X exists. You cannot get the *that* into the what as an element: it was the mistake of Descartes to suppose that you could. (I take it this may be what Plato means when he says that good is ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας on the far side of being.)⁷⁷ If you agree with this, you will see that the question whether knowledge is mainly What-ish or mainly That-ish, is not a question of emphasis.

There is an ambiguity of language here. Suppose a man ‘knows the nature of Reality’ You may say ‘Is not this knowledge par excellence? And is it not, as the very words express, knowledge of a whatness?’ But the sentence must mean either (a.) He knows what the nature of the real is = he knows *that* this (imaginatively or sensibly realised) character does belong to the real: in which case knowledge turns out to be a *that*: or (b.) He ‘has before’ him a certain whatness which *as a matter of fact* does belong to the real: but its belonging to the real is a fact *for us* and cannot be included in his imaginative grasp of the whatness. All he can have, before you reach the

that, is ‘a’ nature: whether that nature is anywhere realised, whether it is subjective or objective etc. are all questions which have no meaning except on the supposition that he has already grasped the nature: and for that v. reason the grasping of the nature must be prior to, and distinct from, those questionings, and (a fortiori) from their answers.

But we need no philosophy for something which experience daily forces upon us. Faced with a problem, we at once say ‘X might be Y...or Z’. Y and...Z are hypotheses, sometimes logically contrived, sometimes flashed upon us by metaphor: and some such hypothesis is necessary in order for us to ask a question. I grant that in asking the right questions, imagination is paramount. But all that has to be done *before* an answer can arrive: an answer which will consist in establishing the certain or probable actuality of one of the hypotheses already suggested and grasped by imagination.

To say, therefore, that imagination is knowledge, or that knowledge is of whatness, seems to me like saying that to wonder is the same as to know, that there is no difference between doubting and discovering, that a question is the same as its answer, and that the solution of a problem is the problem itself. For what do all these terms, ‘doubting’ ‘wondering’ and the like, mean, except to have before ones mind ‘floating’ or unasserted whatnesses—the work of imagination which both calls them into being and *is* their being—which cannot yet be attributed to reality: and what does knowing or ‘solving the problem’ mean, but linking one of them up with that whole system of assertions which we call the real and therefore excluding the others?

It all comes to this. To wonder is to have hypotheses. To have hypotheses is to imagine. But to know is to have one assertion, and one or more rejected hypotheses. Now can these two states be called the same, except in some sense in which ‘same’ can be applied [to] thirst *and* drink, the G.W.R. [78](#) mainline *and* Paddington, to everything *and* everything else?

You will see that I cannot answer when you ask whether metaphor is ‘an effective demonstration What’. Do you mean a ‘demonstration what this is’. But such demonstration (in spite of the form of words) is really a demonstration ‘that’: a demonstration *that* the whatness you have grasped is actually given in the ‘this’ we are discussing. If you mean a ‘demonstration’ in the primitive sense, a displaying or exposing, of the unattached ‘whatness’ *in your mind*, which I have to receive (to the best of our

common abilities) before I can *either* affirm *or* deny that it is actualised here or there, the Whatness which must be common to us before we can even *disagree* (for only in so far as I deny *what* you affirm is there real disagreement between us), then I agree.

But do not be misled by the word 'demonstration'. That which is the preliminary of disagreement, which is as much the condition of your being refuted as of your making your point, is clearly not 'demonstration' in the sense of 'proof'. It is simply the mental equivalent of what would be pointing in the sensible sphere. The three huntsmen all pointed at the object before 'The first said 'twas a hedgehog, The second he said Nay.' The pointing was not the argument, still less the entelechy of the argument into knowledge: tho, I grant, there could have been no argument without it.

Now for your two v. difficult leading questions. (1.) Does a poet in observing or intuiting a resemblance (which he will afterwards express in a metaphor) note an identity in difference in substantially the same way as a man who is making a judgment.

(α .) Psychologically—i.e. as regards the consciousness of the man or the poet at the moment, I think the answer is No. The judging man is more clearly conscious of the *respect* of similarity; the poet (at least the only one I know really well) is often conscious only of the result, i.e. that the sensible image somehow fits in: how, why, or how far, he does not consider at the moment. In fact he is empirical: he judges by results. It gives him 'the right feeling' and there's an end on't.

(β .) Logically. *No*. The judging man asserts that the identity in question holds good of reality: that it is connected (not only to him at that moment, but for all rational beings) with the system of assertions which he calls real. The poet does not assert this; he does not even raise the question. *This* Pity at *this* moment calls up 'a naked new born babe' [79](#) for those in tune with the situation. Whether he raises the question afterwards as to the universal validity of the identity, probably depends on his character & circumstances, not *quâ* poet, but *qua* Master W. Shakespeare.

(γ .) Ontologically. i.e.—apart from the way in wh. they get to the identity, is it, as a matter of fact, the same identity in both cases. *Answer*—I don't know.

(2.) Was Kant right etc. I don't know.

Now for your 'snag'.

From the dismay (it is hardly too strong a word) with wh. you greeted my suggestion, made on our walking tour, that there might be no such thing as *Ego* in the ultimate sense (tho' of course there might be phenomena called 'me' and 'Barfield'), I confess I had concluded that for you, at any rate, the subject was an ultimate: and therefore that 'here am I and over there is Reality' was a scheme you refused to go behind. As I was very uncertain about my own powers of continuing an argument behind it (whatever might happen in odd moments when the light of soul goes out), and not *perfectly* convinced of the truth of my extreme 'an-egoistic' doctrine, I assumed subjects as the framework of our whole discussion. And if 'we' exist, i.e. real, but individual and separate, selves, I certainly think you must either (α .) Assume a reality which is something other than *our* thinking and common to us all, or (β .) Relapse into extreme subjective idealism, *at least*: more probably into solipsism. If the reality thought of is nothing more than the thinking, and if the thinking is that of a real individual Ego, then the world is the content of an individual, personal $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ ⁸⁰ and I (there's only one of me) may as well cut my throat to night.

I know you can't mean that: and therefore wait with interest what you will say next. You see my dilemma. *Either* there is such a thing as a self & therefore such a thing as thinking over and above the Reality thought about *or* the reality is the whole thing: in which case there is no thinking and no selves or else everything is the thinking of this self, which means Solipsism.

I haven't met Clive Hamilton for some time. The air of this country and this house is fatal to him. But from what I remember of him—his mixture of hidden sentimentalism, genuine friendship, common vanity, and downright Yankee love of advertisement—he is just the sort of man who wd. love to have a book dedicated to him. ⁸¹

I can't tell you the desolation I feel when you say you are going abroad for six months.

Yrs
C. S. Lewis

SERIES II, LETTER 1

My dear Barfield—

As a preliminary I observe that the *freedom* of an act of thought lies under the same difficulties as the freedom of any other act i.e. raises the whole problem of the freedom of the will. With this problem in its metaphysical form, I take it, we are not here concerned. In any case we should, I trust, agree that any doctrine of freedom wd *acknowledge* that for every act *ex post facto* you can discover predetermining causes in character, environment etc, or what look like them, and the success of the doctrine wd consist in showing that, despite this appearance, the act was really somehow spontaneous: *not* in trying to find some particular act of which you couldn't re-construct the 'causes'. But, anyway, this is not our point. Coming to lower ground;— We can, leaving all question of real freedom out, distinguish what we call our voluntary acts (in the empirical sense) from those done ἐν πάθει.⁸² In the same way we can distinguish acts of thought: i.e. 'thinking of what we choose to think of' from thinking of a subject obviously imposed on us by fear or the like—or by necessity of earning ones living, or desire to 'shine' etc. I take it your main point here is *not* this distinction. i.e. you are not simply offering me moral assistance in my efforts to control my thinking *in that way*. This narrows the field again.

Now having ruled out those obvious cases of 'involuntary' thought I find that I do already 'deliberately take part with my own will in the act of thinking'. I do choose to think of one subject rather than another: I do (subject to weariness & external interruption) choose how I shall continue to think on it. So, I suppose, does everyone. If you ask what such choices of subject matter depend on, I can think of only (1.) My own conviction of relative importance (2.) A doctrine of relative importance accepted from authority (3.) My 'interests' i.e. natural *tastes* for particular ὕλαι⁸³ resulting from temperament & environment (4.) The natural branchings-out of the τ 8 kg⁸⁴ wh. I'm already engaged on before the new choice is made: i.e. following the *leadings* of the subject whether they look like being 'interesting' beforehand or not.

All my plea was not to suppose (4.) too hastily in favour of the others. The trouble about (1.) is that it may be only a disguise for (3.): (2.) may be only disguise for *someone else's* (3.), and anyway the 'authority' wd. never be infallible. Therefore to pursue (1.) or (2.) *exclusively* may mean to cut yourself off from the last chance of *rescue* from the parochialness of your own mind, or that of your age. The point about (4.) is that it is ones *line of communication* with universal nature. I don't recommend a blind preference for it, but it must be *kept open*: and men of our upbringing are just the men whose business is rather to keep an eye on it. When a man or an age is completely bamboozled (4.) is the only alley down wh. deliverance will come.

The difference between us is, I suppose, that you rely more than I do on (2.). It does not seem a very fundamental one for of course I rely on (2.) also, and so do you on (1.) and (3.).

If you are referring expressly to *meditation* as enjoined in The Way of Initiation, [85](#) that is another matter. The choice there cd. only be based on (2.)—no one is going to 'think about' a seed for 10 minutes on end except in obedience to a master. And that presupposes that the master has made good his claim to authority. At present the only claim that has reached me is the master's promise that if I meditate on the seed long enough I shall see blue lights or something coming round it: and your promise (if you mean meditation, wh. I'm not sure of) that I shall come to see my own thinking as a being who is also everyone else's thinking, tho he remains individual & not universal. Neither promise seems to me to prove authority: tho' I can well believe that both are verified *for the sort of man who is already prepared to obey by his* (3.).

I was struck by the extraordinary poetry wh. the sentence 'when I impersonated the sceptic in the little wood' might have if it turned up as a fragment in my desk 30 years hence.— Yrs

C. S. Lewis

SERIES II, LETTER 2

My dear Barfield—

After writing lectures all morning, I dashed off a note to you in some haste before coming home to lunch: and on reconsidering it, I conclude that the last paragraph may have sounded offensive. I want to cry you mercy for

this, and for something like it while we were having tea at Sandford—indeed for many, many occasions. Your patience throughout has been admirable.

You will believe me when I say that it is always unpremeditated. It forces itself out. In vain do I tell myself that you have a right to think what you please! I am often surprised at the extent to which your views occupy my mind when I am not with you and at the animosity I feel towards them. Try not to bulverize⁸⁶ this too much: you see I deliver myself into your hands.

It is not entirely Ioldabaath⁸⁷ nor yet Inferiority Complex: you must allow something for the born rhetorician's love of a good Aunt Sally and for his tendency to become hypnotised by it. Also—the virtue of tolerance is most easily practised towards strangers. I can't really feel that you have a right to think what you please without removing you mentally to an immeasurable distance. What has specially raised the point is your refusal to bulverise me at Sandford. At the time, of course, I interpreted it in the way most pleasing to my wishes: assuming that your case was so bad that the bulverisms which you had to use were too appalling to be uttered. It only occurred to me afterwards that you might know by bitter experience that any attempt to take the same liberty which you had just allowed to me wd. lead to an explosion. Humiliating thought!

All this is the personal side of the question. As to the argument: I think I probably took the whole thing on too shallow and 'popular' a level this morning. The thing which secretly influences my mental selections is for you, I take it, a power far further back than my *four* items, and embracing them all: i.e. something *nearly* as far back as Kant's categories, ⁸⁸ but not quite, since you hold that we can escape from it without un-making the whole mind.

Now it is, I admit, a disquieting thought, 'What if there is a hidden force working beneath all my apparent choices of thought and compelling me to attend to certain subjects and to overlook others when I seem most free?' You will recognise the resemblance to 'What if there are hidden forces controlling all our economic life?' and (my own example) 'What if Gyges were in the room wearing his invisible ring?'. ⁸⁹ Anyone who puts forward such a suggestion has at once certain advantages on his side. To every objection, to every request for evidence, to every evidence brought against him, he can reply 'Ah, of course. *Naturally* you don't see the evidence for it. It doesn't intend that you should.' By hypothesis it is a force that works

by concealing itself: thus every argument against it can be made into an indirect argument for it. And as if this were not enough he can always end by the terrific appeal both to our fears and our fighting instincts which Sinon (you will remember) used to the Trojans ‘Kill me if you like. *It’s just what the Greeks would like you to do.*’ ⁹⁰ So he can say to every opponent ‘Go on. Now you are really in its hands. You are denying its existence: that’s just what it wants you to do.’

You see how helpless we are before such arguments. How can the contrary conviction enter when its first appearance is sure to be hailed as the insidious approach of the enemy himself? And yet, all this can be done, all this inexpugnable belief can be built up, without a single real ground. To go back to my own example, all these unanswerable arguments can be used equally well whether Gyges is really in the room or not.

I have described a situation of which all men are equally in danger. I hope you will admit that, whatever you may conclude about this particular instance, you will admit that, in *general*, these tormenting suggestions, once made, have a diabolical power of fortifying the mind in advance against any allaying, and that before they have really given any evidence for themselves. ‘Beware, my lord, of Jealousy,’ ⁹¹ is not a proof of Desdemona’s guilt: but it is something much better: it is an absolute block to any possible proof of her innocence. Now (if I may so far bulverise) ask yourself whether the particular strength of your own mind does really lie in the direction of avoiding a trap of that sort: supposing one had been set you. Like everyone else, there will be some things that you are specially strong on, and some dangers you are particularly exposed to. Are you, by temperament, the best judge of a ‘What if–’ argument?

When I first knew you, you were struggling with the horrid suspicion that all our ideals might only be disguises for the blind workings of instinct. We were all the dupes of Nature. Do you remember a walk you and I had out beyond the Hinkseys. ⁹² I said I had got over that (I had just written *Foster*). ⁹³ You replied ‘Yes. I too have been through all that and come out the other end—and gone back.’ ⁹⁴ Very soon after that, you had fallen in with journalism, and financial problems, and the Douglas scheme. ⁹⁵ You wrote a pamphlet in which you said ‘It is *significant* that while prosperity is declining new banks are everywhere going up.’ ⁹⁶ We were all the dupes of Financiers. I said I despaired of understanding finance. You replied ‘The people who manage high finance don’t intend that you should.’

Later, you had become an Anthroposophist. ⁹⁷ I need not recall our many conversations on that subject nor how the burden of your doctrine was that we were all the dupes of Ahriman. ⁹⁸ And even while you read this you smile and say ‘I know. I know. Here he comes’—now don’t you? The fact that I am talking so plausibly against the existence of Ahriman, trying so artfully to sap the ‘*contemplation*’ of him which is your hard won defence against becoming (as once you were) his ‘*enjoying*’ dupe, is just one more proof that he is still alive and kicking. Granted Ahriman, and then the existence of such a man as myself, and the arguments I am now using, nay, the Ahriman in your own mind who accepts those arguments (or would, if you didn’t know him so well and watch him) is *just what you would expect*.

But of course you must see that if Ahriman was a fiction, you would still be able to treat my arguments in just the same way. If you were in a trap, this is just how the trap would work. Ahriman has already said that to you a dozen times, I know. But there you go again. Supposing it was not Ahriman, but the diabolical nature of the trap which thus prepared you in advance to reject as Ahriman every struggle of the wounded, but not dead, reason which could possibly offer you an escape? You remember that Catholics are told that the two temptations you must fly from at once are those against chastity and faith. Doubt is to be treated as we treat the prickings of Luxury. They are in fact prepared in advance. At the first flicker of intellectual inquiry they recognise an old enemy whom they have been warned against, and cry ‘Here he comes.’ Thus they are kept safe in the trap.

You will now have been longing for some time to say that I am using against you exactly the same argument which I accuse you (or your teachers) of using. You say ‘What if all this seeming reason means only that we are the dupes of Ahriman?’ and I reply ‘What if all this seeming escape from Ahriman means only that we are the dupes of perjured Sinon.’ ⁹⁹ (I mean, of course, of something like the ‘Conspiracy Complex’, the *Nous-sommes-trahis*-state of mind. ¹⁰⁰ I don’t for a moment suggest that your teachers are all ‘Sinons’). But I have no objection to this. Either both arguments are futile or both are good. You can’t go on giving real weight to ‘Ah—here comes this old plausible Ahrimanic logicism. I’m not having any’ unless you also give weight to ‘Ah—here comes this old diabolical I ago—Sinon trap. I’m not having any.’ The upshot is that no argument of that

sort (and, remember, I have heard you use just such arguments about financiers & secret societies, as well as Ahriman) ought to have any value at all. You must give up discounting the plausibility of *doubts* on the ground that they are just what you would expect if Ahriman were real. Two can play at that game.

If, then, you are to have a belief in Ahriman it must be on totally different grounds. *Historically*, I think it is admitted what your original grounds were. You found that ‘reasoning’ led you more and more to deny the reality of everything which you felt at heart most certain of.

*‘Trivial reasoning won his grave assent
Provided only its conclusion mocked etc’*

This is perfectly respectable ground as far as it goes. But I would underline the word ‘trivial’. I think you will admit that when Harwood first introduced you to the works of Steiner you had no notion (as you now have) how far Reason in her full sway could go towards healing the wounds that ‘trivial reasoning’ had made. Perhaps you would even admit that if you had known, if your training had not been exclusively literary and empirical, you would probably *not* at that time have become an Anthroposophist at all. Of course I am not suggesting for a moment that Reason can give you what you now have. I recognise that you could not now sink into some such vague and tentative idealism as mine, without a very painful feeling of impoverishment. Still—if you had then known that Empiricism, Psychoanalysis, Materialism etc were ‘trivial reasoning’ and curable by more reason—your history might have been different. And if your original conversion to a belief in Ahriman came partly from ignorance of Reason’s real nature and partly from an inveterate tendency to find wire-pullers, to unmask huge deceptions, ought not your present grounds to be *very* strong if you are to trust them? The proof that it is *not* a trap ought to be *very* complete, for such a man as you, having arrived where you are by such paths.

What you produce as your present ground is an ‘intuition’. ‘Just as a sense-intuition carries with it the conviction etc’. But does it? Who believes a sense intuition? Even what οἱ πολλοί¹⁰¹ call the ‘real world’ is a construction from sense, one sense confirming another, details supplied by memory and imagination, theory, hypothesis. When a sense intuition won’t fit in to the construction it is scrapped and called an ‘illusion’. The

scientist's 'real world' is still further removed from sense: the philosopher's, furthest of all. How can any isolated experience, sensuous or not, carry any conviction? Surely it is only in so far as experiences fit together into a growing *wholeness* that they make up what we call the real? But we have been through all this before.

The more obvious point is this. Uneasy suspicions of the 'What if' nature are worthless: least of all can they be escaped by flying to any *authority*, or to any intuition of your own. That only lands you in an opposite 'What if'. I have been driven to bulverise, because that sort of argument admits only of bulveristic treatment. But I am sure you will have lots to say in reply. One of my main objects in writing was to make sure that any disagreeableness of mine shd. not lead you to keep the subject in the background hereafter. We must go on talking about [it]. You must teach me more patience and better manners.

Yrs
C.S.L.



Owen Barfield planned to go with his wife, Maud, and his baby, Alexander, to Greece for six months in 1929 or 1930. In the event, they were unable to go, but in 1929 Lewis drew this picture of what he imagined the Barfield family in Greece would look like. See Backmatter: 'Great War' Letters.

BIOGRAPHICAL APPENDIX

ALDWINCKLE, Elia Estelle ‘Stella’ (1907–89), founder of the Oxford University Socratic Club, was born in Johannesburg, South Africa on 16 December 1908, the second of four children of English parents. In 1915 the family moved to England, and in 1932 Stella went to St Anne’s College, Oxford. She took a BA in Theology in 1936, and over the next three years taught theology in Yorkshire and at St Christopher’s College, Blackheath. Gradually she came to realize that her calling was pastoral, and she returned to Oxford in 1941 as a member of the Oxford Pastorate attached to St Aldate’s Church. She served as Chaplain to Women Students, 1941–66, which involved acting as an advisor to the students at Somerville College, one of the all-women colleges in Oxford.

In 1941 one of her students complained that no one seemed ready to discuss the questions agnostics raise about God. As a result, Stella put up a notice exhorting ‘all atheists, agnostics, and those who are disillusioned about religion or think they are’ ¹ to meet in the Junior Common Room. They decided they needed an ‘open forum for the discussion of the intellectual difficulties connected with religion and with Christianity in particular’, ² and Lewis was asked if he would serve as its senior member. He accepted, and the Oxford University Socratic Club was founded shortly after Christmas 1941 with Aldwinckle as its chairman and Lewis as president. Over the years it was one of the best-known and best-attended university societies in Oxford. It declined steeply when Lewis went to Cambridge in 1955, but by the time it ended in 1972 Aldwinckle had more than accomplished what she set out to do.

She was a knowledgeable horsewoman, and in 1958 she founded the Oxford University Horsemanship Club. This, too, had its pastoral side; she used it to raise funds for Christian medical work in Africa, and also as a focal point for Christian fellowship. She also started a prayer fellowship called ‘Scars’, a lunchtime silent meditation in the Cathedral of Christ Church, designed to reconcile differences of

doctrinal approach and to help heal the wounds these differences caused.

Upon her retirement from the Oxford pastorate in 1966 Aldwinckle devoted herself to a philosophical treatise on some of the theoretical ontological problems that had always interested her. This was published as *Christ's Shadow in Plato's Cave: A Meditation on the Substance of Love*, Foreword by Iris Murdoch; Biographical Postscript by Richard Leachman (Oxford: Amate Press, 1990). Perhaps her most enduring monuments are the five volumes of the *Socratic Digest* she edited between 1941 and 1952. Aldwinckle died on 28 December 1989. For a history of Lewis's part in the Socratic Club, and a list of speakers for 1941–54, see Walter Hooper, 'Oxford's Bonny Fighter' in *Remembering C. S. Lewis: Recollections of Those Who Knew Him*, ed. James T. Como (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), pp. 174–85.

BERNERS-PRICE, Nell (1906–98) was born Nellie Devonald Lewis at 84 High Street, Harlesden, London, on 13 October 1906, the daughter of Arthur Devonald Lewis and his wife Susan Amy (Wheeler) Lewis. She was educated at Croydon High School,

On 7 April 1934 Nell married Alan Maxwell Berners-Price (1903–89) in Beddington Church, Surrey. Alan was an auctioneer and antiques dealer whose particular interest was in china and pictures. During the Second World War he served as a wing commander with the Royal Air Force, while Nell taught at Collingwood School, Wallington, Surrey. They had two children, Peter Devonald, born in Byfleet, Surrey, on 27 January 1943, and Penelope Devonald Maxwell, born in Queen Charlotte's Hospital, London, on 6 February 1945.

In 1946 the family moved to Thanet, on the coast of Kent, where Nell and Alan opened a country house hotel, Courtstairs. This imposing mansion, built as a private house in 1883, is set in grounds facing south and sheltered by massive evergreen oaks. The magnificent entrance hall is 20 feet high with a gallery running round it. Alan was still working as an art dealer, and Courtstairs provided the backdrop for many grand pictures. They made it a splendid and successful hotel.

Nell first met Lewis in 1952 after a woman claiming to be 'Mrs C. S. Lewis' came to stay at Courtstairs, saying her husband would soon be joining her. Eventually she ran up a very large account, always with

the promise that her husband would pay. In April 1952, after ‘Mrs C. S. Lewis’ had been at Courtstairs for almost a year, Nell Berners-Price took the unpaid bills to Oxford, intending to confront Lewis with them. She was as surprised to find Lewis was unmarried as he was to learn he had a ‘wife’.

It transpired that the woman posing as Lewis’s wife was a Mrs Nella Victoria Hooker, who had been in jail a number of times for similar offences. She was arrested, and from her jail cell she wrote to Lewis every day. The story of Mrs Hooker appeared under the title ‘70 Year Old Charged’ in *The Kent Herald* (20 May 1952), p. 3. In the course of Mrs Hooker’s trial at Canterbury, at which he was required to give testimony, Lewis stayed at Courtstairs, and this was the beginning of a close friendship with the Berners-Price family. Lewis gave their daughter, Penelope, copies of the Narnian stories as they were published. Lewis liked the family so much that, during his wife’s long stay in hospital, Nell invited David and Douglas Gresham to stay with them. In 1969 Nell and Alan gave up Courtstairs and retired to Chipperfield, Hertfordshire. Alan died on 30 April 1989 and Nell on 5 February 1998.

Penelope Berners-Price, a wine correspondent, accompanied her mother on a number of visits to Oxford for tea with Lewis. She was educated at Leeland’s Preparatory School, St George’s School, Ascot, and St Clare’s International College, Oxford. In 1968 she joined Conde Nast Publications, and started the Wine and Food section in *House & Garden* magazine. In 1975 she married Marshall Angus Avery and moved to Scotland where she wrote as a wine correspondent for various publications. The Averys had two sons, Archie Maxwell (b. 1 July 1977) and Alexander Marshall Devonald (b. 24 April 1982). Angus Avery died on 2 February 2006. Penelope now lives in Chesham, Buckinghamshire.

BIDE, The Reverend Peter William (1912–2003) was born in Uxbridge, Middlesex, on 18 November 1912, the elder son of Jesse and Katherine Bide. He went to Dover College and then Cranbrook School in Kent, but left when he was seventeen. After a spell in Germany, he joined the staff of British Dyestuffs Corporation, Manchester, a subsidiary of Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI), as

a dyehouse assistant. The contrast between his own privileged background and the plight of the northern working class was so shocking that he joined the Communist Party.

In 1935 his parents sold their business and gave him and his brothers £500 each. The following year Peter gave up his position with ICI and matriculated at St Catherine's Society, Oxford where he read English Language and Literature. 'Almost the first thing,' he said, 'that happened when I came up was being told to go and attend the lectures of someone called Lewis of whom I'd never heard.'³ He took his BA in 1939.

Bide left the Communist Party in 1939, disenchanted with the signing of the infamous German–Russian Non-Aggression Pact that August. The following month he joined the Royal Marines and after serving for a while in the ranks, he was promoted to second lieutenant. He was involved in the disabling of ships of the French fleet at Dakar in 1940, after which he returned to England to serve as an instructor in the School of Military Intelligence in Cambridge. In 1943 he was promoted to captain and became Brigade Intelligence Officer, responsible for training the Normandy Expeditionary Force in German infantry weapons and tactics. He remained in Intelligence for the rest of the war, leaving with the rank of major.

On 1 March 1941 Bide married Margaret Grace Garrett and they were to have four children: Carol (b. 4 February 1944); Stephen (b. 2 December 1946); Penelope (b. 25 August 1949);⁴ and Mark (b. 15 January 1954). During the years of the war Bide had kept up with Lewis, visiting him whenever he passed through Oxford.

In 1948 Bide was recommended for ordination and trained at Wells Theological College. He was ordained deacon in 1949 and priest in 1950 by the Bishop of Chichester, George Bell, who sent him to be Curate of St Helen's, Hangleton, a tiny Sussex church. In 1955 he was made Perpetual Curate of Hangleton.

In the spring of 1954 there was a terrible polio epidemic in the area, and numerous sufferers were moved by ambulances to the 'fever hospital' where Bide was chaplain. One young boy named Michael Gallagher was seriously ill of cerebral meningitis and believed to be dying. Bide went on his knees beside the boy's bed, laid his hands on him, and prayed for his recovery. Michael did recover, and after being

told about it Lewis was one of those who believed a miracle had been worked.

Lewis remembered this when, in 1957, Joy was in the Wingfield-Morris Hospital (now the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre), dying of cancer. He asked Bide to come up and lay his hands on her. Although it was not expected that she would recover, Lewis would not consider moving Joy to The Kilns unless they were married in a Christian ceremony in addition to the civil marriage they had already contracted, but when Lewis asked the Bishop of Oxford for permission to marry he was refused on the grounds that her previous marriage was still valid. Bide arrived in Oxford on 20 March. As he later explained:

When Joy was diagnosed as having a sarcoma, Jack wrote to me and asked for me to come up and lay hands on her. I hesitated. The Michael case had mercifully made little or no noise but I had been aware of how easy it would have been for me to assume the role of 'a priest with a gift of healing', so I made no attempt to exploit the gift, if gift it was...But Jack was a special case. Not only did I owe a considerable intellectual debt but the ordinary demands of friendship would have made it churlish to say no. So I went. And that was the beginning.

Shortly after Bide's arrival at The Kilns Lewis asked him whether he would marry them. Bide asked Jack to leave him alone while he considered the matter.

In the end there seemed only one Court of Appeal. I asked myself what He would have done and that somehow finished the argument. The following morning I married them in the hospital ward with the Ward Sister and Warnie Lewis as witnesses. I laid hands on Joy and she lived for another three years.

Then the pigeons began to come home. I went straight to the Bishop of Oxford and told him what I had done. He tore me off a strip—quite properly—and then said, 'I will not give you a penance. You are to go straight home and tell your own Bishop what you have done.' I loved George Bell and the idea of going and telling him something of which I knew he would not approve was very difficult...When I got to Chichester...I told him the story...When I had finished he paused and

then said ‘Peter, what did you think you were doing? They were married already.’ I tried to explain that the sacramental aspect of Christian marriage meant a great deal to a dying woman and that she felt that the marriage service would give her some final sense of acceptance. But he remained baffled. ‘Anyway, you won’t do it again will you Peter?’ I was able to give him that assurance.

Shortly afterwards Bide was made Vicar of Goring-by-Sea. In 1959, after only two years there, he was appointed Assistant General Secretary of the British Council of Churches, responsible to local councils of churches throughout the British Isles. He also became the full-time secretary of the Faith and Order Committee. In 1960 Bide asked Lewis for his prayers: his own beloved wife, Margaret, had been struck by cancer. She died two months after Joy Lewis, on 17 September 1960.

Bide found it almost impossible to look after four motherless children and at the same time cope with a job that demanded constant travel. On 13 February 1961 he married Penelope Anne Voelcker, who was secretary to his boss, Kenneth Slack. They had two further children: Katharina (b. 11 April 1962), and Nicola (b. 8 January 1967). Bide returned to the parish ministry, chiefly for recuperation. He was Rector of Little Hadlam, Hertfordshire, from 1961 to 1964, and Vicar of St Luke’s, Battersea, from 1964 until 1968. In 1969 he returned to Oxford as Chaplain and Tutor in Theology at Lady Margaret Hall, where he remained until 1980. He was to stay in Oxford for a further two years. Christ Church Cathedral was in need of a Precentor and, since he had a good voice and a love of music, Bide took on the role until a long-term appointment could be made. In 1982 Bide retired to Boxgrove, West Sussex, where he enjoyed assisting in local churches. He died, aged 90, on 30 September 2003.

BRADBROOK, Muriel Clara (1909–93), literary scholar, was born in Glasgow on 27 April 1909, the eldest child of Samuel Bradbrook and his wife Annie Wilson (Harvey) Bradbrook. Her father was superintendent of HM Water Guard, first at Glasgow and then at Liverpool. Muriel was educated at Hutcheson’s Girls’ School, Glasgow, and at Oldershaw School, Wallasey. From there she went to Girton College, Cambridge, where she graduated with a Double

First in English in 1930. She was Otilie Hancock research fellow at Girton, 1932–5, and in 1935 was made an official fellow.

During the Second World War Bradbrook worked in London for the Board of Trade, returning to Cambridge as University Lecturer in 1945. By this time she had already published five books of literary criticism: *Elizabethan Stage Conditions* (1932); *Themes and Conventions of Elizabethan Tragedy* (1935); *The School of Night: A Study of the Literary Relationships of Sir Walter Raleigh* (1936); (with Mary Gwyneth Lloyd Thomas) *Andrew Marvell* (1940); and *Joseph Conrad: Poland's English Genius* (1941). While busy with her war work she wrote *Ibsen, the Norwegian: A Revaluation* (1946).

Bradbrook was an avid theatre-goer, and she was one of the first twentieth-century critics to rehabilitate Elizabethan drama as *drama*. She often expressed her disapproval of the nineteenth-century tendency to regard Shakespeare as 'mere literature'. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s Bradbrook's work on Shakespeare and the Elizabethans was greeted with superlatives from the best critics.

It was in mid-1950s, through his friendship with Nan Dunbar who was a don at Girton, that Lewis came to know Muriel Bradbrook well. The University of Cambridge appointed her Reader in 1962 and in 1965 she was elected Professor of English, the first woman to be so elected by the English faculty. In 1968 she was appointed Mistress of Girton College. She retired in 1976 and spent the rest of her life in Cambridge. In all she wrote seventeen books. She died at her home, 91 Chesterton Road, Cambridge, on 11 June 1993. See her biography by Eric Salmon in the *Oxford DNB*.

BREWER, Derek Stanley (1923–), Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 1977–90, was born in Cardiff on 13 July 1923, the son of Stanley Leonard Brewer and his wife Winifred Helen (Forbes) Brewer. After attending Crypt Grammar School in Gloucester, he went up to Magdalen College, Oxford, in March 1941 to be examined for a scholarship:

The plump cheerful man with a large, red countryman's face and a loud voice, who rolled his r's and who asked most of the questions, was Lewis, though I did not know it. One or two bits of the discussion are

burned into my memory. Lewis asked me some general question about Johnson. 'Which Johnson do you mean?' I asked, cautiously. 'Ben or Sam?' 'Oh, either!' So I replied, 'I know nothing about either!' He agreed that my misquotation from Milton's Samson Agonistes, 'All weakness is wickedness',⁵ might well represent Milton's own view.⁶

Brewer was awarded a Demyship, and as Lewis was to be his tutor, he asked what he should read before matriculating in the autumn of 1941. Lewis replied with the letter of 8 April 1941, found in the Supplement. Writing about his tutorials with Lewis, Brewer said: 'At each of these he also gave one the reading for the following week, sometimes pointing out the most important texts. Rarely did he suggest any critical books...Neither he nor anyone else ever mentioned to me such names as I. A. Richards or F. R. Leavis.'⁷

During 1942–5 Brewer was an infantry officer. He served as second lieutenant with the Worcestershire Regiment in 1942 and as captain and adjutant with the 1st Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers in 1944–5. When Lewis learned he would be returning to Magdalen he sent a reading list dated 19 September 1945, found in the Supplement. After Brewer came back into residence he resumed his weekly tutorials with Lewis. Of these he said:

Reading my essay usually took me about ten minutes though I have heard of men who occupied almost the whole hour. Lewis listened with extreme intentness, not, I am all too sure, because of the fascination of my words, but because it was his duty. Once, in the middle of my essay, his phone rang, I stopped, and he answered it in the other room. When he returned after a five-minute interruption, he repeated verbatim my last sentence as far as it had got. He had an astonishing verbatim memory and could repeat whole passages of prose to illustrate a point arising in discussion. Given any line in Paradise Lost, he could continue with the following lines...⁸

Brewer also attended Lewis's lectures, 'Prolegomena to Medieval Literature' and 'Prolegomena to Renaissance Literature'. He wrote of these:

The lectures were schematic, beautifully organized in a clear intellectual scheme, very precise, and rich with quotations familiar and unfamiliar, which both illustrated and were illustrated by the

*points made...They were remarkably fresh and extremely well designed for note-taking. They did not change much, but he kept a notebook for further illustration of these and other works, which supplements he called 'thickening'.*⁹

Brewer took a First in English in 1948. In 1949 he was appointed to an assistant lectureship in English at the University of Birmingham, where he stayed until 1964, apart from 1956–8 when he held a professorship in the International Christian University in Tokyo. He received a Ph.D. from the University of Birmingham in 1956. On his return to England from Tokyo, Brewer was Lecturer and Senior Lecturer in English at the University of Birmingham, 1958–64. In 1965 he was appointed to a lectureship in English in the University of Cambridge and elected to a Fellowship in Emmanuel College. In 1977 Brewer was elected Master of Emmanuel College, and Professor of English in the University of Cambridge in 1983. He retired in 1990. Besides lecturing and supervising, Brewer held many offices in the university. He has seven honorary degrees from English and foreign universities, and won the Seatonian Prize Poem competition at Cambridge ten times.

In 1972 he founded D. S. Brewer Ltd, for the publication and distribution of academic books. In 1978 he merged his company with Boydell Press to form Boydell and Brewer Ltd, of which he was director from 1979 to 1996. Medieval studies originally formed the core of the list but it has expanded to embrace the humanities in all periods up to and including the nineteenth century.

Brewer is the author of many books, most of them on Chaucer. They include *Chaucer* (London: Longman, 1953); *Chaucer in his Time* (London: Nelson, 1963); (ed. and contributor) *Chaucer and Chaucerians* (London: Nelson, 1966); (ed.) *Malory's Morte Darthur* (London: Nelson, 1968); (ed. and contributor) *Writers and their Backgrounds: Chaucer* (London: Bell, 1974); (ed.) *Chaucer: The Critical Heritage* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978); *Chaucer and his World* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1978); *Symbolic Stories: Traditional Narratives of the Family Drama in English Literature* (London: Longman, 1980); *English Gothic Literature* (London: Macmillan, 1983); *Chaucer: The Poet as Storyteller* (London: Macmillan, 1984); (ed.) *The Middle Ages after the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: D.

S. Brewer, 1997); *A New Introduction to Chaucer* (London: Longman, 1998); and *Seatonian Exercises and Other Verses* (London: Unicorn Press, 2000).

CURTIS BROWN, Spencer (1906–80), literary agent, was born in London on 20 January 1906, the youngest of three children of Albert Curtis Brown, who founded the literary agency Curtis Brown, and his wife, Caroline (Lord) Curtis Brown. Spencer was educated at Harrow School and at Magdalene College, Cambridge, where he obtained a BA in History in 1927.

On leaving Cambridge Spencer joined the firm which still bears his father's name to run the drama department. In 1928 he married Jean Watson, and they had one daughter. By that time the Curtis Brown agency was well abreast of its rivals, J. B. Pinker and A. P. Watt. When Michael Joseph (1897–1958), manager of Curtis Brown, left the agency in 1935 to found his own publishing house, Spencer succeeded him as manager in 1936.

The occasional news-sheet of Curtis Brown Ltd for 1930 gives an indication of the business in which Spencer found himself as a young man:

Reproduction of Mr Milne's world-famous Winnie the Pooh and other characters has been arranged for in various forms...Arrangements have been made for a series of twelve monthly articles to be written for a group of newspapers by the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill...In the last six months we have made play deals...for (inter alia) Noël Coward, John Galsworthy, Maurice Maeterlinck, A. A. Milne, R. C. Sheriff...We have even made a contract for performances of 'Journey's End' in the Dutch East Indies!

The agency's New York branch had already been set up at 130 West 42nd Street, and there was also a branch in Leipzig. Curtis Brown was acting for thirty-one American publishers on their British rights and for a further sixteen on their European rights. Volume translation rights were at last making a profit for the agency, while first novels had been placed with British publishers for Nancy Mitford, R. C. Hutchinson and Daphne Du Maurier, and non-fiction titles for Ivor Brown, G. D. H. Cole, Sir J. R.

Shane Leslie, D. B. Wyndham Lewis, Herbert E. Read, Edith Sitwell, Ethel Mannin, and Major F. Yeats-Brown.

With the outbreak of war the agency's links with Europe were severed. Curtis Brown sold the New York branch to Alan Collins, while maintaining a reciprocal trading relationship. During the war, after a short spell in the British army, he worked from 1941 to 1943 for the Polish forces in exile as personal adviser to the Polish prime minister, General Wladyslaw Sikorski. He then joined the intelligence corps (special services).

In 1945 Curtis Brown became chairman of the agency. Its American book department was never more active and successful, helping to establish the reputation of writers such as John Steinbeck, William Faulkner and Norman Mailer in Britain and the Commonwealth. Curtis Brown himself acted for C. P. Snow, Angus Wilson, Lawrence Durrell, Gerald Durrell, Kingsley Amis, Alan Bullock, J. H. Plumb and Isaiah Berlin. All were to remain with Curtis Brown except for Amis and Plumb.

When the publisher Geoffrey Bles announced his retirement in 1954 Lewis contacted Curtis Brown. It was a wise move, one Lewis never had reason to regret. It was nevertheless regretted by the new manager of Bles, Jocelyn Gibb, but Curtis Brown secured much better book deals and royalties for Lewis than he ever had with Bles. The Curtis Brown agency continued to represent Lewis and his literary estate until 1999.

Spencer Curtis Brown was a larger-than-life figure. He was a complex man, capable of inspiring great affection and great animosity. It annoyed him extremely when, after Lewis's death, Owen Barfield made a contract for a Lewis volume without consulting him. Two of those who worked with him, Andrew Best and Elizabeth Stevens, wrote in their biography in the *Oxford DNB*:

Clever, shrewd, with a sardonic sense of humour, he was interested in people. His Who's Who entry listed his hobby as 'listening to other people'. He had a genuine dislike of display and snobbery...With his ability to recognize quality in literature of all kinds, and his relish for the tussle of negotiation, he stimulated his staff to give of their best. He could be charming, particularly to women. Irascible, he did not easily

forgive those whom he felt had let him down. Tall, leonine in appearance, he preferred casual to formal dress. Although a Londoner for most of his life, he had a deep attachment to Monks Hall, his seventeenth-century house in Suffolk, and it was there that he spent his retirement. Curtis Brown died suddenly and peacefully in University College Hospital, Camden, London, on 16 January 1980. He was reading a book at the time.

DAY-LEWIS, Cecil (1904–72), poet, critic and educator, was born at Ballintubbert, County Laois, on 27 April 1904, the son of the Reverend Frank Cecil Day-Lewis and his wife Kathleen Blake (Squires) Day-Lewis. After his mother died in 1908 the young Day-Lewis was brought up in London by his father. He was educated at Sherborne School and Wadham College, Oxford, taking his BA in 1927.

In Oxford he became part of the circle that gathered around W. H. Auden and helped him to edit *Oxford Poetry 1927*. Day-Lewis's own first collection of poems, *Beechen Virgil*, appeared in 1925. In 1928 he married Mary King and worked as a schoolmaster at three schools. By 1934, with a wife and two sons to support, he began writing detective stories under the pseudonym Nicholas Blake. The first of these, *A Question of Proof* (1935), was followed by nineteen more crime novels. The success of the stories made it possible for Day-Lewis to retire from teaching and become a full-time writer and political activist. He joined the Communist Party in 1935 but by 1938 was disillusioned with it and turned his attention to poetry. During this period he published several collections: *From Feathers to Iron* (1932), *Collected Poems* (1935), and *A Time to Dance and Other Poems* (1935).

From 1941 he worked at the Ministry of Information, and at the end of the war he joined the publisher Chatto & Windus as a director and senior editor. In 1939–41 Day-Lewis had a love affair with the novelist, Rosamond Nina Lehman. At the end of 1949 he fell in love with the actress Jill Balcon. On 27 April 1951, after the dissolution of his first marriage, he married Jill Balcon, and they had a daughter and a son, the Oscar-winning film actor, Daniel Day-Lewis (b. 1957). Cecil Day-Lewis was Professor of Poetry at Oxford, 1951–6, and in

succession to John Masefield he was appointed Poet Laureate in 1968. He died on 22 May 1972.

DUNBAR, Nan Vance (1928–2005), classical scholar, was born in Glasgow on 18 July 1928, the eldest of four children of John S. Dunbar. She was educated at Hutcheson's Girls' School, and attended Glasgow University, 1947–51, where she was awarded, among other honours, the First Prize for Latin and Greek. In 1949 she became a student of Girton College, Cambridge, where she gained a First in both parts of the Classical Tripos in 1952. There, too, she won numerous prizes.

In 1952 she became Lecturer in Greek at Edinburgh University while retaining a bye-fellowship at Girton for three years, after which she returned to her Cambridge college as a Research Fellow and Lecturer in Classics, 1955–7. It was during this period that she began work on an edition of Aristophanes' *The Birds*.

Her return to Cambridge coincided with Lewis's series of lectures on 'Some Major Texts: Latin and Continental Vernacular'. Dunbar was a devout Presbyterian, an admirer of Lewis's theological books, and she went to hear him. In the lecture he gave on 11 October 1955 Lewis suggested that one reason Dante had for placing the Latin poet Statius (c. AD 40–c. AD 96) in Purgatory was that 'he had an attitude to the sexual life which Dante would not easily have found in any other ancient text'. ¹⁰ Dunbar thought Lewis wrong in a particular interpretation of ancient Latin poetry, and she fired off a letter telling him that pagan maidens of the ancient world were expected to behave themselves as well as Christian ones. Thus began a lively battle between Lewis and the young classical scholar. We have only Lewis's side of the correspondence, but in the 1990s Dr Andrew Cuneo talked to Dunbar about her letters to Lewis, and with her help he was able to recreate her side of the correspondence so that his doctoral dissertation contains an invaluable commentary on the Lewis–Dunbar controversy. ¹¹

Dunbar met Lewis for the first time at a dinner in Girton College, probably on 25 January 1956. On finally meeting his critic, Lewis said: 'Ah! Miss Dunbar! I'm glad to find you actually exist—I'd thought

perhaps you were only the personification of my conscience!’ ¹² Lewis was charmed by this delightful Scottish woman, whose wonderful talk and Glaswegian accent made one think she had stepped out of a novel by Sir Walter Scott. Dunbar remembered that over dinner she talked to Lewis about the Scottish writer William McGonagall (1825–1902), said to be the world’s worst poet, while Lewis introduced her to the Irish novelist Amanda McKittrick Ros (1860–1939), known as the world’s worst novelist. ¹³

Lewis once suggested that Jane Austen might be the daughter of Dr Samuel Johnson because she inherited his ‘commonsense, his morality, even much of his style’. ¹⁴ Everyone would agree that Nan Dunbar—with her erudition, her common sense, her Christian faith, her lively conversation—would have been the ideal daughter for Lewis. Indeed, years later, in his letter of 18 November 1963, he spoke of her as ‘the liveliest and learnedest of my daughters’.

Dunbar’s next post was a lectureship in humanities at St Andrews University, where she stayed until 1965; notwithstanding her loyalty to her Scottish roots, she was then induced to accept a fellowship at Somerville College, Oxford.

During the thirty years Dunbar spent as Fellow and Tutor in Classics at Somerville College she established herself as a scholar of note by her *magnum opus*, an edition of Aristophanes’ *Birds*, ¹⁵ the longest of his surviving plays. *Birds*, the work of a lifetime, runs to 799 pages and in her preface Dunbar confessed that the original manuscript had been longer. It was published in 1995. One of her colleagues suggested that

One important reason for the long delay in completion was that Professor Geoffrey Arnott of Leeds rightly persuaded Dunbar that she should make herself an expert in ornithology. This advice was taken seriously and she spent a lot of time at the Institute of Ornithology in Oxford and on bird-watching expeditions. Her edition deals with 150 species, twice the number mentioned in the text of the play, and it is clear that her research represents a real advance on the previously standard treatment by D’Arcy Thompson, author of A Glossary of Greek Birds (1895 and 1936).

*Apart from that, the commentary gives meticulous coverage of the other questions that scholars ask about the text and is a notable achievement. It is one of the best commentaries that there will ever be on a play of Aristophanes. Its merits received further recognition through the issue of an abridged version for students in 1998. It is a sad comment on the running of modern universities that virtually no scholar can nowadays contemplate a project on the grand scale such as this was.*¹⁶

On 1 July 1972 Dunbar married D. Mervyn Jones in Somerville College Chapel. He had been one of her tutors at Glasgow in 1948, and he subsequently became an Oxford tutorial fellow and an expert in Hungarian and East European affairs. Dunbar showed her interest in her husband's field by learning Hungarian and asking him for a precise explanation of any Hungarian phrase that came up in conversation. As Jones worked in London, they had a flat in Pimlico as well as a home in Walton Street, Oxford. It was said that her progress on *The Birds*

*was of course delayed by the typical licensed interruptions of an academic career. Her teaching duties had not altered much on going to St Andrews, but the move to Somerville confronted her with the challenges that face all Oxford tutors. She was not a person to take obligations lightly, and proved herself a very attentive tutor, who realized that many of her pupils had not had the traditional rigorous training at school. In addition, she played a significant role in the life of the college, serving on the finance committee and holding at one time or other almost all the college offices; she was the college's first Tutor for Admissions and in 1983 became Vice-Principal. Her immense vitality and fund of evident good-will contributed enormously to maintaining a congenial atmosphere in and about the college.*¹⁷

Following her retirement in 1995 Dunbar continued to enjoy walking holidays and travel. At home, she devoted some of her great energy to the Association of University Pensioners. Her Christian belief, which had sustained her since her schooldays, was shown in college by her tenure for many years of the office of Chapel Steward and was also manifested by her staunch support of St Columba's Church in Oxford, where she edited the newsletter. She served as Vice-

Principal of Somerville from 1983 to 1985 and was an Emeritus Fellow of Somerville from 1995 to 2005.

Lewis's final letter to her, on 21 November 1963—possibly the last he wrote—was to arrange for a visit in December. When he died the next day, Nan was beside herself with grief. She was consoled by the theologian, Henry Chadwick, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford. Professor Chadwick reminded her that she would some day die. 'And when you get to Heaven,' he said, 'you will be met by Lewis. He will have got there before you, and he'll have his arm firmly around a small man in a toga, who is being dragged along to meet you. "All right," Lewis will be saying to the ancient Roman—"Tell her!! Tell her!!!"'

Nan had no doubt that Lewis would be in heaven, and she roared with laughter at the thought of Statius waiting there to rebuke her. Perhaps such thoughts gave her comfort when she confronted her own death. The fact that she died only two days after secondary cancer had been diagnosed ensured that she was a delightful companion to the end.

She died in Oxford on 3 April 2005.

FARRER, Austin Marsden (1904–68), philosopher, theologian and biblical scholar, was born at 28 Kempley Road, Hampstead, London on 1 October 1904, the son of the Rev. Augustus John Donald Farrer, a Baptist minister who was for many years Secretary and Librarian of New College, London, and his wife Evangeline (Archer) Farrer. He attended St Paul's School, 1917–23, and went up to Balliol College, Oxford, on a scholarship in 1923. There he read Classical Honour Moderations, *Literae Humaniores* and Theology, achieving Firsts in each (1925, 1927, and 1928).

Despite a Nonconformist upbringing Farrer was confirmed in the Church of England in 1924. From that point on he was a devoted member, Catholic in doctrine and high church in style. He was appointed deacon in 1928, ordained priest in the following year, and served his title at All Saints', Dewsbury.

In 1931 Farrer returned to Oxford, never to leave it. He was first Chaplain and Tutor of St Edmund Hall until 1935, then Fellow and Chaplain of Trinity College until 1960; in that year he became Warden

of Keble College, remaining there until he died. During a visit to his parents at Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, in 1932 he met Katharine Dorothy Newton, whose father was the parish priest of Rickmansworth. They were married on 15 April 1937, and their one child, Caroline, was born in 1939.

Those who attended Trinity College Chapel became devoted to this brilliant scholar and humble priest. His book of sermons, *Said or Sung* (1960), which were mostly preached in the Chapel at Trinity, witness to the undergraduates' difficulties and his own shining faith and practical piety. He was the master of the opening sentence, and one of the best is found in his sermon 'All Souls' Examination' which begins:

*When I was a young man I used devoutly to believe that fellows of All Souls were selected by a simple test: they were given cherry pie to eat. If they spat the stones they were disqualified for boorishness and for smoothness if they swallowed them. The serious competition lay between those who, with various degrees of elegance, got the cherries into their throats and the stones into their spoons.*¹⁸

Farrer had as penetrating a philosophical mind as anyone of his generation, but partly because of his shyness it was not apparent outside the relatively small circle of those who engaged in philosophical discussion with him. He shared with Lewis an uncanny ability to penetrate through the cloud of detail to the essential structure of a problem or the essential features of some doctrine. He was drawn to the Socratic Club because of his belief that it was the duty of philosophically minded Christians to attack the intellectual roots of infidelity.

Writing about the Socratic Club, he described Lewis as 'a bonny fighter'¹⁹ whom 'nobody could put down'.²⁰ Farrer attended most of the meetings of the Socratic from the time it began in 1941 and for the rest of his life. He did not *look* as forceful as Lewis, but they were pretty evenly matched. If Lewis was the Socratic heavyweight, Farrer, a handsome, lithe man, was their top middleweight. It was through the society that the two men became friends.

While all Farrer's books were written in a lapidary style that made them a pleasure to read, some are not easy to understand. *Finite and Infinite: A Philosophical Essay* (London: Dacre, 1943) and *The*

Freedom of the Will (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1957) are philosophical and profoundly illuminating. But they are so studded with metaphor, and in places so fast-moving, some readers have a problem keeping up. More characteristic of Farrer was his 1948 Bampton lectures, *The Glass of Vision: The Making of St John's Apocalypse* (London: Dacre, 1948), in which he maintained that religious truth can be communicated to human intelligences only through images. His works on the New Testament include *St Matthew and St Mark* (London: Dacre, 1954) and *The Revelation of St John the Divine* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964).

Farrer and his wife Katharine or 'K'—as she always signed her name—were hospitable to all who wanted to see them. Those in awe of Farrer's great learning were often surprised to find him so warm. He was first and foremost a priest, and he would spend hours with any student who had a problem. He liked to either celebrate or attend the Holy Eucharist every day, and Keble College was the college of choice for students who planned to read Theology. Farrer loved the rosary and used it regularly. Out of term, he celebrated the Eucharist at either St Mary Magdalen or Pusey House. Crowds gathered wherever he preached. In the preface to Farrer's *A Faith of Our Own*, Lewis explained why this was so:

Dr. Farrer is far too wise and workmanlike in his pastoral office to waste any time on being topical. You will find nothing here about the Bombs or Sputniks. What is usually called 'the contemporary' is in fact a composite picture of the recent past, based on secondary sources (chiefly newspapers) and touched up with guesses about the future. Dr. Farrer...has no leisure to spare for such a phantom. He deals with what is really and knowably contemporary—with the august and terrible coincidence of the present moment and the eternal, in which each one of us lives. He is never speaking to the abstraction 'modern man' always to you and me...Perhaps, after all, it is not so difficult to explain why books like this are rare. For one thing, the work involved is very severe: not the work on this or that essay but the lifelong work without which they could not even have been begun. For another, they demand something like a total conquest of those egoisms which...play so large a part in most impulses to authorship. To talk to us thus Dr.

*Farrer makes himself almost nothing, almost nobody. To be sure, in the event, his personality stands out from the pages as clearly as that of any author; but this is one of heaven's jokes—nothing makes a man so noticeable as vanishing.*²¹

When Farrer was elected Warden of Keble College in 1960 many imagined that he would be too impractical and too shy for the job. Such presumptions were quickly dispersed. The ease with which he took on the work surprised everyone. He was a firm and decisive warden, and students found him wise, unsentimental and easy to talk with. His relaxations included working in his rose garden and upholstering furniture. His slim figure was once seen inspecting the roof of the college.

Austin and 'K' were some of the first of Lewis's friends to welcome Joy Gresham, and Joy came to love them both. Austin was witness to Lewis's register office marriage on 23 April 1956, he gave Joy the last rites on her deathbed, and he presided at her funeral. Although devoted to his daughter, he sometimes expressed regret he did not have 'five or six' children. It was his wish to retire some day to a country parish where he would live a simple life. In this he was forestalled by dying suddenly and unexpectedly on 29 December 1968.

The Austin Farrer Papers are in the Bodleian Library, and there is a portrait of Farrer by George Speake in the Hall of Keble College. See Philip Curtis, *A Hawk Among Sparrows: A Biography of Austin Farrer* (1985). 'In His Image', an address read at a memorial service for Lewis, is published in *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, pp. 383–6.

FARRER, Katharine Dorothy (1911–72), wife of Austin Farrer, was born at Chippenham, Wiltshire, on 27 September 1913, the daughter of the Rev. Frederick Henry Joseph Newton and Edith Grace (Sanders) Newton. In a little biography she wrote of herself, she said: 'On her father's side she is related to Miss Buss, the pioneer of women's education in the nineteenth century;²² on her mother's to the Des Anges family who were associated with the Port Royal movement in France under Louis XIV.'²³ Katharine was brought up in four parsonages in Wiltshire and Hertfordshire: first in Chippenham, where her father was curate of St Peter's Church,

1909–12; second in Kingswood, Bristol, where he was curate, 1912–15; next in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, where he was vicar, 1921–33, and finally in Ashwell, Baldock, Hertfordshire, where he was rector, 1933–8. Katharine was educated at St Helen's School, Northwood. In 1929 she matriculated at St Anne's College, Oxford, where she read Classical Honour Moderations and *Literae Humaniores*. During her undergraduate years she published her first stories under a pen-name in *The Cherwell*. On receiving her BA in 1933 she took a course in education, and then taught at Gerrard's Cross.

In 1932 she met Austin Farrer, Chaplain of St Edmund Hall, Oxford, who was at Rickmansworth visiting her father. They began seeing one another frequently, but Farrer refused to propose until Katharine had taken her degree. They were married in St Mary's Church, Ashwell, on 15 April 1937. Their first home was the flat over the Gate House of Trinity College, Oxford. Their only child, Caroline, was born on 5 April 1939.

Katharine gave up writing when her daughter was young, but took it up again when Caroline went away to school. In 1949 she translated Gabriel Marcel's *Etre et Avoir* (1935) as *Being and Having* (London: Dacre, 1949). This was followed by the three detective novels she discussed with Lewis: *The Missing Link* (London: Collins, 1952), *Cretan Counterfeit* (London: Collins, 1954) and *Gownsmen's Gallows* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1957). What she called her only 'straight' novel was *At Odds with Morning* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1960). She came to know Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, Charles Williams and most of the Inklings in the 1940s, and Lewis and Tolkien discussed *Till We Have Faces*²⁴ and *The Lord of the Rings* with her as the books were being written.²⁵

'K', as Katharine always signed herself when writing to friends, had the fragile beauty of fine porcelain. She was a fey, elegant and cultivated hostess. She and her husband delighted in having people in for tea—always at 4.15 p.m.—at which Katharine invariably served a Chinese tea, lapsang souchong. Once, in August 1963, when the Farrers had tea with Lewis and Walter Hooper at The Kilns, Lewis said afterwards, 'It was like entertaining elves.'

She was one of the first of Lewis's friends to be introduced to Joy Gresham, and this proved a wise choice. Soon after Walter Hooper met the Farrers in June 1963 Katharine told him of how they were able to help Joy. She said that on the evening of 18 October 1956 she suddenly knew something was wrong with Joy, and told her husband, 'I *must* ring her!' At the very moment she was dialling the number, Joy, at 10 Old High Street, Headington, tripped over the telephone wire. The bone in her left leg snapped as she fell to the floor, and, lying there, she heard Katharine talking to her. The Farrers took Joy to hospital where the doctors discovered that the femur in her left leg was eaten through by cancer. After Joy died Lewis wrote to the Farrers on 22 July 1960: 'She loved you both very much. And getting to know you both better is one of the many permanent gains I have got from my short married life.' Warnie recorded in his diary of 13 July 1960 that, on her deathbed, Joy left her fur coat to Katharine. She wore the musquash coat until her death in 1972, and her daughter Caroline used it until it finally wore out in 1992.

Katharine was fiercely proud of her husband, and when he was not appointed Regius Professor of Divinity in 1958, but Warden of Keble College two years later, she was pleased. She considered a professorship too limiting for a man of so many talents. 'Austin,' should would say, 'is not a Brain on a Stalk.' As she had been ideal as a chaplain's wife, so she became the ideal wife of the head of a college. She sometimes introduced herself to the students as 'the Wardress'.

During their years at Keble, Katharine accompanied Austin when he lectured in the United States. When they visited Louisiana in 1966, their hosts found it necessary to drive through a very large swamp to get to Baton Rouge. They did not know Katharine wrote detective novels, and as the car passed through the swamp they were shocked to hear her say, 'What a lovely place to hide a body!'

Katharine was the victim of acute insomnia, and this was a great trouble to her and her husband. Austin urged her to write another detective novel, thinking the work might be therapeutic, but it was not to be. No one who met this enchanting woman would guess she survived on so little sleep. Following her husband's sudden death, she remained in Keble College until a new warden was appointed, and

then she moved to 71 Lonsdale Road, Oxford. She died there on 25 March 1972, and she is buried with her husband in the churchyard of St Cross Church. See Philip Curtis, *A Hawk Among Sparrows: A Biography of Austin Farrer* (1985).

FOWLER, Alastair David Shaw (1930–), Renaissance scholar, was born in Glasgow on 17 August 1930, the son of David Fowler and Maggie (Shaw) Fowler. He was educated at Queen's Park School, Glasgow, the University of Glasgow and the University of Edinburgh, where he took his first degree in 1952. While still an undergraduate he married Jenny Catherine Simpson on 23 December 1950

From Edinburgh he went to Pembroke College, Oxford, where, on being accepted by the English faculty, he hoped Lewis would supervise his thesis. As he wrote in his essay, 'C. S. Lewis: Supervisor', he soon encountered a difficulty: Lewis 'was averse to supervised research'.²⁶ In the end, Hugo Dyson persuaded Lewis to take him on, and Fowler began his weekly meetings with Lewis in October 1952. Writing about his time with Lewis, he said:

A great teacher and a great writer need not be an efficient supervisor. Lewis was too permissive, and left me to get on with things. Perhaps this was deliberate; he was to follow a similar method during his early years at Cambridge...Lewis never insisted I should begin by reading secondary sources. He never insisted I should compile a preliminary bibliography. He never insisted on anything. On the wild assumption I shared his own powers, he gave me so much rope that I tied myself into a ramifying topic that took five years to escape. Yet he gave generously of his time, unlike most supervisors in those days, who were content to see a research student for a few minutes a term. Lewis spent more than twenty hours exploring the vast wildernesses of my ignorance. And this was in the same overfilled terms when he fell in love with Joy Gresham and made his move to Cambridge. I must have been a great nuisance to him; even as graduate students go, I was raw. Yet, affirmative as always, he found more than duty in our shared interest, for we were soon on a basis of disparate equality. Our meetings were opportunities for both to clarify ideas of the sixteenth century. In fact, he offered

*something far better than efficient supervision; he opened windows to the aer purior, the expanse of intellectuality.*²⁷

The subject of Fowler's dissertation was 'Protestant Attitudes to Poetry 1560–1590'. During the two years Lewis supervised him Fowler found that Lewis's 'notion of supervision included exchanging work in progress'.²⁸ Lewis became interested in a science fiction story, 'The Rest of Time', Fowler was writing:

*Lewis showed me several unfinished or abandoned pieces...These included 'After Ten Years', The Dark Tower and Till We Have Faces. Another fragment, a time-travel story, had been aborted after only a few pages. Getting to the 'other' world was a particular problem, he said: he had given up several stories at that stage.*²⁹

By now many readers know that Lewis had been working on what became *Till We Have Faces* since 1922, and that in 1955 he found exactly what he wanted to say about the story of Cupid and Psyche. *Till We Have Faces* was published in 1956. Of great importance and interest is the discovery that the manuscripts of 'After Ten Years' and *The Dark Tower*, found among Lewis's papers after his death, and published in *The Dark Tower and Other Stories* (1977), were examined by Dr Fowler in Lewis's company as far back as 1962.

Unfortunately Lewis was offered the Chair in Cambridge before his pupil could complete his dissertation. 'But never forgetting a pupil,' said Fowler, 'he passed me on to his own former tutor, F. P. Wilson, Merton Professor...and an authority on Elizabethan and Jacobean prose':

*Wilson was a very different supervisor: less the bold critic, more the professional scholar. He knew just what shape a dissertation should have; and his gentle suggestions, quietly put, were so clearly right as to render argument superfluous. But no single supervisor could supply Lewis's place.*³⁰

But even from Cambridge, Lewis was keen to help his former pupil, and he played a part in securing Fowler a junior research fellowship at The Queen's College, Oxford. This ran from 1955–9. During this time Fowler completed his dissertation, *Protestant Attitudes to Poetry 1560–1590*,³¹ and was awarded a D.Phil. in 1957.

Before this Jenny Fowler presented her husband with their first child, Alison, born on 18 November 1954. Their son, David, was born on 11 May 1960.

During this fellowship, Fowler went to Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, for a year with leave of absence from Queen's. He returned to Queen's, after which he was a lecturer in English at University College, Swansea, 1959–61. He returned to Oxford in 1961 as Fellow and Tutor in English at Brasenose College, where he was to remain until 1972. Fowler published a good many items while he was at Brasenose, including *Spenser and the Numbers of Time* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964), *Silent Poetry: Essays in Numerological Analysis* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), *Triumphal Forms: Structural Patterns in Elizabethan Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970) and—his major work—an edition of *Paradise Lost* (London: Longman, 1971). In 1972 he was awarded an Oxford D. Litt. on the basis of submitted material, which included his edition of *Paradise Lost* and other books and articles.

Back in Oxford Fowler saw Lewis from time to time, sometimes on Monday mornings before Lewis returned to Cambridge. 'Visiting him in the Acland hospital,' he said, 'and at the Kilns, I got to know him as a friend. Now our talk, more recollective and ruminative, was about anything and everything: his dreams, plum jam, *The Lord of the Rings*. On his side at least, it seemed without reserve.' ('C. S. Lewis: Supervisor', pp. 79–80.) Lewis had given a course of eight lectures in Cambridge on *The Faerie Queene*, and following his death his lecture notes were expanded and edited by Fowler. The work was published as *Spenser's Images of Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967).

Fowler and his family returned to Scotland in 1972 when he became Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature at the University of Edinburgh. He retired in 1984 to teach in the United States. The works he published during his years there included *Conceitful Thought: The Interpretation of English Renaissance Poems* (Edinburgh; Edinburgh University Press, 1975) and *Edmund Spenser, Writers and Their Work* (London: Longman, 1977). After becoming an emeritus Fellow of the University of Edinburgh in 1984 Fowler published *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theories of*

Genres and Modes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985) and *A History of English Literature* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989). Fowler and his wife spent four months each year, from 1985 to 1998, at Charlottesville, Virginia, where he was Visiting Professor of English, and then Professor of English, at the University of Virginia. Since 1998 he has enjoyed an active retirement in Edinburgh. He is editor of *The New Oxford Book of Seventeenth Century Verse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) and the author of *Renaissance Realism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). There is a bibliography of his writings in the Bodleian Library.

GIBB, Jocelyn Easton ‘Jock’, CBE (1907–79), managing director of Geoffrey Bles Ltd, was born at Goytree House near Abergavenny on 18 May 1907, one of the three sons of Sir Alexander Gibb (1872–1958) and Norah Isobel (Monteith) Gibb. His father, who founded the firm of Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners, Consulting Engineers, was descended from a long line of civil engineers.³²

Jocelyn went to preparatory school at Scaitcliffe, Englefield Green, Surrey, and then to Rugby, 1921–4. Because of ill health he was moved to Switzerland, where he was a pupil for two years at Chillon College, Montreux-Territet. While there he edited the college magazine. In 1926 he matriculated at Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he read Engineering, English and History, taking his BA in 1930.

His father was disappointed that Jock did not enter the family firm, but he nevertheless equipped him for his chosen career by sending him to Leipzig to learn German—and because Leipzig was in the forefront of colour printing and methods of reproduction. On returning home Jocelyn served an apprenticeship at Hutchinson Publishers under Sir Robert Lusty (1909–91). His career as a publisher properly began when he was made production manager at Methuen & Co., London, in the mid 1930s. While there he edited (with R. I. Aaron) *An Early Draft of Locke’s Essay, Together with Excerpts from his Journals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936). It was at Methuen, too, that he met his wife, Evelyn Elizabeth Balfour Milne, secretary to

the publicity manageress. They were married on 21 April 1937, and were to have three children.

Gibb had become a Territorial in the Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry, and in 1939 he was called up to serve with his regiment in Palestine. At the end of the war he was released as a lieutenant-colonel. Returning to London, he explored the possibility of forming his own publishing firm.

Eventually, however, he joined Geoffrey Bles Ltd. as production manager. When Bles retired in 1954, the company was bought by William Collins & Sons, and Gibb was asked to become managing director. From April 1954 he took responsibility for the rest of Lewis's books published by the firm of Geoffrey Bles. Gibb was the ideal publisher for Lewis and made things easier for him by making numerous visits to Oxford and Cambridge. He deplored the fact that Bles had destroyed most of his letters from Lewis and he carefully preserved both sides of their own correspondence, now in the Bodleian Library.

Gibb was the creator of the Geoffrey Bles house magazine, named *Fifty-Two* after the address of the firm: 52 Doughty Street, London WC1. Following Lewis's death he edited and published *Lighton C.S. Lewis* (1963), which contains some of the best reminiscences by his friends. Gibb also contributed the article on Lewis to the fifteenth edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1974). Another author to whom he gave much attention was J. B. Phillips. Perhaps the single book of which Gibb was most proud was *Phoenix at Coventry: The Building of a Cathedral* (London: Bles, 1962) by Sir Basil Spence.

During the years Gibb devoted so much attention to Lewis and other authors, he farmed a hundred acres at home in Sussex, as well as a family farm in West Lothian where the Gibb family originated. From 1958 to 1977 he was chairman of the Land Settlement Association, an association of horticultural smallholding co-operatives in England, and it was for this that he received the CBE. This 'last gentleman publisher', as he was often called, died at his home, Mousehall, Tidebrook, Sussex, on 4 April 1979. See his photograph in Douglas Gilbert and Clyde S. Kilby, *C. S. Lewis: Images of His World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973; 2nd edn, 2005), p. 57.

GRESHAM, David Lindsay (1944–), stepson of C. S. Lewis. He was born in New York City on 27 March 1944, the son of William Lindsay Gresham, the novelist, and Helen Joy (Davidman) Gresham. His brother, Douglas, was born on 10 November 1945. Shortly after Douglas was born the family moved to Ossining, New York. Some months later the success of their father's novel, *Nightmare Alley* (1946) made it possible for the family to move again, this time to Staatsburg, in Dutchess County, New York, where they had a large house in Endekill Road.

As explained in the biography of his mother, marital strain led her to go to England in August 1952 where, during a five-month stay, she met Lewis. In November 1953 she left her husband and moved to England with her two sons. This was a wrench for David who loved his home. They settled in London, and David and Douglas went to Dane Court, a preparatory school (now extinct) at Pyrford, near Woking in Surrey. David never liked England; he found it hard to understand the regional accents, and he found the accents of the educated simply unattractive. Some thirty years later he said: 'I suffered a lot from my parents' divorce and my subsequent exile in England.'³³

David met Lewis for the first time on 17 December 1953 when the family spent four days at The Kilns. Writing to Bill Gresham on 22 December, Joy said: 'the boys were a big success with the Lewises'.³⁴ She went on to say that Warnie and Jack taught David chess, and that 'he astonished them all by learning instantly and doing very well.'³⁵

In 1954 David's parents were divorced, and in August 1955 his mother moved with her sons to 10 Old High Street, Headington. They now had their own house with a garden. Meanwhile, Joy Gresham persuaded Lewis to tutor David in Latin. They had been in Oxford only a few months when Joy found she was unable to get her passport renewed, and in order to prevent her deportation she and Lewis were married in a register office on 23 April 1956. This act gave Joy the right to British citizenship, and the 'patrial' status made it possible for David and his brother to have British citizenship.

A few months later Joy was found to have cancer, and David and Douglas were invited to live at The Kilns with Lewis and his brother. By the spring of 1957 the doctors were almost certain Joy was dying,

and on 21 March 1957 she and Lewis were married by an Anglican clergyman in the Wingfield-Morris Hospital, Oxford. When he wrote to Sister Penelope on 6 March 1957 Lewis spoke of David as ‘a comically appropriate stepson for me (13), being almost exactly what I was—bookworm, pedant, and a bit of a prig.’

By September 1957 his mother’s cancer had disappeared, and David left Dane Court to become a day boy at Magdalen College School, directly across the High Street from Magdalen College. David had been interested in Judaism since he was eleven, and following his mother’s death on 13 July 1960, this interest came into its own. Lewis allowed him to have private lessons in Hebrew from Ronald May, who was working as a proofreader for the Oxford University Press. In a letter to Walter Hooper of 1995, David said he believed the ‘real reason’ behind this love for Judaism was ‘divine grace’, because the main concern of Judaism is one’s ‘coming to God’. He was also spurred on by his Anglophobia and the need for an identity. While studying for the Hebrew O-level examination, David began a study of Yiddish on his own. He was fortunate in making the acquaintance of Professor Chone Shmeruk of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, one of the leading Yiddish scholars, who was in Oxford doing research on medieval Yiddish manuscripts. He gave David lessons in this language during the winter of 1961–2.

David was attending the Oxford Synagogue at this time, and on 10 April 1962 he visited Carmel College, an Orthodox Jewish college or seminary in Wallingford. Rabbi M. Y. Young, a master there, encouraged David to visit a yeshiva (a Jewish Talmudic college) at Gateshead in the north of England. At Gateshead one of the rabbis advised David to go to a Jewish school in London to finish his A-level examinations before going to a yeshiva. On 15 April 1962 David went to London, and after a few months he became a student at the North West London Talmudical College in Finchley Road, where he remained for a year.

From London he went to New York where he studied until the beginning of 1966, mostly in the Mesivta Rabbi Chaim Berlin, of which Rabbi Isaac Hunter was the Rosh Yeshiva. In 1966 he returned to England and settled briefly in London. He decided he should go to university, and for this he needed to pass the A-level examination.

After a period of private study he passed in German, Logic and Biblical Hebrew. In 1967 he went to Israel where he studied for about nine months at the Hebrew Yeshiva in Jerusalem, and then for a year at the Hebrew University where he studied Arabic. David returned to England in 1969 and that autumn became a student at Magdalene College, Cambridge, where his stepfather had been a Fellow. He read Oriental Studies (Arabic, Turkish, Hebrew), graduating with a BA in 1972.

In 1974 David Gresham moved to Spain. He remained there until 1977, when he went to live in Paris. During these years he devoted himself to the study of Hebrew, Latin and modern languages. In 1980 he moved to Montreux in Switzerland where he studied at the Montreux Yeshiva. This yeshiva was transferred to Jerusalem in 1984, and in 1985 David Gresham moved to Ireland where he has a home.

From 1985 David began spending three or four months of the year in India. On 1 November 1992 he married Miss Padmavati Hariharan at the Magen Aboth Synagogue in Alibag, Maharashtra. They have two sons, Joseph Isaac, who was born on 17 May 1994, and Ishmael Iyer, who was born on 23 April 1996. David said in his letter to Walter Hooper of 1995: 'My main occupation is the study of the Hebrew Bible and the Talmud and their commentaries, and languages and literature, and I take an interest in furthering Jewish education.' For further information see Douglas Gresham, *Lenten Lands* (1988) and Lyle Dorsett, *And God Came In* (1983).

GRESHAM, Douglas Howard (1945–), stepson of C. S. Lewis, was born in Queens, New York City on 10 November 1945, the second son of the novelist William Lindsay Gresham (1909–62) and Joy (Davidman) Gresham. His brother, David Howard, was born in 1944. Wanting to be closer to nature the family moved to Ossining, New York. Then, following the success of his father's novel *Nightmare Alley* (1946), the family moved to a spacious house at Pleasant Plains, near Staatsburg. It was this lovely place and its grounds which provided Douglas with his first memories, and fixed in him a love of outdoor spaces and woodlands. Years later he

recalled the Pleasant Plains house with its ‘dark, cool pines, welcoming gentle dogwoods and majestic, towering maples’.³⁶

His mother, brought up an ethnic Jew, converted to Christianity in 1946, partly through the reading of Lewis’s books. Douglas’ father came to the truth by a different route, and said when asked about his journey: ‘Baptised an Episcopalian, raised an agnostic, in turns a Unitarian, a hedonist, a Stoic, a Communist, a self-made mystic, and an eclectic grabber after truth, I had at last come home.’³⁷ It was, in any event, as a Christian family that they presented themselves at the Presbyterian Church of Pleasant Plains, and where Joy, David and Douglas were baptized in 1948.

The year 1950 was decisive for the Greshams. Joy was emboldened by Chad Walsh to write to Lewis, thus beginning a lively correspondence. About the same time Douglas heard his father talk about ‘Dianetics’—the religious/scientific system developed by Ron Hubbard in his book, *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health* (1950). While his mother’s interest in Christianity deepened, Douglas witnessed the ‘destructive influence’³⁸ Scientology had on his father. The strain this and other things caused in his parents’ marriage led his mother to visit England in 1952 with the hope of meeting Lewis.

On her return to Staatsburg, she and Bill Gresham agreed to part. Douglas and David accompanied their mother to London in November 1953. The boys met Lewis for the first time on 17 December 1953 when invited to visit The Kilns. Having been moved by the chivalry of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* Douglas thought to himself on meeting the author: ‘This was the heroic figure of whom Mother had so often spoken?’³⁹ Nevertheless, ‘I never knew a man whose face was more expressive of the vitality of his person.’⁴⁰ Describing the boys to Nell Berners-Price on 26 December 1953, Lewis said: ‘Whew! Lovely creatures...but the pace!’

In January 1954 Douglas and his brother were enrolled at Dane Court School near Woking, Surrey. On 5 August of the same year his parents were divorced, his father marrying Joy’s cousin, Renée Pierce, the same day. In 1954 the family moved to 10 Old High Street, Oxford, where they would see more of Lewis. In order to provide Joy with British citizenship and to give the boys a ‘patrial’ status entitling

them to claim British citizenship, Lewis married Joy in a civil ceremony on 23 April 1956.

Douglas was aware his mother was experiencing pain in her left leg, and he was at school when in October 1956 Lewis wrote to say she 'had fallen and broken her leg and was in hospital'. Back at home he saw that his mother had cancer, and he knew she was dying. To provide her with the consolation of the sacrament of marriage, a clergyman married Joy and Lewis in the Wingfield-Morris Hospital on 21 March 1957. Despite the original pessimism about her condition, Joy made steady improvement. Lewis wrote to Laurence Harwood on 12 December 1957 that 'My wife has made an almost miraculous... recovery.' David and Douglas, meanwhile, had been moved into The Kilns as soon as their mother was hospitalised. 'And so I went,' wrote Douglas,

*for the first time, 'home' to The Kilns. Jack had...shown me all the delights and secrets of the woods and the lake; he showed me the air-raid shelter which Paxford had built and introduced me to Paxford himself, to whom, although at first I could barely understand his native Cotswold burr, I took an instant liking.*⁴¹

His mother was able to join her family at The Kilns in April 1957 and this ushered in a surprisingly happy period of the boy's life. 'When I was home from school,' he wrote, 'the dinner table of The Kilns was the scene of my real education. Jack and Warnie were both brilliant at sustaining a conversation at any one of a dozen different levels and on almost any topic, and I learnt more sitting and conversing over meals that I ever leant at school.'⁴²

In the spring of 1960 Douglas went to Lapley Grange School, Machynlleth, Montgomeryshire. It suited him admirably, and while there he became head prefect. His mother had been ill before he left, and he and his brother were brought home before her death on 13 July 1960. 'Douglas,' Lewis wrote to Arthur Greeves on 30 August 1960, 'is, as always, an absolute brick, and a very bright spot in my life.' The next month Douglas was enrolled in Magdalen College School, Oxford, of which he said: 'My experiences of life were so widely divergent from those of the boys around me that I could not, nor could I even want to, bridge the gap between their minds and mine.'⁴³

Lewis then sent Douglas to a ‘crammer’ who could prepare him for the General Certificate of Education exams, and the boy next found himself at a small private school, Applegarth, in Godalming, Surrey. Here, too, he was to know grief, for his father, whom he last saw in 1960, died by his own hand in September 1962. Perhaps the one who helped him most was his mother’s close friend, Jean Wakeman, who lived at Horton-cum-Studley near Oxford. Jean was not married and it was as natural that she become a mother to Douglas as that he should become a son to her. It was Jean who collected Douglas from Applegarth and took him to Horton-cum-Studley after Lewis’s death on 22 November 1963.

When things settled down Douglas went to ‘Chargot’, the farm of Sir Edward Malet in Somerset, to gain agricultural experience. During the six months he spent there he met and fell in love with Malet’s Australian niece, Meredith ‘Merrie’ Conan-Davies, a nurse at St Thomas’ Hospital in London. After further training at a large farm and a year at an agricultural college, Douglas and Merrie were married in Westminster Cathedral on 20 February 1967. Douglas had thought about farming in Australia, and not long after their wedding he and Merrie sailed for Tasmania. The story of the eventful years they spent there, and the births of their children, James (b. 1968), Timothy (b. 1969), Dominick (b. 1971) and Lucinda (1976), is told in the concluding chapters of *Lenten Lands*. In 1990 Douglas and Merrie adopted Melody, a five-year-old girl from Korea.

Following the death of Warnie Lewis in 1973 Douglas has worked untiringly with all aspects Lewis’s estate. In 1993 the family moved to Ireland so that, being in easy reach of London, he could devote more time to the management of the estate. But this has not been his only interest. As devoted Christians, he and Merrie made their home, Rathvinden House, in Leighlinbridge, County Carlow, available as the European centre of the Institute for Pregnancy Loss and Child Abuse Research and Recovery. About the same time they began Rathvinden Ministries, a multi-faceted house ministry in Ireland. On his many visits to Oxford he has had a home at Horton-cum-Studley with Jean Wakeman. Finally, after thirteen years living in Ireland and running Rathvinden Ministries, Douglas and Merrie have moved to a smaller

house in Malta. ‘There,’ Douglas said in a letter to Walter Hooper of 7 July 2006, ‘We hope to do whatever work the Lord sends us.’

One ambition which goes back almost to Douglas Gresham’s initial meeting with Lewis has been that of seeing a film made of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. In this, as so much else, he has been successful. After he was approached by Walden Media the project began to take shape, and he guided it through to its fulfilment when, on 7 December 2005, Walt Disney Pictures and Walden Media’s *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* received its premiere in London. Douglas, co-producer of the film, was there with his children and grandchildren. Besides all this, he has published *Jack’s Life: The Life Story of C. S. Lewis* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman, 2005).

HARDIE, Christian Viola Mary (1910–2001) was born Christian Viola Mary Lucas at 13 Warrington Crescent, London, on 13 January 1910, the daughter of Perceval and Madeline (Meynell) Lucas, and the sister of Barbara Lucas Wall.⁴⁴ She attended St Paul’s Girls’ School in London from September 1922 to July 1928. She was both a Junior and Senior Foundation Scholar, so one of a select group. She secured a Leaving Certificate (Honours) in 1926 and won the Castlecomer Senior Latin Prize in 1928.

Christian matriculated at St Hugh’s College, Oxford, in 1928. She read *Literae Humaniores* and took a First in 1932. A devout Catholic, she read the works of G. K. Chesterton when a teenager. She met him once and twice heard him lecture, once when he gave an address to an undergraduate society at Oxford about his Distributist ideas, and again when he made a contribution in a public meeting about Lourdes at the Royal Albert Hall.

On taking her degree, Christian held research scholarships at Westfield College, 1933–4, and St Hugh’s College, 1939–41. She was awarded a Ph.D. in 1937 from Westfield College for a thesis entitled ‘The Composition and Functions of the Local Councils of the Cities of the Province of Africa Under the Early Roman Empire up to Constantine’. From 1932 to 1987 she taught and examined at a number

of schools: Rye St Antony in Oxford, Dorset House in Sussex, as well as Oxford University.

During the Second World War she served in an administrative position at the Ministry of Food in London. At St Hugh's, Christian shared a room with Margaret Hardie, and through her she came to know her room-mate's brother, Colin. She and Colin Hardie were married in the thick of the Blitz in St Andrew's Chapel, Westminster Cathedral, London, on 10 September 1940. Although Colin Hardie had been Classics Tutor at Magdalen College, Oxford, since 1936, he served with the War Office, 1941–3, and the Admiralty, 1943–5.

After the war the Hardies moved to Oxford where Colin continued teaching at Magdalen College. They lived immediately across the street from Magdalen at 63 High Street. Christian had a particular interest in women's education, and in 1949 she became a member of the Girls' Public Day School Trust, founded in 1872 by Emily Shirreff (1814–97), the initial purpose of which was to prepare girls for the local examination administered by Oxford and Cambridge. Christian worked with the trust until 1986, and served as vice-president in 1987. The Hardies had two sons, Nicholas, to whom *The Silver Chair* is dedicated, and Anthony.

Lewis had known Colin Hardie since 1936 when he was appointed Fellow and Classical Tutor at Magdalen College, and the Hardies often invited him to their flat for lunch. Introducing Lewis's letters to her of 22 March 1951, 27 March 1951 and 6 April 1952, Mrs Hardie said:

After Colin and I were married in 1940, Lewis was one of the first of his colleagues whom I met...I myself was first included in an invitation from Lewis in December 1949. He was giving a lunch in Magdalen and mentioned Owen Barfield, Ruth Pitter and Miss Milne⁴⁵hellip;After that, in a series of winters, Lewis would give a dinner party in Magdalen for his friends and their wives; on one such occasion, before there was an idea of his marriage, we all met Joy.⁴⁶

Following Colin's retirement in 1973 he and Christian moved to Rackham Cottage, Greatham Lane, Pulborough, Sussex. Their many years there turned out to be a particularly happy part of their lives. Christian had a passion for working with trees, and both took a great

deal of trouble with the flower and vegetable gardens. Christian Hardie died on 19 September 2001.

HARDIE, Colin Graham (1906–98), classical scholar, was born in Edinburgh on 16 February 1906, the son of William Ross Hardie (1862–1916), the distinguished classical scholar, and his wife Isabella Wall (Stevenson) Hardie. His brother, William Francis Ross ‘Frank’ Hardie (1902–1990), classical scholar and philosopher, was President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 1950–69. Colin was educated at Edinburgh Academy and Balliol College, Oxford, where (like his brother) he won all the major undergraduate prizes in Classics, and gained Firsts in Classical Moderations (1926) and *Literae Humaniores* (1928). After winning the Gaisford Prize for Greek Prose in 1927, he was a junior research Fellow (1928–9), then Fellow and Classical Tutor (1930–3) at Balliol, before spending three years as director of the British School at Rome.

In 1936 Hardie returned to Oxford as Fellow and Tutor in Classics at Magdalen College, Oxford. It was there he met Lewis. He said of their first meeting: ‘A little like his Mark Studdock in *That Hideous Strength*...I inclined at that time towards the “Progressive Element”.’⁴⁷ Before the war, however, they found a common interest in Dante, both being members of the Oxford Dante Society, in which Hardie was to play a significant part. It was only after the war, he said, that he became close to Lewis. ‘By this time my beliefs were very different from those of 1941 or so. I felt that what was good enough for the not very orthodox Dante would do for me.’⁴⁸ Hardie served in the War Office, 1941–3, and the Admiralty, 1943–5.

In 1940 he married Christian Viola Mary Lucas, and they had two sons. The family lived at 63 High Street, and Hardie became a regular member of the Thursday evening Inklings meetings and the Tuesday morning gatherings at the ‘Bird and Baby’. When it was discovered that Hardie was an expert carver, it became his task to carve the hams enjoyed at the Inklings’ parties. Hardie was a friend of J. R. R. Tolkien and in 1945 he converted to the Catholic Church.

Hardie's scholarly work was devoted to Virgil and Dante. His most important work is an edition of the *Vitae Vergilianae Antiquae* published by the Clarendon Press in 1954. Other works on Virgil include *The 'Georgics': A Transitional Poem* (1971). Following his election to the Oxford Dante Society in 1938 he was its secretary for thirty years. During this time he edited the Society's *Centenary Essays on Dante* (1965), which includes his essay 'The Symbol of the Gryphon in *Purgatorio* xxix. 108 and following Cantos'.

Hardie was Public Orator of the University of Oxford from 1967 until 1973. This meant making speeches in Latin, because the Public Orator presents those who are to be admitted to honorary degrees. One of his most interesting speeches was made on 3 June 1972 when J. R. R. Tolkien was awarded the Doctorate of Letters. The address contained several references (in Latin) to Tolkien's stories of Middle-earth, and Hardie concluded with the hope 'that in such green leaf, as the Road goes ever on, he will produce from his store *Silmarillion* and scholarship'.⁴⁹ On his retirement in 1973 Hardie and his wife moved to Rackham Cottage, Greatham Lane, Pulborough, Sussex, where for years he indulged his love of gardening. He died in Chichester on 17 October 1998.

HESKETH, Phoebe (1909–2005) was born Phoebe Rayner in Preston, Lancashire, on 29 January 1909, the daughter of the pioneer radiologist, A. E. Rayner. She was educated at Cheltenham Ladies' College and lived most of her life in Lancashire. The landscape there is reflected in all her writings, particularly in her prose works, *Rivington* (London: P. Davies, 1972) and *Village of the Mountain Ash* (1990). She was editor of the women's page of the *Bolton Evening News* in 1942 and 1943, later becoming a freelance lecturer, poetry teacher and broadcaster; she was a lecturer at Bolton's Women's College from 1967 to 1969.

Phoebe began writing poetry at an early age, and in 1939 she published her first collection of verse, *Poems* (Manchester: Sherratt & Hughes, 1939). There were to be fourteen further volumes before the publication of her last collection, *A Box of Silver Birch* (London: Enitharmon Press, 1997). Her most widely known book is *My Aunt*

Edith (Preston: Lancashire County Books, 1992), an affectionate biography of her suffragette aunt.

On 30 September 1931 Phoebe married Aubrey Hesketh, master cotton spinner of Bolton. She came to know C. S. Lewis through their mutual friend Herbert Palmer. She died on 25 February 2005.

KILBY, Clyde Samuel (1902–86) was founder and curator of the Marion E. Wade Center, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois. He was born outside Johnson City, Tennessee, on 26 September 1902, the youngest of the eight children of James Lafayette Kilby, a carpenter, and his wife, Sophronia Kilby. On completing high school, Clyde entered a lawyer's office where he worked for four years as a court reporter and public stenographer.

He had, however, set his ambition on going to college, and such was his persistence that in 1927 he was awarded a place at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. While working on his degree Kilby served from 1927 to 1930 as Registrar of John Brown College (now University) at Siloam Springs, Arkansas. He was awarded his BA from the University of Arkansas in 1929, the only member of his family to graduate from college.

Next came the University of Minnesota at Rochester, which granted him a fellowship that required him to work part-time in the registrar's office. He completed his master's degree in 1931. After taking it he remained in Rochester where he was employed at Rochester Junior College as Superintendent of Education and Chairman of the English Department from 1932 to 1934, and Registrar in 1934–5.

In the meantime he had come to know Martha A. Harris from Columbus, Mississippi. She was born in Columbus on 28 July 1902, and took a BA from Mississippi State College for Women in 1928. Martha and Clyde were married on 11 June 1930, and in 1935 they moved to Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, where Kilby was appointed Dean of Men and Assistant Professor of English. Wheaton was to be their home for forty-six years, and it is difficult to imagine where they could have been happier. While continuing with his teaching, Kilby received a Ph.D. from New York University in 1938. His dissertation was entitled 'Horace Walpole as Literary Critic'.

One of the turning points of Kilby's life, with lasting consequences for Wheaton College, his students, and many who never knew him personally, occurred in 1943. As he wrote in 1964,

It was almost a quarter of a century ago that I picked up at my college book store a little volume by an Oxford don named C. S. Lewis. It was called The Case for Christianity,⁵⁰ and when I sat down to read it I realized that a new planet had sailed into my ken...I discovered a writer who like a philosopher claimed that the unexamined life is not worth living, yet who with the humblest Christian gave that life a Living Centre. My impression was of a man who had won, inside and deep, a battle against pose, evasion, expedience, and the ever-so-little lie and who wished with all his heart to honour truth in every idea passing through his mind.⁵¹

Thereafter he immersed himself in everything Lewis wrote, and he began corresponding with Lewis in 1952. When Clyde and Martha were passing through Oxford on 1 July 1953 Lewis invited Kilby to visit him in Magdalen College.⁵² That meeting cemented Kilby's admiration and he became Lewis's chief champion and defender in America. So sound were his judgements about Lewis that it was inevitable that Kilby should be referred to as 'Dean of Lewis studies' and 'the godfather of Lewis interest in America'. Certainly, he did more to introduce Lewis to evangelical Christians than anyone.

While his interest in Lewis was deepening, and he was looking for a way to make him better known, Kilby continued with his main work. He served as Chairman of the English Department from 1951 to 1966. He was a born teacher, one with a mission, and his students came to love literature not only because he did, but for the same reasons. During these early years Kilby published his first book, *Poetry and Life: An Introduction to Poetry* (New York: Odyssey Press, 1953), followed by a biography of the founder of Wheaton College—*Minority of One: The Biography of Jonathan Blanchard* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959).

It must have been a rare sight to see someone in a small evangelical college in mid-America teaching aesthetics. In 1955 the Philosophy Department of Wheaton College invited Kilby to teach a course entitled 'A Christian Philosophy of the Arts', and the fruit of his

thinking about aesthetics found expression in his *Christianity and Aesthetics* (Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1961).

His lectures were inspiring, remembered years later by scores of young men and women. Teaching, for Kilby, was not confined to the classroom. For many years he and his wife held a Monday evening seminar for senior English majors in their apartment at 620 North Washington Street. It seems wildly inaccurate to say the Kilbys had no children of their own. While it is true they were childless, their 'children' were the many students who sought them out. Martha Kilby bore a striking resemblance to Sarah Smith in *The Great Divorce*, of whom it was said, 'Every young man or boy that met her became her son...Every girl that met her was her daughter.'⁵³ Those familiar with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and who enjoyed Martha Kilby's tea and biscuits must have felt they were being entertained by Mrs Beaver. It is inconceivable that Clyde Kilby could have been half so effective, or loved so much, had it not been for Martha.

While he never appeared to be in a hurry, Kilby was a tireless worker. In 1956 he laid plans for a Christian Writers' Conference (later called the Writing and Literature Conference), an annual event now attended by many college and university professors and others who hear distinguished speakers on literary subjects. Kilby also initiated the first Conference on Christianity and Literature, held at Wheaton in 1959. One of the principal reasons for his success as a teacher, writer, and a founder is stated in a piece he wrote for the *Wheaton College Alumni Magazine*:

*I am afraid that the problem of Christian writing is not so much that of making it Christian as making it structurally and intellectually sound...I believe one reason contemporary evangelicals have done so badly in creative writing is that they simply do not believe in it. They have never become persuaded that good writing is worthy of their efforts...As long as we suppose writing to be an after-dinner exercise in sentimentality, we shall continue to produce trash.*⁵⁴

By the time he wrote those words he had for years been successful in helping his students understand why *what* an author says is closely related to his way of saying it, his style. As for Kilby himself, nowhere did he see content and style so perfectly matched as in the writings of

Lewis. In *The Christian World of C. S. Lewis*, he remarked: ‘As to style, Lewis is undoubtedly a master...There is a sense in which style becomes not simply the “dress” of thought but its body.’⁵⁵

Kilby left many memorials, of which the Marion E. Wade Center is the best known. It began in 1964 when Kilby set out to collect Lewis’s papers and writings. By February 1965 the Library Committee had approved Kilby’s proposal and the C. S. Lewis Collection was in existence. For its first seven years the collection was housed in a small room in the basement of the Wheaton College Library. A dramatic increase in holdings, and a wider network of contacts during 1967–72, led Kilby to move from the library to the Charles Albert Blanchard Memorial Room in Blanchard Hall. By this time he was collecting the writings of seven British writers. Lewis remains the most popular of the seven, the other six being J. R. R. Tolkien, Charles Williams, Owen Barfield, Dorothy L. Sayers, G. K. Chesterton and George MacDonald. Such was its success that by 1974 the collection began to draw national and international attention. Friends of Marion E. Wade, founder of ServiceMaster Corporation, took particular notice, and in association with the Wade family they established an endowment in honour of Mr Wade to help provide for the collection’s increasing financial needs. At the same time the name was changed from the C. S. Lewis Collection to the Marion E. Wade Collection. In 1976 the collection moved again, from Blanchard Hall to the second floor of the Nicholas Wing in the College Library.

Despite his heavy round of teaching and the curatorship of the Wade Collection, Kilby visited Oxford almost every summer. There he came to know Warnie Lewis, Tolkien, Owen Barfield and the remaining Inklings.

Out of these friendships grew a number of books. One of the most notable is an edition of Lewis’s letters to Mary Willis Shelburne—*Letters to an American Lady* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967). This was followed by *A Mind Awake: An Anthology of C. S. Lewis* (London: Bles, 1968); (with Douglas Gilbert) *C. S. Lewis: Images of His World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973; 2nd edn, 2005); *Tolkien & the Silmarillion* (Wheaton: Shaw, 1976); and *Brothers and Friends: The Diaries of Major Warren Hamilton Lewis*, edited with Marjorie Lamp Mead (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982). A bibliography of

Kilby's writings up to 1971 is found in *Imagination and the Spirit: Essays in Literature and the Christian Faith presented to Clyde S. Kilby*, ed. Charles A. Huttar (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971).

Fifteen years after the founding of the Marion E. Wade Collection, Barbara Reynolds, Kilby and Beatrice Batson founded *VII: An Anglo-American Literary Review*, which was born out of the need and opportunity for discussion and balanced assessment of the seven writers. The first issue of *VII* was published in March 1980, and it has been published almost every year since then with Reynolds as managing editor for its first twenty volumes.

On Kilby's retirement in 1981, he and Martha moved to Columbus, Mississippi where they were married half a century before. Clyde died on 18 October 1986, but Martha was able to follow the next step in the story of the Wade Collection. Following Kilby's retirement, Dr Lyle Dorsett had been appointed as his replacement, and he served from 1983 to 1990. During his tenure the name was changed from the Wade Collection to the Wade Center, and the title Curator to Director. From 1990 to 1994 the Wade Center flourished under the direction of its Associate Director, Marjorie Lamp Mead. Dr Christopher Mitchell took up the directorship in 1994.

Needing to expand, but confronted with limitations of space in the College Library, the Center was rescued by Mary Wade, daughter of Marion E. Wade. Her generosity made possible a handsome building fashioned after an English manor house. This new Wade Center, guided to fruition by Christopher Mitchell, was dedicated on 8 September 2001. Each year, over 10,000 visitors from around the world enjoy the Wade Center museum, and hundreds of researchers make use of the collection's vast resources in the Clyde and Martha Kilby Reading Room. Martha Kilby died, aged 102, on 4 September 2004.

THE KILMER FAMILY. The children to whom Lewis dedicated *The Magician's Nephew* were the sons and daughters of the writer Kenton Kilmer (1909–95) and his wife Frances (Frieseke) Kilmer, daughter of the Impressionist painter Frederick Frieseke (1874–1939). Kenton, son of the poet Joyce Kilmer (1886–1918) who wrote *Trees and Other Poems* (1914), was the editor of *This Is My*

America: Poems from the Washington Post (1946), and the author of *Memories of my Father, Joyce Kilmer* (1993). Kenyon and his wife had ten children, of whom eight were mentioned in Lewis's first letter of 24 January 1954: Hugh, Anne, Noelie, Nicholas, Martin, Rosamund, Matthew and Miriam.

Martin Kilmer, Professor of Classics at the University of Ottawa, is the author of *The Shoulder Bust in Sicily and South and Central Italy* (1977), *Greek Erotica on Attic Red-figure Vases* (1993) and *Life in Athens: 700–480 BC* (2001).

Nicholas Kilmer, poet and novelist, is the author of a number of novels, including *Harmony in Flesh and Black* (1995) and *Madonna of the Apes* (2005), as well as several works of non-fiction, including *A Place in Normandy* (1996), the story of the author's struggle over whether to retain his grandfather's home in Normandy, France. The farmhouse was the place where his grandfather, Frederick Frieeseke, created some of his greatest works.

Miriam A. Kilmer, artist, poet and musician, is the owner of *Rising Dove Fine Arts and Services*.

LADBOROUGH, Richard William 'Dick' (1908–72), friend and colleague of Lewis at Cambridge, was born in London on 12 September 1908, the son of William Frederick Ladbrough and his wife, Julitta Alice Abecassis, a member of a distinguished Portuguese family. He was educated at Malvern College, 1922–7, and went up to Magdalene College, Cambridge in 1927. He read French and Latin for the Modern and Medieval Languages Tripos, taking his BA in 1930. He remained at Magdalene while gaining his Ph.D. in 1932 with a thesis on François Maucroix.

Ladbrough spent the next two years working in the British Museum on the book catalogue. In 1936 he was appointed Lecturer in French at the then University College of Southampton. During his nine years there he served as vice-warden of Connaught Hall. In 1954 he returned to Cambridge as University Lecturer in French. That same year he was elected a Fellow and Director of Studies at his old college, Magdalene, where he also served as Dean and Pepys Librarian. Ladbrough is responsible for organizing the first complete catalogue

of the Samuel Pepys Library. He excelled as a teacher and was admired for his many years of loyalty to Magdalene.

His published writings include 'Translations from the Ancients in Seventeenth-century France', *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, II, no. 2 (1938), pp. 85–104; 'François Maucroix's friendship with La Fontaine',

Modern Language Review, XXIV, no. 2 (1939), pp. 223–9; *Jean de Routou's Le Véritable Saint Genest*, ed. R. W. Ladbrough (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954), and 'Pepys and Pascal', *French Studies*, X, no. 2 (1956), pp. 133–9.

Dick Ladbrough gave Lewis a warm welcome to Cambridge, and they became instant friends. Ladbrough's essay, 'In Cambridge', which appears in *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, is the fullest account yet written of Lewis's years at Magdalene College. Like Lewis, Ladbrough was a devout Christian, and he showed his love for the faith by his support for the college chapel and his parish church, Little St Mary's. When he died on 30 April 1972 a memorial service was held for him at Little St Mary's on 30 May, at which the Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsay, gave the address. In a memorial essay devoted to Ladbrough in the college magazine, R.F.B. said:

*One of the most striking things about Dick was an exuberant sense of fun, which he communicated to old and young alike. Laughter was never far away, and a cheerful grin always lighted up his face when one called at his rooms or met him in the street. His stories were endless and always amusing. Many, told quite unselfconsciously out of sheer delight in the joke, were against himself. He was a master of the art of the gaffe, and must have dropped more bricks on his own toes than a dozen other men.*⁵⁶

LAWLOR, John James (1918–99), medievalist, was born in Plymouth, Devon on 5 January 1918, the only child of Albert John Lawlor and his wife Teresa Anne Clare (Knight) Lawlor, both of Irish descent. After schooling at Devonport High School, in 1936 he won a state scholarship and an open exhibition to Magdalen College, Oxford, where he read English with Lewis. He graduated with first class honours in 1939.

Lawlor served with the Devonshire Regiment between 1940 and 1945, returning to Oxford after the war as senior Mackinnon Scholar and pursuing graduate studies under J. R. R. Tolkien. In 1941 he married the soprano, Thelma Weeks, a scholar and gold medallist of the Royal Academy of Music, and they had four children. Lawlor was a lecturer in English at Brasenose College and Trinity College, 1947–50, and a university lecturer in English Language and Literature, 1949–50. He was hoping for a Fellowship in one of the Oxford colleges, but none came up.

However, in 1950 he was appointed the first Professor of English Language and Literature at the newly formed University College of North Staffordshire, now Keele University, a post he held until his retirement in 1979. It was a wise choice; he gathered about him a lively group of lecturers, and contributing greatly to realizing the hopes of A. D. Lindsay,⁵⁷ the first Vice-Chancellor, that the new university would combine the fellowship, collegiate spirit and academic standards of Oxford with its own fresh courses and methods.

Lawlor was a hard worker and his chief publications came early in his career. *The Tragic Sense of Shakespeare* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1960) was followed by *Piers Plowman: An Essay in Criticism* (London: Arnold, 1962) and *Chaucer* (London: Hutchinson, 1968). In addition to many articles, he edited *The New University* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968) and *Higher Education: Patterns of Change in the 1970s* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972).

Lawlor was a restless man who appeased his wanderlust by teaching abroad during vacations and sabbaticals. He was a founding member, in 1950, of the International Association of University Professors of English and served as its secretary-general and treasurer, 1971–95. No one was more welcoming to scholars who visited Britain.

Few of Lewis's pupils could have appreciated him more than John Lawlor. It was probably his years as Lewis's pupil that drew him to medieval studies, and in later years he solicited from Lewis's friends and colleagues material for a retirement volume, which in the event became a memorial, *Patterns of Love and Courtesy: Essays in Memory of C. S. Lewis* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1966). He also edited, with W. H. Auden, *To Nevill Coghill from Friends* (London: Faber, 1966). As literary editor of Hutchinson's

University Library he was conscientious and inspiring: it is said that drafts sent to him were returned by almost the next post, annotated with suggestions, comment and encouragement.

The author of his obituary noted that ‘His extravagant humour and excess did not impair his scholarly work. After carousing like a latter-day Sir Toby Belch,⁵⁸ he would be back at his desk betimes, bright eyed and eager.’⁵⁹ However, Lawlor’s brilliant ebullience could be difficult to live with, and he divorced his wife in 1979. In 1984 he married Kimie Imura, a Japanese professor of English. This coincided with his retirement to the village of Marazion, Cornwall, overlooking the island of St Michael’s Mount.

Lawlor was usually more brilliant in talk than in his writings, where he was somewhat cautious. The exception is his last book, *C. S. Lewis: Memories and Reflections* (Dallas, Texas: Spence, 1998). It is the best written of his works, and perhaps the most illuminating book about Lewis yet written. Lewis, Tolkien and their fellow Inklings emerge from its pages as vividly as Dr Johnson and his friends do from the pages of James Boswell. After measuring Lewis’s scholarly achievement, he concludes with his own understanding of his old tutor, in whom ‘maddening obstinacies and sword-sharp disclaimers co-existed with an untroubled awareness of the highest order’.⁶⁰ Lawlor was moving towards this himself when he died on 31 May 1999.

LEWIS, Helen Joy (1915–60) was born Helen Joy Davidman in New York City on 18 April 1915, the daughter of Jewish parents, Joseph Isaac Davidman and his wife Jeanette (Spivack) Davidman. Joseph Davidman was born in Poland in 1887 and arrived in New York in 1893. Jeanette Spivack's family came to New York from the Ukraine. Both had abandoned the practice of the Jewish religion before they were married in 1909. They attended City College of New York, after which they taught in public schools, and Joseph became in time a junior high school principal. Their second child, David, was born in 1920.

Joy was educated in New York public schools, after which she received a BA from Hunter College, New York, in 1934, and an MA in English from Columbia University in 1935. In an autobiographical essay, 'The Longest Way Round', she wrote:

I declared my own atheism at the age of eight, after reading Wells' Outline of History⁶¹...In a few years I had rejected all morality as a pipe dream...In 1929 I believed in nothing but American prosperity; in 1930 I believed in nothing. Men, I said, are only apes. Virtue is only custom. Life is only an electrochemical reaction. Mind is only a set of conditioned reflexes, and anyway most people aren't rational like ME. Love, art, and altruism are only sex. The universe is only matter. Matter is only energy. I forget what I said energy was only.⁶²

After teaching in a number of schools, Joy devoted herself to writing. Her first work was a volume of verse, *Letter to a Comrade*, Foreword by Stephen Vincent Benét (New Haven: Yale, 1938), which won the Yale Series of Younger Poets Award for 1938. The Depression of the 1930s began to affect her deeply, and in 1938 she joined the Communist Party and became a journalist and critic for the party's magazine, *New Masses*.

After an unsuccessful six months as a junior screen writer for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in Hollywood during 1939 she returned to New York and resumed work for *New Masses*. She also published a novel, *Anya* (New York: Macmillan, 1940).

At a meeting of the Communist Party in 1942 Joy met William Lindsay 'Bill' Gresham (1909–62). He was born in Baltimore on 20 August 1909, but moved with his family to New York in 1917. After

high school he held a variety of jobs. In 1935 he married a New York woman and set out to become a freelance writer. However, in 1937, when one of his friends was killed in the battle of Brunette in Spain, he joined the Abraham Lincoln Battalion as a volunteer and fought with the Marxists in the Spanish Civil War. When he returned to New York in 1939 he was mentally ill. After an attempt at suicide he turned to psychoanalysis and the Communist Party.

Soon after meeting Joy at a party meeting, Bill divorced his first wife and he and Joy were married on 2 August 1942. They found a flat in New York, where Bill continued with his writing and Joy edited *War Poems of the United Nations: Three Hundred Poems, One Hundred and Fifty Poets from Twenty Countries*, sponsored by the League of American Writers (New York: Dial Press, 1943) and Alexander F. Bergman's *They Look Like Men* (New York: B. Ackerman, 1944). After they moved to a larger flat in Queens, the Greshams had two children, David (b. 1944) ⁶³ and Douglas (b. 1945).⁶⁴ In 1946 the family moved to the little town of Ossining, New York. It was there things came to a head. 'My husband had been overworking,' Joy wrote:

*One day he telephoned me from his New York office...to tell me that he was having a nervous breakdown. He felt his mind was going; he couldn't say where he was and he couldn't bring himself to come home...By nightfall there was nothing to do but wait and see if he turned up, alive or dead. I put the babies to sleep and waited. For the first time in my life I felt helpless; for the first time my pride was forced to admit that I was not, after all, 'the master of my fate' and 'the captain of my soul.'*⁶⁵ *All my defences—the walls of arrogance and cocksureness and self-love behind which I had hid from God—went down momentarily. And God came in...There was a Person with me in the room, directly present to my consciousness—a Person so real that all my previous life was by comparison mere shadow play.*⁶⁶

When Bill came home several days later, he accepted Joy's account of what had happened. 'Together,' said Joy, 'we set about remaking our minds.'⁶⁷ Meanwhile, Bill, who was fascinated by carnivals, enjoyed a huge success with the publication of *Nightmare Alley* (New York: Rinehart, 1946), a novel which now enjoys the status of a cult

classic. It is the story of Stanton Carlisle, a lowly carnival worker, whose duties include assisting mind reader Zeena Krumbein and her alcoholic husband Pete with their act. The Greshams sold the film rights to Hollywood and in 1947 the film of *Nightmare Alley* proved very successful. With their new riches they bought a house in Pleasant Plains, near Staatsburg, New York.

Joy had been reading Lewis's books for years and as her beliefs took shape, she began going to church. In the summer of 1948 she and her children were baptized at Pleasant Plains Presbyterian Church. The next year she read Chad Walsh's *C. S. Lewis: Apostle to the Skeptics* and soon came to know the author. This in turn led her to write to Lewis in January 1950. Soon after they began corresponding, Joy published her second novel, *Weeping Bay* (New York: Macmillan, 1950).

The prosperity of the Gresham family did not last long. Bill's writing was not going well, and he again became mentally unstable. Joy's cousin, Mrs Renée Pierce, brought her two children to stay, and in August 1952 Joy left for England with the hope of completing her book, *Smoke on the Mountain*, and meeting Lewis. On arrival in London she stayed with a friend, Phyllis Williams, and they invited Lewis to have lunch in the Eastgate Hotel, Oxford, on 24 September 1952. A few days later Lewis invited them to lunch in his College rooms.

As Joy intended to be in England until January, the Lewis brothers invited her to spend the second week of December at The Kilns. In fact she stayed for three. During her stay at The Kilns Joy had a letter from Bill saying that while he knew Joy would never be anything but a writer, 'Renée has a different orientation; her only interest is in taking care of her husband and children and making a home for them.' 'The optimum solution,' as he saw it, 'would be for you to be married to some swell guy, Renée and I to be married, both families to live in easy calling distance so that the Gresham kids could have Mommy and Daddy on hand.'⁶⁸

Looking back on the event years later, Douglas Gresham thought the whole thing looked so inevitable that 'in honesty I must ask myself if in fact Mother saw Renée's arrival in our household as an opportunity not to be missed and left for England, not only aware of

the likelihood of their falling in love, but also hoping that they would, thus giving her the chance of escaping from a marriage which was fast disintegrating'.⁶⁹

The first week of November 1953 Joy sailed for England with her sons, David and Douglas. On reaching London they took rooms in the Avoca House Hotel, 43 Belsize Park, Hampstead. Joy found the boys places at Dane Court School near Woking, Surrey. Lewis invited the three of them to The Kilns for a Christmas visit, on 17 to 20 December. Thereafter Lewis visited Joy in London occasionally, and Joy completed her book, *Smoke on the Mountain: an Interpretation of the Ten Commandments*. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954). The English edition of the book, published by Hodder & Stoughton in 1955, contains a foreword by Lewis.

On 5 August 1954 Joy and Bill Gresham were divorced, and the same day Bill married Renée. In August 1955 Joy and the boys moved to Oxford and lived at 10 Old High Street, Headington. For reasons that remain unknown, Joy was unable to get her passport renewed, and rather than see her forced to return to the United States, Lewis decided on a register office marriage, after which he would continue to live in his house and Joy in hers. They were married in the register office in St Giles, Oxford, on 23 April 1956.

Joy had been suffering for some time from pains in her left leg when, on 18 October 1956, she was found to have cancer in her leg and other parts of her body. The doctors believed her to be dying, and on 21 March 1957 Lewis and Joy were married in the Wingfield-Morris Hospital by the Rev. Peter Bide, who also laid his hands on Joy praying that she be healed. Joy was moved to the Kilns in 2 April 1957, simply because the doctors could do no more for her. However, when Lewis wrote to his godson, Laurence Harwood, on 12 December 1957, he said: 'My wife has made an almost miraculous, certainly an unexpected, recovery.' Not long afterwards they had lunch at Merton College with Lewis's old friend, Nevill Coghill, who wrote of the occasion: 'When he brought his wife to lunch with me, he said to me, looking at her across the grassy quadrangle, "I never expected to have, in my sixties, the happiness that passed me by in my twenties."' ⁷⁰ There were to be many happy times for both of them. Lewis was, of course, obliged to spend much of his time in Cambridge after he

became a professor there in 1955. When he was away Joy had the company of his brother, Warnie, who wrote of her in his 'Memoir':

Jack's marriage meant that our home was enriched and enlivened by the presence of a witty, broad-minded, well-read and tolerant Christian, whom I had rarely heard equalled as a conversationalist and whose company was a never-ending source of enjoyment: indeed at the peak of her apparent recovery she was at work on a life of Mme. De Maintenon,⁷¹ which unfortunately never got further than several books of notes and an explanatory preface.⁷²

When Joy went to the hospital on 13 October 1959 for a routine check-up it was found that her cancer had returned. All her life Joy had wanted to visit Greece, and as they had already arranged with Roger and June Lancelyn Green to go there in April 1960 they stuck to their plans. Despite the fact that Joy's health was declining, the trip, between 5 and 14 April 1960, was a great success.⁷³ Once back in Oxford Joy showed heroic courage. She was in and out of hospital, but somehow she and Lewis managed to squeeze a good deal of happiness out of her last few months. Lewis was with her when she died in the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford on 13 July 1960. See Douglas Gresham, *Lenten Lands* (1988) and *Jack's Life: The Life Story of C. S. Lewis* (2005), and Lyle Dorsett, *And God Came In: The Extraordinary Story of Joy Davidman, Her Life and Marriage to C.S. Lewis* (1983)—renamed *Joy and C. S. Lewis* (1994).

LINDSKOOG, Kathryn (1934–2003) was born Kathryn Stillwell in Petaluma, California on 26 December 1934, the daughter of John Stillwell. Her father being a retired US Navy bandmaster, she grew up in Novato and other places in California. Having received her BA from the University of Redlands in June 1956, she visited England the following month, and met Lewis in Oxford on 20 July.

In 1957 she received her MA from California State University at Long Beach, her thesis being 'The Lion of Judah in Never-Never Land', a copy of which elicited Lewis's letter of 29 October 1957.⁷⁴ She was to go on corresponding with Lewis. On taking her degree, Kathryn taught English at Orange High School between 1957 and 1964. In 1959 she married John Lindskoog, and they were to have two sons, Jonathan (b. 1964) and Peter (b. 1968).

From this point on Kathryn undertook an almost superhuman amount of work, lecturing in various colleges, presenting papers at conferences, and writing numerous articles and books. The latter include *C. S. Lewis: Mere Christian* (Chicago: Cornerstone Press, 4th edn 1997), *Creative Writing: For People Who Can't Not Write* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1989), and, with her husband, *How to Grow a Young Reader: A Parent's Guide to Books for Kids* (Wheaton: Shaw Publishers, 1989). In the 1960s she was struck with multiple sclerosis, which was often crippling. She bore this, however, with wonderful fortitude. She died on 21 October 2003.

MCCASLIN, Mary Margaret (1913–80) was born Mary Margaret Dobbs in Ackerman, Choctaw County, Mississippi, on 11 December 1913, the daughter of Estel Bridges Dobbs and Mary Eunice Adams. She attended Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi, from September 1929 until December 1932, but left during mid-term of her senior year because of the Depression and began teaching elocution in the Choctaw County public schools.

On 14 February 1934 she married Alston Jones McCaslin IV (b. 20 May 1908), a banker and later a partner and bookkeeper in a lumber business. They lived in Eupora, Mississippi, where they had two sons, Alston Jones V (b. 19 July 1939) and Silas Dobbs (b. 6 December 1940). In reference to Mary Margaret's correspondence with C. S. Lewis, which began in 1950, her son Alston said in a letter to Walter Hooper of 29 June 2006:

Mary Margaret was a student of the Bible, influenced by her mother, her father, and her mother-in-law, all of whom taught Sunday school for most of their adult lives. Mary Margaret was a Bible teacher and men's Sunday school class teacher for many years. She learned of C. S. Lewis in the mid-1940s, before he became a literary celebrity. From the early 1950s until the 1960s, she received at least fourteen letters from C. S. Lewis in reply to her letters about his writings and her Christian faith.

Mary Margaret's husband, Alston, died in an accident on 8 July 1953. In May 1954 she returned to college, attending Mississippi

Southern College (now the University of Southern Mississippi), Hattiesburg, Mississippi. She earned a BA in 1955 and an MS in Speech Therapy in 1956, both with honours. On the anniversary of her husband's death in 1954, she wrote to Lewis for a second time, and it was this event he referred to in his letter of 2 August 1954 as her 'terrible calamity'. Now qualified as a speech therapist, Mary Margaret moved with her family in 1956 to Gainesville, Hall County, Georgia, where she organized a speech therapy programme in the Hall County public school system. Her sons enrolled at Gainesville High School. Her elder son thinks it may have been this move 'across two states, far away from her family and roots' that Lewis referred to in his letter of 15 November 1956 as her 'great sacrifice'.

Alston V graduated from Georgia Tech in December, 1961. To celebrate that accomplishment, Mary Margaret wrote to Lewis requesting a signed copy of his book *Miracles* as a graduation gift. Lewis answered on 28 October 1961, 'Sorry, but an autographed copy w. make no difference, you know.' Accompanying the letter was a paperback copy of *Miracles* with the inscription, 'A. J. McCaslin from C. S. Lewis, Oct 1961.' Mary Margaret clipped the inscription from the paperback and attached it to the title page of a hardback copy that she gave Alston for his graduation, believing, as she did, that his graduation from Georgia Tech was 'a miracle'.

In 1959 Mary Margaret married Eugene Long Ward, MD (b. 9 June 1906), who had been widowed two years earlier. Meanwhile her sons went to college and qualified as dentists (Alston gained his BS at Georgia Tech, a DDS from the University of North Carolina and an MSD from Emory University; Silas his BA, DDS and MSD from Emory University). When Alston became engaged to Pamela May Stanley, his mother sent Lewis a copy of their engagement announcement, and it was this Lewis referred to in his letter of 22 January 1962. The marriage took place on 23 June 1962. Mary Margaret's sons went into practice together as paediatric dentists in Savannah, Georgia, in 1970. Eugene Ward died on 21 July 1989. By the time Mary Margaret died in Gainesville, on 1 August 1980, her sons had given her four grandchildren.

MILWARD, Father Peter, SJ (1925–), Jesuit teacher and writer, was born in London on 12 October 1925, the son of Richard Milward and Hannah (Taylor) Milward. Hannah Milward was an Irish Catholic, and her husband was received into the Catholic Church on the occasion of their marriage. Peter was the second of their five children, and when the family moved to Wimbledon he underwent a traditional Jesuit classical education at Wimbledon College, which he attended between 1933 and 1943. On leaving school he went to the Jesuit noviciate at St Beuno's College in North Wales. After two years of noviceship and a further year of juniorate at St Beuno's, Milward went to Manresa House, Roehampton, for a second year of juniorate. From there he went to Heythrop College, Oxfordshire, where he read the three-year course of scholastic philosophy. While there he became fascinated with the thought of St Thomas Aquinas, especially his theology of angels. In a letter to Walter Hooper of 19 May 2005 Milward said:

All this time I had been a fan of C. S. Lewis, especially his imaginative writings, but it was when I moved from Heythrop College to Campion Hall, Oxford, for a classical degree in 1950, that I met him at closer quarters. He was an occasional guest of the then Master of Campion Hall, Fr Thomas Corbishley, and my first reaction on seeing him at a guest night was precisely that of Debra Winger in the film Shadowlands, 'You don't look like Lewis!'

Though Milward was reading Classics, he made a point of joining the Socratic Club, founded by Lewis, and he soon became secretary for Campion Hall. Later, on receiving an appointment in Japan (at his own request to the Father-General), he was told that a degree in English would be more useful in Japan than one in Classics, and in making this change he welcomed the opportunity to study under Lewis. He learned, however, that Lewis didn't welcome pupils from outside Magdalen College, and so he made the effort to attend all Lewis's lectures, chiefly his 'Prolegomena' to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

Fr Milward continued in his letter to Walter Hooper:

During this period [Lewis] remained above my ken, as a mere student, but in my final year 1954 I made an appointment with him for a

discussion on my favourite subject of angels at his study in Magdalen overlooking the Deer Park. He opened the discussion, however, with a strange question about why so many Irish men remain celibate all their lives. It never occurred to me that he was speaking about himself and his brother, or that he was already contemplating the married state himself. It was only after my arrival in Japan that summer that I came to know how he had been 'surprised by Joy'. Nor, during these academic years, when I read all he had written especially of an academic nature, did I realize he was already venturing into the field of children's literature with his Narnia stories.

In the same year, 1954, that Milward emigrated to Japan to take up his appointment at Sophia University, Tokyo, Lewis similarly 'emigrated' from Oxford to Cambridge, after having been one of Milward's examiners at his viva voce exam in July. From then on Milward began to engage Lewis in a correspondence which ended only with Lewis's death in 1963.

Father Milward, who was ordained a priest on 18 March 1960, is a prolific author; his better known works include *Christian Themes in English Literature* (Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 1967); *Shakespeare's Religious Background* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1973); *Landscape and Inscape: Vision and Inspiration in Hopkins' Poetry* (London: Paul Elek, 1975); *Introducing English Literature* (Tokyo: Shinkosha, 1977); *Religious Controversies of the Elizabethan Age* (London: Scholar Press, 1977); *Religious Controversies of the Jacobean Age* (London: Scholar Press, 1978); *Anthology of Mediaeval Thinkers* (Tokyo: Renaissance Institute, 1981); *A Challenge to C. S. Lewis* (Madison Teaneck, New Jersey: Associated University Press, 1995); and *Shakespeare the Papist* (Naples, Florida: Sapientia Press of Ave Maria Univeristy, 2005).

NEWBY, Percy Howard (1918–97), writer and broadcasting administrator, was born in Crowborough, Sussex, on 25 June 1918, the son of Percy Newby, a baker, and his wife, Isabel Clutsom (Bryant) Newby. He was educated at Hanley Castle Grammar School, Worcestershire, and St Paul's Teacher Training College, Cheltenham. He joined the Royal Army Medical Corps on the outbreak of the Second World War, and served with the British

expeditionary force in France, 1939–40. In 1942 he was seconded by the army to be a lecturer in English literature at Fouad 1st University (Cairo University), remaining there until 1946.

On his return to Britain the BBC invited him to broadcast occasional short stories, book reviews and talks, and he became a fiction reviewer for the BBC house journal *The Listener*. In 1949 Newby joined the BBC as a talks producer, specializing in literary talks series, including *First Reading* (a ‘literary magazine of the air’) and *Literary Opinion*, a monthly series of arts talks. In 1958 Newby was made Controller of the Third Programme, BBC Radio’s flagship arts network. In 1971 he became Director of Programmes, Radio, where he was responsible for consolidating news and current affairs coverage and introducing consumer programmes and phone-ins. In 1975 Newby became managing director of BBC Radio. By the time he retired in 1978, after thirty years with the BBC, he had published thirteen novels and other books. He died on 6 September 1997. See his biography in the *Oxford DNB*.

PEAKE, Mervyn Laurence (1911–68), artist and writer, was born in China on 9 July 1911, the son of Ernest Cromwell Peake and Amanda Elizabeth (Powell) Peake. The family returned to England in 1923 and Mervyn attended Eltham College, Kent, 1923–29, and the Royal Academy Schools, 1929–33. Although he failed his examination because of a lack of interest in formal studies. Peake was offered a position at the Westminster School of Art in 1935 and he taught life drawing there until 1939.

While at Westminster he met the artist, Maeve Patricia Mary Theresa Gilmore (1917–83), and they married in 1937. They had two sons and a daughter. An exhibition of Peake’s work in 1938—oils, sketches, watercolours and macabre drawings—attracted much attention. While serving in the Second World War Peake was appointed a war artist, and after witnessing the first war-crimes trial he sent back haunting drawings of Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. He was invalided out of the army in 1943 after a nervous breakdown.

During the war he had worked on the first volume of his ‘Gormenghast’ trilogy, *Titus Groan*, published in 1946. He also illustrated a volume of nursery rhymes, the first of his many

illustrations for books. One of the best examples of this is Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1943). The second volume of his trilogy, *Gormenghast*, was published in 1950, and the final volume, *Titus Alone*, in 1959. These volumes were also illustrated by Peake. This enormously talented man suffered from what was eventually diagnosed as a form of Parkinson's disease and he died in a nursing home on the night of 16–17 November 1968. See Maeve Gilmore, *A World Away: A Memoir of Mervyn Peake* (1992); and Maeve Gilmore and Sebastian Peake, *A Child of Bliss: Growing up with Mervyn Peake* (1989).

PEDROLLO, Fr Luigi (1888–1986) was born in San Gregorio di Cavalpone (also known as San Gregorio di Veronella), a village near Verona, Italy on 31 December 1888. Here he attended elementary school, and later went on to attend the first two years of secondary school in Cologna Veneta. He entered the Vicenza Seminary in 1902, and studied there until his ordination in 1912. Since he held a teacher's degree, he was sent as chaplain to Arsiero, where he should also have obtained—having won an Italian state competition—a teaching position at the local school. However, the position was denied him by the city council. He was therefore assigned to teach the fifth year of the secondary school in the Vicenza seminary. Later he was sent as chaplain and elementary teacher to the village of Gambellara, where he remained for a year.

He had long been in contact with St Giovanni Calabria, whom he had met as early as 1908, when the latter had opened the great Casa dei Buoni Fanciulli (House of the Good Children) of San Zeno in Monte, Verona. Luigi felt his vocation was to follow in Calabria's spirit of total abandonment to the Divine Providence and to pursue his mission to educate the poor children who had found shelter at the Buoni Fanciulli. He joined this institution on 24 August 1914 and for five years supervised and worked at the elementary school there, with the help of his brethren Luigi 'Gigio' Adami and Angelo Faccioli. In 1919 another Buoni Fanciulli centre was opened in Costolozza di Longare, near Vicenza. He was sent there as director and father superior and spent ten years in this position.

He was called back to the main Verona house in 1929 to work alongside St Giovanni Calabria, then busy preparing the constitutions

and rules of his congregation. The latter were to be recognized and approved by the Church as the *Poveri Servi della Divina Provvidenza* at the hands of Mgr Girolamo Cardinale, then Bishop of Verona on 4 March 1932. Afterwards Pedrollo was always close to St Giovanni, who entrusted the most delicate tasks to him and involved him more and more in the new activities of the congregation.

When Calabria died Pedrollo succeeded him as rector of the congregation, having been elected General Superior during the first Chapter of March 1955, a post he held, with successive elections, for twelve years. Under his mandate, new houses were opened, and, even more importantly, there was a significant expansion (which Calabria had foretold) in the activities of the Congregation in South America, first in Uruguay and later in Brazil.

During this period he addressed many letters to the brethren of the congregation, the fruit of his fervent prayer, study and confident trust in the Divine Providence. He died on 16 February 1986.

POLLARD, Dr Margaret ‘Peggy’ (1903–1996), Cornish poet and linguist, was born Margaret Steuart Gladstone at 2 Whitehall Court, London, on 1 March 1904, the daughter of John Steuart Gladstone (1862–1920), an East India merchant, and his wife, Anne (Fitzgibbon) Gladstone, a granddaughter of W. E. Gladstone’s niece Mary Ellen (who married her second cousin Robert Gladstone). After attending Eversley School, Folkestone, she matriculated at Newnham College, Cambridge, in 1922. In 1924 and 1925 she took first-class honours in both parts of the oriental languages tripos. She received the degree of Ph.D. in 1952. Her initial interest was Hinduism, but she learned (and taught) Russian.

Following her marriage on 30 June 1928 to George Francis Giffard Pollard (1905–1968), a journalist, whom she met at Cambridge, they moved to Truro. Peggy became deeply committed to preserving Cornwall and its landscape, and she was Cornish secretary for the Council for the Preservation of Rural England from 1935 to 1945. She was also a member of ‘Ferguson’s Gang’, an unorthodox group of anonymous fund-raisers for the National Trust. Her donations to such causes were beyond calculation. She converted to the Catholic Church

in 1947, after which she became one of the prime movers in building a new Catholic church in Truro. Our Lady of the Portal and St Piran opened in 1973 on what is believed to be the site of the medieval chapel of Our Lady of the Portal. Peggy claimed to have received an apparition of the Blessed Virgin on 2 November 1955, an account of which is found in Claire Riche, *The Lost Shrine of Liskeard* (London: St Austin Press, 2002).

This eccentric and brilliant woman was the author of *Cornwall* (1947) and (with Faith Godbeer) of *The Guild of Our Lady of the Portal* (Redruth: Dyllansow Truran, 1985). In Truro she was well known for her embroidery and tapestry work. *The Guinness Book of Records* mentioned her tapestry embroidered with pictures of Lewis's Narnian stories, which is 1,338 feet long. See Brian Murdoch's life of Pollard in the *Oxford DNB*.

PRIESTLEY, John Bloynton (1894–1984), author and playwright, was born in Bradford on 13 September 1894, the only child of Jonathan Priestley (1868–1924), schoolmaster, and his first wife, Emma (Holt) Priestley (1865–96). In 1914 he enlisted as a private soldier in the Duke of Wellington's West Riding regiment. He went through almost the entire war in the trenches, being wounded twice.

In 1919 he went to Cambridge, where he read History and Political Science at Trinity Hall, taking his BA in 1921. That same year he married Pat Emily Tempest (1896–1925). Priestley remained at Cambridge for a further year after his marriage, during which time he published *Brief Diversions* (1922) and *Papers from Lilliput* (1922).

In 1922 Priestley moved to London, where he worked as a freelance journalist. Following the birth of two daughters he lost his father in 1924 and then his wife (1925). Despite all this Priestley's literary output between 1926 and 1929 was immense and covered many fields: essays, biographies, literary criticism and his first attempt at fiction—*Adam in Moonshine* (1927). Shortly before Pat's death he formed a deep and lasting friendship with the best-selling novelist Hugh Walpole. In 1927 Walpole suggested they write the joint novel *Farthing Hall* (1929). Because Walpole was so well known he could command a substantial advance, and he gave this to Priestley in its

entirety, which enabled him to write the book that was to make his name and fortune, *The Good Companions* (1929). This was followed by Priestley's best novel, *Angel Pavement* (1930). Priestley had found his voice, and there were to be many more successes.

During the Second World War he offered to do some broadcasting for the BBC, and the result was the famous *Postscripts*, broadcast on Sunday nights after the 9 p.m. news. The series ran from June to October 1940 and was an international institution. Despite his success with the public, however, the BBC then dropped Priestley, possibly on the orders of Winston Churchill. During the war Priestley wrote several topical novels, a number of information booklets such as *Britain at War* (1942), and three plays, the best known of which is *They Came to a City* (1943).

Although never a member of a political party, in 1945 Priestley stood as an Independent candidate for the Cambridge University seat on a broadly socialist agenda. He was defeated, but this was probably just as well, as he could never have borne the life of a backbencher. Soon afterwards he wrote one of his best-known plays, *An Inspector Calls* (1946). Unable to find a venue for it in London, he sent it to his Russian translator, as a result of which it was premièred later that year jointly in Moscow and Leningrad. In 1949 it was made into a film starring Alistair Sim. While Priestley's plays have always been popular outside London and abroad, it became fashionable to consider them too old-fashioned for metropolitan audiences, a view which took a severe knock when Stephen Daldry's production of the play for the National Theatre in the 1990s became a critical and box-office smash hit. Priestley suffered throughout his life from the metropolitan literary attitude towards writers from the provinces. The fact that he had written an international best-seller often led to unfair disparagement. 'I was outside the fashionable literary movement,' he said, 'even before I began.'⁷⁵

Over the years Priestley wrote several more plays, including *The Linden Tree* (1947) and, with Iris Murdoch, *A Severed Head* (1963), but the main impetus had gone. He also wrote only five more novels. By far the best are *Bright Day* (1946) and *Lost Empires* (1965), both with autobiographical overtones, although his own favourite was the two-volume *The Image Makers* (1968). However, he continued writing

non-fiction right up until 1977, his most remarkable achievement being a *tour de force*, *Literature and Western Man* in 1960.

For many years Priestley contributed to the *New Statesman*, and in 1957 he wrote an article which led directly to the founding of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, with which his name will always be associated. Priestley never sought honours and over the years turned down a knighthood and two offers of peerages. He was, however, proud to accept the Order of Merit when it was offered to him in 1977.

Priestley spent the last years of his life in Warwickshire. He died of pneumonia at Kissing Tree House on 13 August 1984, surrounded by his family, and his ashes were buried in Hubberholme church, at the head of Wharfedale in Yorkshire.

RAINE, Kathleen Jessie (1908–2003), poet and Blake scholar, was born in Ilford on 14 June 1908, the only child of George Raine, a schoolmaster and Methodist lay preacher, and his wife Jessie (Wilkie) Raine. Although she grew up in Ilford, which was being taken over by suburbia, she spent the happiest part of her childhood with an aunt in Bavington, Northumberland. ‘Bavington, as I remember it,’ she said, ‘seems to have stood outside the mill-race of history, abiding still within the covenant of God.’⁷⁶

She was educated at Highland Elementary School and in 1926 won a scholarship to read Natural Sciences at Girton College, Cambridge. She was genuinely interested in science, but had already decided that her vocation was that of a poet. Kathleen was accounted a great beauty, but at Cambridge it was revealed that she had very little capacity for sustaining relationships. By the time she took a Third in Psychology in 1929 Cambridge had become a disappointment and she was happy to leave. She was depressed by the emphasis on rational thought because, as she said, cerebralism denied ‘the sacred springs of life, which are the imagination and the heart’.⁷⁷ And so it was that while many of her friends began exploring the philosophy of the Left, Kathleen turned to the mystical, to Celtic culture, astronomy and magic: ‘I wanted to get away from the Sherlock Holmes misconception that everything has a rational explanation.’⁷⁸

She could not bear to return to Ilford, and having been turned down by Virginia Woolf for a job at Hogarth Press, on 26 August 1930 she hastily married Hugh Sykes Davies (1909–84), a cousin of Herbert Read. Just as quickly she eloped with the poet Charles Madge (1912–96). They eventually married on 27 December 1937 and had a son, James, and a daughter, Anna. But Kathleen found it impossible to reconcile herself to motherhood, and the marriage was dissolved in 1940.

Shortly afterwards she went to live at Martindale, near Penrith, where she began to write. In 1941 she became a Catholic. Two years later she published her first volume of poetry, *Stone and Flower: Poems, 1935–1943*, with drawings by Barbara Hepworth (London: Nicholson & Watson, 1943). This was followed by *Living in Time* (London: Editions Poetry, 1946) and *The Pythoness, and Other Poems* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1949). There followed a prolific output of work which continued throughout her life. Besides poetry, she wrote numerous scholarly and critical works particularly on William Blake and W. B. Yeats.

By now Raine had established herself in Paultons Square, off the King's Road in Chelsea. There, in 1949, she met the man who was to be the love of her life. This was Gavin Maxwell (1914–69), the Scottish naturalist and author, later celebrated as the author of *Ring of Bright Water* (1960). Although Maxwell was essentially a homosexual, Raine formed an instant and intense affinity with someone for whom, like her, Nature had a mystical importance. She gave herself utterly to him. There were to be tempestuous rows between them, but their relationship (though never physically consummated) lasted for seven years. The landscape around Maxwell's house at Sandaig, on the coast of Wester Ross, inspired many of Raine's poems.

The relationship with Gavin Maxwell burnt itself out. Raine was banished from the house during a raging storm in 1956. She cursed him under a rowan tree: 'Let Gavin suffer in this place as I am suffering now.'⁷⁹ Within the next few years his pet otter was killed, his house destroyed by fire, and he was diagnosed with terminal cancer.

Raine retreated into scholarship. In 1954 she was awarded a five-year research fellowship at Girton College. There she concentrated her studies on Yeats, Coleridge and particularly William Blake. As her

fellowship was coming to an end, Muriel Bradbrook, Mistress of Girton, made it possible for her to stay longer. When she told Lewis of her dilemma, whether to go or stay, he urged her to postpone. But she longed to return to Paultons Square, and writing about it years later, she said: 'In Girton I could not...take root. Some homing instinct had taken me back to Paultons Square as the only place left where I might still pick up the threads of the broken pattern of my life.'⁸⁰

While she never got over Gavin Maxwell, back in Paultons Square her poetic inspiration returned, and she wrote her finest books on Blake. She told Lewis about a major project on Blake, and he replied in his letter of 5 December 1958: 'When the Big Book finally appears I think all pre-Raine views of Blake will be obsolete forever.'

The 'Big Book' was her two-volume *Blake and Tradition*, A.W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, 2 vols. (Volume I, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968; Volume II, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969). This was followed by *William Blake* (London: Longman, 1969); *From Blake to 'A Vision'* (Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1979) and *Blake and the New Age* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1979).

'Temenos' means 'sacred place' and in 1981 Raine co-founded *Temenos*, 'A Review of the Arts of the Imagination', with the ambition to affirm 'at the highest level of scholarship and talent, and in terms of the contemporary situation, of the Sacred'. She soon became sole editor with a devoted international following. Still, she experienced terrible depression and felt her life was useless until, in her ninth decade, the Prince of Wales invited her to set up the Temenos Academy, devoted to 'the Arts of the Imagination'. The Prince recognized Raine as a soul mate after reading copies of her journal, *Temenos*, and he urged her to take rooms in his Institute of Architecture in Regent's Park to establish a school based, in Raine's words 'on truth, beauty and goodness'. For her part, she felt protective of the Prince: 'When I saw him, I thought that *poor young man*, anything I can do for him I will, because he is very lonely.'⁸¹ The Temenos Academy was founded in 1990 and *Temenos* was re-named *Temenos Academy Review*.

In the last poem of her collection *The Lost Country* (London: Dolmen Press, 1971), Raine described how some years ago an unknown voice had told her in a dream: 'You have only 100 months to

live.’ It is said she took this tip seriously and seemed almost irritated when she survived her designated appointment with death. In her last years she was heaped with honours and in 2000 was made a Commander of the British Empire. Despite her reservations about the Catholic Church she found her way back in the end. She received the last rites from a priest before she died on 6 July 2003. Her funeral mass was celebrated in the Lady Chapel of Westminster Cathedral.

RAKESTRAW, Dr Caroline (1912–93) was born Caroline Adkins Leiding in Atlanta, Georgia, on 28 June 1912. She was educated at the University of Georgia, Atlanta Division. In the early days she was a divorced woman with a daughter to support, but in the end her indomitable strength won a victory out of this and much else.

She was a devoted Episcopalian who believed the radio should be used as a means of evangelization. During the Second World War, while serving as secretary to John Moore Walker, Bishop of Atlanta, she succeeded in persuading the bishop to make a number of radio broadcasts. Following Walker’s death in 1952, his successor wished to hire his own secretary and suggested that Rakestraw work on the radio project independently. With initial funding from Episcopal Church Women of the Southeastern United States, in 1954 she founded the Episcopal Radio-TV Foundation, working tirelessly thereafter as its executive director.

It was her idea to invite Lewis to make some recordings for broadcast during the ‘Episcopal Radio Hour’, and after Lewis agreed to talk on the Four Loves, she arranged for him to record the talks in London during August 1958. Broadcast in 1959, the talks form the basis of Lewis’s book, *The Four Loves* (1960).

In a conversation with Lewis during the recording of the broadcasts, Lewis commented that he would mostly be remembered for his Narnian tales. This gave Rakestraw the idea of obtaining film and television rights to the Chronicles of Narnia, and she was responsible for the first animated film version of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, made jointly by the Episcopal Radio-TV Foundation and the Children’s Television Workshop and broadcast in 1979. Some time afterwards she was presented with an honorary doctorate in Divinity by the University of the South. After having done

so much to make Lewis better known in the United States, Rakestraw retired as executive director of the Episcopal Radio-TV Foundation in 1980. She died in Atlanta on 29 October 1993.

REYNOLDS, Dr Barbara (1914–), Italian scholar and translator, was born in London on 13 June 1914, the daughter of Alfred Charles Reynolds. She was educated at St Paul's Girls School and University College, London, taking her Ph.D. in 1948. She was Assistant Lecturer in Italian at the London School of Economics, 1937–40, University Lecturer in Italian Literature and Language at Cambridge University, 1945–62, Warden of Willoughby Hall, 1963–9 and Reader in Italian at the University of Nottingham, 1970–8.

She was a close friend of Dorothy L. Sayers, and when Sayers died suddenly in 1957 Reynolds completed the translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy* (1962) which Sayers left unfinished. Dr Reynolds later told the story of Sayers' commitment to Dante in *The Passionate Intellect: Dorothy L. Sayers' Encounter with Dante* (1989). In recent years she has edited *The Letters of Dorothy L. Sayers* in four volumes, plus a supplementary volume of childhood memoirs. Details of *The Letters of Dorothy L. Sayers* can be found in *CL* II, p. 1072. She has written a biography of her friend entitled *Dorothy L. Sayers: Her Life and Soul* (1993). She has also translated Dante's *La Vita Nuova* and Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* for Penguin Classics. Dr Reynolds was general editor of *The Cambridge Italian Dictionary* between 1948 and 1981. In 1964 the Italian government awarded her a Silver Medal for Services to Italian Culture, and in 1978 she was made Cavaliere Ufficiale al Merito della Repubblica Italiana. She also holds three honorary doctorates. Dr Reynolds was one of the founders of the journal *VII: An Anglo-American Literary Review*, of which she was managing editor for its first twenty volumes. She is now consultant editor on Dorothy L. Sayers.

In 1939 Reynolds married Professor Lewis Thorpe (d. 1977), by whom she had a son and a daughter. In 1982 she married Kenneth Imeson (d. 1994). Her most recent work is *Dante: the Poet, the Political Thinker, the Man* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2006).

SAYER, George Sydney Benedict (1914–2005), pupil, friend and sometime Inkling, was born in Bradfield, Berkshire, on 1 June 1914, the son of Sydney Sayer and his wife Hilda Julia Frances (Payne) Sayer. Sydney Sayer was an irrigation engineer whose work often took him to Egypt. George was educated at what he described as a ‘brutal Eastbourne preparatory school’ and Trinity College, Glenalmond, in Perthshire, a ‘dull, unacademic school, that nevertheless taught him to love the Scottish countryside’.

Sayer went up to Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1933 and read English with Lewis. He was to become a teacher himself, and the flavour of Lewis’s tutorials is brilliantly captured in the preface to his biography, *Jack: C. S. Lewis and His Times* (London: Macmillan, 1988), republished as *Jack: A Life of C. S. Lewis* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1997). He converted to the Catholic Church while Lewis’s pupil, and it was almost certainly Sayer that Lewis wrote to Dom Bede Griffiths about in his letter of 8 January 1936:

‘Neo-Scholasticism’ has become such a fashion among ignorant undergrads. that I am sick of the sound of it. A man who was an atheist two terms ago and admitted into your Church last term, and who had never read a word of philosophy, comes to me urging me to read the Summa⁸² and offering me a copy!⁸³

The amusing thing about this is that Lewis made almost the same objections about Griffiths when he was his pupil seven years before. Whereas Griffiths became a Catholic in 1932 through the Benedictine Order, Sayer became a Catholic in 1935 through the influence of a Dominican friar, Fr Victor White (1902–60), Lector in Theology at Blackfriars, 1920–54.⁸⁴

Sayer was one of the few pupils Lewis invited to The Kilns, and this is how he came to know Lewis’s ‘adopted’ mother, Mrs Janie Moore, and her daughter Maureen.

Upon taking his BA in 1938 Sayer set out to be a writer. He completed two novels which remain unpublished, one of which might be *The Isle of the Undead*, mentioned in Lewis’s letter of 17 July 1953. After spending six months in Germany learning the language, Sayer translated two theological works from German: Matthias Laros,

Confirmation in the Modern World (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1938); and Herbert Doms, *The Meaning of Marriage* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1939).

His ability to speak German proved useful when the Second World War broke out. Sayer joined the army and was promoted to captain in Army Intelligence. On 21 August 1940 he married Moira Macrae Casey at the Catholic Church of the Oratory, London. Moira was born in Edinburgh on 17 June 1913, the daughter of Henry James Casey, a magistrate on the island of Guernsey. After demobilization Sayer decided to become a schoolmaster, and in 1945 he joined the staff of Malvern College, still temporarily located in Harrow because Malvern had been taken over by the Telecommunications Research Establishment. In 1949 Sayer was appointed senior English master, remaining in that post until his retirement in July 1974. Among his pupils was the future broadcaster Jeremy Paxman, who rated Sayer as the best of his teachers. Sayer, a handsome figure with a manly bearing, was described as

*a fine teacher, an inspiration to his pupils...He was never a disciplinarian because he had no need to be. Instead of sitting the boys in rows, he favoured placing them at a round table in the middle of the classroom. Essays would be returned with witty and encouraging comments inscribed in red ink, and sometimes embellished with smears of marmalade and paw prints from his cat.*⁸⁵

Soon after the college moved back to Malvern in 1946 Lewis began visiting George and Moira for several days once or twice a year at their home, 'Hamewith', 22 Alexandra Road. The Sayers had no children, and he was always their only guest. The visits included long walks over the Malvern Hills and were some of the most relaxing times in Lewis's busy life. Sayer described these visits in his essay, 'Jack on Holiday'.⁸⁶

George Sayer had long known Mrs Moore's daughter, Maureen,⁸⁷ whom he saw a good deal of at Malvern; her husband, Leonard Blake,⁸⁸ was director of music there from 1945 to 1968. Beginning in 1947, Maureen and her family changed houses with Jack and Warnie for a week each year so Maureen could look after her mother and the brothers could have a holiday in Malvern. There was an exchange of

houses from 4 to 18 August 1947, when Maureen and Leonard were in The Kilns, and Jack, Warnie and J. R. R. Tolkien stayed in the Blakes' house, 4 The Lees, Malvern. Sayer turned up with his car and offered to be their guide, and the holiday was a great success. 'Sayer,' wrote Warnie in his diary on 19 August 1947, 'has the supreme car driving virtue that he is always ready to *stop*; and stop we frequently did to drink in the beauty and peace of it all.'⁸⁹ It was during these few days together that George became friends with Tolkien.

In his 'Recollections of J. R. R. Tolkien'⁹⁰ Sayer tells how in 1952, when Tolkien was very low owing to ill-health and his impending retirement, he found a diversion in the form of a tape recorder. During a visit to Malvern in August 1952 Sayer persuaded Tolkien to record a number of poems and passages from *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*, a work which had not yet been published. Tolkien was delighted with the result, and in a letter to his publisher, Rayner Unwin, of 29 August 1952 he said: 'I have recently made some tape-recordings of parts of the Hobbit and The Lord...and was much surprised to discover their effectiveness as recitations, and...my own effectiveness as a narrator.'⁹¹ They have since become a valuable part of the Tolkien corpus.⁹²

A month after the Tolkien recordings, Lewis met Joy Gresham for the first time when he joined her and a friend of hers for lunch on 24 September 1952, and he soon returned the favour by entertaining the two women in Magdalen College. Because Warnie was unable to attend the latter occasion, Sayer took his place: 'The party was a decided success', he recalled.⁹³ But Joy was not the only woman whom Lewis was befriending at this time. During the 1950s he became close friends with the poet Ruth Pitter, who lived at Long Crendon in the Buckinghamshire countryside. On three occasions Sayer drove Lewis to Long Crendon, dropped him off at Pitter's house and collected him later. He recorded: 'After one visit in 1955, [Lewis] remarked that, if he were not a confirmed bachelor, Ruth Pitter would be the woman he would like to marry.'⁹⁴ As it turned out, of course, it was not Ruth but Joy whom Lewis would marry. When he asked Sayer's advice about a civil marriage with Joy in order that she and her sons might be able to stay permanently in England, Sayer raised objections: 'A civil marriage with Joy could not possibly be a

formality’, he wrote.⁹⁵ In the event, Lewis and Joy married at a register office in April 1956, but his friendship with Sayer did not suffer for it. Sayer’s combination of kindness and solidity made him a friend whom Lewis could have hardly done without.

In July 1974 Sayer retired as head of English, but stayed on at Malvern as librarian until July 1978. He and Moira did not enjoy the retirement long before Moira became ill with cancer. After a long illness she died on 13 July 1977. In 1983 Sayer married a widow, Margaret Cronin (1932–). It was a marriage that gave him immense happiness, particularly as he inherited thereby three children and several grandchildren. A few years later he yielded to a friend’s wish that he write a biography of Lewis. The result was *Jack: C. S. Lewis and his Times*, which is of such excellence that it has come to be the ‘standard’ biography of Lewis. Sayer intended to follow it with a biography of Warren Lewis, but in the end he decided against it.

The same honesty that made him a good biographer led him to criticize the film about Lewis’s marriage, *Shadowlands* (1993) directed by Richard Attenborough and starring Anthony Hopkins as Lewis. ‘The film keeps to the bare bones of the story,’ said Sayer,

*but de-Christianizes it...This is a most serious distortion...Anthony Hopkins was never recognizable as Lewis. Lewis had wit, a glorious sense of humour (he regarded this as one of God’s greatest gifts to man) and a rather boyish sense of fun, qualities that made him a joy to meet and a wonderful companion. Hopkins...was usually solemn and, frankly, rather dull—something that Lewis never was. He seemed to be an unhappy character suffering from an obscure sense of guilt. Lewis had none of this.*⁹⁶

Sayer had a long, slow decline, made much easier by a loving wife. He died at Perrins House in Malvern on 20 October 2005. Much of his love for Malvern College went into *Age Frater: A Portrait of a School* (1965).

SCHOFIELD, Stephen Leonard (1915–93) was born in London Ontario, Canada, on 13 July 1915, but spent his early life in Montreal. At the age of five he contracted scarlet fever, and when about eight he was diagnosed as being deaf. He attended Trinity College School in Port Hope, Ontario, after which he went to

McGill University in Montreal to study engineering. He was unable to complete his studies, but returned to McGill to study draughtsmanship, which he used in his father's firm, R & M Bearings. He decided, however, that he wanted to work on a newspaper, and in 1950 he toured England gathering human interest stories. While visiting Oxford in 1951 he met Lewis. Back in Canada he worked on *The Daily Gleaner* in Fredericton, New Brunswick. During this time he met Esther Palin of Montreal, and they were married in 1956. In 1960 they moved to England with their two children, Elaine and Ted. Their third child, Wood, was born in 1962. In 1964 Schofield published *Musketoon: Commando Raid, Glomfjord, 1942* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1964). That same year the family moved to Dunsford, Godalming, Surrey where Schofield kept horses and dogs.

There his interest in Lewis flowered, and he founded the monthly periodical, *The Canadian C. S. Lewis Journal*, which began publication in 1979. This charming man was tireless in his search for first-hand news about Lewis. Despite his profound deafness, a wealth of his interviews with Lewis's friends found their way into *In Search of C. S. Lewis*, ed. Stephen Schofield (South Plainfield, New Jersey: Bridge Publishing Co., 1983). Schofield's interest in Lewis and his world was unquenchable, and even after being diagnosed with cancer he did some of his best work with *The Canadian C. S. Lewis Journal*. He had published eighty-three issues before his death on 12 August 1993. The journal was taken over by Roger Stronstad who acted as editor until it ceased publication in 2001. Copies of *The Canadian C. S. Lewis Journal* may be found in the Bodleian Library and the Wade Center.

SCOTT, Anne Barbara (1919–97) was born Anne Barbara Renwick on 11 September 1919, the daughter of William Somerville Renwick (1887–1962) and Joan (Bayly) Renwick (1898–1978). She was living in Kenilworth, Warwickshire when, at the age of seven, her parents separated. She and her sister, Philippa, moved around a good deal, until she and her mother and sister went to live in Bath with her grandmother, and when she was fourteen they moved to London where they were to remain.

Anne was educated at Lady Margaret's School in Fulham and in 1938 went to St Anne's College, Oxford, where she read English. During her undergraduate years she attended Tolkien's lectures on *Beowulf* and Lewis's 'Prolegomena' lectures on Medieval and Renaissance literature, becoming friends with Charles Williams. When she took her BA in 1941, Lewis was one of her examiners. In a letter to Walter Hooper of 24 December 2004 her daughter, Helena Scott, said: 'According to Charles Williams, Lewis's comment on her finals papers was: "I've never wanted to give anyone a First more—she writes like an angel and thinks like a sage."'"

In his letter to Anne of 28 July 1952 Lewis said he regarded the letter she had written to him on 26 July 1952 as 'a valuable Caroline document'. Fortunately, her draft of that letter survives in the Bodleian Library (MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/7, fols. 10–14) and it includes the following account of how she came to know Charles Williams:

It was you [she said to Lewis] who, in a fashion introduced us twice over. I had never heard of him until I read in Theology your review of Taliessin through Logres.⁹⁷ I had already read, with the greatest enjoyment & admiration The Pilgrim's Regress & The Allegory of Love, & was attending, with equally great pleasure & profit, your Prolegomena to Mediaeval Literature lectures. Accordingly, I thought that if you spoke so highly of anyone he must be really good, & on seeing that he was to speak to the English Club on 'The Image of the City in English Verse', I went to hear him. I had been rather hoping that a poet who wrote about King Arthur & the Round Table would be young & romantic looking & was distinctly disappointed to find that Charles Williams was only 'the odd-looking man who always sits in the same place at Lewis's lectures & laughs at all the jokes.' And at first when he began to speak I could hardly follow the sense because of his queer & unfamiliar inflections, stresses, & treatment of words. But by the time he finished I was quite clear in my mind that nothing whatever mattered except to hear him talk again. This conviction remained unweakened during the day or two which came between his talk & your next lecture, so I got to Magdalen Hall early & took the place next to the one which was always his. When he came in and sat down I smiled at him as broadly as I could, & he at once smiled back

& began to talk as if we had been briefly interrupted in a conversation that had been going on for some time. That was the beginning of what became a more exciting & profitable friendship than I ever had or could have imagined. So I can't tell what impression your Preface⁹⁸ would make on someone who had never met him. But I am quite sure that all 'the company of those who loved him' must be immeasurably grateful to you for it.⁹⁹

Williams later told her that she was the inspiration for one of his Taliessin poems, 'The Queen's Servant', in *The Region of the Summer Stars* (1938). After taking her BA, Anne remained in Oxford a little longer and continued to see a good deal of Williams.

In 1944 she became engaged to Peter Scott (1918–78), a musician, who had just converted to Catholicism. She began instruction in the Catholic faith and later wrote: 'I found that where the Church of England said, "You may believe that if you want to, or find it beautiful or helpful," the Catholic Church said, "You've got to believe that, because it's TRUE"...As I wanted my religion to be as true as the multiplication table, this suited me down to the ground.'¹⁰⁰ Anne was received into the Catholic Church on 14 October 1944, and she and Peter Scott were married on 11 September 1945.

Soon after their marriage they went to live in Seaford, Sussex, where Anne taught English and Peter music in a school. Peter had trained under F. Matthias Alexander, and he was one of the first teachers of the Alexander technique. Their first child, Catherine, was born on 4 June 1946. In December 1947 the family moved to 3 Viewfield Road, Wands-worth, London, where seven more children were born: Elizabeth (b. 26 January 1948); Frances (b. 7 July 1950); Mary (b. 10 December 1952); Helena (b. 9 September 1954); Philip (b. 27 August 1956); Dominic (b. 17 July 1958); and Andrew (b. 23 June 1961). Peter and Anne Scott were the first married couple in England to become members of Opus Dei, a personal prelature of the Catholic Church.

In February 1967 the family moved to a larger house at 25 Corfton Road, Ealing, London. With the added space, Peter was able to take pupils in the Alexander technique at home, and, a little later, to set up a course of future teachers there. By 1978 almost all the children had left home, and when her husband died that same year, Anne had only her

son, Andrew, and her mother-in-law living with her. In July 1980 she moved with them to 24 Southmoor Road, Oxford, where she was to spend the remainder of her life. Anne regularly attended meetings of the Oxford University C. S. Lewis Society and the Charles Williams Society. She died on 16 October 1997.

SHELBURNE, Mary Willis (1895–1975), was born Mary Willis Walker in Atlanta, Georgia, in April 1895, the daughter of Herbert Thomas Walker (d. 1930). Her mother was born in Cheraw, South Carolina, and educated in Athens, Georgia. Mary Willis's grandfather, Thomas Willis Walker, was a member of the Georgia bar

The family moved to Richmond, Virginia, in 1898 where her father was the senior member of the firm of Herbert T. Walker and Son, advertising specialists.¹⁰¹ Mary Willis was educated at the Chatham Episcopal Institute, and Women's College, now Westhampton College, Richmond.

On 30 June 1920 Mary Willis married William Henry Boyer (b. 1892), a farmer, in Tazewell County, Virginia.¹⁰² They had a daughter, Lorraine Boyer, who was born on 2 April 1921. There was possibly a son, Joseph Beauregard Boyer, born in 1925 and who died 24 December 1945 in Tazewell County, Virginia. It was presumably this son who is remembered in Mary Willis's poem, 'I Watched Him Go'.¹⁰³

It is not known when William Boyer died, but Mary Willis was a widow when she married Jacob Creath Shelburne (1879–1942) of Richmond, Virginia, on 18 March 1933.¹⁰⁴ At this time, J. Creath Shelburne, as he was known, was a widower with seven children by a previous wife, Martha (Judkins) Shelburne. Mary Willis had been married for nine years when her second husband died on 29 December 1942. Her daughter, Lorraine, who was mentioned often in letters to C. S. Lewis, married Don Nostadt sometime in the 1940s.

Mary Willis and her husband had continued to live in Richmond, where in the mid-1930s Mary Willis began publishing some of her poems. By 1940 she was on the board of the Poetry Society of Virginia and a member of the Poetry Society of America. She was a regular

contributor to the quarterly journal *Poet Lore* between 1938 and 1947. The poems she published in *Poet Lore* include: 'Pluto Meditates', 44, no. 1 (1938), p. 88; 'Sand', 45, no. 1 (1939), p. 112; 'Unwilling Sojourn', 46, no. 2 (Summer 1940), p. 184; 'Released', 47, no. 3 (Autumn 1941), p. 286; 'Devotee of Grief', 48, no. 4 (Winter 1942), p. 224; and 'Cypress Swamp', 53, no. 4 (Winter 1947), p. 367. A number of her poems had appeared in various publications, including the *New York Times* and the *Saturday Evening Post*, when in June 1942 she won the Barrow Poetry Prize of the Georgia Poetry Society.¹⁰⁵ The following poem, 'Love is Like Water' appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* in April 1947:¹⁰⁶

*Love is like water; it may run
Smooth as silver under the sun;*

*Dance to the music of the wind,
Free as breath, and unconfined,*

*Sing its song in liquid, cool,
Polished depth of a woodland pool;*

*Surge with wild emotion, caught
In tumult that a storm has wrought;*

*Hold in hidden caves of wonder
Passion swift and hot as thunder,*

*Or sweep the debris all away
And love again another day.*

Mary Willis Shelburne was an Episcopalian for most of her early life, and after she moved to Washington, DC in 1946 she worked as executive assistant to the Canon Precentor of Washington Cathedral until about 1970. From 1951 she lived at 103 Sixth Street, NE, Washington, DC. After 1956 she earned what she could working from her apartment: book reviewing, translating, editing, proofreading, and doing research.

Mary Willis converted to the Catholic Church in 1951, and from then on she drew on the help of various Catholic friends. The Catholic

family she knew best was that of the writer Kenton Kilmer (1909–95), who provided a foreword to Shelburne’s single volume of verse, *Broken Pattern: Poems* (Richmond: Dietz, 1951). Kilmer, who suggested that Mary Willis get in touch with Lewis, was the son of the poet Joyce Kilmer (1886–1918) and father of the Kilmer children, to whom Lewis dedicated *The Magician’s Nephew*. They called her ‘Aunt Mary Willis’.

One of the scholars for whom she did some research, and who is mentioned in Lewis’s letter of 29 December 1958, was Fr. Louis F. Hartman, author of the *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of the Bible* (1963). Shelburne’s own work took on a Marian flavour after she became a Catholic. Her poem ‘Annunciation’ was published in a national Catholic magazine, *Sign*, XXXVI (March 1957), p. 22, and her essay ‘Courage Has Many Facets’ in *Spiritual Life: A Quarterly of Contemporary Spirituality*, 2 (Spring 1965), pp. 35–8.

As Lewis’s letters make clear, Mary Willis suffered acutely from anxiety about what she would live on. In his letter of 25 December 1958 he mentioned that his lawyer, Owen Barfield, had found a way to have his New York publishers send her money every month. This monthly stipend continued until Lewis died. When Walter Hooper visited her Washington flat at 103 Sixth Street on 26 September 1968 he found her very lonely and worried about money. She kept a plate on a table beside the door, and as he was leaving she pointed to it and said, ‘People usually put something in that.’ Despite all this she was generous: she donated her huge collection of Lewis letters to Wheaton College. Most of them were published as *Letters to an American Lady*, ed. Clyde S. Kilby (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967). By the time Mary Willis Shelburne died at her home on 25 February 1975, she had two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Her funeral mass was said at St Thomas the Apostle Church on 28 February 1975. Lorraine Nostadt died on 18 May 2004 in Manchester, Maryland.

SPENCER, Dr Seymour Jamie Gerald (1920–), psychiatrist, was born Seymour Schlesinger in London on 4 May 1920, the son of banker Gerald Leonard Schlesinger and Dorrit Rosa Henrietta (Van den Berg) Schlesinger. Seymour changed his name to Spencer in 1941. He was educated at Winchester College, 1933–8, after which

he read Medicine at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He took a BA in Medicine in 1941, followed by a BM and a B.Ch. in 1943. During the Second World War he served as a captain with the Royal Army Medical Corps, 1944–7.

After a year of postgraduate training in psychiatry at the Warneford and Park Hospitals, Oxford, Spencer continued with his studies and received his doctorate in Medicine in 1953. He served as Registrar (Psychiatry) at Warneford and Park Hospitals, 1947–51, after which he was Senior Registrar, 1951–4. Spencer served as 1st Assistant in the Department of Psychological Medicine at Durham University, 1954–8, Consultant Psychiatrist at Exeter, and Psychiatrist at Torbay Hospital, 1958–61. Dr Spencer was a consultant psychiatrist with the Oxford Area Health Authority, 1961–82, Clinical Lecturer in Psychiatry at Oxford University, 1962–91, and Consulting Psychiatrist with the Oxford Area Health Authority, 1986–91.

After retirement from full-time practice in 1982, Spencer served the NHS part time at various institutions for patients with learning disabilities and finally as psychiatrist to Sir Michael Sobell House. In 1991 he retired from this position, practising privately until 2003. He is the author of *'The Good that I Would': Impediments to Free Moral Responsibility* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1967) and many articles in learned journals.

VANAUKEN, Frank Sheldon (1914–96), teacher and writer, was born in Auburn, Indiana, on 4 August 1914, the son of Glenn and Grace Van Auken. His father was an attorney-at-law and a member of the Indiana Delegation to the 1924 and 1940 Democratic Conventions. When the boy arrived at his first school, Culver Military Academy, Culver, Indiana, he was using the name Frank S. Van Auken. Although he changed his name to 'Vanauken' only in the late 1950s, it is convenient to begin using it here.

In 1935 Vanauken matriculated at Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana, where he was to remain for three years. He had been raised a disciple of Christ but in his first year at Wabash he abandoned his faith. As he wrote in his booklet, *Encounter with Light*,¹⁰⁷ 'The beginning of my conversion was...the moment I abandoned my childhood Christianity and

became a small, fierce atheist.’¹⁰⁸ It left him happier than he had been, and a member of the college said of him:

Frank grew to like Wabash, and stayed. He impressed everyone with his intelligence and appreciation of things artistic. I’ve found no record that he left any mature writing behind. He wrote a few pieces for the school newspaper and acted in a play, but he had not yet learned to express the world of beauty that had opened itself to him as a boy, seeing those ‘bare branches against the stars.’¹⁰⁹ He discussed religion sometimes, but his serious questioning would only come later. He played no athletics; many of his weekends he spent at home. He had a pilot’s license and access to an open-cockpit biplane: presumably he spent many hours aloft, the earth and its concerns far away. Did he prefer this loneliness, like Saint-Exupéry?¹¹⁰

It was at Wabash that his autobiography, *A Severe Mercy* begins. In 1936, during his second year at college, Vanauken met Jean Palmer ‘Davy’ Davis (b. 1914), a freshman from New Jersey. They fell passionately in love and married in September of 1936.¹¹¹ The marriage was kept a secret and the couple had to live apart until Vanauken could graduate. From the beginning Vanauken and Davy devised what they called ‘The Shining Barrier’. Although it was intended to insulate their marriage from the world, it turned out to have its dangers. Vanauken said:

Creeping separateness and sharing were opposite sides of one coin. We rejected separate activities, whether bridge or shooting or sailing, because they would lead to creeping separateness; on the other hand, if one of us liked anything, the other, in the name of sharing, must learn to like it, too...If children could be raised by a nanny, we sharing them for a few hours each day...children might be a good. But in the pattern of modern life, where they became the centre for the woman, they were separating. We would not have children...We decided that each of us must read every book, even children’s books, the other had read; and we did so...We therefore commenced an immense effort...to see and understand the very different points of view; it is not too much to say that I learnt to think like a woman and she like a man.¹¹²

In 1938 Vanauken graduated from Wabash College with a BA in English. Though his father wanted him to be a lawyer, Vanauken had

his eye on an academic life, and for a while he found himself in a Westinghouse factory working on electrical engines.¹¹³ Vanauken joined the navy in March 1941 and was sent as a US naval lieutenant-commander to Pearl Harbor, where he was stationed when it was bombed by the Japanese on 7 December 1941.

On leaving the navy in November 1945 Vanauken went to Yale University with Davy. He graduated with a MA in General Studies in 1948. That same year he joined the faculty of Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, Virginia, as an assistant professor of history. Two years later he was granted a leave to study at Oxford, and he matriculated at Jesus College, Oxford, in Michaelmas Term 1950. After casting about for a research subject, Vanauken eventually began a B.Litt. thesis on 'English Sympathy for the Southern Confederacy'.¹¹⁴ He was to continue working on this after his return to the United States, and was awarded a B.Litt. degree *in absentia* on 23 November 1957.¹¹⁵

Vanauken and Davy were agnostics when they arrived in Oxford, but it was not long before they felt it was time for a 'long-postponed second look'.¹¹⁶ They read a number of Lewis's books and in December 1950 Vanauken wrote to Lewis about the muddle he was in. Lewis replied on 14 December 1950, addressing him as 'Van Auken', the name he was still using. Besides reading widely in theology, Vanauken and Davy began attending services at Oxford's most evangelical Anglican church, St Ebbe's. Their doubts began melting away, and in January 1951 Davy became a Christian. 'The Shining Barrier,' said Vanauken, 'came into my mind, mostly as an awareness of danger ahead if we remained a house divided.'¹¹⁷ However, he became a believer in March of that year.¹¹⁸ When they told Lewis what had happened, he replied on 17 April 1951: 'My prayers are answered.' Later that month Lewis invited Vanauken to dine at Magdalen, and soon afterwards he met Davy and Vanauken on a number of occasions. A few days before they returned to the USA, Vanauken had lunch with Lewis at the Eastgate Hotel, across the road from Magdalen College. After saying goodbye in front of the hotel, Lewis plunged into the traffic and made it to the pavement opposite. As Vanauken recalled:

When he reached the pavement on the other side, he turned round as though he knew somehow that I would still be standing there in front of the Eastgate. Then he raised his voice in a great roar that easily overcame the noise of the cars and buses. Heads turned and at least one car swerved. ‘Besides,’ he bellowed with a great grin, ‘Christians NEVER say goodbye!’

The Vanaukens returned to Lynchburg College at the end of 1952 and Sheldon resumed teaching as Professor of History and English. Both were keen to share their new-found faith with the students and a ‘Christian group’ gathered at their house to discuss theological matters. During these sessions the students were allowed to read the originals of Lewis’s letters to Vanauken, made more legible by the fact that Vanauken printed Lewis’s words in small letters above the handwriting.

In 1954, after being back in Virginia for two years, Vanauken was offered a post at Wabash College. He decided to accept and resigned his position at Lynchburg College. Then, in July 1954, when bracing themselves for the move, Davy became ill and was admitted to the University Hospital at Charlottesville, Virginia. Shortly afterwards it was confirmed that she was seriously ill with a virus in her liver. They abandoned their plans to go to Wabash, and Vanauken was rehired by Lynchburg College.¹¹⁹ For many months Vanauken drove back and forth between Lynchburg and Charlottesville, caring for his beloved wife. He later said that during her months in hospital, Davy was ‘a tower of strength to everybody else’.¹²⁰ She died on 17 January 1955.

As he struggled with this terrible loss, Vanauken sought Lewis’s advice. In Oxford he had been careful not to let Lewis know about the ‘Shining Barrier’. Now, writing to Lewis in April 1955 Vanauken told him about the ‘Barrier’ and the fact that, because he himself could not have a baby, Davy was not allowed to have one. Vanauken appears to have had himself sterilized. Lewis was appalled. In his letter of 8 May 1955 he insisted that ‘One flesh must not...“live to itself” any more than the single individual. It was not made, any more than he, to be its Own End. It was made for God and (in Him) for its neighbours...’

Vanauken knew he had been wrong. ‘After this severe and splendid letter,’ he said, ‘I loved Lewis like a brother. A brother and father combined.’¹²¹ When Vanauken visited Lewis in Oxford on 26 March

1957 he learned that Lewis had just married a dying woman. Later, when Lewis's wife had recovered, Vanauken described the emptiness left by Davy's death as 'the Second Death'—an experience characterized in Lewis's letter of 27 November 1957 as a 'second bereavement...which bereaves one of the bereavement itself'. Over the next few years they corresponded about Lewis's short but happy marriage. Vanauken had a last meeting with Lewis on 11 November 1963, a few weeks before he died.¹²²

From about 1960 on Vanauken got caught up in the civil-rights and anti-war movements that were to play a huge part in the colleges and universities of the United States during the 1960s and early 1970s. As a result of his views on segregation, he left the Episcopal Church he had been attending and joined an ecumenical body called The Church of the Covenant, which in 1961 published *Encounter with Light*. Vanauken described his part in civil-rights movement in an autobiographical piece, 'Putting the Neighbour First: The Idealistic Years', and his concern about the war in Vietnam in 'Putting the Neighbour First: The Angry Years', both of which are found in *Under the Mercy*.¹²³ In the 1960s Vanauken became a 'keen feminist',¹²⁴ and while all these things were going on around him, he wrote his only novel. It was published years later as *Gateway to Heaven*¹²⁵ and the author's feminism is particularly evident. Vanauken was so absorbed by these movements that he lost interest in Lewis; after donating Lewis's letters to him to the Bodleian Library in 1969 he promptly forgot that he had done so.

In 1975 Vanauken felt a 'recall to the Obedience'¹²⁶—that is, obedience to Christ. After re-reading Lewis's letters (of which he had kept copies) he knew God 'commanded' him to write *A Severe Mercy*.¹²⁷ In *Under the Mercy* he described how he had expected it to take years to write *A Severe Mercy*, but that soon after he began writing in June 1976 it turned out to be such 'joyous work'¹²⁸ that the whole thing took only seventy-eight days. The book was published in London by Hodder & Stoughton in 1977 to huge acclaim. A few days after its publication he burnt the letters and diaries which had gone into its construction. Looking back over the years, he said:

*A Severe Mercy had a totally unlooked-for effect on my life...it bridged the two halves of my life, the first half with Davy, the second without her. Anyone might have thought in the late '60s...that the second half of my life was altogether divorced from the first half and could continue to diverge. But now A Severe Mercy: it was about the first half and it was written in and experienced (as a book) in the second half. The two halves had become one story. The theme of my life with Davy became the theme of my whole life.*¹²⁹

Even before the halves came together, Vanauken was unhappy with what the 'Secularizers' were doing in the Episcopal Church, especially ordaining women to the priesthood. He retired from teaching in 1980, but continued to live in Lynchburg, Virginia. After much thought he was received into the Catholic Church on 15 August 1981. The story of his conversion is told in his essay, 'The English Channel'.¹³⁰ Seven years later Vanauken was to have a very happy surprise. After he came to know Davy she revealed that when she was fourteen she had had a baby girl out of wedlock. Marion, as she was called, was given up for adoption, and over the years Davy and Vanauken had often wondered what happened to her. As she grew up, Marion became interested in finding her real mother, and while she searched for her mother, Vanauken had begun searching for her. In his account of this story, 'The Little Lost Marion', Vanauken explains how, in 1988, they found one another through a movement that attempted to put adopted children in touch with their natural parents.¹³¹ Marion read about her mother in *A Severe Mercy*, and soon after she met Vanauken he became like a father to her. Vanauken died on 28 October 1996.

WARNER, Francis (Robert Le Plastrier) (1937–), poet and dramatist, was born in Bishopthorpe, Yorkshire, on 21 October 1937, the son of the Rev. Hugh Compton Warner (1903–55)¹³² and Nancy Le Plastrier (Owen) Warner (1902–92).¹³³ His parents arrived in Oxford in 1922 to read 'Greats', Hugh Warner a member of Oriel College, and Nancy Owen a member of Lady Margaret Hall. They met at several Student Christian Movement conferences at Swanwick, Derbyshire, and by the time they took their BA degrees in 1927 they were engaged to be married. Hugh read Theology at

Westcott House, Cambridge, 1928–9, married Nancy on 19 September 1929, and was ordained a priest on 21 December 1930.

While Hugh was serving his curacy at Christ Church, Luton, between 1930 and 1932, he and Nancy had the first of their six children, David Hugh, b. 21 February 1932.¹³⁴ The others are Andrew Compton (b. 20 July 1935);¹³⁵ Francis; Martin Michael (b. 27 September 1940);¹³⁶ Margaret Anne ‘Megan’ (b. 4 September 1943);¹³⁷ and Alison (b. 24 January 1948).¹³⁸

In 1932 Hugh Warner was invited by Archbishop William Temple (1881–1944) to become Vicar of Bishopthorpe, Yorkshire, and his personal chaplain. Hugh had been impressed by the Archbishop’s ‘brilliant intellect and straightforward faith’¹³⁹ when he met him in 1923, and he accepted. Besides running his parish, he was to assist Archbishop Temple at the Coronation of King George VI on 12 May 1937.

Francis was born at the end of his father’s time as Vicar of Bishopthorpe. In 1938 Warner was persuaded to move to Epsom, south of London, where he served as Vicar of St Martin’s from 1938 until 1950. Before he left, William Temple—who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1942—made Warner his permanent chaplain. Excepting three months after the house next door to the vicarage received a direct hit, Francis spent ‘the entire six years of the Second World War in Epsom...five of them under intermittent air attack beneath the flight path of the main German bombers and rockets.’¹⁴⁰

The Warner family was especially proud of Hugh, who during the war slept out in the garden in an Anderson shelter so he could dash off to the scene of action even before the sirens had ceased their alarm.¹⁴¹ Among the many war-time parishioners who became friends of Francis was the artist John Piper (1903–92). Piper’s mother, Mary Piper, was a close friend of Francis’s maternal grandmother, Amy Owen, and Piper often sheltered with his mother at the vicarage during air raids.

In January 1947 Francis became a schoolboy at Christ’s Hospital, Horsham, and a little later a chorister in the Christ’s Hospital Chapel Choir. He remained there until 1954, when he went to the London College of Music to study conducting and composition. That same year he took the Cambridge Entrance Choral Trial for King’s College Choir, in the course of which he was auditioned for a choral

scholarship by the organist of King's, Boris Ord (1897–1961). He was unsuccessful, but with Ord's recommendation he won a Choral Exhibition to St Catharine's College, Cambridge. Meanwhile, Hugh Warner became a canon of Guildford Cathedral in 1948, and in 1950 he was appointed Education Secretary to the Church of England Moral Welfare Council. The new job meant a move to Dorking in Surrey. To the consternation of his family and many others, Hugh, after only five years in his new job, died of cancer on 1 July 1955. 'Love was his vocation,' his wife wrote of him.¹⁴²

Thereafter St Catharine's College, where Francis matriculated in 1956, was to be another home for the rest of his life. His tutor in English was Thomas Rice Henn, who had been an undergraduate at St Catharine's and English tutor since 1926.¹⁴³ When, in 1957, Francis felt that Edward Elgar's centenary was not being observed with the appreciation it deserved, he founded the Cambridge University Elgar Centenary Choir and Orchestra. While still an undergraduate, he produced *The Dream of Gerontius*¹⁴⁴ in Ely Cathedral on 16 November 1957, with an audience of over 600 people.¹⁴⁵ Not long afterwards he conducted his own rescoring of Arthur Honegger's *King David* in King's College Chapel on 28 February and 1 March 1958.¹⁴⁶ Despite all this, he took his English Tripos in 1958 and 1959 and received his BA in 1959.

Warner was appointed a supervisor in English Literature at St Catharine's from 1 October 1959. Shortly before that Lewis began supervising him for his postgraduate thesis in July 1959. The young man's subject was 'A Bibliographical Edition of the Latin text of *De Occulta Philosophia* by H. Cornelius Agrippa [1533], edited together with a revision of the translation of the text published by J.F. in 1651'. Warner was to be Lewis's last pupil, and pupil and teacher were ideally suited. 'I went regularly, on Wednesday mornings,' said Warner,

to Professor Lewis's rooms in Magdalene to show him my week's work on the text of Agrippa...I would knock on his door at 10.30, and we would sit at an angle together, neither facing nor side by side, until 12.45...He would make me note down references neither of us knew, and in the intervening week each of us would look them up, and compare our answers the following Wednesday. He was fascinated by

*this chasing of sources for the innumerable quotations, and was awe-inspiringly well-read. I, for my part, paid particular attention to the bibliographical side, the alternative readings in the folio copies of this work I was laboriously collating letter by letter...He cheered me on: 'Praestat difficilior lectio'*¹⁴⁷ he would say again and again.¹⁴⁸

It was during this time that Lewis's wife died and he began to suffer ill health. While awaiting an operation, Lewis wrote to Warner on 27 October 1961: 'I've told the Board to appoint you a new supervisor, but if I'm well enough to come up in January I'll be happy to resume on C. Agrippa.' In the end, he was not able to get to Cambridge that term and on 5 January 1962 Dr Frederick James Edward Raby, Fellow and Lecturer at Jesus College, Cambridge between 1948 and 1955, took over the supervision of Warner's thesis.¹⁴⁹ By the time Nancy Warner wrote to Lewis about the Narnian stories in October 1963, it was clear he would never be able to go back to Cambridge, and in his reply he said: 'Remember me to your third son...He is not only a very promising scholar but the best mannered man of his generation I have ever met.'¹⁵⁰

Agrippa was not the only link between Lewis and his last pupil. In 1961 he offered Warner detailed advice about yet another aspect of the young man's creativity—his long narrative poem, *Perennia* (Cambridge: Golden Head Press, 1962).¹⁵¹ Six months later Lewis gave advice about the poems that went into Warner's second volume of verse, *Early Poems* (London: Fortune Press, 1964). Yet another volume of verse, *Experimental Sonnets* (London: Fortune Press, 1965), coincided with Warner's appointment to a Fellowship in Oxford.

While it must have been a wrench to leave Cambridge, in 1965 Warner was elected Fellow and Tutor in English Literature at St Peter's College, Oxford, and there he would stay for the next thirty-four years. He was extraordinarily fortunate in his first generation of pupils, three of whom took Firsts in 1968. There were no age limits to Warner's sympathies, and as a member of the English faculty he came to know many of Lewis's Oxford colleagues, including Nevill Coghill, with whom he played cello in Coghill's Sunday evening quartet in Merton,¹⁵² Lord David Cecil,¹⁵³ and the poet Edmund Blunden,¹⁵⁴ who returned to Oxford in 1966 as Professor of Poetry. It was a glorious time to be reading English at Oxford, and Warner certainly

did his part. Besides his tutoring, Warner was a University Lecturer, 1966–99; Vice-Master of St Peter's College, 1987–9; Dean of Degrees, 1984–2006; and Pro-Proctor of the University three times, 1989–90, 1996–7 and 1999–2000.

Francis Warner's literary output has been copious and awe-inspiring. He was to follow Nevill Coghill in his contribution to the theatre, most noticeably with his sixteen plays. They are best appreciated, not by following the chronological order of publication, but in historical order of content. All are published by Colin Smythe of Gerrards Cross. *Agora: An Epic* (1994) is made up of *Healing Nature: The Athens of Pericles* (1988); the 'Roman Trilogy': *Virgil and Caesar* (1993), *Moving Reflections* (1983), *Light Shadows* (1980); and then *Byzantium* (1990). It continues with the 'Europa Tetralogy': *Living Creation* (1985), set in Medici Florence; *King Francis I* (1995); *Rembrandt's Mirror* (2000); and *Goethe's Weimar* (1997), which is followed by *A Conception of Love* (1978). It concludes with the twentieth-century plays: *Maquettes: A Trilogy of One-Act Plays* (1972), followed by the 'Requiem Trilogy': *Lying Figures* (1972), *Killing Time* (1976) and *Meeting Ends* (1974).

Warner's other works include *Collected Poems 1960–1984* (1985) and *Nightingales: Poems, 1985–1996* (1997). Two recent anthems, with words by Warner and music by David Goode, have recently been written for, and performed by, King's College Choir and St Catharine's College Choir, Cambridge.

By the time Warner retired in 1999 he had received many foreign honours. It is unlikely that any meant more to him than his election as Emeritus Fellow of St Peter's College in 1999 as well as an Honorary Fellowship at his beloved St Catharine's College, Cambridge. He was made a Doctor of Literature by the University of Oxford in 2002 for his sixty-fifth birthday. But Warner's best treasures are not academic. On 6 August 1958 he married Mary Hall and they had two daughters, Georgina (b. 4 December 1962) and Lucy (b. 7 November 1967). That marriage was dissolved in 1972; on 2 July 1983 Warner married Penelope Davis (b. 16 Oct. 1954), by whom he had two children, Miranda (b. 28 March 1985) and Benedict (b. 10 Feb. 1988). For details of his life and works see his two autobiographical poems, *By the Cam and the Isis 1954–2000* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe,

2005), and the studies by his former student, Glyn Pursglove, *Francis Warner and Tradition* (1981) and *Francis Warner's Poetry: A Critical Assessment* (1988).

WILLEY, Basil (1897–1978), Professor of English, was born in Willesden, London on 25 July 1897, the son of William Herbert Willey and Alice Ann (Le Gros) Willey. He was educated at University College School, Hampstead, and in 1915 he won a scholarship to Peterhouse, the oldest of the colleges that make up Cambridge University. As with most men of his generation, his adolescence was overshadowed by the First World War. Almost as soon as he arrived at Peterhouse in December 1915 he was selected for training as an officer. As it turned out, he was posted to his own college, which was being used for military training. He served with the West Yorkshire Regiment from 1916 to the end of the war. He was captured in March 1918, and spent the later part of the war as a prisoner of the Germans. His experiences in the army are recorded in his autobiography, *Spots of Time: A Retrospect of the Years 1897–1920* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1965).

Upon demobilization, Willey returned to Cambridge. After taking a First in History in 1920, he moved on to the English Tripos. This subject had been established in Cambridge in 1911, the year after Arthur Woollgar Verrall (1851–1912) had been made the first King Edward VII Professor of English. Verrall was followed in 1912 by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (1863–1944), who was to have enormous influence on those reading English. Willey took a First in English, along with his fellow-student F. R. Leavis,¹⁵⁵ in 1921. He won the Le Bas prize with an essay, *Tendencies in Renaissance Literary Theory* (1922), and in 1923 was appointed a university lecturer. The same year he married Zélie Merlis Ricks, and they were to have two sons and two daughters. It was an exceptionally happy marriage, and undoubtedly contributed to Willey's many achievements.

There were few Fellowships in English to be had and Willey's election to a Fellowship at Pembroke College, Cambridge, in 1934 coincided with the publication of his first major work, *The Seventeenth Century Background: Studies in the Thought of the Age in Relation to*

Poetry and Religion (1934), in which he was concerned to show how poetry and religion were affected by contemporary 'climates of opinion'. The final chapter of the book, 'Postscript: On Wordsworth and the Locke Tradition' was of particular interest. Willey went on to write *The Eighteenth Century Background: Studies on the Idea of Nature in the Thought of That Period* (1940), in which the central theme was the 'divinization of Nature'. This was followed by two volumes of *Nineteenth Century Studies: Coleridge to Matthew Arnold* (1949), and *More Nineteenth Century Studies: A Group of Honest Doubters* (1956).

Following the death of Quiller-Couch in 1944, Willey's contribution to the study of English was eventually rewarded by his election to the King Edward VII Professorship in 1946. This appointment was not always an easy one for Willey, who had been brought up a Christian, because of certain anti-Christian tendencies of the English School at Cambridge; his difficulties prefigured those that Lewis would experience there ten years later.

By this time the Cambridge faculty had become a collection of individual talents, with F. R. Leavis and his followers a source both of stimulus and contention. In 1932 Leavis became the director of studies in English at Downing College, and a Fellow of the College in 1935. During his years at Downing he established an unofficial 'English School' thought by some to rival the provision of the official English faculty. 'Willey made some attempts,' said John Beer, 'in fact, to bring about a reconciliation between F. R. Leavis and the rest of the Faculty', but the task proved too much for his mediating powers:

Both, in their differing ways, were devoted to 'English', with all that that term might suggest: they stood strongly, that is, for the belief that English literature was valuable for its ability to teach human beings about the life they lived. For Leavis, however, the old tradition, based largely on the Classics and Christianity, was no longer valid: true moral guidance must now be sought in the qualities of great writers such as Shakespeare, Jane Austen or George Eliot, who had expressed a refined intelligence that transcended the limitations imposed by traditional codes, so offering human beings a way of living in the world which would be surer than that afforded by swimming along in

*the old European stream. Willey, by contrast, never lost his faith in the old ways, feeling it rather to be his task to rediscover links with the past and forge new ones if necessary.*¹⁵⁶

Following his retirement, when less inhibited, Willey insisted that it was to the lasting credit of the Leavisites that they ‘did keep the flag of the true faith bravely flying’.¹⁵⁷ The pity was, he said, that ‘The original faith had been liberal, tolerant, genial; theirs was fanatical, intolerant and ascetic.’¹⁵⁸

Despite the tribulations in the English School, a feature of post-war Cambridge was a renewed interest in Christianity, and when the Faculty of Theology invited Willey to give a series of lectures entitled ‘Christianity, Past and Present’ in Michaelmas Term 1950 he found himself with his largest-ever audience. In the course of his lectures Willey admitted that he was not, perhaps, doctrinally sound, but he said in conclusion:

*The essential thing as I see it, is that Christianity, throughout all its changing doctrinal formulations, has remained a spiritual communion and community within which, and for Christendom within which alone, redemption is to be sought and found. It is because I am convinced that in this, its real function, it has a greater part to play than ever before, that I am so anxious to base its claims only on what I believe to be unshakable foundations. I am not seeking to water down the faith of those who already believe; I am merely saying to those who may be in a position like my own: let no theological scandal block your way towards Christian regeneration.*¹⁵⁹

Willey was one of the Electors who persuaded Lewis to accept the Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English, and in a letter to Walter Hooper of 25 September 1970 he said: ‘During the negotiations, I tried to move him by saying “Come over into Macedonia & help us!”’¹⁶⁰ With his quick wit, & readiness of literary allusion, he at once retorted “I prefer to regard you as Aufidius!”’¹⁶¹

The men had much in common besides the study of English: while Lewis served as a member of the Commission to Revise the Psalter, Willey served on the literary panel of those translating the *New English Bible* (the New Testament appeared in 1961, and the whole Bible in 1970). But perhaps one of the most valuable contributions he made to

the English School at Cambridge was to continue a course of lectures started by Quiller-Couch in 1927 on 'The Moralists'. As Willey explained in his book, *The English Moralists*:

*The moralists are writers who tried to make explicit the moral values and attitudes of their time, or who have criticized the current valuations; and in studying them we are doing something quite relevant to the study of literature. The subject-matter of literature, after all, happens to be Life, and conduct makes up, if not three fourths of life as Matthew Arnold said...at any rate a very considerable part of it.*¹⁶²

After he retired in 1964 Willey remained a devoted member of Pembroke College, where he had been President from 1958 to 1964, and he and his wife visited their cottage in Clappersgate in the Lake District. Willey served the cause of literature through his work as Chairman of the Dove Cottage Trust. This humble and just man had come to know Lewis's friend, Delmar Banner, who lived nearby, and Banner's drawing of Willey is reproduced in the *Proceedings of the British Academy*, LXVI (1982), Plate XVII. Eventually his powers failed and he died on 2 September 1978.

WILLINK, Sir Henry Urmston, 1st Baronet (1894–1973), politician and academic administrator, was born in Liverpool on 7 March 1894, the elder son of William Edward Willink (1856–1924), architect, and his wife, Florence Macan (Urmston) Willink (d. 1933). He was educated at Eton College, where he won a scholarship to Trinity College, Cambridge. However, when the First World War broke out in 1914 he volunteered before he could take his degree. He was commissioned captain and acting major in the Royal Field Artillery, gaining the MC, the Croix de Guerre, and mention in dispatches.

Willink was called to the Bar, Inner Temple, in 1920, where he was a pupil of William Allen Jowitt (1885–1957), the future Lord Chancellor. On 11 December 1923 he married Cynthia Frances Fletcher, and they had two sons and two daughters. Willink took silk in 1935 and became a bencher of the Inner Temple in 1942.

In 1938 Willink contested Ipswich for the Conservatives and although he was unsuccessful, he became a Member of Parliament after winning a by-election at Croydon North in June 1940. He was appointed special commissioner for the homeless in London, a post he held throughout the heaviest German bombing of the Second World War. In November 1943 he was appointed Minister of Health. By the time Willink took up his post, Conservative and Labour ministers serving in Churchill's coalition government had agreed to the principle of a free health service. In February 1944 this agreement was reflected in the publication of a White Paper. Willink regarded this as a consultative document, and he opened fresh negotiations with various interested parties, making early legislative action unlikely. Under pressure from the British Medical Association Willink hinted at modifications to the White Paper, notably over the fate of the hitherto fee-paying 'voluntary' hospitals. As relations between the coalition partners deteriorated in the final months of the war, Willink faced accusations from Labour MPs that he had 'surrendered' to the doctors. Willink held his parliamentary seat in spite of heavy Conservative losses as Labour swept to power at the general election in 1945.

After suffering from a period of ill health Willink was appointed Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, with effect from January 1949. He resigned his parliamentary seat at the end of 1948. He never regretted his decision and it was at Magdalene, where he remained master until 1966, that he was happiest. He was created a baronet in 1957. His colleague, J. F. 'Jock' Burnet, said of him in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*:

He had a well-cultivated mind and a commanding presence. He read widely and was a witty conversationalist. Architecture, music, and travelling were among his many interests, and he was devoted to his large family. But with all his wisdom, wit, and charm he was in some ways strangely diffident, vulnerable, and never fully confident of his own considerable abilities. Willink was a popular master and resisted unnecessary change, taking pride in preserving Magdalene's special character. He presided over a very successful appeal to raise funds for what was the least well endowed of the ancient Cambridge colleges. It

was a special joy to him when the fellows prolonged his tenure of the mastership for two years beyond the normal retiring age of seventy.

Towards the end of this period Willink had a coronary thrombosis, from which he recovered. He became an honorary Fellow of Magdalene in 1966. He served the university on the Council of the Senate (1951–60) and was Vice-Chancellor (1953–5). Willink's first wife, Cynthia Frances, died in 1959 and on 8 August 1964 he married Mrs Doris Campbell Preston. Sir Henry died in Cambridge on 1 January 1973. He was succeeded in the baronetcy by his elder son, Charles William Willink (b. 1929). See the obituary by J. F. Burnet in the *Oxford DNB*.

YOUNG, the Reverend Andrew John (1885–1971), poet and clergyman, was born on 29 April 1885 at the Highland Railway Station, Elgin, Moray, the youngest of the four children of Andrew John Young and Maria (Adams) Young. He read moral philosophy at Edinburgh University, 1903–07, after which he prepared for the ministry in the United Free Church of Scotland at New College, Edinburgh.

Throughout these early years Young was writing poetry. Some early verses, *Songs of Night*, were published by his father in 1910. On completing his studies in 1912 he became an assistant at Wallace Green church in Berwick upon Tweed before obtaining a charge as minister at the United Free church at Temple in Midlothian (1914–19). After the war he became minister at the Presbyterian church in Hove, where he remained from 1920 to 1938. During the 1920s and 1930s Young wrote a succession of slim volumes of short reflective verses, seven of which were published between 1920 and 1931 by a bookseller friend, J. G. Wilson.

His reputation as a poet of the first rank was made in the thirties with *Winter Harvest* (1933), meditations on religion and nature. In this collection he found a distinctive voice which was enhanced by his intimate knowledge of botany. He consolidated his reputation with his *Collected Poems* (1936) and the modern mystery play *Nicodemus* (1936). Young became friends with George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, and in 1939 he converted to the Church of England. In 1941 he

obtained the rural parish of Stonegate, Sussex, where he remained until his retirement in 1959. He died on 25 November 1971.

ZERNOV, Nicholas (1898–1980) was born in Moscow into a family strongly linked to the Russian Orthodox Church on 9 October 1898. In 1917 he entered the University of Moscow but his studies were interrupted by the accession of the Communists. As his country was dragged into the revolution the family fled to the Caucasus, and then to Constantinople. In 1921 they moved to Yugoslavia where Nicolas enrolled in the Theology Faculty at Belgrade University. While in Belgrade he took part in the creation of the Russian Student Christian Movement, founded in 1923 with the help of the international Student Christian Movement.

Until this time Zernov had no experience of non-Orthodox Christians, but his attitude changed dramatically during his first visit to England in July 1923 when he attended an SCM conference. This brought him into contact with Christian life in other churches, as a result of which he found his true vocation: work for Christian unity. It was while at this conference that he had the idea of founding the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, a society which promotes cooperation and theological discussions between Anglicans and Orthodox. On graduating in theology in 1925 Zernov moved to Paris to work with the Russian SCM. While in Paris he met Militza Lavrova (b. 1899), a doctor by training, who had fled Russia at the same time as he. They were married on 14 October 1927. Militza shared to the full Nicolas's hopes and dreams, and theirs was to be a very happy marriage.

The Zernovs went to Oxford in 1930 where Nicolas wrote a doctoral dissertation on 'The Unity of the Church and the Reunion of the Churches'. After taking his doctorate in 1932, he served for thirteen years as secretary of the Society of St Alban and St Sergius, during which time the fellowship began publishing a journal, *Sobornost*. In 1947 he resigned to take up the position of Spalding Lecturer in Eastern Orthodox Culture in the University of Oxford, a Chair founded by his friend H. N. Spalding.¹⁶³ In 1965 he was elected to a Fellowship at St Cross College.

Ever since their first visit to Oxford the Zernovs had felt the need for a residential centre to promote East–West contacts, and in 1959 the House of St Gregory and St Macrina was opened in Canterbury Road, Oxford, with Zernov as its warden. In 1966 the University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. He and his wife continued to live in Oxford. He died on 25 August 1980. See ‘Nicolas Zernov (1898–1980)’ with a full bibliography by Kallistos Ware in *Sobornost*, 3, no. 1 (1981), pp. 11–38. For obituaries of Militza Zernov, who died 4 February 1994, see *Sobornost*, 16, no. 1 (1994), pp. 38–47.

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About the Author and the Editor

CLIVE STAPLES LEWIS (1898–1963) was one of the intellectual giants of the twentieth century and arguably the most influential Christian writer of his day. He was a Fellow and Tutor in English Literature at Oxford University until 1954 when he was unanimously elected to the Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English at Cambridge University, a position he held until his retirement. His major contributions in literary criticism, children’s literature, fantasy literature, and popular theology brought him international renown and acclaim. He wrote more than thirty books, allowing him to reach a vast audience, and his works continue to attract thousands of new readers every year. His most distinguished and popular accomplishments include *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Out of the Silent Planet*, *The Four Loves*, *The Screwtape Letters*, and *Mere Christianity*.

WALTER HOOPER is the literary adviser to the estate of C. S. Lewis and the author of *C. S. Lewis: A Companion and Guide*.

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1 *CL* I, p. viii.

² Lewis wrote of this in detail in *AMR*, pp. 201–8.

[3](#) *SBJ*, ch. 13, p. 157.

⁴ *ibid.*

5 Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey* (1818), ch. 25.

[6](#) *SBJ*, ch. 13, p. 156.

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 160.

[8](#) *CL* II, pp. 905–6.

⁹ *Of This and Other Worlds*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Fount, 1984; HarperCollins, 2000), 'It All Began with a Picture...', p.64.

[10](#) *CL* II, p. 221, letter of 25 January 1938.

[11](#) *ibid.*, p. xi.

[12](#) *Of This and Other Worlds*, p.64.

[13](#) *ibid.*, 'Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's to be Said', pp. 57–8.

14 Mrs Moore died at Restholme on 12 December 1951.

[15](#) See p. 66.

[16](#) See p. 150.

[17](#) Many of these letters are preserved in the Bodleian Library (MS. Eng. c. 5369).

[18](#) *The Spectator*, 193 (1 October 1954), p. 405.

[19](#) Helen Gardner, 'Clive Staples Lewis 1898–1963', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, LI (1965), p. 425.

20 *ibid.*

[21](#) Roger Lancelyn Green and Walter Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: A Biography* (London: Bles, 1974; rev. edn, HarperCollins, 2002), ch. 12, p. 340.

[22](#) See p. 268.

[23](#) See p. 1464.

[24](#) See p. 1429.

[25](#) *The Horse and His Boy* (1954), ch. 11.

[26](#) See p. 834.

¹ See **Roger Lancelyn Green** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1039–43. Green was the primary reader and critic of Lewis’s Narnian stories.

² For information about the writing of the Narnian stories see Roger Lancelyn Green and Walter Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: A Biography* (London: Bles, 1974; rev. edn HarperCollins, 2002), ch. 11.

³ This is a letter of reference for Lewis's former pupil, Jonathan Francis 'Frank' Goodridge, whose biography appears in *CL* II, p. 936n. Goodridge was applying for the position of Senior Lecturer in English at St Mary's College, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, London. He taught at St Mary's College, 1950–65. See Goodridge's comments on this testimonial in *CSL: The Bulletin of the New York C. S. Lewis Society*, Whole No. 75 (Jan. 1976), p. 13.

4 This is one of those occasions on which Lewis misspelled his pupil's name.

⁵ This was the Oxford University Socratic Club, founded in 1941 by Stella Aldwinckle with Lewis as its first president. See **Stella Aldwinckle** in the Biographical Appendix. The club's purpose was to discuss the pros and cons of Christianity, and it met weekly during term-time. Goodridge was secretary of the Socratic Club, 1947–8. For a history of the club see Walter Hooper, 'Oxford's Bonny Fighter' in *Remembering C. S. Lewis: Recollections of Those Who Knew Him*, ed. James T. Como (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005). This book was previously published as *C. S. Lewis at the Breakfast Table* (1979; new edn, 1992).

[6](#) See the biography of George Rostrevor Hamilton in *CL* II, p. 707n.

⁷ Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus), *Satires*, II, vi, 65: 'O nights and suppers of gods!' Horace (65–8 BC) was one of the greatest of the Roman poets.

[8](#) Claudian, *De Raptu Proserpinae*, II, 282–3: ‘There are other stars for us.’ Pluto speaks the phrase, attempting to calm Persephone’s weeping, telling her that he is a person of importance and that there is an upside to being in the underworld.

⁹ The word *planta*—‘a young tree’—appears in Virgil, *Georgics*, II, 23.

[10](#) See **Owen Barfield** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* I, pp. 979–82. Barfield was one of Lewis's oldest friends and also his lawyer.

[11](#) 'ritual'.

[12](#) John Masefield (1878–1967), Poet Laureate 1930–67.

[13](#) See the biography of Nathan Comfort Starr, Professor of English at the University of Florida in Gainesville, in *CL II*, p. 809n. His essay on Lewis, 'Good Cheer and Sustenance', appears in *Remembering C. S. Lewis*.

[14](#) Lewis's group of friends, the Inklings, met regularly every Tuesday morning in the Eagle and Child ('Bird and Baby') pub in St Giles.

[15](#) p.p. See Abbreviations.

[16](#) Sarah Neylan (later Tisdall) was Lewis's eleven-year-old goddaughter. See **Mary Neylan** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1054–5.

¹⁷ Rhona Bodle, from New Zealand, arrived in England in 1947 to study the education of deaf children. That same year she began teaching at Oakdene School for girls in Burgess Hill, Sussex. In December 1947 she began reading Lewis's *Broadcast Talks* (London: Bles, 1942) and this led her to write to him. She became a Christian in 1949. See her biography in *CL* II, p. 823n. Her notes to Lewis's letters are in the Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 200/4.

[18](#) See **Charles Walter Stansby Williams** (1886–1945) in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1081–6.

[19](#) Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* (1590, 1596), I, xi, 45, 6: 'It chaunst (eternal God that chaunce did guide)'.

[20](#) See **Sister Penelope CSMV** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1055–9.

[21](#) In 1948 Sister Penelope began asking Lewis's advice about a story she was writing, to be called 'The Morning Gift'. She was never able to find a publisher. It is first mentioned in Lewis's letter to Sister Penelope of 8 April 1948 (*CLII*, p. 848).

[22](#) This was probably a reference to Sir Herbert Butterfield's *Christianity and History* (London: Bell, 1949).

[23](#) Sister Penelope's *St Bernard on the Love of God, De Diligendo Deo*, newly translated by A Religious of C.S.M.V. (London: Mowbray, 1950).

²⁴ In a letter of 29 November 1944 to his son Christopher, Professor J. R. R. Tolkien said that he and Lewis ‘begin to consider writing a book in collaboration on “Language” (Nature, Origins, Functions)’ (*The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, ed. Humphrey Carpenter (1981), p. 105). By 1948 it had got as far as being called *Language and Human Nature* in an announcement of forthcoming books from the Student Christian Movement, who expected it to be published in 1949. In the end, it was never written. Emperor Augustus used ‘on the Greek Kalends’ for ‘Never’.

[25](#) Edward A. Allen and his mother, Mrs Belle Allen, lived at 173 Highland Avenue, Westfield, Massachusetts. They were very generous to the Lewis brothers, and sent them numerous parcels of food over the years. For the beginning of the correspondence see Lewis's letter to Allen of 3 January 1948 (*CL II*, p. 827).

[26](#) John Strachey (1901–63), a British Socialist writer and Labour politician, who served as Minister of Food, 1946–50.

[27](#) Vera Mathews (later Gebbert) was living at this time at 510 North Alpine Drive, Beverly Hills, California. She supplied the Lewis brothers with vast quantities of food during the lean years following the war.

[28](#) See **Edward Thomas Dell**, Jr in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, p. 1025. At this time Dell was a student at Eastern Nazarene College, Wollaston, Massachusetts.

[29](#) In a letter of 12 December 1949 Dell had asked whether 'evil is an illusion'. Lewis replied on 19 December 1949: 'I don't think the idea that evil is an illusion helps. Because surely it is a (real) evil that the illusion of evil shd. exist. When I am pursued in a nightmare by a crocodile the pursuit and the crocodile are illusions: but it is a real nightmare, and that seems a real evil' (*CL* II, p. 1010). Continuing the discussion, Dell asked in a letter of 26 January 1950: 'If the illusion of the crocodile is evil isn't it so because of man's sin rather than a basic relationship set up either by an evil or uncontrolled by a finite God?' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fols. 89–90).

[30](#) Nothing is known of this American nun who, it appears, wanted to know why Lewis was not a Roman Catholic.

[31](#) See **Nicolas Zernov**, Spalding Lecturer in Eastern Orthodox Culture in the University of Oxford, in the Biographical Appendix.

³² Henry Norman Spalding (1877–1953), philanthropist. In his early life Spalding came across a book about the history of India which kindled in him an interest in the Far East. He settled in Oxford and devoted himself to the attempt to cultivate better relations between the West and the East by fostering scholarly approaches to the history, art, religion and philosophy of Oriental countries. He was so impressed by the work of Nicolas Zernov that in 1965 he founded the Spalding Lectureship in Eastern Orthodox Culture, with Zernov as its first holder.

[33](#) Mrs Frank Jones, who was still sending food parcels to Lewis, wrote from 320 Brookside Road, Darien, Connecticut.

[34](#) *The Problem of Pain* (London: Bles, 1940; HarperCollins, 2002).

35 The Old Testament.

[36](#) Mr Lake had presumably asked Lewis about the association of planetary intelligences and *eldila* with angels in his interplanetary trilogy, *Out of the Silent Planet* (London: John Lane, 1938), *Perelandra* (London: John Lane, 1943) and *That Hideous Strength* (London: John Lane, 1945). Lewis was later to write about these angels or daemons in *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), ch. 3, pp. 40–2.

[37](#) For years Lewis had been publishing some of his poems under the pseudonym Nat Whilk (or N.W.)—Anglo-Saxon for ‘I know not whom’. In *Perelandra* (1943; HarperCollins, 2000), ch. 1, p. 13, he quotes a note on the *eldila* or angels by one ‘Natvilcius’, which is Latin for ‘Nat Whilk’.

[38](#) See **Daphne Harwood** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1050–1. Mrs Harwood, the wife of Cecil Harwood, had not been well.

[39](#) i.e., her husband.

[40](#) Bede (c. 673–735) established the date of Easter in his *De Temporum Ratione* (written in 725).

[41](#) Christopher Fry, *The Lady's Not For Burning* (1949).

[42](#) John, the Harwoods' eldest son, was Lewis's pupil at Magdalen College. See his biography in *CL II*, p. 300n.

43 Sylvia was one of the Harwoods' daughters.

[44](#) See the biography of Walter Ogilvie 'Woff' Field in *CL* II, p. 572n. Field, like Cecil Harwood, was a teacher at Michael Hall School, Kidbrooke Park, Forest Row, Sussex.

⁴⁵ See **Roger Lancelyn Green** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1039–43. At this time Green was living at 119 Woodstock Road, Oxford,

[46](#) Lewis's original title for what became *Prince Caspian: The Return to Narnia* (1951) was 'A Horn in Narnia' (since it was Queen Susan's magic horn which drew the children back to the rescue of Prince Caspian).

[47](#) See **Lady Freud** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1033–6. June Flewett (known familiarly as ‘Jill’) had been evacuated to Oxford at the beginning of the Second World War, and ended up living at The Kilns during 1943–5, helping Mrs Moore and the Lewis brothers. After graduating from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London, in 1947, she became an actress, using the screen name Jill Raymond.

48 Warnie was in Restholme on this occasion.

49 Bruce was Mrs Moore's elderly dog.

[50](#) This letter was published in *The Times Literary Supplement* (3 March 1950), p. 137, under the title 'Text Corruptions'.

[51](#) William Shakespeare, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, ed. John Dover Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921).

[52](#) William Shakespeare, *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1594), V, iv, 90. References to Shakespeare in the present volume are to William Shakespeare, *Complete Works*, ed. W. J. Craig, Oxford Standard Authors (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1905).

[53](#) Shakespeare, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, ed. Dover Wilson, p. 103.

[54](#) See **Dr Warfield M. Firor** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1031–2.

[55](#) On 24 February 1950 the British Labour Party won the general election, with Clement Attlee (1883–1967) returning as Prime Minister.

[56](#) William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (1603), IV, iv, 36–9.

[57](#) 'masterpiece'.

58 'way to arrive'.

[59](#) Green had written a blurb for the cover of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (London: Bles, 1950), but in the end it was not used.

[60](#) See the biography of Geoffrey Bles in *CL* II, p. 554n. Bles, Lewis's publisher, was the owner of Geoffrey Bles Ltd, London.

[61](#) Milton Waldman (1895–1976) was born in the United States and educated at Yale University. After serving with the US Army, 1917–19, he moved to England where he spent his life in publishing. He was assistant editor of *The London Mercury*, 1924–7, before becoming a literary advisor to the publishers Longmans Green, 1929–34, and then William Collins, 1939–52. He was joint managing director of Rupert Hart-Davis Ltd, 1952–3, and literary advisor to Collins, 1955–69. During his years with Collins he edited the Golden Hind and Brief Lives series. Waldman was the author of *Americana* (1925), *Elizabeth of England* (1933), and *The Lady Mary: A Biography of Queen Mary I* (1972).

62 The King's Arms public house on the corner of Holywell Street and Parks Road.

[63](#) See **George** and **Maira Sayer** in the Biographical Appendix.

[64](#) In a letter of 3 April 1950 Dell said: 'I have been reading your *Allegory of Love* with great interest. It has occurred to me to wonder whether the present-day lack...of a depth of love between men so often seen in the middle ages could be part of the cause for the male lack of interest in God' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol. 91).

[65](#) In the same letter Dell asked: 'I am a bit confused on a point. You say in "Membership"... that "all biological life (will be)...extinct"...But nonetheless I remember that your view of immortality in *Miracles* includes animals...Now, will only part of Nature then be redeemed when we, please God, "ride those greater mounts...with the King" and what we know as Bios be gone and Zoe reign in the "more organic" Nature?' (ibid., fols. 91-2).

66 'existence'.

[67](#) *The Problem of Pain*, ch. 9, pp. 145–6: ‘Supposing, as I do, that the personality of the tame animals is largely the gift of man—that their mere sentience is reborn to soulhood in us as our mere soulhood is reborn to spirituality in Christ—I naturally suppose that very few animals indeed, in their wild state, attain to a “self ” or *ego*. But if any do, and if it is agreeable to the goodness of God that they should live again, their immortality would also be related to man—not, this time, to individual masters, but to humanity.’

[68](#) Dell asked: 'In reading the new translation of St. Athanasius' *Incarnation of the Word of God* by your friend at "Wantage" [Sister Penelope]...I have wondered about an intimation on p. 28... that Athanasius may have assumed that God superimposed the Word or His image on the animal form of man. Do you think St. Athanasius was merely using a convenient way of speaking to describe a difference between man and animals or that he saw man as a progressively developed animal that was finally "made in the image" of the Word?' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol. 92). Dell was referring to *The Incarnation of the Word of God, Being the Treatise of St. Athanasius 'De Incarnatione Verbi Dei'*, trans. 'A Religious of C.S.M.V.' (London: Bles, 1944).

In *Against the Heathen*, 33, St Athanasius distinguishes between humans, who have immortal souls, and animals, who do not: 'These things simply prove that the rational soul presides over the body. For the body is not even constituted to drive itself, but it is driven by another's will, just as a horse does not harness himself, but is driven by his master. Hence laws for human beings to practise what is good and to abstain from evil-doing, while for animals evil remains unthought of and undiscerned, because they lie outside rationality and the process of understanding. I think then that the existence of a rational soul in man is proved by what we have said...O God, You have given us an immortal soul which distinguishes us from irrational creatures. Help us all to safeguard it from evil influences and everything that tarnishes it and turns it away from You.'

[69](#) See **Dom Bede Griffiths OSB** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1043–9. Griffiths, Lewis’s former pupil, had been prior of the Benedictine abbey at Farnborough since 1947.

[70](#) Dom Bede Griffiths, 'Catholicism To-day', *Pax: The Quarterly Review of the Benedictines of Prinknash*, XL, no. 254 (Spring 1950), pp. 11–16.

[71](#) See the biography of Dr Robert Emlyn ‘Humphrey’ Havard in *CL* II, p. 182n. Havard was Lewis’s doctor and an Inkling. As an oblate of Ampleforth—a lay member of the Benedictine order—he probably met Griffiths while visiting Farnborough Abbey.

72 '[He is] pure spirit'.

[73](#) Griffiths, 'Catholicism To-day', p. 13.

⁷⁴ The classical definition of natural law is found in St Thomas Aquinas: ‘The natural law is nothing other than the light of understanding placed in us by God; through it we know what we must do and what we must avoid. God has given this light or law at the creation’ (*Collationes in decem praeceptis*, 1). The chief New Testament text on which natural law is based is Romans 2:14–15: ‘When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts’ (RSV). Lewis devoted the first book of *Mere Christianity* (London: Bles, 1952) to natural law, and in *The Abolition of Man* (London: Oxford University Press, 1943; Fount, 1999), ch. 1, pp. 11–12, he defines it as ‘the doctrine of objective value, the belief that certain attitudes are really true, and others really false, to the kind of thing the universe is, and the kind of things we are’. See the section on natural law in *CG*, pp. 586–96.

[75](#) Romans 7:12–13: ‘The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.’

[76](#) Lewis was referring to the belief in ‘salvation by faith and faith alone’, as understood by the Protestant Reformers, and St Paul’s statement in Galatians 2:16: ‘Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.’

[77](#) As president of the Oxford University Socratic Club, Lewis was present at its meeting on 10 November 1947 when Ronald Grimsley read a paper on 'Existentialism', later published in the *Socratic Digest*, no. 4 [1948], pp. 66–77.

[78](#) Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme* [*Existentialism Is a Humanism*] (1945).

[79](#) On the philosophical theory of Bishop George Berkeley, see *CL II*, p. 703, n. 21.

[80](#) On 3 November 1947 Lewis read a paper to the Socratic Club entitled 'A First Glance at Sartre'. A brief summary of the paper, which was a critique of Sartre's *L'Existentialisme est un Humanisme*, is found in Walter Hooper, 'Oxford's Bonny Fighter', *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, pp. 160–1.

[81](#) In his letter to Dom Bede Griffiths of 5 July 1949 (*CL* II, pp. 953–4), Lewis mentions hearing the French Catholic philosopher Gabriel Marcel (1889–1973) give a lecture to the Oxford University Socratic Club on 18 February 1948. ‘It is definitely *not* my philosophy,’ commented Lewis.

[82](#) See Marcel's 'theism and personal relationships' in *Socratic Digest*, No. 4, pp. 78–9.

[83](#) In her note to this letter Bodle said: 'I had received bad and completely unexpected news from home' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol. 247).

84 Dr Firor had invited Lewis to spend a holiday with him at his cabin in the Rocky Mountains.

85 i.e., his responsibility for taking care of Mrs Moore.

[86](#) While Lewis was preparing to spend a fortnight in Ireland with Arthur Greeves during the summer of 1949, Warnie went on a binge and the holiday was cancelled. See the letter to Greeves of 2 July 1949 (*CL II*, pp. 952–3).

[87](#) William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra* (1623), V, ii, 87–8.

[88](#) George John Romanes (1848–94) was born in Canada and moved with his family to London in 1850. After reading Medicine and Physiology at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, he decided to devote his life to scientific research. This led to a lifelong friendship with Charles Darwin. Romanes was, at the same time, a man of strong religious convictions. In 1891 he provided for the Romanes Lectureship, the oldest and most famous of Oxford's lectures. It is delivered once a year on a subject relating to science, art or literature. See Ethel Romanes, *The Life and Letters of George John Romanes* (1896). Lewis was asked to deliver the Romanes Lecture at the end of his life.

[89](#) Mrs Maude M. McCaslin, wife of Alston Jones McCaslin, was writing from Europa, Mississippi.

[90](#) 'The Wood that Time Forgot' is a novel by Roger Lancelyn Green. Although it was written before *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* it remains unpublished because it would seem to owe too much to Lewis's *Lion*.

[91](#) *BF*, p. 233.

[92](#) See **Arthur Greeves** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* I, pp. 993–6.

[93](#) Matthew 6:28–30; Luke 12:27–8: ‘Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?’

[94](#) See **Cecil Harwood** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL I* (pp. 998–1000). Harwood, one of Lewis's oldest friends, was an anthroposophist and a teacher at Michael Hall School, Kidbrooke, Forest Row, East Sussex.

[95](#) Virgil, *Aeneid*, II, 61: 'prepared for either thing'.

[96](#) In *SBJ*, ch. 13, p. 155, Harwood is described as ‘a pillar of Michael Hall’.

[97](#) The Bellman was the captain of the ship in Lewis Carroll's *The Hunting of the Snark* (1876). In Fit the Second, stanzas 5–8, the Bellman persuades his crew that a blank sheet of paper makes an ideal chart of the open sea. 'This was charming, no doubt: but they shortly found out/That the Captain they trusted so well/Had only one notion for crossing the ocean,/And that was to tingle his bell./...And the Bellman, perplexed and distressed,/Said he *had* hoped, at least, when the wind blew due East,/That the ship would *not* travel due West!'

98 Harwood had written to tell Lewis that his wife, Daphne, was dying of cancer.

[99](#) Lewis had published a poem, 'As One Oldster to Another' under the pseudonym 'N.W.' in *Punch*, CCXVIII (15 March 1950), p. 295. Mr Dixey wrote to compliment him on his use of Alcaics, a four-line stanza using a predominantly dactylic metre named after the Greek poet, Alcaeus. A slightly revised version of the poem appears in *Poems* (1974) and *CP*.

[100](#) Ernest H. Shepard (1879–1976), a cartoonist for *Punch*, illustrated ‘As One Oldster to Another’ and other of Lewis’s poems. Shepard also illustrated all A. A. Milne’s Winnie the Pooh books.

[101](#) In 1942 Lewis had Owen Barfield set up a charitable trust into which Lewis directed all his royalties. It was named 'Agapony' 'or 'Agapargyry' or 'The Agapargyrometer' = love + money. The money was available for whoever might be in need, with preference given to widows and orphans. For details see *CL II*, p. 483.

[102](#) While protecting Lewis's confidentiality, Barfield devoted a chapter to the Agapony in his book *This Ever Diverse Pair* (1950).

[103](#) Harwood had written to say that he had received some money from the Agapony fund.

[104](#) See **Stella Aldwinckle**, founder of the Socratic Club, in the Biographical Appendix.

[105](#) As president of the Oxford University Socratic Club, Lewis was suggesting in his letter to Aldwinckle a list of people she might ask to speak at the club, along with possible topics.

[106](#) Gilbert Ryle (1900–76), philosopher, was Waynflete Professor of Metaphysical Philosophy and Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, 1945–68.

[107](#) Henry Habberley Price (1899–1984), philosopher, was educated at Winchester College and New College, Oxford, where he took a First in Classics in 1921. In 1924 he was elected a Fellow and lecturer in Philosophy at Trinity College, Oxford, where he remained until 1935. In that year he was elected Wykeham Professor of Logic and moved to New College where he remained until his retirement in 1959. He was a frequent speaker at the Socratic Club. See his biography in the *Oxford DNB*.

[108](#) i.e., an admirer of Jean-Paul Sartre.

[109](#)—Francis Joseph ‘Frank’ Sheed (1897–1981), publisher and author, was born in Sydney, Australia, and read law at Sydney University, taking his BA in 1917. In 1920 he went to London where he came across the recently formed Catholic Evidence Guild, devoted to out-of-doors speaking to explain the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. He was bowled over by the excitement of the Guild’s task, and he joined. There he met Mary ‘Maisie’ Josephine Ward (1889–1975), and they were married in 1926. That same year Frank and Maisie founded a publishing firm, Sheed and Ward. In 1933 they opened an office in New York, through which Sheed and Ward became the most influential Catholic publisher in the English-speaking world. Maisie died on 28 January 1975 and Frank on 20 November 1981.

[110](#) Christopher Dawson (1889–1970), cultural historian, was born at Hay, Brecknockshire, on 12 October 1889 and educated at Winchester College and Trinity College, Oxford, taking his degree in 1911. He had sufficient means to be able to follow his own highly original path of historical research and reflection. His first book, *The Age of the Gods* (1928), was the result of fourteen years of research. His second, *Progress and Religion* (1929), articulated the major theme of his subsequent writings, that religion is the dynamic of all social culture. *The Making of Europe* (1932) discussed a specific case of this, showing that the ‘dark ages’ were in fact the most creative period in the culture of the Western world. Dawson developed the topic further in his Gifford Lectures for Edinburgh University, *Religion and Culture* (1948), about which Lewis wrote to him on 27 September 1948 (see Supplement). Dawson became a Roman Catholic shortly after going down from Oxford and was an influential member of the group of writers which formed around the Catholic publishing house of Sheed and Ward. Dawson’s achievements were mainly overlooked by the academic world. He was eventually offered a chair in the United States at Harvard where he was Professor of Roman Catholic Studies, 1958–62. He died on 25 May 1970.

[111](#) Henry Fitzgerald Heard (1889–1971), science writer and philosopher, was educated at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, after which he lectured for Oxford University's extramural studies programme, 1926–9. He took a strong interest in developments in the sciences and his *The Ascent of Humanity* (1929) marked his first foray into public acclaim. He served as a science and current affairs commentator for the BBC, 1930–4. In 1937 he moved to the United States, accompanied by Aldous Huxley, to accept the chair of Historical Anthropology at Duke University. His most famous book, *The Five Ages of Man*, was published in 1963. He died on 14 August 1971.

[112](#) Aldous Leonard Huxley (1894–1963), English novelist, won a scholarship to Balliol College, Oxford where in 1916 he took a First in English. His first novel, *Crome Yellow* (1921), was followed by others satirizing contemporary society through characters who flout convention. While in Italy he wrote *Brave New World* (1932). His move to California in 1937 coincided with a move away from his ‘philosophy of meaninglessness’ to something more transcendental and mystical. The books that followed, such as *Brave New World Revisited* (1958), spelt out the temptations presented by life in the modern world with its materialist values and dangerous technological advances. Huxley died on the same day as John F. Kennedy and Lewis—22 November 1963.

[113](#) This was probably Fr John Philip Gleeson, who took a B. Litt. from Campion Hall in 1951.

[114](#) Gertrude Elizabeth Margaret Anscombe (1919–2001), philosopher, was born on 18 March 1919 at Glanmire, North Strand, Limerick. Her conversion to Catholicism as a teenager led to a lifelong interest in philosophy. She was educated at St Hugh's College, Oxford, where she took a First in Greats in 1941. The following year she moved to Cambridge where, as a research student, she became the pupil of Ludwig Wittgenstein. In 1936 she returned to Oxford as a Research Fellow at Somerville College. She was a Fellow of Somerville, 1964–70, and Professor of Philosophy, Cambridge University, 1970–86. She died on 5 January 2001. On her debate with Lewis about *Miracles: A Preliminary Study* (London: Bles, 1947) see her biography in *CG*.

[115](#) Colin Hardie, one of the Inklings, was Classical Tutor at Magdalen College, Oxford. See **Colin and Christian Hardie** in the Biographical Appendix.

[116](#) New Testament.

[117](#) The Rev. Dr Austin Farrer was Chaplain and Tutor of Trinity College, Oxford. See **Austin and Katherine Farrer** in the Biographical Appendix.

[118](#) Basil Mitchell (1917–), philosopher, was educated at the Queen’s College, Oxford, where he took a BA in 1939. He was Fellow and Tutor in Philosophy at Keble College, Oxford, 1947–67, and Nolloth Professor of Philosophy of the Christian Religion, Oxford University, 1968–84. An active member of the Socratic Club, he followed Lewis as its president in 1955.

[119](#) Alfred Jules Ayer (1910–89), Wykeham Professor of Logic at Oxford, 1959–78, was a proponent of logical positivism, and the author of *Language, Truth and Logic* (1936).

[120](#) On 2 February 1948 Elizabeth Anscombe gave a paper to the Socratic Club on Lewis's *Miracles* entitled 'A Reply to Mr C. S. Lewis's Argument that "Naturalism" is Self-Refuting'. It was published in the *Socratic Digest*, no. 4 (1948) and is reprinted in her *Collected Philosophical Papers*, Vol. II, *Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Mind* (1981). Anscombe's argument concerned the nature of causation, one of its crucial points being that Lewis should have distinguished in chapter 3 of *Miracles* between 'irrational causes' and 'non-rational causes'. Lewis accepted that he might have made his argument clearer and this he attempted to do by revising chapter 3 for the Fontana paperback of *Miracles*. See the letters to Jocelyn Gibb of 11 July and 8 August 1959.

[121](#) Professor Dorothy Emmet (1904–2000), philosopher, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Manchester, 1946–66.

[122](#) Jill had become engaged to the writer Clement Freud, and their engagement was announced in *The Times*: 'Clement Raphael third son of Ernst and Lucie Freud of St Johns Wood London to June Beatrice second daughter of H. W. Flewett M.A. and Mrs Flewett of Gipsy Lane London SW15.'

[123](#) This note was added later in Lewis's hand. Jill sent him a copy of the Wilton Diptych, the full title of which is *Richard II Presented to the Virgin and Child by his Patron Saint John the Baptist and Saints Edward and Edmund*. The diptych was painted between 1395 and 1399, and is in the National Gallery, London. It is called the Wilton Diptych because it came from Wilton House in Wiltshire, the seat of the Earls of Pembroke. Lewis treasured this gift all his life, and had it with him in Magdalene College, Cambridge, during his years there.

[124](#) Arthur's cocker spaniel.

[125](#) Mrs D. Jessup was writing from 66 Milton Road, Rye, New York.

[126](#) A house-maid.

[127](#) Virgil (70–19 BC), *Aeneid*. Lewis probably read the *Aeneid* more often than he did any other book.

[128](#) Green and Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: A Biography*, ch. 11, p. 310.

[129](#) Griffiths was planning to visit Oxford.

[130](#) Mathews wrote to Lewis on 24 June 1950: 'I'm in the midst of ARTHURIAN TORSO at the moment, but am having trouble with the pronunciation. How *does* one pronounce TALIESSIN and BROCELIANDE? Did you ever complete the idea for a children's story you wrote me about?' (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 191), Lewis, presumably, meant the second, not third, syllable of Brocelliande.

While Lewis was referring to the imminent publication of *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, Mathews was probably remembering a comment in his letter of 17 September 1949: 'A good idea for a (children's) story...arrived this morning' (CL II, p. 980), this being the second Narnian story, *Prince Caspian*.

[131](#) 'Pray for us'.

[132](#) Mark 4:5–6: ‘There went out a sower to sow. And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.’

[133](#) When in 1935 Oxford University Press conceived the idea of the mammoth *Oxford History of English Literature* (OHEL), Lewis was asked to contribute a volume covering the sixteenth century. He had been working on what was to be *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama* (1954) since 1936 and he was spending every available minute in the Bodleian Library trying to complete it. He called it his 'O Hell!' volume.

[134](#) Acts 2:1–9: ‘And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting...They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language...Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia.’

[135](#) Ralph E. Hone was writing from 39 Leicester Square, London.

[136](#) See **Chad Walsh** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1078–81.

[137](#) Daphne Harwood died on 14 July 1950.

[138](#) Lewis was John Harwood's tutor at Magdalen College, and John had just taken a fourth-class degree in Schools.

[139](#) See **St Giovanni Calabria** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1036–9. Don Giovanni Calabria was the founder of the Congregation of Poor Servants of Divine Providence in Verona. In 1947 he read *The Screwtape Letters* in Italian. Wishing to write to Lewis about his books and about Christian unity, but not understanding English, he began corresponding in Latin. Most of the correspondence between Lewis and Don Calabria was published as *Letters: C. S. Lewis–Don Giovanni Calabria: A Study in Friendship*, trans. and ed. Martin Moynihan (London: Collins, 1989). Unless otherwise stated, the letters were translated into English by Moynihan (see his biography in *CL* II, p. 615n). There is also an Italian edition of the correspondence, with some additional letters between Lewis, St Giovanni Calabria and Don Luigi Pedrollo, entitled *Una Gioia Insolita: Lettere tra un prete cattolico e un laico anglicano*, ed. Luciano Squizzato, trans. Patrizia Morelli (Milan: Jaca Book SpA, 1995). Those additional letters appear in the present volume.

[140](#) *Le Problème de la Souffrance*, trans. Marguerite Faguer, with an introduction by Maurice Nédoncelle (Bruges: Desclées de Brouwer, 1950).

[141](#) In *Una Gioia Insolita* Luciano Squizzato (p. 156, n. 92) notes that both Lodetti and Arnaboldi denied ever having received this volume, and that no copies can be found in St Giovanni Calabria's private library. Calabria was at this time seriously ill; Fr Pedrollo, who answered this missive, was deeply concerned for his friend's health, and may have simply been vague about the books; apparently, Lewis just sent one to him (see Lewis's letter of 12 September 1950). For biographical information on Dr Romolo Lodetti see *CL II*, pp. 821–2. Fr Paolo Arnaboldi (1914–98) was the founder of FAC, a Catholic movement in part inspired by Calabria's books *Apostolica vivendi* and *Amare* (see Squizzato, pp. 262–3); incidentally, these were the books Calabria sent to Lewis in the autumn of 1947 (see *CL II*, p. 807).

[142](#) Maurice Nédoncelle (1905–1976), philosopher and lecturer in Theology at the Faculty of Theology in Strasburg.

[143](#) Probably a reference to Mrs Moore's continued decline.

[144](#) He was referring to his Preface in *Essays Presented to Charles Williams* (1947).

[145](#) i.e., of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

[146](#) For an account of the wedding see Clement Freud, *Freud Ego* (2001), pp. 99–100.

[147](#) In her note to this letter, written on 4 October 1972, Bodle explained that she was wondering whether to take a German boy, Franzel, to New Zealand. 'He didn't go,' she said. 'He now has a doctorate & is on the staff of a German university' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol, 247).

[148](#) See **Don Luigi Pedrollo** in the Biographical Appendix. Fr Pedrollo, a member of the Congregation of Poor Servants of Divine Providence in Verona, was answering on behalf of Don Giovanni Calabria. This letter first appeared in *Una Gioia Insolita* and was translated by Dr C. M. Bajetta.

[149](#) Towards the end of his life (after 1949) St Giovanni Calabria was affected by a mysterious illness, which underwent a particularly acute phase in 1950. After a period of relief, following the Pentecost of 1951, his infirmity worsened and he died in 1954.

[150](#) Horace, *Carmina*, I, 24, 1–2: ‘Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus/tam cari capitis?’: ‘Why blush to let our tears unmeasured fall/For one so dear?’.

[151](#) i.e., Geoffrey Bles.

[152](#) See the biography of Anne Ridler, friend of Charles Williams, in *CL* II, p. 658n, and Anne Ridler's *Memoirs* (2004).

[154](#) Charles Williams. Ridler criticised Williams's use of 'shend' in a Taliessin poem.

[155](#) See **Martyn Skinner** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1072–3.

[156](#) Martyn Skinner, *Two Colloquies* (1949).

[157](#) 'Collections' are examination papers set by college tutors for their pupils. They take place either at the end of term (in which case students are tested on their work during the term) or at the beginning of term (on work set for the preceding vacation). In Magdalen, in Lewis's day, Collections usually took place in Hall.

[158](#) School Certificate examinations; for a definition see *CL I*, p. 612.

[159](#) Skinner, *Two Colloquies*, 'The Lobster and the Thatch', 49.

[160](#) *ibid.*, 332.

[161](#) *ibid.*, 'The Recluse', Part I, 13.

[162](#) Alfred, Lord Tennyson, 'Milton', 9.

[163](#) Skinner, *Two Colloquies*, 'The Lobster and the Thatch', 220.

[164](#) *ibid.*, 239–43: ‘The sudden clatter of cutlery and crockery/As sliding through the ham the
knife’s thin edge/Turns half to rose its honey-coloured wedge;/Or where the bronze pork sizzles
still with heat/Clicks through the crackling to white mines of meat.’

[165](#) John Milton, *Works*, vol. IV (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), *Of Education*, p. 286.

[166](#) Skinner, *Two Colloquies*, 'The Recluse', Part II, 28.

[167](#) *ibid.*, 'The Lobster and the Thatch', 433.

[168](#) King George I's comment, 'I hate all Boets and Bainters' is found in John Campbell, *Lives of the Chief Justices* (1949), 'Lord Mansfield'.

[169](#) See **Harry Blamires** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, p. 1024. Blamires had been head of the English Department at King Alfred's College, Winchester, since 1948.

[170](#) Blamires had asked Lewis, his old tutor, to read and criticize his book *English in Education* (London: Bles, 1951).

171 'between ourselves'.

[172](#) 'Best professional judgement'.

[173](#) *Beowulf*, I, xviii, 1206: 'He was asking for trouble'.

174 The letter was unsigned.

[175](#) See **Mary Willis Shelburne** in the Biographical Appendix. She is the author of *Broken Pattern: Poems* (Richmond: Dietz Press, 1951).

[176](#) Harriet Elizabeth Beecher Stowe. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1851–2), ch. 21: “Do you know who made you?” “Nobody, as I knows on,” said the child, with a short laugh. The idea appeared to amuse her considerably, for her eyes twinkled, and she added—“I ’spect I growed. Don’t think nobody never made me.”

[177](#) *The Imitation of Christ* is a manual of spiritual devotion first circulated in 1418 and traditionally ascribed to Thomas à Kempis (c. 1380–1471). Lewis nearly always read this work in Latin, and when quoting it in English, he used his own translation.

[178](#) The edition of this work used by Lewis was *The Scale of Perfection by Walter Hilton, Augustinian canon of Thurgarton Priory, Nottinghamshire*, modernized from the first printed edition of Wynkyn de Worde, London, 1494, by an oblate of Solesmes; with an introduction from the French of Dom M. Noetinger (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne Ltd [1927]).

[179](#) In her letter of 20 November 1950 Mathews wrote: 'I came upon such a beautiful message today by Fra Giovanni (an extract from a letter, Anno Domini 1513) that I simply must pass it on to you' (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 199). She went on to quote from Fra Giovanni Giocondo (c. 1435–1515), *A Letter to the Most Illustrious the Contessina Allagia Dela Aldobrandeschi, Written Christmas Eve Anno Domini 1513* (193?). In 1970 the British Museum stated that it was impossible to identify Fra Giovanni. The letter was published, probably in the 1930s, 'with Christmas greetings' from Greville MacDonald, son of George MacDonald, and his wife Mary. It is reprinted in various dictionaries of quotations.

[180](#) Hermann Wilhelm Goering (1893–1946), German Nazi military leader, creator of the Luftwaffe, the German Air Force, directed the German wartime economy. In 1939 he was named Hitler's successor, but he later lost favour and in 1943 he was stripped of his command. 'Guns will make us powerful,' Goering said in a radio broadcast in 1936, 'butter will only make us fat.'

[181](#) George Bernard Shaw, *The Doctor's Dilemma* (1906).

[182](#) See **Ruth Pitter** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1060–4.

[183](#) *The Case for Christianity* (New York: Macmillan, 1943) was the American edition of *Broadcast Talks*.

[184](#) *Beyond Personality* (London: Bles, 1944; New York: Macmillan, 1945).

[185](#) J. B. Phillips, *Letters to Young Churches: A Translation of the New Testament Epistles* (1947). See Lewis's letter to Phillips of 3 August 1943 (*CL II*, pp. 585–6).

[186](#) Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876); *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884).

[187](#) William Shakespeare, *King Henry V* (1600), IV, iii, 55.

[188](#) Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24.

[189](#) John 6:53.

[190](#) i.e., in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

[191](#) 1 Corinthians 12:12: 'For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.'

[192](#) Mark 16:17–18: ‘These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name...they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.’

[193](#) See **Sheldon Vanauken** in the Biographical Appendix. Vanauken's 'Notes on the Letters' are in the Bodleian Library (MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fols. 152b–c).

[194](#) Sheldon Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1977), ch. 2, p. 38.

[195](#) *ibid.*, ch. 4, pp. 87–8.

[196](#) G. K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man* (1925).

[197](#) Lewis uses the Chinese word 'Tao' in *The Abolition of Man* to mean natural law or morality.

[198](#) The Rev. R. B. Gibbon, a relative of Arthur Greeves, was writing from Ballinderry Road, Easton, Maryland, USA.

[199](#) i.e., *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

[200](#) Rudyard Kipling, *The Seven Seas* (1896), 'McAndrew's Hymn', II, 17–18: 'Hail, snow an' ice that praise the Lord: I've met them at their work,/An' wished we had anither route or they anither kirk.'

[201](#) In his second letter to Lewis, Vanauken said: ‘My fundamental dilemma is this: I can’t believe in Christ unless I have faith, but I can’t have faith unless I believe in Christ...Everyone seems to say: “You must have faith to believe.” Where do I get it? Or will you tell me something different? Is there a proof? Can Reason carry me over the gulf...without faith? Why does God expect so much of us?...If He made it clear that He is—as clear as a sunrise or a rock or a baby’s cry—wouldn’t we be right joyous to choose Him and His Law?’ (Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 4, pp. 90–1)

[202](#) The Eleatic school of philosophers was founded by the Greek poet Xenophanes (born c. 570 BC), whose main teaching was that the universe is singular, eternal and unchanging. According to this view, as developed by later members of the Eleatic school, the appearances of multiplicity, change and motion are mere illusions.

[203](#) William Shakespeare, *Othello, The Moor of Venice* (1622).

[204](#) William Shakespeare, *King Lear* (1608).

[205](#) Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* (1711), II, 2.

[206](#) Luke 10:7.

207 This note was added in Lewis's hand.

[208](#) 'Let us pray for one another'.

[209](#) 'the beard of corn'.

[210](#) Abul Kasim Mansur Firdausi (c. 950–1020), Persian poet, is the author of *Shahnameh*. Considered the greatest national epic in world literature, the poem consists of 60,000 couplets. When the work was presented to the Sultan, he rewarded Firdausi with a pitiful amount of money. The disappointed Firdausi gave the money to a bath attendant and left for Afghanistan. Lewis regretted he could not read Persian, but in his poem ‘The Prodigality of Firdausi’, published in *Punch*, 215 (1 December 1948), p. 510, and reprinted in *Poems and CP*, he extols ‘Firdausi the strong Lion among poets’ and tells how handsomely he behaved at the hands of the Sultan.

[211](#) Dorothy Wellesley, Duchess of Wellington (1889–1956), whose collected poems were published as *Early Light* (1955).

[212](#) Sayer had asked if Pauline Baynes should illustrate all the Narnian stories. See **Pauline Diana Baynes** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1018–22.

[213](#) Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici* (1643), II, x: 'Great virtues and vices no less great'.

[1](#) Timothy 2:1: 'I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men.'

² Many of these thoughts were later to go into Lewis's essay, 'The Efficacy of Prayer', published in *Fern-seed and Elephants and Other Essays on Christianity*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Collins, 1975; Fount, 1998).

³ Vanauken had asked Lewis his opinion as to whether he should continue with his postgraduate work in history or study theology.

⁴ Francis Bacon, *Essays* (1625), 'Of Atheism': 'The great atheists, indeed are hypocrites; which are ever handling holy things, but without feeling; so as they must needs be cauterized in the end.'

5 Pauline Baynes was illustrating the Narnian books.

[6](#)At a meeting with Geoffrey Bles in London on 1 January 1951 Lewis gave Pauline Baynes a map he had drawn of Narnia bordered on the north by the 'Wild Lands of the North' as well as his drawing of a Monopod. In this letter he refers to that map which is in the Bodleian Library. (MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/1, fol. 160), and is reproduced by the Bodleian as a postcard. Baynes used Lewis's original map to draw (1) 'A Map of Narnian and Adjoining Lands' which appeared on the endpapers of *Prince Caspian*; (2) a map of the Bight of Calormen and the Lone Islands of the Great Eastern Ocean which appeared on the endpapers of *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'* (1952); (3) 'A Map of the Wild Lands of the North' which appeared on the endpapers of *The Silver Chair* (1953); and (4) a map on the endpapers of *The Horse and His Boy* (1954) showing the position of Tashbaan, the Desert and Archenland.

⁷ George MacDonald, *Unspoken Sermons*, 2nd series (1885), 'The Fear of God', p. 163.

[8](#) See **Percy Howard Newby**, writer and broadcasting administrator, in the Biographical Appendix.

⁹ Newby, Organizer of Third Programme Talks for the BBC, had written to Lewis on 9 February 1951: 'From time to time we broadcast in the Third Programme talks under the general title of "Work in Progress", the general idea being that scholars and critics should discuss the nature and scope of a particular book they are engaged upon. We should be very happy if you would talk in this way about the volume you are preparing for the Oxford History of English Literature.'

[10](#) William Lewis Kinter (1915–) was born in St Thomas, Pennsylvania, on 21 October 1915. He took a BA in English from Lafayette College, Easton, Pennsylvania, in 1938, another BA from Yale University in 1940, and a PhD from Columbia University, New York, in 1958. He taught Latin and English at Westminster School, Hartford, Connecticut, 1944–6, was Assistant Professor of English at Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pennsylvania, 1946–62, and Associate Professor of English at Loyola College, Baltimore, Maryland, 1962–78. From there he became Chairman of the Department of Language and Literature at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore. He is the author, with Joseph R. Keller, of *The Sibyl: Prophetess of Antiquity and Medieval Fay* (Philadelphia: Dorrance 1967).

[11](#) *Spirits in Bondage: A Cycle of Lyrics* (1919), Lewis's first book, was published under the pseudonym 'Clive Hamilton'. See *CL* I, p. 443n.

[12](#) *Dymer*, with a preface by the author (London: Dent; New York: Macmillan, 1950).

[13](#) i.e. Lewis's interplanetary trilogy, *Out of the Silent Planet*, *Perelandra* and *That Hideous Strength*.

[14](#) Ludovico Ariosto (1474–1535) was the author of *Orlando Furioso* (1532). See *The Allegory of Love*, Ch 7, Sect. 1, pp. 312–13).

[15](#) Bernardus Silvestris, *De Mundi Universitate*, ed. Carl Sigmund Barach and Johann Wrobel (Innsbruck: Verlag der Wagner'schen Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1876).

[16](#) Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–69), American general and President of the United States, 1953–61, who launched the invasion of Normandy on 6 June 1944 and oversaw the final defeat of Germany. In 1950 President Truman asked Eisenhower to become supreme commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and in 1951 he flew to Paris to assume his new position. For the next fifteen months he devoted himself to the task of creating a united military organization in western Europe to be a defence against the possibility of Communist aggression.

[17](#) On Mrs Alice Hamilton Moore (1853–1939), see *CL II*, p. 281n.

[18](#) Rider Haggard, *She* (1887); *Ayesha* (1905); *She and Allan* (1921); *Wisdom's Daughter* (1923).

[19](#) After Greeves's mother died in 1949 he moved from the family home, 'Bernagh' in Belfast, to a cottage at Silver Hill, Crawfordsburn, Co. Down, about twelve miles from Belfast. When he visited Arthur there, Lewis always stayed at the Old Inn, Crawfordsburn.

[20](#) When Roger Lancelyn Green's father died in 1947, Roger, his eldest son, became the 31st Lord of Poulton, and in August 1950 he moved with his wife and son from Oxford to the family home, Poulton Hall, Poulton-Lancelyn, Bebington, Wirral, Cheshire.

[21](#) The Festival of Britain was opened by King George VI in London on 3 May 1951, six years after the end of the Second World War. It was designed to celebrate the best of British art, design and industry, and raise the nation's spirits after the austerity of the war years. More than eight million people visited the exhibition over a period of five months.

[22](#) Frederick James Eugene Woodbridge, *An Essay on Nature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940).

[23](#) See **Cecil Day-Lewis** in the Biographical Appendix.

[24](#) *BF*, p. 239.

[25](#) See **Dr Seymour Jamie Gerald Spencer** in the Biographical Appendix.

[26](#) Eric Fromm (1900–80), German-born American psychoanalyst who studied the role of social conditioning in human behaviour.

[27](#) This was Lewis's essay, 'The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment', in *20th Century: An Australian Quarterly Review*, vol. III, no. 3 (1949), pp. 5–12 and subsequently in *Res Judicatae*, VI (June 1953), pp. 224–30, and *The Churchman*, LXXIII (April-June 1959), pp. 55–60. It was reprinted in *First and Second Things*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Fount, 1985) and *EC*.

[28](#) 'Mrs Lockley' is the pseudonym Warnie Lewis gave this correspondent in *L* and *WHL*. See *CLII*, p. 975n. The woman is yet to be identified.

[29](#) Green had been reading the manuscript of what became *The Silver Chair*, and he had questioned whether the wood fire Puddleglum tramples on in Chapter 12 would go out. In the end, Lewis did not specify what kind of fire it was, and he simply let Puddleglum ‘stamp on the fire, grinding a large part of it into ashes on the flat hearth’.

[30](#) Paul Capon, *The Other Side of the Sun* (1950).

31 Period of two days.

[32](#) Ruth Pitter, *Urania* (1950). This volume of poems was a selection from Pitter's *A Trophy of Arms: Poems 1926–35* (1936), *The Spirit Watches* (1939) and *The Bridge* (1945).

[33](#) *Urania* contains an engraving by Joan Hassall. At the feet of the Muse there is a vine branch based on those at Pitter's farm in Essex.

[34](#) Thomas Traherne (c. 1636–74), *Centuries of Meditation* (1908), First Century, 27.

³⁵ See **Colin and Christian Hardie** in the Biographical Appendix. In ‘Three Letters from C. S. Lewis’, *The Chesterton Review*, XVII, nos. 3 and 4 (August/November 1991), p. 393, Christian Hardie commented: ‘The three letters...relate to the two novels which I lent to C. S. Lewis. He had revealed one day at lunch with us, that he had read no book by Evelyn Waugh or Graham Greene. I said that he should try to catch up with the contemporary scene, and that I would lend him some books which were currently read and admired. The first, in March 1951, was *Brideshead Revisited*. Treating this as a Lenten penance, a year later he asked for another and got *The Power and the Glory*. He could easily have returned the books with only a verbal message; characteristically, he took the trouble to write a letter.’

[36](#) Lewis took Hardie's advice and read Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* (1945). The novel is told in the first person by Charles Ryder, a fellow-student at Oxford of Lord Sebastian Flyte, a member of an ancient Roman Catholic family. Sebastian takes Charles to the home of his family, Brideshead Castle, where he meets the rest of the Flyte family. Sebastian has an elder brother, Lord Brideshead, and two sisters, Julia and Cordelia. His mother, the devout Lady Marchmain, refuses to divorce Lord Marchmain, who is living in Venice with his mistress. Lady Marchmain attempts to enlist Charles's help in preventing Sebastian's drinking, but Sebastian escapes to North Africa where, after his mother's death, he becomes a saintly down-and-out. Charles falls in love with Lady Julia, but in the end the power of the Church reclaims her and they part for ever.

[37](#) Samuel Butler, *Erewhon* (1872).

[38](#) Sir Walter Scott, *Rob Roy* (1817).

[39](#) James Hogg, *The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824).

[40](#) Stephen McKenna, *The Confessions of a Well-Meaning Woman* (1922).

[41](#) G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (1909), ch. 2: 'You can make a story out of a hero among dragons; but not out of a dragon among dragons.'

[42](#) When Charles Ryder is stationed near Brideshead Castle near the end of the war, one of his platoon commanders is named Hooper. The man epitomizes everything Ryder—and Waugh—hate. ‘In the weeks that we were together,’ says Charles in the Prologue to *Brideshead Revisited*, ‘Hooper became a symbol to me of Young England, so that whenever I read some public utterance proclaiming what Youth demanded in the Future and what the world owed to Youth, I would test these general statements by substituting “Hooper” and seeing if they still seemed as plausible.’

[43](#) Constantin Levin is a character in Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina* (1873–82).

44 Characters in Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace* (1863–9).

[45](#) Archdeacon Grantly is a prominent character in the 'Barsetshire' novels of Anthony Trollope.

[46](#) Benjamin Disraeli, *Coningsby* (1844).

[47](#) Edward Frederic Benson (1871–1914), whose novels include *Dodo* (1893).

48 Railway.

[49](#) Lewis was planning to travel the (roughly) twelve miles from Oxford Street, Belfast, to Helen's Bay, near Crawfordsburn.

⁵⁰ Douglas Edison Harding (1909–) was born in Lowestoft, Suffolk, on 12 February 1909 and educated at Lowestoft Grammar School and University College, London. In a letter to Walter Hooper of 11 August 2005, he said: ‘My parents were Exclusive Plymouth Brethren. I apostacised from them at the ripe age of 21. Though I earned my living as an architect, my real job and passion has been the Perennial Philosophy and research into my True Identity, plus sharing my discoveries with as many people as possible worldwide by means of workshops and books.’ Harding is the author of many books, including *The Hierarchy of Heaven and Earth: A New Diagram of Man in the Universe* (1952), *The Little Book of Life and Death* (1988), *Religions of the World* (1966), *The Trial of the Man Who Said He Was God* (1992), and the best known of all his books, *On Having No Head: A Contribution to Zen in the West* (1961).

[51](#) Lewis was reading the manuscript of what was published as D. E. Harding, *The Hierarchy of Heaven and Earth: A New Diagram of Man in the Universe*, with a preface by C. S. Lewis (London: Faber, 1952). Lewis's preface was reprinted as 'The Empty Universe' in *Present Concerns*, ed. Walter Hoope (London: Fount, 1986) and *EC*.

[52](#) *ibid.*, ch. 9, ix, pp. 95–6: ‘Only beings who consider the possibility of breaking laws can comply with them. Earth does both. To determine her orbit, the scientist supposes that, disobeying for a while the law of gravity and obeying the law of inertia, she flies off at a tangent; and that then, reversing her disobedience, she falls towards the sun; and he adds that these illegalities are in practice so brief that her ratchet-shaped path is smoothed out into the compromise of a curve, which respects both laws alike. Now I take this mathematics more seriously than the scientist himself; for (a) I link Earth, not merely with the original data and the final result of the calculation, but with the intermediate stages as well, and (b) I say that all three are her function.’

[53](#) *ibid.*, ch. 18, vii, p. 188.

[54](#) In Lewis's interplanetary trilogy, *eldila* (singular, *eldil*) are angels who inhabit 'Deep Heaven'. Their bodies are as swift as light, and hence they are usually invisible to human beings. They are first mentioned in *Out of the Silent Planet*, ch. 13. See the letter to Mary Willis Shelburne of 4 March 1953.

[55](#) *Perelandra* (London: Bodley Head, 1943; HarperCollins, 2000), ch. 17, p. 223.

[56](#) 'The "ferly"', wrote Pitter, 'is a sort of vision in the engraving by Joan Hassall...the figure of the Muse stands with flowers & vine-leaves in her arms, in the calm twilight landscape full of symbols: she points downward to a kind of visionary sphere containing images of violence: it is this that someone thought was like a concrete-mixer' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 100).

[57](#) Pitter said of this: ‘I had expressed mild pain at the idea of the spectacle-case lurking so long undiscovered in the crease of the armchair. Never cleaned–didn’t know they had to be?!!!’ (MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 100).

[58](#) Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass* (1872), ch. 4, 'The Walrus and the Carpenter':
““The time has come,” the Walrus said,“To talk of many things:/Of shoes—and ships—and
sealing wax—/Of cabbages—and kings...””

[59](#) Cardinal Schwanda was the Sayers' cat.

60 Homer (fl. 8th century BC) is the author of the Greek epics, *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad*.

[61](#) 'The same rule applies to things that do not exist and to things that are not apparent.' This is a standard legal maxim.

[62](#) Anthony Trollope, *Barchester Towers* (1857), ch. 40: 'The painter put a veil over Agamemnon's face when called on to depict the father's grief at the early doom of his devoted daughter.'

[63](#) Nicholas Hardie (b. 12 November 1945), to whom *The Silver Chair* is dedicated, is the eldest son of Colin and Christian Hardie. Nicholas was educated at Magdalen College School and Balliol College, Oxford. After taking his BA in 1970, he took an MBA from Lancaster University.

[64](#) Victor Drew ran the little barber's shop now called High St Barbers at 38 High Street, Oxford.

[65](#) John 16:22: 'Ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.'

[66](#) George Herbert, *The Temple* (1633), 'The Tempter', I, 3–4: 'If what my soul doth feel
sometimes,/My soul might ever feel!'

[67](#) See the biography of Robert William Chapman in *CL* II, p. 203n.

[68](#) Legend relates that Stesichorus (c. 640–c. 555 BC), a Greek lyrical poet, was struck blind for having censured Helen in one of his poems. His sight was restored after he had written his *Palinodia* or recantation, in which he claims that it was not Helen, but her phantom, that accompanied Paris to Troy. This version of events was adopted by Euripides who used it in his play, *Helen*. Lewis was later to use this theme in his unfinished ‘After Ten Years’, published in *The Dark Tower and Other Stories*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Collins, 1977; Fount, 1983).

[69](#) Horace, *Odes*, I, ix, 21–4: ‘nunc et latentis proditor intimo/gratus puellae risus ab angulo/pignusque dereptum lacertis/aut digito male pertinaci’: ‘Now too the lovely laugh betraying the girl hiding in the secret corner, and the token snatched from her arm or her scarcely resisting finger.’

[70](#) Chad Walsh, *C. S. Lewis: Apostle to the Skeptics* (1949).

[71](#) i.e., Warnie's drinking.

[72](#) Sister Madeleva CSC was a teacher of English at St Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana, who had attended some of Lewis's lectures in 1934. See her biography in *CL II*, p. 140n.

[73](#) Sister Madeleva, *A Lost Language* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1951), p. 17: ‘This practice of prayer was something of a habit with Chaucer...It was, of course, one of the writer’s conventions of his day. Had it not been, there is a probability that he would have practiced it. But, as a convention, the devotional sincerity of his prayers is frequently questioned. Conventions are a badly libelled lot. One knows they are devices; one concludes that they are deceits with an immediacy to be recommended rather for speed than for logic. Particularly is this true of the conventional medieval writing. Without going into digression on this matter, it may be volunteered that the fourteenth century writer probably used the convention to say what he meant rather than to say the exact opposite of what he meant.’

[74](#) Mrs Lisbeth Greeves (1897–1982), née Lizzie Snowden Demaine, was the wife of Arthur's cousin, Lt.-Col. John Ronald Howard Greeves (1900–). She was a devout and enthusiastic member of the Bahai faith, and was keen to discuss it with Lewis through the post.

75 One of Greeves's dogs.

[76](#) 'No ham yet.' See the letter to Greeves of 23 April 1951.

⁷⁷ Cardinal Henri de Lubac (1896–1991), French Jesuit theologian, was a professor of theology at Lyon for many years. He was one of the thinkers who created the intellectual climate of the Second Vatican Council (1962–5), his major contribution being to open up the vast spiritual resources of the Catholic tradition. De Lubac was one of the founders of the collection ‘Sources Chrétiennes’, an important series of patristic and medieval texts. Griffiths probably sent Lewis a copy of de Lubac’s *Catholicism: A Study of Dogma in Relation to the Corporate Destiny of Mankind* (London: Burns & Oates, 1950).

[78](#) William Wordsworth, *The Prelude: or, Growth of a Poet's Mind* (1850).

[79](#) Matthew 5:29: 'If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.' See also Mark 9:47.

[80](#) Lewis had already devoted an essay to this principle entitled 'First and Second Things', published in *First and Second Things* and *EC*.

[81](#) The Festival of Britain.

[82](#) See **Colin and Christian Hardie** in the Biographical Appendix.

[83](#) Hardie had asked Lewis to read an essay he had written on 'The Myth of Paris'. It has never been published.

84 'delete'.

[85](#) Maurice Roy Ridley (1890–1969) was Tutor in English Literature at Balliol College, Oxford, 1920–45. See his biography in *CL* II, p. 306n.

[86](#) Reginald Walter Macan (1848–1941) was Master of University College, Oxford, 1906–23. See his biography in *CL I*, p. 263n.

[87](#) This letter was published in *Essays in Criticism*, I (July 1951), p. 313, under the title 'Robinson Crusoe as a Myth'.

[88](#) Ian Watt, 'Robinson Crusoe as a Myth', *Essays in Criticism*, I (April 1951), pp. 95–119.

[89](#) Watt's reply appears on the same page as Lewis's letter.

[90](#) See **Valerie Pitt** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1059–60. Pitt, who was writing a B. Litt. thesis for St Hugh’s College, Oxford, was secretary of the Socratic Club.

[91](#) Austin Farrer was a member of the Socratic Club. See **Austin and Katharine Farrer** in the Biographical Appendix.

[92](#) John Flavell (baptized 1630, d. 1691), Presbyterian minister and religious writer, was educated at University College, Oxford. He was the minister at Dartmouth, Devon, 1656–62. Following Charles II's declaration of indulgence in 1672, Flavell returned to Dartmouth, licensed as a Congregationalist minister. His works include *A Token for Mourners* (1674), *The Seaman's Companion* (1676), *Divine Conduct* (1678), *Sea Deliverances* (c. 1679), *The Touchstone of Sincerity* (1679), *The Method of Grace* (1681), *A Saint Indeed* (1684) and *Treatise on the Soul of Man* (1685). See the article on Flavell in the *Oxford DNB*.

[93](#) E. R. Eddison, *The Worm Ouroboros* (1922). See **Eric Rcker Eddison** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1025–8. Hamilton had been a close friend of Eddison, and he was trying to arrange for *The Worm Ouroboros* to be reprinted, with an introduction by Lewis. He was not successful.

[94](#) James Stephens (1882–1950) wrote an introduction to Eddison's *A Fish Dinner in Memison* (1941). See *CL* II, p. 558, n. 53.

95 'The other Edison' was Colin Edison, brother of E. R. Edison.

[96](#) See the letter to Andrew Young of 18 May 1951.

[97](#) See the **Rev. Andrew John Young** in the Biographical Appendix.

[98](#) Andrew Young, *Collected Poems* (1936), 'The Slow Race', IV, 2.

[99](#) George MacDonald, *Unspoken Sermons*, 1st series (1867), 'Love thy Neighbour', p. 202:
'No one loves because he sees why, but because he loves.'

[100](#) This was probably Edward John Gough, author of *Simple Thoughts on the Holy Eucharist* (1893).

[101](#) An article entitled 'The Id and the Fall' which was not, finally, published in *The Month*.

[102](#) St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part I, Question 98: 'In the state of innocence there would have been generation of offspring for the multiplication of the human race; otherwise man's sin would have been very necessary, for such a great blessing to be its result.'

[103](#) 'increase and multiply'.

[104](#) Genesis 1:21–2: ‘And God created great whales, and every living creature...And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.’

[105](#) Starr had been teaching at Rollins College Winter Park, Florida, since 1941. In March 1951, its 33-year-old president, Paul Wagner, announced that almost a third of its faculty members (one of whom was Starr) were to be dismissed for 'financial reasons'. Members of the board suspected that the progressive educator had fired these members because they refused to conform to his campaign for visual education, as opposed to the old reading and lecture method: Wagner boasted that after a number of years people wouldn't know how to read. The firing was reported in 'Squeeze at Rollins', *Life*, 30, no. 13 (26 March 1951), p. 115. After months of wrangling, the faculty members were reinstated and Wagner was removed from office. He was replaced by Hugh F. McKean (1908–95), a member of the art faculty. Professor Starr chose to resign at the end of the academic year 1951–2, and he spent the next academic year at Kansai University, Osaka, Japan as a Fulbright Scholar. See the letter to Starr of 3 February 1953.

[106](#) George MacDonald, *The Diary of an Old Soul* (1885).

[107](#) Virgil, *Georgics*, IV, 169; *Aeneid*, I, 436: 'the work grows feverish'.

[108](#) John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress from this World to That which is to Come*, ed. James Blanton Wharey, 2nd edn rev. Roger Sharrock (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1960), First Part, p. 106: 'Then Christian and Hopeful outwent them again, and went till they came at a delicate Plain, called Ease, where they went with much content.'

[109](#) Springfield St Mary's was a youth hostel at 122 Banbury Road, Oxford, run by the Community of St Mary the Virgin.

[110](#) Lewis was reading Skinner's *The Return of Arthur: Merlin* (London: Frederick Muller, 1951), the first part of a four-part work. The second part was entitled *The Return of Arthur: Part I* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1955); the third was entitled *The Return of Arthur: Part II* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1959). The complete edition, containing the three earlier volumes as well as *The Return of Arthur, Part III*, was published under the title *The Return of Arthur: A Poem of the Future* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1966). Because of the rarity of the individual parts, all references are to the 1966 edition.

[111](#) 'to think alike about political affairs'. From Henry St John Bolingbroke (1678–1751), *Dissertation Upon Parties*, Letter 1.

[112](#) Skinner, *The Return of Arthur: Merlin*, II, ii, 5.

[113](#) *ibid.*, xxxvii

[114](#) Stanza.

[115](#) *ibid.*, III, ix. ‘*Lasciate etc*’ refers to Dante, *Inferno*, III, 9.

[116](#) Sir Desmond MacCarthy (1877–1952), literary journalist, was known for his theatre criticism and for his reviews and other writing in the *Sunday Times*.

[117](#) In *C. S. Lewis: Apostle to the Skeptics*, ch. 20, p. 161, Walsh stated: 'I mention what Lewis has *not* done, not as a reproach to him, but to suggest to his overardent admirers that an exclusive diet of his works is not wholesome.'

[118](#) Genia Goelz–Mrs E. L. Goelz–was the daughter of Mrs Mary Van Deusen. She is referred to as ‘Mrs Sonia Graham’ in *L*. She was writing from 2756 Reese Avenue, Evanston, Illinois. Although abbreviated copies of the letters to Mrs Goelz appeared in *L*, complete copies were made by Walter Hooper in 1965.

[119](#) Mary Elizabeth 'Lily' Ewart was Greeves's sister. See her biography in *CL* I, p. 98n.

[120](#) Dr Firor had a ranch in Wyoming, and he was constantly urging Lewis to join him there.

[121](#) In *The Great Divorce: A Dream* (London: Bles, 1945 [1946]; Fount, 1997), ch. 11, one of the Ghosts has on his shoulder a Red Lizard who represents Lust.

[122](#) Robert C. Walton, head of the BBC's School Broadcasting Department, wrote to Lewis on 9 July 1951 announcing plans for six half-hour programmes on 'the nature of evidence': 'We shall begin by stating as clearly as possible the Christian belief that God is to be understood in personal terms, and then two speakers will discuss with the "interrogator" how they have come to accept the Christian conception of God's nature. Our main purpose is not to argue whether or not the Christian belief is true, but to explain the nature of the evidence which leads Christians to this conclusion. We should be very glad if you would take part in this programme.'

[123](#) The old white cobra in 'The King's Ankus' in Kipling's *Second Jungle Book* (1895).

[124](#) Sir David Lyndsay, *The Monarchie (Ane Dialog Betwix Experience and ane Courteour)* (1554), 1293–4.

[125](#) This letter was first published in the *Church Times*, CXXXIV (10 August 1951), p. 541, under the title 'The Holy Name'.

[126](#) Leslie E. T. Bradbury, 'The Holy Name', *Church Times*, CXXXIV (3 August 1951), p. 525.

[127](#) See the biography of **Idrisyn Oliver Evans** in *CL II*, p. 584n.

[128](#) I. O. Evans, *The Coming of a King: A Story of the Stone Age* (1950).

[129](#) Mrs Vulliamy was writing from Park College, Parkville, Missouri.

[130](#) Lewis's doctor, Robert Emlyn 'Humphrey' Havard.

[131](#) Acts 9:4-5: 'And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who are thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.'

[132](#) Colossians 1:23–4: ‘I Paul...now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church.’

[133](#) Romans 12:5: 'So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.'

[134](#) Lewis was referring to a problem that sometimes arises when, in a family of non-Christians, one of them becomes a Christian. It is one of the themes in Lewis's novel, *Till We Have Faces*. See the letter to Clyde Kilby of 10 February 1957.

[135](#) Lewis meant 'The Coming of Galahad' in Charles Williams's *Taliessin Through Logres* (1938).

[136](#) Luke 12:49–53: Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.'

[137](#) *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, 3 vols., ed. Regis J. Armstrong OFM Cap., J. A. Wayne Hellmann OFM, Conv., William J. Short OFM (New York: New City Press, 2000), Vol. II: *The Founder*, 'The Legends and Sermons about Saint Francis by Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (1255–1267)', p. 564: '[Francis of Assisi] taught his brothers...that they should master their rebellious and lazy flesh by constant discipline and useful work. Therefore he used to call his body Brother Ass, for he felt it should be subjected to heavy labor, beaten frequently with whips, and fed with the poorest food.'

[138](#) This was the Italian translation of *Out of the Silent Planet*, published as *Lontano dal Pianeta Silenzioso*, trans. Franca Degli Espinosa (Milan and Verona: Mandadori, 1951).

[139](#) See the biography of Bernard Acworth in *CL* II, p. 632n. Acworth was founder and president emeritus of the Evolution Protest Movement.

[140](#) Bernard Acworth, *This Progress: The Tragedy of Evolution* (London: Rich & Cowan, 1934).

[141](#) The tomb of Boethius (AD 480–524) is in the Church of S. Pietro Ciel d’Oro at Pavia.

[142](#) The edition Lewis used was *The Consolation of Philosophy, with the English Translation of 'I.T.'* (1609), rev. H. F. Stewart (London: Heinemann, Loeb Classical Library, 1918).

[143](#) Kinter had asked about a sentence in the preface of Lewis's *That Hideous Strength: A Modern Fairy-Tale for Grown-Ups* (London: John Lane, 1945; HarperCollins, 2000), p. xii: 'Those who would like to learn further about Numinor and the True West must (alas!) await the publication of much that still exists only in the MSS. of my friend, Professor J. R. R. Tolkien.'

[144](#) Max Muller, *The Science of Language*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, 1891), Vol. II, p. 454.

[145](#) George MacDonald, *Sir Gibbie* (1879), ch. 47: ‘the time for speaking comes rarely, the time for being never departs.’

[146](#) Wendell W. Watters, MD, a Canadian psychiatrist, was Professor of Psychiatry at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. He was the author of *Deadly Doctrine: Health, Illness, and Christian God-talk* (1992).

[147](#) This letter first appeared in *L* as 'To A CRITICAL BUT CHARITABLE READER', and was incorrectly dated 12 September 1951.

[148](#) Dr Watters's objection to Christ's 'unfair advantage' was occasioned by Lewis's *Broadcast Talks*, Bk. II, ch. 4. When revising the talks for *Mere Christianity* (London: Bles, 1952; HarperCollins, 2002), Lewis added two paragraphs to the end of Book II, Chapter 4, in which he used the example given here: 'I have heard some people complain that if Jesus was God as well as man, then His sufferings and death lose all value in their eyes, "because it must have been so easy for him"...If I am drowning in a rapid river, a man who still has one foot on the bank may give me a hand which saves my life. Ought I to shout back (between my gasps) "No, it's not fair! You have an advantage! You're keeping one foot on the bank"? That advantage—call it "unfair" if you like—is the only reason why he can be of any use to me. To what will you look for help if you will not look to that which is stronger than yourself?' (pp. 58–9)

[149](#) Geoffrey Bles was pressing Blamires to persuade Lewis to write a preface for Blamires's *English in Education* (London: Bles, 1951).

[150](#) i.e., the preface he was writing for D. E. Harding's *The Hierarchy of Heaven and Earth*.

[151](#) See the biography of Herbert Palmer, poet and literary critic, in *CL* II, p. 678n.

[152](#) John Milton, *Prose Works*, with preliminary remarks and notes by J. A. St John, 5 vols. (London: Bohn's Standard Library, 1948–53).

[153](#) Herbert Palmer, 'English Poetry: 1938–1950–I', *The Fortnightly*, CLXX (September 1951), pp. 624–8; 'English Poetry: 1938–1950–II', *ibid.* (October 1951), pp. 695–700; 'English Poetry: 1938–1950–III', *ibid.* (October 1951), pp. 768–74.

[154](#) Kinter had asked about Lewis's interplanetary trilogy, of which the first book is *Out of the Silent Planet*.

155 i.e., *The Problem of Pain*.

[156](#) Ashley Sampson of Geoffrey Bles, The Centenary Press, had asked Lewis to contribute a book on pain to the Christian Challenge series. See *CL* II, p. 289n.

[157](#) *The Problem of Pain*, ch. 1, p. 15: 'The Christian faith...has the master touch—the rough, male taste of reality.'

[158](#) 'C. S. Lewis: 1898–1963', Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. d. 290.

[159](#) Since the thirteenth century there have been many versions of the legend of the Wandering Jew. In essence the legend recounts how a Jew chided Christ as he bore the cross to Calvary and was thereafter condemned to wander about the world until Christ's Second Coming.

[160](#) Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I, pp. 55–6.

[161](#) United Nations Organization.

[162](#) 25 April.

[163](#) Hebrews 11:1: 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.'

[164](#) Psalm 8:2; Matthew 21:16.

[165](#) Numbers 22:24–31.

[166](#) Philippians 4:4.

[167](#) Colossians 2:14–5.

¹ Winston Churchill was re-elected Prime Minister in 1951, and on 5 January 1952 he went to Washington, DC, to renew Britain's 'special relationship' with the United States.

² Clement Attlee (1883–1967) was the Labour Prime Minister, 1945–51.

³ 'Maleldil' is the 'Old Solar' name given in Lewis's interplanetary novels to God the Son.

⁴ Pitter had been trying since 1949 to transcribe a passage from Lewis's *Perelandra* into Spenserian stanzas. She said in a note to Lewis's letter of 17 November 1949 (*CL* II, p. 997): 'The passage...was to have been included in one of my books, but I think John Hayward... finally decided that (copyright trouble, apart) it didn't do anything that the original hadn't done a lot better' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 84).

⁵ He was referring to the poem 'The Earwig's Complaint' in Pitter's *A Mad Lady's Garland* (1934). Pitter said of this poem: 'The earwig is imagined as a sort of little fiery Elizabethan soldier of fortune—he gets by chance into a lady's bed, is much struck by her beauty, has the misfortune to tickle, and of course she throws him out—he laments the episode in what I thought a fine heroic tragical strain, but reflects finally that he has wings, after all, she not! It is an image, I suppose, of the scruffy neglected poet, a failure too in love, consoling himself' (MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 107).

[6](#) i.e., the poet George Herbert (1593–1633).

7 The *Flying Enterprise* was a 6,711-ton cargo ship. Built during the Second World War, it became a commercial cargo vessel after the war. On Christmas Day 1951 it left England and headed into the Atlantic Ocean on route for the United States through a turbulent sea. By the next day the Atlantic was hit by one of the worst storms in history, winds rising to hurricane force. On the bridge was Captain Henrik Kurt Carlsen, a Dane of extraordinary courage who remained aboard his ship for almost two weeks as efforts were made to tow her to port. He was finally forced to abandon ship when her list increased to a fatal degree on 10 January 1952, only about 40 miles away from Falmouth, England. The ordeal of the *Flying Enterprise* and Captain Carlsen was world-wide news at the time and remains one of the great stories of endurance and courage at sea. See Gordon Holman, *Carlsen of the Flying Enterprise* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1952). On 22 June 2001 a team of divers discovered the lost ship resting on her side in a depth of 280 feet on the seabed of the western approaches to the English Channel.

8 p. p.

⁹ Sister Penelope's imagination had been fired by an article in *The Times* (6 December 1951), p. 5, entitled 'A Mystery of Everest: Footprints of the "Abominable Snowman"'. The British mountaineer Eric Shipton wrote about a discovery his team made on Mount Everest on 8 November 1951: 'At 4 o'clock we came upon some strange tracks in the snow. [Our guide] immediately announced them to be the tracks of "yetis" or "Abominable Snowmen"...The tracks were mostly distorted by melting into oval impressions, slightly longer and a good deal broader than those made by our large mountain boots. But here and there, where the snow covering the ice was thin, we came upon a well preserved impression of the creature's foot. It showed three broad "toes" and a broad "thumb" to the side. What was particularly interesting was that where the tracks crossed a crevice one could see quite clearly where the creature had jumped and used its toes to secure purchase on the snow on the other side.' The first reliable report of the Yeti appeared in 1925 but the best tracks ever seen were photographed by Shipton and published in *The Times* (7 December 1951), p. 13.

[10](#) Genesis 6:1–4: ‘And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair: and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.’

[11](#) Cf. Psalm 45:11.

[12](#) He means the confusion between the Latin *homo*, 'human being', and *VIR*, '(adult male) man'.

[13](#) Austin Farrer, *The Glass of Vision*, The Bampton Lectures for 1948 (1948).

[14](#) See *CL II*, p. 961.

[15](#) Simone Weil, *Waiting on God*, trans. Emma Craufurd (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951).

[16](#) 'A Religious of CSMV' (Sister Penelope), *They Shall Be My People: The Bible Traversed in a Course of Reading Plays*, 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1951).

[17](#) I. O. Evans, *Led By the Star: A Christmas Play* (London: Rylee, 1952).

[18](#) L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt, *The Roaring Trumpet* (1940); *The Mathematics of Magic* (1940); *The Incomplete Enchanter* (New York: Pyramid Books, 1941).

19 i.e., *The Incomplete Enchanter*..

20 These notes relate to Blamires's unpublished book on the Christian philosophy of education.

21 Carol Jenkins was writing from Westmead, 35 Flushcombe Lane, Bath.

22 i.e., the name Aslan.

[23](#) *The Thousand and One Nights: Commonly Called, in England, The Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, trans. Edward William Lane (1838–40).

24 i.e., *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

²⁵ Wayland Hilton Young (1923–), who became the 2nd Baron Kennet in 1960, is the son of Edward Hilton Young, 1st Baron Kennet (1879–1960) and Lady Edith Agnes Kathleen Bruce (1878–1947). He was born in London on 2 August 1923, and educated at Stowe School. He served in the Royal Navy, 1942–5. Following the war he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, taking his BA in 1946. Young entered the Foreign Office in 1946 and was Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 1966–70, Opposition spokesman on foreign affairs and science policy, 1971–4, a Member of the European Parliament, 1978–9, and SDP spokesman in the House of Lords on foreign affairs and defence, 1981–90. In 1948 he married Elizabeth Adams, daughter of Captain Bryan Fullerton Adams, and they had six children. His many published books and pamphlets, on subjects such as defence, disarmament, the environment and architecture, include *Deadweight* (1952), *Now or Never* (1953), *The Montesi Scandal* (1957), *Still Alive Tomorrow* (1958), *Strategy for Survival* (1959), *The Futures of Europe* (1976), *The Rebirth of Britain* (1982) and *Northern Lazio* (1990).

[26](#) i.e., John Lane The Bodley Head, the publishers of Lewis's interplanetary trilogy.

27 'excessive' or 'in the way'.

28 *That Hideous Strength.*

29 A word is missing from the text.

[30](#) A poem by Robert Browning included in his *Dramatis Personae* (1864).

[31](#) 1 Timothy 4:10: 'We both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.'

[32](#) This letter was first published in the *Church Times*, CXXXV (8 February 1952), p. 95, under the title 'Mere Christians'.

[33](#) R. D. Daunton-Fear, 'Evangelical Churchmanship', *Church Times*, CXXXV (1 February 1952), p. 77.

[34](#) An abbreviated form of the quotation from St Vincent of Lerins, *Commonitorium*, IV, section 3: ‘Id teneamus, quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est’: ‘Let us hold on to that which has been believed everywhere, always, by everyone.’

³⁵ Richard Baxter, *Church-history of the Government of Bishops and their Councils* (1680), 'What History is Credible, and What Not', p. xv: 'You know not of what Party I am of, nor what to call me; I am sorrier for you in this than for my self; if you know not, I will tell you, I am a CHRISTIAN, a MERE CHRISTIAN, of no other Religion; and the Church that I am of is the Christian Church, and hath been visible where ever the Christian Religion and Church hath been visible.'

36 This was a short story Mathews had written.

[37](#) *The Gospels*, trans. into modern English by J. B. Phillips (London: Bles, 1952).

[38](#) 'general presentation'.

39 One or two words are missing from the facsimile copy.

40 Genia Goelz was being baptized.

[41](#) The twelve-week period between the end of Trinity Term, which ends on 6 July, and the beginning of Michaelmas Term, which starts on 1 October.

[42](#) Helen D. Calkins, who first wrote to Lewis from India, had returned to the United States and was now writing from 915 Taylor Street, Albany, California.

[43](#) Calkins's unpublished work, 'India Looks', mentioned in the letter of 29 March 1952.

[44](#) See the biography of John Alexander Chapman (1875–1968) in *CL* II, p. 954n.

[45](#) J. A. Chapman, *War* (Windsor: Savile Press, 1951).

[46](#) Warnie

47 Lewis usually stayed at the Old Inn in Crawfordsburn when visiting Greeves.

[48](#) Anthony Trollope, *The Last Chronicle of Barset* (1867).

[49](#) Mark 9:24.

[50](#) John 7:17.

[51](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *The Luck of the Lynns: A Story of Hidden Treasure* (1952).

[52](#) For some time Lewis had been planning a holiday with Arthur Greeves in Northern Ireland. He expected to arrive at Greeves's house on 21 August, and leave on the night of 8 September. Lewis and Green had long wanted to visit the ruined castles of North Wales, beginning with Beaumaris Castle, Anglesey.

[53](#) Liverpool.

[54](#) This letter is found only in Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 5, p. 110.

[55](#) Michael Kevin Irwin (1944–), a schoolboy who wrote to Lewis about the Narnian stories, was born on 2 December 1944. He was educated at St Edward's School, Oxford, and was the son of the Rev. Patrick Irwin, to whom Lewis wrote on 26 September 1952.

[56](#) E. Nesbit, *The Phoenix and the Carpet* (1904); *The Story of the Amulet* (1906).

[57](#) J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit: or There and Back Again* (1937).

[58](#) George MacDonald, *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872); *The Princess and Curdie* (1883).

59 Baloo is the sleepy brown bear in Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*.

[60](#) Bulkeley Arms Hotel, Beaumaris.

[61](#) Richard Hughes, *A High Wind in Jamaica* (1929).

[62](#) Ralph Waldo Emerson, *May-day and Other Pieces* (1867), 'Brahma', 11.

[63](#) In *Miracles: A Preliminary Study* (London: Bles, 1947; Fount, 1998), pp. 90, 110, Lewis quotes from Alfred North Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World* (1925).

[64](#) See **Mary Neylan**, mother of Sarah Neylan, in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1054–5.

65 i.e., Charles Williams.

[66](#) Joseph Stalin.

[67](#) Graham Greene, *The Power and the Glory* (1940). This novel, usually regarded as Greene's best, is set in Mexico during a time of religious persecution. It describes the desperate last wanderings of a priest, the central character in the book, who is never given a name. The priest, who 'carried a wound, as though a whole world had died', commits the moral sin of fornication with the peasant woman Maria, after falling into the worst sin of 'despair'. The only priest left in the state who has not either escaped or died, or conformed to the atheistic government, he returns to the village where Maria lives with their illegitimate daughter. Despite the fact that he believes himself to be condemned by God, he knows he can nevertheless bring salvation to others. In the end he achieves holiness and eventually martyrdom by virtue of, rather than in spite of, his sins.

[68](#) Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*. See the letter to Christian Hardie of 22 March 1951.

[69](#) William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (1623).

[70](#) Lewis's confessor was Father Walter Adams SSJE of Cowley, Oxford. He had been Lewis's confessor since Lewis began going to confession in 1940. Father Adams died on 3 March 1952, but Lewis is curiously wrong about his dying at the altar. He died peacefully at the home of friends in Headington. See **Father Walter Adams SSJE** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1015–16.

⁷¹ The words quoted seem to be a conflation of two very similar passages. The first is Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, Book IV, Ch. 4, 3: ‘et tu fons es semper plenus et super abundans, ignis semper ardens et numquam deficiens’: ‘and you are a fountain ever full and over abundant, a flame always burning and never failing’. This passage has a textual problem: sometimes ‘ignis semper ardens’ is read as ‘ignis iugiter ardens’, ‘a flame continually burning’. Lewis’s text presumably read ‘ignis iugiter ardens’. Then there is the passage from Book IV, Ch. 16, 3: ‘cum tu sis ignis semper ardens et numquam deficiens, amor corda purificans et intellectum illuminans’: ‘since you are a flame always burning and never failing, a love that purifies the heart and illuminates the intellect’. Lewis seems to have conflated the two passages in his memory, creating something like this: ‘cum tu sis ignis iugiter ardens et numquam deficiens, amor corda...’

[72](#) John 17:21.

[73](#) Lewis had sent Pitter a ticket to his lecture on 'Hero and Leander', given to the British Academy on 20 February 1952. The lecture is reprinted in *SLE*.

[74](#) Christopher Marlowe and George Chapman, *Hero and Leander* (1598). Marlowe wrote the first two books of this poem, and Chapman (1559–1634) the remaining four. See *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, Pt. III, Ch. 3, Sect. 3.

[75](#) Andrew Young, *Into Hades* (1952).

[76](#) i.e., George Sayer.

[77](#) The incumbent President, Harry S. Truman, decided against seeking re-election in 1952. He threw his support behind Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson—not Robert A. Taft—who was drafted in as the Democratic nominee. Stevenson proved no match for General Dwight D. Eisenhower who won a landslide victory.

[78](#) See the biography of Delmar Banner, artist, in *CL* II, p. 537n.

[79](#) P. G. Wodehouse, *Thank You, Jeeves* (1934), ch. 1: 'I fear I cannot recede from my position.'

[80](#) Banner had invited Lewis to his home at The Bield, Little Langdale, in the Lake District.

[81](#) 'I could'.

82 'I couldn't'.

[83](#) *Library Association Proceedings, Papers and Summaries of Discussion at the Bournemouth Conference on 29 April to 2 May 1952* (1952), pp. 22–8, and reprinted in *Of This and Other Worlds*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Collins, 1982; HarperCollins, 2000); published in the United States as *On Stories: and Other Essays on Literature* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982).

[84](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *The Wonderful Stranger* (1950).

85 'the far country'.

[86](#) See **Nell Berners-Price** in the Biographical Appendix. Lewis had to be present as a witness at Mrs Hooker's trial in Canterbury on 8 May. Nell Berners-Price had invited him to spend the night before the trial at Courtstairs Hotel, so that he would be near Canterbury. Following the trial Mrs Hooker was sent to Holloway Prison in London.

87 Lewis had smudged his signature when using a piece of blotting paper.

[88](#) This letter was published in *The Times Literary Supplement* (9 May 1952), p. 313, under the title 'The Sheepheard's Slumber'.

[89](#) *Prince Caspian.*

90 Penelope was the seven-year-old daughter of Mr and Mrs Berners-Price.

[91](#) Charles Gore, *The Sermon on the Mount* (1896), Appendix III, p. 215: ‘Christ, by a distinct act of legislation, prohibited divorce among His disciples in such sense as allows of remarriage, except in the case of adultery of one of the parties.’

⁹² *Conference of Bishops of the Anglican Communion, Holden at Lambeth Palace in July 1888* (London: SPCK, 1888), pp. 43–4: ‘No. 3.–Divorce...a. That, inasmuch as our Lord’s words expressly forbid divorce, except in the case of fornication or adultery, the Christian Church cannot recognize divorce in any other than the excepted case, or give any sanction to the marriage of any person who has been divorced contrary to this law, during the life of the other party. ‘b. That under no circumstances ought the guilty party, in the case of a divorce for fornication or adultery, to be regarded, during the lifetime of the innocent party, as a fit recipient of the blessing of the Church on marriage. ‘c. That, recognizing the fact that there always has been a difference of opinion in the Church on the question whether our Lord meant to forbid marriage to the innocent party in a divorce for adultery, the Conference recommends that the clergy should not be instructed to refuse the sacraments or other privileges of the Church to those who, under civil sanction, are thus married.’

[93](#) Sir Godfrey Rolles Driver (1892–1975), Old Testament scholar and Semitic philologist, was elected a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1919 and was Professor of Semitic Philology, 1938–62. He was intimately concerned with the New English Bible, and his works include *The Judaean Scrolls* (1965). Young was interested in writing a novel based on the Book of Judith from the Old Testament Apocrypha.

94 Mrs Goelz was being confirmed in the Episcopal Church.

[95](#) David Cecil, *Lord M.: or The Later Life of Lord Melbourne* (London: Constable, 1954), p. 6: '[Lord Melbourne] loved to defend the indefensible. "What I like about the Order of the Garter," he once remarked, "is that there is no damned merit about it."'

[96](#) Sir Fred Hoyle (1915–2001) was Plumian Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge University, and the founder of the Institute of Theoretical Astronomy.

97 'writer of extended romances'.

[98](#) Edmund Spenser, *Epithalamion* (1595).

[99](#) Vera Mathews had married K. H. Gebbert, and they were now living at Sun Valley Lodge, Sun Valley, Idaho, where Mr Gebbert had was working.

[100](#) Since 21 December 1951 Griffiths had been at the Benedictine priory at Pluscarden, Elgin, Moray, Scotland, where he was novice master.

[101](#) Konrad Z. Lorenz, *King Solomon's Ring: New Light on Animal Ways* (1952).

[102](#) The top of this letter was torn off, and with it the date and salutation.

[103](#) During the Summer Term 1952 Vanauken sent Lewis copies of his 'Oxford Sonnets': 'I sent round the whole six sonnets, though he had seen two of them, to C. S. Lewis, and he replied, in part: "I think all the sonnets really good. *The Sands* is v. good, indeed. So is *Advent*, perhaps it is best. (L. 5 is a corker)"' (Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 5, p. 123). All six sonnets are included in *A Severe Mercy*.

[104](#) *ibid.*, ch. 4, p. 100, 'The Gap', iii, 1–4: 'Between the probable and proved there yawns/A gap. Afraid to jump, we stand absurd,/Then see *behind* us sink the ground and, worse,/Our very standpoint crumbling.'

[105](#) See **Austin and Katharine Farrer** in the Biographical Appendix.

[106](#) Katharine Farrer, *The Missing Link* (London: Collins, 1952). This was the first of Farrer's detective novels.

[107](#) i.e., Martyn Skinner's *The Return of Arthur: Merlin*.

[108](#) Farrer, *The Missing Link*, ch. 11, p. 141: ‘He moodily watched Plummer and Thomas go into the watchman’s hut and turned towards the darkness and the familiar devil of the stairs.’ This sentence was changed in the Penguin paperback of 1955 to read: ‘He moodily watched Plummer and Thomas go into the watchman’s hut and turned towards the darkness to wrestle with his hopes and despairs.’

[109](#) Ibid., p. 127: ‘not families, family-allowances’ etc.

[110](#) i.e., a character in one of the novels of Charles Williams.

[111](#) John Milton, *At a Vacation Exercise in the College, part Latin, part English* (1673), 'The Latin Speeches ended, the English thus began', 29–30: 'Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,/Thy service in some graver subject use.'

[112](#) Miss Marg-riette Montgomery was writing from San Antonio, Texas.

[113](#) See the biography of Rudolf Steiner, founder of Anthroposophy, in *CL I*, p. 671n.

[114](#) i.e., Owen Barfield and Cecil Harwood.

[115](#) Lewis used this German word in *SBJ*, ch. 1, to mean the ‘intense longing’ or ‘Joy’ which played a large part in his conversion.

[116](#) Mark 15:31.

[117](#) Charles Williams, *He Came Down from Heaven* (1938), 'The Practice of Substituted Love'.

[118](#) William Borst, an editor in the college department of Harcourt, Brace & World, was handling Lewis's essay on Spenser for *Major British Writers*.

[119](#) Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, I, i, 2, 1–2: ‘But on his brest a bloudie Crosse he bore/The deare remembrance of his dying Lord.’

[120](#) Hsin-Chang Chang was born in China. He attended the University of Shanghai before taking a D. Phil. in English from Edinburgh University. For some years he was a lecturer in English at the University of Malaya in Singapore. In 1959 he returned to England to become University Lecturer in Chinese. He later became University Lecturer in Chinese Studies and Fellow of Wolfson College, Cambridge. He is the author of *Allegory and Courtesy in Spenser: A Chinese View* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1955) and *Chinese Literature*, 3 vols (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973–83). In ‘Memories’, *In Search of C. S. Lewis*, ed. Stephen Schofield (South Plainfield, New Jersey: Bridge Publishing Co., 1983), Chang said (p. 104): ‘I did not then realize, as I have since come to think...that we had much in common. For his hero was Sir Philip Sidney...and Sidney, too, was mine. And indeed Sidney had embodied in his life both chivalry and courtesy. My ingrained belief that a definite code ought to govern the tone of one’s writing as well as one’s conduct—which in essence is Confucian but not uninfluenced by European chivalry—must have appealed to Lewis and made him readier, in later years, to accept me as a friend. Certainly a vein of chivalry underlies all his own writings, and this explains for me the style and verve of his literary criticism.’

[121](#) Monsignor Ferdinand Vandry (1887–1967), Rector of Université Laval, Quebec, wrote to Lewis on 6 June 1952 to say the University wanted to confer on him an Honorary Doctorate of Literature. No difficulties were put in the way of Lewis receiving the degree *in absentia*, and it was duly conferred upon him on 22 September 1952.

[122](#) 1 Corinthians 12:27.

[123](#) The two nonsense poems referred to are the one reproduced above, and 'Awake, My Lute!', published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, CLXXII (November 1943), pp. 113, 115, and reprinted in *Poems and CP*.

[124](#) Rudyard Kipling, *Just So Stories* (1902).

[125](#) A vol is a heraldic symbol consisting of a pair of outstretched wings, connected together at the shoulders without any bird's body in the middle.

[126](#) It is not known which of the letters to Borst this undated poem, in the style of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, accompanied. It seems likely that it was sent with the letter of 22 June 1952.

[127](#) In 1950–1 Bodle trained at the Department of Education of the Deaf at Manchester University, and at this time she was teaching at the Manchester Royal School for the Deaf.

[128](#) Helen Keller, *The Story of My Life* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1903). Born blind and deaf, Helen Keller (1880–1968) learned to read, write and speak from her teacher, Anne Sullivan. She graduated from Radcliffe College, and lectured widely on behalf of deaf people.

[129](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *From the World's End: A Fantasy* (Leicester: E. Ward, [1948]).

[130](#) See Lewis's comments on George Rostrevor Hamilton's *The Tell-Tale Article: A Critical Approach to Modern Poetry* (1949) in the letter to Hamilton of 14 August 1949 (CL II, pp. 966–7).

[131](#) David Craigie, *Dark Atlantis* (1951).

[132](#) 'Orichalcum' is golden copper.

[133](#) Blessed Virgin Mary.

[134](#) Of his poem, 'The Pilgrim's Problem', first published in *The Month*, VII (May 1952), p. 275, and reprinted in *Poems* and *CP*.

[135](#) See the letter to Greeves of 18 September 1916 (*CL I*, pp. 221–3).

[136](#) See the biography of Geoffrey Bles in *CL* II, p. 554n.

[137](#) 'Mycroft' was Bles's name for Warnie, a joke the Lewis brothers greatly enjoyed. Mycroft is the name Sir Arthur Conan Doyle gave the mysterious elder brother of Sherlock Holmes. He is first mentioned in 'The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter' in *Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (1894), in which Holmes says: 'My brother would be the greatest criminal agent that ever lived. But he has no ambition and no energy. He would not even go out of his way to verify his own solutions, and would rather be considered wrong than take the trouble to prove himself right.' The mysterious brother is also mentioned in 'The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans' in *His Last Bow* (1917). In that story Holmes says Mycroft 'has the tidiest and most orderly brain, with the greatest capacity for storing facts, of any man living'.

[138](#) Lewis was referring to *Le Lion et la Sorcière Blanche*, trans. Émile-R. Blanchet (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1952), the French translation of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

[139](#) *Le Lion et la Sorcière Blanche*, ch. 17, p. 185: 'great shame would we have'.

[140](#) *Mere Christianity.*

[141](#) On 'Parson's Pleasure' see *CL I*, p. 304n.

[142](#) Young published his essay on Lewis's trilogy as 'The Contented Christian' in the *Cambridge Journal*, V (July 1952), pp. 603–12.

[143](#) Driver probably had in mind Richard Capper's *Judith: An Historical Drama* (1867).

[144](#) Hermann Hesse, *The Glass Bead Game*, trans. Mervyn Savill (London: Aldus, 1949).

[145](#) In George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949).

[146](#) Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 70–1: ‘Multa renascentur quae iam cecidere, cadentque/ quae nunc sunt in honore.’ (The next word in the poem, *vocabula*, refers not to ‘many things’ but ‘many words’—words that go in and out of favour in literary language.)

[147](#) i.e., Anthroposophists. See the letter to Montgomery of 10 June 1952.

[148](#) Lewis was referring to the Latin poem, 'Dies Irae, dies illa' ('Day of wrath') by Thomas of Celano (c. 1200–1260), companion and biographer of St Francis of Assisi. The poem forms a part of the requiem Masses in the Roman Missal.

[149](#) Revelation 22:20.

[150](#) John 13:34.

[151](#) John 16:22.

[152](#) Bodle was returning to New Zealand to teach at the School for the Deaf, Titirangi, Auckland, and she had asked for Lewis's prayers.

[153](#) Charles Williams Dunn (1915–) was one of the editors of *Major British Writers*. He was also editing at this time *A Chaucer Reader: Selections from the Canterbury Tales* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1952). Dunn was the editor (with E. T. Byres) of *Middle English Literature* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1973) and many other works.

[154](#) Lewis had just finished his mammoth *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*.

[155](#) One part of the examination system at Oxford University consists in a spoken or *viva voce* ('by the living voice') examination.

[156](#) George Sayer's cat.

[157](#) See **Anne Barbara Scott** in the Biographical Appendix. She had attended Charles Williams's lectures when an undergraduate, and she and Williams became close friends.

[158](#) The draft of Scott's letter of 26 July 1952 referred to here by Lewis is preserved in the Bodleian Library (MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/7, fols. 10–14).

[159](#) In his Commentary in *Arthurian Torso, Containing the Posthumous Fragment of The Figure of Arthur by Charles Williams and A Commentary on The Arthurian Poems of Charles Williams* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), Lewis wrote: ‘Between this poem and the *Last Voyage* we should probably place *The Meditation of Mordred*. The doom of Logres is almost accomplished. Gawaine, the king’s nephew, son of Morgause and Lot, whom Williams calls “the canonical Gawaine” because the canon or code of earthly honour is his only principle, urged on by his half-brother Mordred, has revealed to Arthur the loves of Guinivere and Lancelot’ (ch. 5, p. 177).

[160](#) 'The Meditation of Mordred' in Charles Williams, *The Region of the Summer Stars* (1944). Scott said in her letter: '(1) "Canonical G." is surely the ecclesiastical equivalent of "legitimate G."—his birth was approved by the laws of both Church & State, as that of Mordred was forbidden by both. Thus, in the *Meditation*, M. refers to the K. as "my uncanonical father"' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/7, fol. 13).

[161](#) Williams, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 'The Departure of Merlin', XIII, 4.

[162](#) Scott asked in her letter: '(2) Is not "the world's base" Caucasia, & "the worm in the world's base" the Caucasian women, all loving naturally as opposed to arch-naturally? Guinevere's vocation was to "exhibit the glory" so clearly & resplendently to the women of Logres that they should not be able to help being "brought to a flash of seeing" (or as my husband more forcibly puts it "her job was to make the silly ones sit up & take notice")' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/7, fol. 13).

[163](#) Williams, *The Region of the Summer Stars*, 'The Prayers of the Pope', pp. 46–55.

[164](#) *Arthurian Torso*, 'The Grail and the Morte', p. 180: 'In *The Prayers of the Pope* we are invited to study more fully this extinguishing of lights. The situation which "the young Pope Deodatus, Egyptian-born" contemplates is of course very like that which Williams contemplated in 1944 and which we still contemplate in 1946. But the poem is not simply a tract for the time. We are seeing, partly, the real present; partly the imaginary world of the poem; partly the real past, the division of Christendom which culminated with the breach between Pope and Patriarch in 1054 and the great retreat of Christendom before Islam which had preceded it.' In her letter of 26 July 1952 Scott observed: '(3) About the "women of Burma" in *The Prayers of the Pope*, there was an explanation on the level you reject as well as the other, & far more important, meanings. Towards the end of my time at Oxford I went to walk, on most afternoons...with Charles Williams...& at one such time when he was working on that poem, he was speaking of the difficulty of devising some method of defeat for the octopus & saying, of course playfully but seriously in the game, that points in the Taliessin poems had coincided with points in the war so often that he must hurry up and do it, or the Japanese would have taken India before he had thought how to stop them' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/7, fol. 13).

[165](#) Williams, *Taliessin Through Logres*, 'The Coming of Galahad': XIII, 1–3: 'But he: "Proofs were; roofs were: I/what more? Creeds were; songs were. Four/zones divide the empire from the Throne's firmament." Scott commented: 'I am sure that he said the "proofs", "roofs", "creeds" & "songs" were connected forwards with the four planetary Zones, & not backwards with the five Houses... "Proofs" I suppose might appropriately be connected with Mercury, the Lord of Language. Could "roofs", as providing shelter which you can make use of if you choose, be connected with preferences? "Creeds" seem to fit "irony & defeated irony", the irony being in the absurdity of saying, as creeds must, *this is Thou* about Him of whom we must instantly add *neither is this Thou*, & the defeated irony in the absolute necessity of doing just that. And Saturn, beyond the rest & nearest to, though still utterly divided from, "the Throne's firmament" might fitly represent poetry which Charles certainly held to be able to express truth in a way which the prose of creeds could not' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/7, fol. 14).

[166](#) Before the presidential election of 1952 Robert A. Taft (1889–1953) ran against Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–1969) as candidate for the Republican Party. Eisenhower was chosen, and in the election, held on 4 November, he defeated the Democratic candidate, Adlai Stevenson.

167 i.e., Mrs Frank Jones.

[168](#) Green met Lewis at the Woodside Hotel, Liverpool, on 9 September. They visited Beaumaris Castle and spent that night at the Bulkeley Arms Hotel. Lewis spent the following night as the guest of Roger and June Lancelyn Green at Poulton Hall, Bebington, returning to Oxford on 11 September.

[169](#) H. Rider Haggard, *The Virgin of the Sun* (1922).

170 Thank-you notes addressed to one's hostess.

[171](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *The Story of Lewis Carroll* (London: Methuen, 1949).

[172](#) Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*, ch. 5. Asked by the White Queen how old she is, Alice answers, 'I'm seven and a half, exactly.' "“You needn't say 'exactly'," the Queen remarked. "I can believe it without that.”"

[173](#) For the biography of Florence (Michal) Williams, wife of Charles Williams, see **Charles Walter Stansby Williams** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1081–6.

[174](#) Michael Williams (1922–2000) was the son of Charles and Michal Williams.

[175](#) In his diary entry for 5 November 1956 Warnie wrote of the correspondence between Joy Gresham and his brother: ‘Until 10th January 1950 neither of us had ever heard of her; then she appeared in the mail as just another American fan, Mrs. W. L. Gresham from the neighbourhood of New York. With however the difference that she stood out from the ruck by her amusing and well-written letters, and soon J and she had become “pen-friends.”’ (*BF*, p. 244). Unfortunately, none of Joy’s letters to Lewis has come to light, and the only letters from Lewis to Joy that survive are those in this volume of 22 December 1953, 11 March and 19 November 1959.

[176](#) See the passage on Joy Gresham following the letter to Margaret Sackville Hamilton of 23 September 1952.

[177](#) i.e., Anthroposophists. See the letter to Montgomery of 10 June 1952.

[178](#) 'To cap it all!' He was referring to *Mere Christianity*.

[179](#) John Milton, *L'Allegro* (1645), 121–2: 'With store of ladies, whose bright eyes/Rain influence, and judge the prize.'

[180](#) Henry James, *Letters*, ed. Percy Lubbock, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1920). The copy referred to here had once belonged to Albert Lewis, and it had been given to Arthur.

[181](#) The hotel where they had been staying: see the heading of the letter on p. 220.

[182](#) This letter is a reply to a question Goodridge asked Lewis about John Milton's *Comus* (1637).

[183](#) Lewis was planning to give his course of lectures on the 'Prolegomena to Renaissance Poetry' during Hilary Term, 1953.

[184](#) Milton, *Comus*, 459–72.

[185](#) *ibid.*, opening stage direction: 'The first Scene discovers a wild wood./The Attendant Spirit descends or enters.'

[186](#) *ibid.*, 1.

[187](#) *ibid.*, 3.

[188](#) *ibid.*, 4.

[189](#) *ibid.*, 980:.

[190](#) Mrs Margaret Sackville Hamilton wrote to Walter Hooper from 4 Pagoda Avenue, Richmond, Surrey, on 31 May 1968: 'I am a housewife, mother & grandmother of no academic qualification at all. However, being a lover of T. S. Eliot I wrote & asked C. S. Lewis after reading "Beyond Personality" Chapter III for more information re Ever Present Time & by return of post, in his own handwriting, I received the enclosed' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 1).

[191](#) Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy, with the English translations of 'I.T.'* (1690), rev. H. F. Stewart (London: Heinemann, Loeb Classical Library, 1918).

[192](#) Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781).

[193](#) Friedrich von Hügel, *Eternal Life: A Study of its Implications and Applications* (1912).

[194](#) Arthur Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World* (1928).

[195](#) John William Dunne, *An Experiment with Time* (1927).

[196](#) John William Dunne, *The Serial Universe* (London: Faber & Faber, 1934).

[197](#) 2 Peter 2:8: 'One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.'

[198](#) See **Joy Gresham Lewis** in the Biographical Appendix.

[199](#) See **David Lindsay Gresham** in the Biographical Appendix.

[200](#) See **Douglas Howard Gresham** in the Biographical Appendix.

[201](#) George Sayer, *Jack: C. S. Lewis and His Times* (London: Macmillan, 1988; 2nd ed. Hodder & Stoughton, 1997), ch. 19, pp. 214–15.

[202](#) The Rev. Patrick Kevin Irwin (1907–65) was born on 2 October 1907 and read Modern History at Brasenose College, Oxford, graduating in 1929. He read Theology at Ely Theological College in 1930, and was ordained in 1931. He served as Curate of Helmsley, Yorkshire, 1930–3, and of Goldthorpe, 1934–8. He was Vicar of Sawston, 1941–2, Vicar of St Augustine, Wisbech, 1947–58, Rural Dean of Wisbech, 1954–8, and Rector of Fletton, Ely, 1958–65.

[203](#) Charles Wickliffe Moorman (1925–96) was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on 24 May 1925. After serving in the Second World War, he graduated from Kenyon College, Ohio, in 1949. He earned Master's and Doctoral degrees from Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1951 and 1954. He joined the English Department at the University of Southern Mississippi (then Mississippi Southern College), Hattiesburg, Mississippi, in 1954 and became department head in 1956, a position he held for twelve years. Moorman served as Dean of the Graduate School for two years, and as Academic Vice-president for twelve years. He stepped down in 1980 to resume full-time teaching and research, retiring in 1990. An expert in both Middle English and modern English literature, over the years he taught a wide variety of undergraduate and graduate courses. He died on 3 May 1996. His works include *Myth and Medieval Literature: Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (1956), *The Precincts of Felicity: The Augustinian City of the Oxford Christians* (1966) and *A Knyght There Was: The Evolution of the Knight in Literature* (1967).

[204](#) Moorman was collecting material for a work published as *Arthurian Triptych: Myth Materials in Charles Williams, C. S. Lewis, and T. S. Eliot* (1960).

[205](#) Charles Williams, *All Hallows' Eve* (1945).

[206](#) 1 Corinthians 13:13.

[207](#) The three principles which Williams set great store by, and which run through his works, were Co-inherence, Exchange and Substitution. They are summarized in 'Williams and the Arthuriad', ch. 3, p. 123 of *Arthurian Torso*.

[208](#) *The Figure of Arthur, Arthurian Torso*, pp. 5–90.

[209](#) *That Hideous Strength*, ch. 13, part V, p. 316: 'None hears us save the last of the seven bears of Logres' ch. 12, vi, p. 290: 'Who knows what the technique of the Atlantean Circle was really like?'

[210](#) *ibid.*, Preface, p. xii: ‘Those who would like to learn further about Numinor and the True West must (alas!) await the publication of much that still exists only in the MSS of my friend, Professor J. R. R. Tolkien.’ Lewis had in mind that work of Tolkien’s published as *The Silmarillion*, ed. Christopher Tolkien (London: Allen & Unwin, 1977), ‘Akallabêth: The Downfall of Númenor’, pp. 259–82. In a letter to Roger Lancelyn Green of 17 July 1971, in Green and Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: A Biography*, p. 210, Tolkien said: ‘With regard to “Numinor”, in the early days of our association Jack used to come to my house and I read aloud to him *The Silmarillion* so far as it had then gone...Numinor was his version of a name he had never seen written (Numenor) and no doubt was influenced by numinous.’

[211](#) The 'romance' was of course Tolkien's trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954), *The Two Towers* (1954) and *The Return of the King* (1955).

[212](#) See **Phoebe Hesketh** in the Biographical Appendix.

[213](#) Phoebe Hesketh, *No Time for Cowards: Poems*, Preface by Herbert Palmer (London: Heinemann, 1952).

[214](#) *ibid.*, p. 8, 'The Secret in the Stone', 5.

[215](#) *ibid.*, 10.

[216](#) *ibid.*, p. 9, 49.

[217](#) *ibid.*, 'Zebras', p. 39, 10–11.

[218](#) *ibid.*, p. 81, 'Retrospection', 4–5: 'Where half-hearts join while Time's black finger races/Towards the evening train.'

[219](#) *ibid.*, p. 72, 'I Am Not Resigned', 18.

[220](#) Richard Thomas Church (1893–1972), poet, critic and novelist, author of *Over the Bridge* (1955).

[221](#) Greeves's dog.

[222](#) See the letter to Phoebe Hesketh of 4 October 1952.

[223](#) i.e., *No Time for Cowards*.

[224](#) The Rev. John Rowland, B.Sc., was writing from 115 Mackie Avenue, Brighton.

[225](#) The *Northern Whig* was a Belfast newspaper which began in 1824, and continued as *Northern Whig and Belfast Post* from 1919 until 1963 when it ceased publication.

[226](#) Vera Henry, Mrs Moore's goddaughter, sometimes acted as housekeeper for the Lewis brothers.

[227](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *A. E. W. Mason, 1865–1948* (London: M. Parrish, 1952).

[228](#) 'trust one who has experience'.

[229](#) This letter was published in the *Church Times*, CXXXV (24 October 1952), p. 763, under the title 'Canonization'.

[230](#) See Eric Pitt, 'Canonization', *Church Times*, CXXXV (17 October 1952), p. 743.

[231](#) *The Catholic Encyclopedia: An International Work of Reference on the Constitution, Doctrine, Discipline, and History of the Catholic Church*, 15 vols, ed. Charles G. Herbermann, etc. (New York: Robert Appleton Co., 1907–12).

232 A theological term signifying the honour paid to the saints.

[233](#) John Oliver Reed (1929–) was born on 16 December 1929 in London, the son of F. O. Reed. In 1941 he was awarded, on the result of the Junior County Scholarship Examination, a Foundation Scholarship to Bancroft's School, Woodford. In December 1946 he was elected on examination to a Demyship at Magdalen College, Oxford. Before going up to Oxford he did his National Service, arriving at Magdalen in 1949. There he read English under Lewis, taking his BA in 1952. Reed was briefly an assistant master at Winchester College, after which he held assistant lectureships at the University of Edinburgh and at Kings College, London. From 1957 until he retired in 1996 he taught at universities in Africa and the Far East. See the letter to Reed of 8 July 1947 in the Supplement.

[234](#) This letter to Reed is written on a letter Lewis received from A. R. Woolley, Educational Secretary of the Oxford University Appointments Committee, dated 24 October 1952. Woolley said: 'The Headmaster of Winchester tells me that he will need to appoint either in 1953 or 1954 a man with a good degree in English...If there is anyone among your pupils who you think might be interested in this opening I wonder if you would kindly suggest to him that he make an appointment to come and see me.'

[235](#) At this time Reed was in Oxford beginning a B. Litt. degree. Following Lewis's suggestion, he sought the advice of the President of Magdalen College, Thomas Sherrer Ross Boase (1898–1974). In the end Reed was advised to give up work on his B. Litt. and take the job at Winchester College which began in January 1953. By mid 1953 he had accepted an appointment at the University of Edinburgh.

[236](#) See the letter to Hesketh of 4 October 1952.

237 Mrs Johnson was given the pseudonym 'Mrs Ashton' in *L*.

[238](#) Mrs Johnson asked 'What is your correct title?' The following notes indicate the questions she asked (the original of her list is in the Wade Center).

[239](#) 'Do people get another chance after death? I refer to Charles Williams.'

[240](#) 'What would happen if I had died an atheist?'

[241](#) 'What happens to Jews who are still waiting for the Messiah?'

242 'Is the Bible infallible?'

[243](#) Lewis originally wrote 'not read with attention', but altered this to 'without', presumably overlooking that he had written 'not read'. But his meaning is 'isolated from their context and read without attention...'

[244](#) φονεύσεις as in Matthew 19:18.

[245](#) ἀποκτείνω as in John 8:37.

246 'If a thief killed Eileen would I be wrong to want him to die?'

[247](#) 'Is killing in self defense all right?'

[248](#) Romans 13:4.

[249](#) Luke 3:14.

[250](#) Matthew 8:10.

[251](#) 'Will we recognize our loved ones in Heaven?'

[252](#) Matthew 22:4.

[253](#) Matthew 22:2–12; Luke 12:36.

[254](#) Hebrews 11:16; 12:22.

[255](#) Revelation 5:8–14.

[256](#) 'If Wayne didn't go to Heaven I wouldn't want to either. Would his name be erased from my brain?'

[257](#) 'Do you like sweets?'

[258](#) 'Are you handsome?'

[259](#) 'Tell me the story about the barber.'

[260](#) Edward T. Dell Jr had written to Bles on 30 October 1952 that those essays by Lewis ‘chiefly found in pamphlet form or as articles in the “Spectator” might, with an appropriate preface, make an interesting book of essays...There is also a sermon that might be included as well. It was delivered in a church in the midlands on Apr. 7, 1946...I imagine Dr Lewis would scoff at the idea of a reprinting of his first book *Spirits in Bondage* but to me the book seems to merit it just as much as did *Dymer*’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 9).

[261](#) On 7 April 1946 Lewis preached a sermon entitled 'Miserable Offenders' in St Matthew's Church, Northampton. It was included in a booklet, *Five Sermons by Laymen* (April–May 1946), and is reprinted in *EC*.

[262](#) Mrs Shelburne, formerly an Anglican or Episcopalian, in 1951 converted to the Catholic Church.

[263](#) See **J. R. R. Tolkien** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* I, pp. 1022–4.

[264](#) Lewis had read the typescript of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* in October 1949, and he wrote to his friend about it on 27 October 1949 (*CL* II, pp. 990–1). Since then Tolkien had been trying to get it published, hoping whoever published it would also publish the unfinished *Silmarillion*. Rayner Unwin, the son of the publisher Sir Stanley Unwin (1884–1968) of Allen & Unwin publishers, believed it to be a very great work and his father left it to him to decide whether the firm should accept it. After calculations and discussions with others in Allen & Unwin, Rayner wrote to Tolkien on 10 November 1952 saying the firm would like to publish the book under a profit-sharing agreement, under which Tolkien would receive nothing until the sales of the book had covered its publishing costs, but would afterwards share equally with the publishers any profits that might accrue. Tolkien was delighted *The Lord of the Rings* had been accepted, and he wrote at once to tell Lewis what had happened. Lewis replied with this letter.

265 'without trace'.

266 Priscilla was Tolkien's daughter.

[267](#) Katharine Farrer had been corresponding with Tolkien about *The Lord of the Rings*.

[268](#) MacDonald, *Diary of an Old Soul*, November 3: 'Have pity on us for the look of things,/Where blank denial stares us in the face./Although the serpent mask have lied before/It fascinates the bird.'

[269](#) Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34.

[270](#) Romans 12:5.

[271](#) Mrs Van Deusen may have suggested sending Lewis the autobiography of the American political writer Whittaker Chambers (1901–61), best known for his accusation and testimony against Alger Hiss (1904–96), the architect of the Yalta Conference and Secretary General of the San Francisco conference that created the United Nations. Chambers' autobiography, *Witness*, was published in 1952.

272 Blamires had applied for a job in Edinburgh.

[273](#) The US edition of *Mere Christianity* was published by Macmillan of New York on 11 November 1952.

[274](#) *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'.*

[275](#) During the autumn of 1952 the *Church Times* featured a number of pencil drawings of 'Portraits of Personalities' that of Lewis, by Stanley Parker, appeared in the *Church Times*, CXXXV (21 November 1952), p. 844.

[276](#) This was possibly the working title for an intended collection of Lewis's essays.

[277](#) Serena is a young lady whose adventures are recounted in Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, Book VI.

[278](#) The Red Cross Knight.

[279](#) Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, I, x, 61, 8: 'Thou Saint *George* shalt called bee.'

[280](#) There is no evidence that this story was ever published.

[281](#) H. G. Wells, *Kipps* (1905).

[282](#) e.g. H. G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds* (1898), ch. 6: ‘You may figure to yourself the hum of voices along the road in the gloaming.’

[283](#) *Christian Behaviour* (New York: Macmillan, 1943).

[284](#) 'Luke 11:26: the last state of that man is worse than the first' Matthew 12:45.

[285](#) i.e., Joy Gresham.

[286](#) For a while Joy and Bill Gresham dabbled in Ron Hubbard's philosophy of Dianetics or spiritual healing. See Lyle Dorsett, *And God Came In: The Extraordinary Story of Joy Davidman, Her Life and Marriage to C. S. Lewis* (New York: Macmillan, 1983), ch. 3, p. 71.

[287](#) See the biography of the Honourable Phyllis Elinor Sandeman (1895–1986) in *CL* II, p. 788n. Mrs Sandeman was brought up in Lyme Park, one of the most magnificent houses in Cheshire. Home to the Legh family for 600 years, the original Tudor house was transformed by the Venetian architect, Giacomo Leoni, into an Italianate palace. In 1946 Mrs Sandeman's brother, the 3rd Baron Newton, Richard Legh, gave Lyme Park to the National Trust.

[288](#) Phyllis Sandeman, *Treasure on Earth: A Country House at Christmas*, illustrated by the author (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1952), an account of a Christmas spent at Lyme Park during her childhood.

[289](#) Percy Lubbock, *Earlham* (1922).

[290](#) 'we others'.

[291](#) Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *The Lady of Shalott, And Other Poems* (1833), 'The Lotus Eaters', IV, 8–9: 'All things are taken from us, and become/Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.'

[292](#) Sandeman, *Treasure on Earth*, p. 26: 'It was a large lofty room with walls of darkly gloomy cedar-wood, Corinthian pilasters arranged in pairs dividing the long panels and each of these adorned down its centre with swags of elaborate wood-carvings. From looped garlands and palm leaves and cupids' heads hung a host of diverse objects, bunches of fruit and flowers, musical instruments, trophies, fish and birds, all carved to the life in soft yellow pear-wood by the hand of the master—the one and only Grinling Gibbons.' In Mrs Sandeman's book the owners of the house—the Newtons—are given the pseudonym 'Vayne'. Grinling Gibbons (1648–1721) was the most famous English woodcarver of all time.

[293](#) *ibid.*, p. 62: 'They would begin with Grace said by the Canon and then the meal would proceed eaten off silver plates, not so pleasant as the china service because scratchy under the knife and fork.'

[294](#) *ibid.*, p. 83: 'The Long Gallery...could be a little frightening at night, and generally Phyllis avoided going there alone after dark. One night after summer holidays, however, resentful and unhappy from what she considered an unjust rebuke by her parents, she had run there, and flinging herself on one of the deep window seats, burst into tears of self-pity. But almost at once, breaking in upon her grief with a gentle but increasing pressure, she seemed to detect a sympathy in the surrounding atmosphere as if unseen presences thronging about her were offering their love and consolation.'

[295](#) Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (1847), ch. 2.

296 Lewis had put his finger on 'Mrs' while the ink was still wet.

[297](#) Genesis 15:1; Luke 2:10.

[298](#) *The Ichneutai of Sophocles: The Searching Satyrs, the Fragment Freely Translated into English Rhyming Verse and Restored by Roger Lancelyn Green* (Leicester: E. Ward, 1946).

[299](#) Lewis had sent Evans a copy of *Prince Caspian*, and he was here referring to the first illustration in Chapter 3. Pauline Baynes wrote to Walter Hooper on 15 August 1967: '[Lewis] only once asked for an alteration—& then with many apologies—when I (with my little knowledge) had drawn one of the characters rowing a boat facing the wrong direction' (*CL* II, p. 1020).

[300](#) Having returned to New Zealand, Bodle sent Lewis a little book of prayers for deaf children that she had written.

[301](#) John 14:9.

[302](#) John 14:28.

[303](#) Acts 17:27.

[304](#) See **Clyde S. Kilby** in the Biographical Appendix.

[305](#) Laurence was the second son of Cecil Harwood and Lewis's godson. See **Laurence Harwood** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1051–2.

[306](#) At this time Vera Henry was back in her native Ireland. She never recovered from her illness and died in April 1953. The only person at The Kilns who could help with the cooking was the gardener, Fred Paxford (see his biography in *CL II*, p. 213n). When it was clear that Vera would not be returning, Lewis hired as his housekeeper Mrs Molly Miller, who lived close by in Kiln Lane. There are photographs of Fred Paxford and Molly Miller in Douglas Gilbert and Clyde S. Kilby, *C. S. Lewis: Images of His World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), pp. 67, 69.

[307](#) 'Not to us.' Psalm 115 (Vulgate): 'Non nobis, Domine, non nobis; Sed nomini tuo da gloriam': 'Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your Name give glory.'

[308](#) It is known Joy Gresham left for the United States on 3 January 1953.

[309](#) Bonamy Dobrée (1891–1974) was born in London on 2 February 1891 and educated at Haileybury College and the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich. He served with the Royal Horse Artillery and Royal Field Artillery during the First World War. After the war he went to Christ's College, Cambridge (1920–1). In the following years he published many scholarly books. In 1936 he was appointed to the Chair of English Literature at the University of Leeds, where he remained until his retirement in 1955. Dobrée was one of the General Editors of the Oxford History of English Literature, and his contribution to the series was *English Literature in the Eighteenth Century, 1700–1740* (1959). He died on 3 September 1974.

[310](#) *The Wanderer* is an Anglo-Saxon poem of 115 lines. This is Lewis's translation of lines 9–14.

[311](#) Lewis probably meant by this 'A Normal Male Person'.

¹ J. Keith Kyle of the North American Service of the BBC wrote to Lewis on 31 December 1952: 'The Columbia Broadcasting System with whom the North American Service of the BBC often co-operates...has invited us to assist them with a series called "This I Believe"...It is designed to put on the air a number of statements of personal conviction from "men and women in all stations of life, who have been successful in their chosen profession." The CBS emphasizes that the contributions should be extremely personal in approach and as they are to be only 31/2 minutes in length, complete simplicity is obviously essential.'

² Pitter gave a lecture entitled 'A Return to Poetic Law' to the Royal Institution of Great Britain on 22 February 1952. A copy can be found in the Pitter Papers, Temporary Box, Bodleian Library.

³ Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, First Part, pp. 73–4: 'I thought again, this *Shame* tells me what men are; but it tells me nothing what God or the Word of God is. And I thought moreover, That at the day of doom, we shall not be doomed to death or life according to the hectoring spirits of the world, but according to the Wisdom and Law of the Highest. Therefore thought I, what God says, is best, though all the men in the world are against it...But indeed this *Shame* was a bold villain; I could scarce shake him out of my company; yea, he would be haunting of me, and continually whispering me in the ear, with some one or other of the infirmities that attend Religion; but at last I told him, Twas but in vain to attempt further in this business; for those things that he disdained, in those did I see most glory; And so at last I got past this *Importunate* one.'

⁴ Since 1930 the Pitter family had owned a cottage in Felsted, Essex, where Ruth taught herself viticulture. The cottage, however, had to be left behind when Ruth and her companion of many years, Kathleen O'Hara, decided to buy a house in the village of Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire. 'The Hawthorns' in Chilton Road was set in several acres of garden and orchard, and was within reach of Oxford and London. They moved in shortly before Christmas 1953. Pitter noted: 'In coming to the neighbourhood of Oxford, of course I had hoped to see a little more of Lewis, of David Cecil, and others, and to attend open lectures, plays, etc. But we could not find anything near enough to make this at all easy' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 113).

⁵ Dorsett, *And God Came In*, ch.3, pp.90–1.

[6](#) *ibid.*, p. 91.

⁷ This is a reply to a letter from Don Giovanni of 9 January 1953 (?), which appears in *Letters: C. S. Lewis–Don Giovanni Calabria*, pp. 76–7.

[8](#) There had been a mistake. The article, 'Responsabilità'—which was not by Don Giovanni Calabria but by Padre Paolo Manna—was published in *L'Amico*, 8 (Sep.–Oct. 1952), pp. 122–4. The article is reproduced in *Una Gioia Insolita*, pp. 283–5.

⁹ Lewis had only recently begun writing the book on prayer mentioned here. He mentioned it to Don Giovanni again in a letter of 17 March 1953, but had abandoned it by the following year (see the letter to Sister Penelope of 15 February 1954). He could not think how to go on with the book until, in the spring of 1963, he found the form for what he wanted to say. The result was *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer* (London: Bles, 1964; Fount, 1998).

[10](#) 1 Chronicles 13:9–10: ‘And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.

[11](#) Luke 9:62: 'And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.'

[12](#) In 'Responsabilità' Fr Manna pleads for greater recognition of the gravity of Communist persecution of Christians (hospital workers as well as missionaries) in China. He argues that if a Communist (e.g., French Communist Party leader Jacques Duclos) is arrested in the West, the Communists rise in protest. There should be no less an outcry on behalf of victimized missionaries.

13 'so far as' 'whenever'.

14 i.e., Paolo Manna.

[15](#) Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, Bk. I, ch. 5.

16 i.e., the book on prayer.

[17](#) Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:35.

[18](#) Luke 22:42.

[19](#) Lewis read a paper on this same problem to the Oxford Clerical Society on 8 December 1953. It was published as 'Petitionary Prayer: A Problem Without an Answer' in *Christian Reflections*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Bles, 1967; Fount, 1998).

[20](#) Eustace and Edmund are characters in the Narnian stories; Jane and Mark Studdock are the married couple in *That Hideous Strength*.

[21](#) Lewis probably had in mind the last two lines of the title poem of Edna St Vincent Millay's *Renascence, and Other Poems* (1925): 'Ah, awful weight! Infinity/Pressed down upon the finite Me!'

22 Rudolf Steiner.

[23](#) The Rev. Jones B. Shannon was executive director of the Church Society of College Work, Washington, DC.

[24](#) In February 1953 Joy became a member of the Episcopal Church and was confirmed in the Cathedral of St John the Divine, New York.

[25](#) T. H. White, *Mistress Masham's Repose* (1946).

[26](#) Mrs Van Deusen, an Episcopalian, was in touch with the Order of the Holy Cross, a Benedictine Anglican monastic order in West Park, New York. The order had suggested she become one of the Associates of Holy Cross. These lay associates lived under a modified form of the Benedictine rule suitable to laymen.

27 James was probably a clergyman Mrs Van Deusen knew.

[28](#) Warnie served for a number of years on the vestry of Holy Trinity Church, Headington Quarry, Oxford. Vestrymen help the churchwardens deal with the temporal affairs of a parish church.

29 George Bernard Shaw.

[30](#) Robert Louis Stevenson, *Virginibus Puerisque and Other Papers* (1901), ch. 1, 'Virginibus Puerisque': 'Marriage is terrifying, but so is a cold and forlorn old age.'

[31](#) In Charles Williams's *Region of the Summer Stars*, 'P'o-l'u' is in the Antipodean Ocean. Starr was spending the academic year at Kansai University, Osaka, Japan as a Fulbright Scholar. He was then offered a professorship at the University of Florida in Gainesville, where he stayed until his retirement.

[32](#) William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (1623), I, ii, 250–93. Ariel, a spirit of the air, was once the servant of Sycorax, a wicked sorceress who imprisoned him in a ‘cloven pine’ for refusing to fulfil her commands. He was trapped inside the tree for twelve years until Prospero arrived on the island, released him, and bound him to his service.

[33](#) Ray Bradbury, *The Silver Locusts* (1951).

[34](#) The forty-seven Ronin were Samurai retainers who in 1701 avenged their master's death by killing his enemy, and then awaiting the death sentence to be passed on them by the government. The act of defying the government, and following instead the way of the Samurai to be faithful to their lord unto death, won them everlasting fame. Every year on 14 December people gather at their graves at Sengakuji Temple in Tokyo.

[35](#) Anthony Boucher was the pseudonym of William Anthony Parker White (1911–68), critic and author. He wrote a column on mystery stories, ‘Criminal at Large’, for the *New York Times*, 1951–68, and was the editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, 1949–58. He is the author of many works of mystery and science fiction, and it was at his suggestion that Lewis contributed two short stories, ‘The Shoddy Lands’ and ‘Ministering Angels’—reprinted in *The Dark Tower and Other Stories*—to *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*.

[36](#) Boucher's short story, 'The Quest for St. Aquin' was first published in *New Tales of Space and Time*, ed. Raymond J. Healy (New York: Holt, 1951), and 'The Star Dummy' was published in *Fantastic* (Fall 1952). They are reprinted in *The Compleat Boucher: The Complete Short Science Fiction and Fantasy of Anthony Boucher* (1998).

[37](#) Old Solar for 'God bless you.' It is found several times in the last chapter of *That Hideous Strength* when Ransom blesses those who have fought with him at St Anne's on the Hill.

[38](#) Bodle said of this letter: 'I had spoken of a girl in my class at Manchester who was intelligent and had a great deal of language as she had acquired it before being deafened. In answer to her anxieties about the remoteness of God I had tried to explain who Christ is and why He had come. Then she herself said with unusual relief "Then Jesus is God"—a conception entirely new to her. I think that I must have been wondering how much of the teaching about Christ I could present with the Gospel story—a problem which I still find very difficult' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fols. 248–9).

[39](#) Acts 8:31.

[40](#) Matthew 6:12.

[41](#) See **Sir Arthur Charles Clarke** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1024–5.

⁴² Clarke, in his capacity as chairman of the British Interplanetary Society, wrote to Lewis on 13 February 1953: 'I am now trying to arrange this Society's lecture programme for October '53–April '54, and the suggestion has been put forward that you might care to propose a notion that interplanetary travel is a bad thing!...It would be only fair to point out that your position might be somehow analogous to that of a Christian martyr in the arena, but I trust that consideration would not deter you' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol. 16).

[43](#) Robin Oakley-Hill (1932–) was born on 30 May 1932, the son of Dayrell R. Oakley-Hill. He went up to Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1950 where he read English under Lewis. After taking his BA in 1953 he worked as an administrative officer in the Architects' Department of the London City Council.

[44](#) In a note dated August 2003 Oakley-Hill said of this letter: ‘I was walking from the boathouse back to college on an unpleasantly raw winter afternoon after an unsatisfactory session of coxing when I was joined by CS Lewis waiting to cross the High. He said something like “You’re limping–did you hurt yourself?” I said no, I’d had polio, in a fairly unfriendly manner, because I was fed up with the weather, the unsatisfactory rowing and the tedious unfinished work I was going back to. He looked embarrassed and said “Oh, poor chap,” and we went our separate ways. I was astounded to get the letter next day, and was inclined to reply that it didn’t signify, but a confidant warned me to take the apology in a serious manner because otherwise it would seem that I did not appreciate the trouble he had taken in writing the letter, and I did so.’

[45](#) In the country of Brobdingnag in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) the people are as tall as steeples, and everything else is in proportion.

[46](#) Chad Walsh, *Nellie and her Flying Crocodile*, illus. Marc Simont (New York: Harper, 1956).

[47](#) That is, become an Associate of Holy Cross.

[48](#) Wilkie Collins, *Armadale* (1866).

[49](#) Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White* (1860); *The Moonstone* (1868).

50 In *The Woman in White*.

[51](#) Green, *From the World's End*, ch. 5, p. 70. In Roman legend Tarquin raped Lucrece.

[52](#) *ibid.*, p. 83: ‘a supreme surrender and a supreme assumption of responsibility’.

[53](#) Theodore Watts-Dunton, *Aylwin* (1898).

54 Green spelled the names 'Danai' and 'Pasiphai'.

[55](#) i.e., *The Last Battle* (1956).

56 Clifford W. Stone was writing from PO Box 528, El Dorado, Kansas.

[57](#) Mark Twain, *Report from Paradise*, with drawings by Charles Locke (New York: Harper & Bros., 1952). For many years Twain played with the idea of writing an account of heaven that would debunk Christian revelation. In 1909 he published 'Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven', a fragment of his manuscript. *Report from Paradise* contains 'Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven' as well as the other surviving chapters of Twain's unfinished work.

[58](#) Mark Twain, *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889).

[59](#) For *The Silver Chair*.

60 'he is limping'.

[61](#) Shakespeare, *King Lear*, IV, vi, 133–4: ‘Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary, to sweeten my imagination.’

62 Palmer wanted Lewis to recommend one of his books to a publisher.

[63](#) Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*, ch. 6: ‘‘Twas brillig, and the slithy toves/Did gyre and gimble in the wabe’.

[64](#) John Bunyan, *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman* (1680), ch. 8: 'For they are a shame to religion, I say, these slithy, rob-shop, pick-pocket men, they are a shame to religion, and religious men should be ashamed of them.'

[65](#) The *New English Dictionary*, the precursor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

[66](#) See the reference to the *eldila* in the letter to Douglas Harding of 25 March 1951.

[67](#) e.g., Luke 1:30: ‘And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.’ See also Genesis 15:1; Luke 2:10.

[68](#) In *Perelandra*, ch. 16, p. 202, during the attempt to make themselves visible to Ransom, the *eldila* or Oyéresu of Mars and Venus appear as ‘concentric wheels moving with a rather sickening slowness one inside the other’. This imagery was inspired by the appearance of angels in Ezekiel 1:16: ‘Their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.’ We should notice too *Miracles*, ch. 14, pp. 120–1: ‘[Jahweh’s] appearance to Ezekiel is attended with imagery that does not borrow from Nature, but (it is a mystery too seldom noticed) from those machines which men were to make centuries after Ezekiel’s death. The prophet saw something suspiciously like a *dynamo*.’

[69](#) 'Apician' had been added in Lewis's hand.

70 W. K. Scudamore was writing from 3 Maurice Road, Seaford, Sussex.

[71](#) This was Lewis's 'mangling' of Scudamore's name.

[72](#) Sir Scudamour is the lover of Amoret in Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, as well as the name of Lewis's hero in *The Dark Tower*.

[74](#) Jane ('Janie') Agnes McNeill (1889–1959) was a close friend from Strandtown. See her biography in *CL* I, p. 117n.

[75](#) In his letter of 16 March 1953 Bles said: ‘With some trepidation I venture to address you again on the gender of mythological creatures...On returning to the galleys of “The Silver Chair”...I find the same thing has happened again, not only with the Dwarf but with that curious creature, the Marsh-wiggle...It looks to me as though the discrepancies are due to the fact that, although, for some philological reason, you try to keep Dwarf and Marsh-wiggle neuter, you naturally think of them as persons—as indeed most readers would. If I may say so, this neuter business seems strained and artificial, and in places reminds me of Mark Twain’s joke about the German language, “The girl took the spoon and fork. It laid *him* and *her* on the table”’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 20).

[76](#) Bles replied on 18 March 1953: 'I am so glad that you agree to a "he" for the Dwarf and the Marshwiggles. I would suggest this Rule: when mythological creatures speak like human beings, masculine/feminine gender; when they are *personae mutae* [silent characters] neuter' (ibid., fol. 22).

[77](#) Lewis probably had in mind the following three statements regarding natural law. The classical definition is found in St Thomas Aquinas: ‘The natural law is nothing other than the light of understanding placed in us by God; through it we know what we must do and what we must avoid. God has given this light or law at the creation’ (*Collationes in decem praeceptis*, 1). Cicero (51 BC) said in *De Republica*, 11:33: ‘There is in fact a true law—namely, right reason—which is in accordance with nature, applies to all men and is unchangeable and eternal.’ The chief New Testament text on which natural law is based is Romans 2:14–15: ‘When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness.’ Lewis’s writings on natural law include the first book of *Mere Christianity*, *The Abolition of Man*, and ‘The Poison of Subjectivism’ and ‘On Ethics’ in *Christian Reflections*.

[78](#) These reflections were to be repeated the following year in Lewis's inaugural lecture at Cambridge, '*De Descriptione Temporum*': 'It is hard to have patience with those Jeremiahs, in Press or pulpit, who warn us that we are "relapsing into Paganism". It might be rather fun if we were. It would be pleasant to see some future Prime Minister trying to kill a large and lively milk-white bull in Westminster Hall. But we shan't. What lurks behind such idle prophecies, if they are anything but careless language, is the false idea that the historical process allows mere reversal; that Europe can come out of Christianity "by the same door as in she went" and find herself back where she was. It is not what happens. A post-Christian man is not a Pagan; you might as well think that a married woman recovers her virginity by divorce. The post-Christian is cut off from the Christian past and therefore doubly from the Pagan past' (*SLE*, p. 10). See 'A Cliché Came Out of Its Cage', *CP*, p. 17, which begins: 'You said "The world is going back to Paganism". Oh bright Vision!'

[79](#) i.e., the tale which was eventually to be titled *The Horse and His Boy*.

[80](#) *P. Vergili Maronis: Opera*, ed. Frederick Arthur Hirtzel (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900), p. [iii]: 'Eager to correct what they consider errors, they more often trample upon the most delicate flowers of the Muses.'

81 Delirium tremens.

[82](#) Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, III, iv, 140: 'My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time.'

83 Michael was an American schoolboy.

[84](#) In her letter to Lewis of 18 March, Gebbert wrote: ‘A physical condition...caused my mind to wander and speculate for too long now, and recently drove me to a doctor. He told me in no uncertain terms that my husband and I can expect an heir or heiress in a month or two! And all along I had been blaming everything on sea-sickness!’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 238).

[85](#) Lewis ends *SBJ*, ch. 12, 'Guns and Good Company' with these same words.

[86](#) In her letter of 18 March Gebbert continued: ‘I was so dismayed at the doctor’s diagnosis that, for a moment, I wished it had not happened—that I was *not* going to have a child. I know I was guilty of the lowest form of ignorance: fear, and that night, as I was dining alone in my library, my eyes fell upon the Bible I keep open on the table. It had been open to Psalms for several days—I had been reading them off and on and had not turned or disturbed the pages in any way. *Nor had anyone else*. This night, then, as I glanced from the food to the Book, I saw and read the verse: “Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.” Isaiah, Chap. 66, Verse 9. How did the pages get turned from Psalms? And by whom? In such ways, at times, do we receive the miracle of His rebuke, His admonition, His comfort, and the workings of His plan? Am I wrong to take the words I read as a rebuke? Am I wrong in assuming my eye fell on the chapter and verse it was *Supposed* to?’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 238).

[87](#) Matthew 10:29: 'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.'

[88](#) *The Screwtape Letters* (London: Bles, 1942; Fount, 1998), Letter 27, pp. 106–7: ‘If you tried to explain to [the Patient] that men’s prayers today are one of the innumerable co-ordinates with which the Enemy [God] harmonizes the weather of tomorrow, he would reply that then the Enemy always knew men were going to make those prayers and, if so, they did not pray freely but were predestined to do so...What he ought to say, of course, is obvious to us; that the problem of adapting the particular weather to the particular prayers is merely the appearance, at two points in his temporal mode of perception, of the total problem of adapting the whole spiritual universe to the whole corporeal universe; that creation in its entirety operates at every point of space and time, or rather that their kind of consciousness forces them to encounter the whole, self-consistent creative act as a series of successive events.’

[89](#) Chang had sent Lewis his translation of a Chinese allegory to read.

[90](#) 'model of Christ'.

[91](#) *The Great Divorce*, Preface, p. 5: 'It was a wonderful vehicle, blazing with golden light, heraldically coloured. The Driver himself seemed full of light and he used only one hand to drive with. The other he waved before his face as if to fan away the greasy steam of the rain.' Cf. *The Comedy of Dante Alighieri the Florentine: Cantica I Hell L'Inferno*, trans. Dorothy L. Sayers (London: Penguin, 1949), IX, 82: 'His left hand, moving, fanned away the gross/Air from his face, nor otherwise did he seem/At all to find the way laborious.'

[92](#) *The Great Divorce*, ch. 12, cf. Dante, *Purgatorio*, XXX.

[93](#) i.e., Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*.

[94](#) See the discussion of David Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus* (1920) in *CL* II, pp. 440, 541, 630, 753.

[95](#) A vast French prose romance of the fourteenth century, in which the anonymous author sought to link the legends of Alexander the Great and King Arthur.

96 Old French.

[97](#) The story of Balin, or Balain, is recounted in the Old French *Suite du Merlin* and in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*. Balin and Balan are tragic brothers who, despite their nobility, wind up killing each other.

[98](#) John Francis Gilfedder (1925–), musician, was born in Melbourne, Australia, on 27 January 1925. After studying medicine, he began composing music in 1948. In 1951–2 he studied composition with Benjamin Frankel and Raymond Jones in England, and it was in 1952 that he met Lewis. On returning to Australia, he studied at the University of Melbourne and graduated with a Bachelor of Music degree in 1958. This was followed by a Dip. Ed. in 1959, and a B. Ed. in 1962, also from the University of Melbourne. Gilfedder was employed by the Victorian Education Department, 1953–69, before taking up a position at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music in 1970. His works include *The Timeless Land Symphony*, which had its premiere in 2002.

[99](#) Gilfedder suggested Lewis provide a glossary of obscure terms to go with the Arthurian poems of Charles Williams, *Taliessin Through Logres* and *The Region of the Summer Stars*.

[100](#) A Religious of CSMV (Sister Penelope), *The Coming of the Lord: A Study in the Creed* (London: Mowbray, 1953; 2nd impression, 1954).

[101](#) Lewis was reading the typescript of the book; the page numbers of the typescript differ from those in the published book which are the ones given below.

[102](#) *ibid.*, ch. 8, p. 48: ‘When a smith says of a sword, “It is finished,” he means that it is ready to be used. Only when it has served its purpose and has no longer any *raison d’être*, does the end of a thing mean its ceasing to exist. The two Ends that our Lord is seeing in St. Mark xiii exactly illustrate this difference. The End of the Temple was the destruction of the Temple, because the type was no longer needed when the thing typified, the New Humanity, had come. But when Man comes to his End, he will be finished in the sense of being ready, at last, for the purpose for which he was made.’

[103](#) *ibid.*, ch. 6, pp. 34–5: ‘Except for the saying of John the Baptist, “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom,” the bride is never mentioned in the Gospels. Why? Surely because she did not yet exist, because the New Eve had yet to be created, as the Fathers loved to say, out of the pierced side of the Second Adam on the Cross. Later in the New Testament St. Paul, in Ephesians v.22 ff., uses the husband and wife analogy for the relation between Christ and His Church, but does not expressly name her either wife or bride. In the Apocalypse, however, right to the end she is only the bride, the wife to be. For the Church is not yet wholly one with Christ, as man was one with God before the Fall; and the consummation of “the marriage of the Lamb” with the bride of His own redeeming and remaking is itself the consummation for which the whole creation waits.’

[104](#) *ibid.*, pp. 37–8: ‘There is so much that is obvious about Palm Sunday, our Lord’s deliberate and literal fulfilment of Zechariah’s prophecy about the peaceful king, the bitter contrast between that triumph and the Passion following, that other things no less significant often get overlooked...That impromptu procession of the Passover pilgrims on the first Palm Sunday combined the themes and types of both those two great Feasts. But over and above all that, the festal coming of Christ to Jerusalem was a symbol of His final, finished Coming to the Father as the Son of Man. That, at least, is how St. Bernard sees it. The liturgical palm procession, he says, which re-enacts that entry, represents the glory of our heavenly fatherland.’

[105](#) *ibid.*, ch. 9, pp. 58–9: ‘The Greek says, “He was *metamorphosed* before them,” He changed His form. Metamorphosis, change of form at different stages on the way to perfection, is common in the natural world, the most familiar instance being that of the creature which ends up as a butterfly, after being successively an egg, a caterpillar, and a chrysalis. The Transfiguration of Christ suggests that Man also is a metamorphic creature...After death [Christ] passed again to His perfection, this time finally. In that perfected body, that yet bore the marks of what its larval form had borne on Calvary, He was touched and handled, as well as seen and heard, by many of His friends during the Great Forty Days.’

[106](#) *ibid.*, ch. 2, p. 9.

[107](#) 'waiting for'.

[108](#) Sister Penelope removed this word from the book.

[109](#) The word 'neo-Paganism' was also removed from the book.

[110](#) 'respect'.

111 'fear of the gods'.

[112](#) 'world' as in John 9:39: 'For judgement I am come into this world.'

[113](#) Corbin Scott Carnell (1929–) was born in Ormond, Florida, on 7 July 1929, the son of Stanley and Doris (Scott) Carnell. He received a BA from Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, 1952, and an MA from Columbia University in New York, 1953. He received his Ph.D. in English from the University of Florida in 1960 where his dissertation topic was ‘The Dialectic of Desire: C. S. Lewis’ Interpretation of “Sehnsucht”’. Carnell was, successively, Teaching Associate, Associate Professor, and Assistant Professor of English at Bethany College, West Virginia, 1953–76. He served as Professor of English at the University of Florida, 1976–2000. His thesis was published as *Bright Shadow of Reality: C. S. Lewis and the Feeling Intellect* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974).

[114](#) Carnell said of this letter: 'I inquired about the lengthy footnote in *Miracles* which asserts that some Biblical miracles are to be understood rather literally, others not.' The footnote he was inquiring about is a reference to the book of Jonah in *Miracles*, ch. 15, note 1: 'A consideration of the Old Testament miracles is beyond the scope of this book and would require many kinds of knowledge which I do not possess. My present view...would be that just as, on the factual side, a long preparation culminates in God's becoming incarnate as Man, so, on the documentary side, the truth first appears in *mythical* form and then by a long process of condensing or focusing finally becomes incarnate as History...The Hebrews, like other people, had mythology: but as they were the chosen people so their mythology was the chosen mythology—the mythology chosen by God to be the vehicle of the earliest sacred truths, the first step in that process which ends in the New Testament where truth has become completely historical...I take it that the Memoirs of David's court come at one end of the scale and are scarcely less historical than St Mark or Acts; and that the Book of Jonah is at the opposite end.'

[115](#) On Lewis's first confession see his letters to Sister Penelope of 24 October and 4 November 1942 (*CL* II, pp. 450–2, 453–4).

[116](#) President Dwight D. Eisenhower said in a speech of 16 April 1953, reported in *The Times* (17 April 1953), p. 8, under the title 'President Eisenhower's Appeal to Russia': 'Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. The world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children...This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron.'

[117](#) See the biography of Margaret Deneke attached to letter of 3 October 1944 in supplement. Deneke was making plans to produce a volume of reminiscences about her kinsman, P. V. M. Benecke. The book was published as *Paul Victor Mendelssohn Benecke (1868–1944)* (Oxford: A. T. Broome & Son, 1954), and Lewis's contributions are found on pp. 3, 31–4.

[118](#) Philemon 10: 'I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds.'

[119](#) Matthew 12:37.

[120](#) Professor Masato Hori was a teacher at Kansai University, Osaka, Japan.

[121](#) Joseph A. Breig, *The Devil You Say: Report from Hell* (Milwaukee: Bruce Pub. Co, 1952).

[122](#) Ruth Pitter, *The Ermine: Poems 1942–1952* (1953).

[123](#) This was Pitter's first book after becoming a Christian.

[124](#) Pitter, *The Ermine*, p. 19, 'The World is Hollow', III, 1.

[125](#) *ibid.*, p. 18, 'The Captive Bird of Paradise', II, 4.

[126](#) *ibid.*, p. 15, 'The Other', X, 3–4.

[127](#) *ibid.*, p. 9, 'Great Winter', III, 3.

[128](#) *ibid.*, 'Herding Lambs', p. 16, I, 3–4.

[129](#) *ibid.*, p. 38, 'Aged Man to Young Mother'.

[130](#) See Lewis's letter to George Rostrevor Hamilton of 14 August 1949 on *The Tell-Tale Article* (CL II, pp. 966–7).

[131](#) John H. McCallum, head of the trade department at Harcourt, Brace & World, was Lewis's American editor at the time.

[132](#) Bodle had sent her own simplified version of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* to the deaf daughter of a friend.

[133](#) Bodle said of this letter: 'I had explained that in N.Z. government schools religious instruction cannot be given by teachers. I was feeling frustrated. The principal did, however, allow me to take classes after school for any children who wanted to come' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol. 249).

[134](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *The Secret of Rusticoker* (1953).

[135](#) Martin Kilmer was a member of the 'Kilmer family' to whom *The Magician's Nephew* was dedicated.

[136](#) Stephen Vincent Benét (1898–1943), *Western Star* (1943).

[137](#) Calkins wrote on this letter; 'Reply to my cable at the time Elizabeth II was crowned.'

[138](#) News reached the British public on the eve of the Coronation that Edmund Hillary and the Nepalese Sherpa, Tenzing Norgay, had set foot on the summit of the world's highest mountain, Mount Everest, on 29 May.

[139](#) Hila Newman was an eleven-year-old girl from New York who sent Lewis some drawings of the characters in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

[140](#) Romans 14:13–17: ‘Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother’s way. I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Let not then your good be evil spoken of. For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink: but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.’

[141](#) Mildred Boxill was an editor in the Harcourt Brace college department in New York.

[142](#) John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1667).

[143](#) Douglas Bush was the editor of the section on John Milton in *Major British Writers*. See his biography in *CL II*, p. 221n.

[144](#) Blamires had found a publisher for his book, *The Devil's Hunting-grounds: A Fantasy* (London: Longmans, 1954).

[145](#) The Rev. Canon Roger Bradshaigh Lloyd (1901–66) was educated at St John's College, Cambridge and ordained in 1924. He served as residentiary canon of Winchester Cathedral, 1937–66. During the 1950s he was a reader for Longmans Green. He recommended *The Devil's Hunting-grounds* to Longmans and was in contact with Blamires about the book. His own works include *The Mastery of Evil* (1941) and *The Borderland: An Exploration of Theology in English Literature* (1960). Lloyd was also a keen railway enthusiast, and his books on that subject include *Farewell to Steam* (1956).

[146](#) Beatrix Potter, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (1901); *The Tale of Benjamin Bunny* (1904).

[147](#) 'mother-sickness'. The pun consists in substituting '*mal-de-mère*' for the familiar '*mal de mer*' (sea-sickness). See the letter to Gebbert of 16 July 1953.

148 A poet born at Mitylene, Lesbos, about the middle of the seventh century BC.

[149](#) The song of praise (Luke 1:46–55) sung by the Blessed Virgin Mary when her cousin Elizabeth greeted her as Mother of the Lord.

[150](#) See Kilby's account of this meeting, 'Visit with C. S. Lewis', in the Wheaton College literary magazine, *Kodon*, 8 (December 1953), pp. 11, 28, 30.

[151](#) Stephen Vincent Benét, *John Brown's Body* (1928), a narrative poem of the Civil War.

[152](#) Warnie was correcting the proofs of his first book, *The Splendid Century: Some Aspects of Life in the Reign of Louis XIV* (1953), and his brother was correcting those of *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*.

[153](#) H. Rider Haggard, *The Mahatma and the Hare* (1911).

[154](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table* (1953).

[155](#) See the reference to 'brasting and fighting' in the letter to Greeves of 20 June 1916 (*CL I*, pp. 196–7).

[156](#) See the letter to Gebbert of 20 June 1953.

[157](#) Richard Lancelyn Green (1953–2004) was born at Poulton Hall on 10 July 1953, the second son, and third child, of Roger and June Lancelyn Green.

[158](#) According to the Roman law of *Jus Trium Liberorum*, every man who had been a father of three children had particular honours and privileges.

[159](#) A story Sayer was writing, which has never been published.

[160](#) Matthew 6:11; Luke 11:3.

[161](#) Joel 2:28: 'Your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.' Acts 2:17: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.'

[162](#) Lewis may have had in mind the two great Carmelite doctors of the Church, St Teresa of Avila and St John of the Cross. St Teresa felt visions were unimportant because of their 'sensual nature'. St John of the Cross, in the *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, is blunt and states that visions should be ignored.

[163](#) *In That Hideous Strength.*

[164](#) Cecil John Rhodes (1853–1902), British financier and colonizer, left the greater part of his fortune for the establishing of a scholarship fund. The Rhodes Scholarships to Oxford University were intended to reward applicants who exhibited qualities of character and physical ability, with the aim of promoting cross-cultural understanding and peace between nations. The scholarships have been awarded annually since 1903 by the Rhodes Trust in Oxford, where centenary celebrations were held in June 1953.

[165](#) p.p.

[166](#) 1 Peter 4:12: 'Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you.'

[167](#) See the description of his confessor, Fr Walter Adams SSJE, in the letter to Mary Neylan of 30 April 1941 (*CL II*, p. 482): ‘If I have ever met a *holy* man, he is one.’

[168](#) Laurence Harwood matriculated at Christ Church, Oxford in 1952 and began reading modern history. Unfortunately, in June 1953 he failed the preliminary examination which is designed to ensure that students are sufficiently prepared to proceed to the honours degree in the second or third year. As a result he had to leave Oxford.

[169](#) 'mishap'.

[170](#) Mrs Emily McLay was writing from 4 Denham Avenue, Fulwell, Sunderland, County Durham.

[171](#) 2 Peter 3:16–17: ‘As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.’

[172](#) John Calvin (1509–64) maintained in his *Institutes of Christian Religion* (1536), Bk. II, ch. 1, section 8, that: ‘Our nature is not only utterly devoid of goodness, but so prolific in all kinds of evil, that it can never be idle...everything which is in man, from the intellect to the will, from the soul even to the flesh, is defiled.’ The ‘other view’ was that of the Arminians, after Jacobus Arminius (1560–1609). They insisted that the divine sovereignty was compatible with a real human free will; that Jesus Christ died for all and not just for the elect.

[173](#) *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, Introduction, p. 34: 'In a single sentence of the *Tischreden* [*Table Talk*] Luther tosses the question aside for ever. Do you doubt whether you are elected to salvation? Then say your prayers, man, and you may conclude that you are.'

[174](#) Lewis had received a letter dated 23 June 1953 from the Seminario Presbiteriano Do Sul, Campinas, Est. de S. Paulo, Brazil, in which the Librarian of the Seminary wrote: 'We have a deep regard for your wonderful books on Christianity and its stand today. Of course, for quite a long time we have been eager to acquire them. However, we have no funds available for this purpose. Hence, we felt that perhaps you might be willing to offer them, as well as any other works you might think it fitting, to our library, at this Seminary' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 30).

175 The letter is unsigned.

[176](#) 1 John 1:5: 'God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.'

[177](#) Lewis probably had in mind the 'hard sayings' of Jesus, among them Matthew 7:13: 'Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat' Matthew 13:49–50: 'So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth' Matthew 25:41: 'Then shall he say...unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels'.

[178](#) Luke 9:55.

[179](#) 1 Peter 4:8.

[180](#) Lewis probably had in mind Colossians 1:24: 'I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church' (RSV).

[181](#) Matthew 6:25–6: “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?...”(RSV).

[182](#) *Prince Caspian*, ch. 8: ‘When they came out into the daylight Edmund turned to the Dwarf very politely and said, “I’ve got something to ask you. Kids like us don’t often have the chance of meeting a great warrior like you. Would you have a little fencing match with me? It would be frightfully decent.”’

[183](#) *The Silver Chair.*

[184](#) Sir Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe* (1819).

[185](#) See the letter to Bodle of 31 December 1947 (*CL II*, p. 823).

[186](#) The name given to the planet Earth in Lewis's interplanetary trilogy.

[187](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *Tellers of Tales: An Account of Children's Favourite Authors from 1839 to the Present Day* (1946; new edn, 1953).

[188](#) For Don Giovanni Calabria's letter of 3 September 1953 see *Letters: C. S. Lewis–Don Giovanni Calabria*, pp. 84–7.

[189](#) Giovanni Calabria, *Instaurare Omnia in Christo* (Verona: Vescovile Casa Buoni Fanciulli, 1952).

[190](#) Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 169–74: ‘Multa senem circumveniunt incommoda, vel quod quaerit et inventis miser abstinet ac timet uti, / vel quod res omnis timide gelideque ministrat, / dilator, spe longus, iners, avidusque futuri, / difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti / se puero, castigator censorque minorum’: ‘Many troubles assail an old man, whether because he seeks gain, and then wretchedly abstains from what he possesses and is afraid to use it, or because he attends to all his affairs feebly and timidly; a procrastinator, he is apathetic in his hopes and expectations, sluggish and fearful of the future, obstinate, always complaining; he devotes himself to praising times past, when he was a boy, and to being the castigator and moral censor of the young.’

[191](#) 2 Corinthians 1:3.

[192](#) This had been Lewis's chief intention in *The Abolition of Man*.

[193](#) Herbert Read, *The Green Child* (1935).

[194](#) The French composer, Olivier Messiaen (1908–92).

[195](#) Probably Douglas Edison Harding, author of *The Hierarchy of Heaven and Earth*.

196 In *The Horse and His Boy*.

[197](#) *ibid.*, ch. 7.

[198](#) Lewis was referring to Rachel, son of Laban. According to Genesis 29:20: 'Jacob served seven years for Rachel.' In her note to his letter Pitter said: 'I had now known Lewis for seven years, and thought perhaps he would not mind if we now used Xtian names...I had asked "if I might now have Rachel", alluding to Jacob's seven-year service' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 119).

[199](#) The foolish clergyman in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), who is excessively obsequious to persons of high rank.

[200](#) G. A. L. Burgeon (Owen Barfield), *This Ever Diverse Pair*, introduction by Walter de la Mare (London: Gollancz, 1950). See the description of this book in *CL* II, p. 937n.

[201](#) Charlotte M. Yonge, *The Daisy Chain* (1856); *The Trial* (1864); *The Pillars of the House* (1873); *The Three Brides* (1876); *The Two Sides of the Shield* (1885); *Dynevor Terrace* (1857); *Nutty's Father* (1886).

[202](#) John Richards (1918–95) was born in London on 23 June 1918. He went to Brockley County School in Forest Hill, after which he read English at King's College, London. Before he could complete his degree the Second World War intervened and he spent most of the war years working in an anti-aircraft battery in Northern Ireland. After VE Day Richards was transferred to the Foreign Office. He soon left, returning to King's College to complete his degree. In 1949 he realized his long-time ambition and began work in the Ministry of Education, where he served as Under-Secretary, 1973–7. A convert to Roman Catholicism in 1940, he afterwards contributed to many Catholic periodicals. See Lewis's letter to Richards of 5 March 1945 in the Supplement.

[203](#) Charlotte M. Yonge, *The Heir of Redclyffe* (1853).

204 i.e., *The Splendid Century*.

[205](#) John Forrest, who had just died, was the husband of Lewis's cousin, Gundreda Ewart Forrest. See **The Ewart Family** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL I*.

[206](#) The words 'better the frying pan than the fire' were removed from *The Silver Chair* before the book was published.

[207](#) Lewis had probably been asked to examine J. B. Phillips's translation of Acts, *The Young Church in Action: The Acts of the Apostles*, published by Geoffrey Bles in 1955. The reference is to Phillips's translation of Acts 2:22–4.

[208](#) The fourteenth-century manor Dartington Hall was bought in 1925 by Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst, who opened it in 1926 as an experiment in co-education. From the first one of its purposes was to renovate the large Dartington Hall estate. The school featured a 'pupil-defined curriculum' based upon the individual. There were few rules for older students, no uniforms, no religious education, and no church services. Emphasis was placed on 'co-operation rather than competition'. Lewis's pupil, Mary Neylan, taught there for a number of years. See **Mary Neylan** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1054–5.

[209](#) The school in *The Silver Chair*.

[210](#) Edgar Allan Poe, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket* (1850).

[211](#) 'for the prayers'.

[212](#) Congregation of Sisters of the Holy Redeemer, a lay order within the Order of the Holy Cross.

[213](#) *Book of Common Prayer*, Collect for Whitsunday.

[214](#) The story is told of a friend saying to Sir Winston Churchill, 'How wonderfully your new grandson looks like you.' 'All babies look like me,' replied Sir Winston. 'But then, I look like all babies.'

[215](#) William Wordsworth, 'Ode, Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood' (1807), 63–6: 'Not in entire forgetfulness,/And not in utter nakedness,/But trailing clouds of glory do we come/From God, who is our home.'

[216](#) i.e., Florence 'Michal' Williams, the widow of Charles Williams.

[217](#) Lewis forgot he had asked Bles, in his letter of 20 October, to remove the words from *The Silver Chair*.

[218](#) Romans 8:26–7: ‘We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.’

[219](#) Luke 18:2: 'And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.'

[220](#) Luke 22:42.

[221](#) Mark 11:24: 'Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them and ye shall have them.'

[222](#) Charles Williams, Evelyn Underhill, George MacDonald.

[223](#) John 3:16.

[224](#) 1 John 2:15.

[225](#) Revelation 18:4.

[226](#) Mrs Gebbert had asked if Lewis would autograph a copy of *The Silver Chair* for her son, Charles Marion Gebbert.

[227](#) The Bermuda Summit, 4–8 December 1953, was held at the initiative of Sir Winston Churchill and included Britain, the United States, France and the USSR. In the aftermath of Joseph Stalin's death and the Soviet development of a hydrogen bomb, Churchill hoped to gain President Eisenhower's support for a top-level dialogue with the new Soviet leadership. He was motivated primarily by a wish to break the stalemate of the Cold War and avert a possible nuclear conflict.

[228](#) Panama was Queen Elizabeth II's and Prince Philip's first port of call (29 November 1953) on their visit to Australia, which was part of the Queen's first Commonwealth tour.

[229](#) The letter is unsigned.

[230](#) Sir Stanley Unwin (1884–1968), publisher, was the son of Edward Unwin, a London printer. In 1904 he joined his father’s stepbrother, T. Fisher Unwin, in his publishing firm. At 28 he began his own firm and soon afterwards bought George Allen & Sons. With the new company, George Allen & Unwin, he quickly built a formidable list of authors. In 1926 Unwin published *The Truth about Publishing*, which became the authoritative textbook on the subject. He was a tireless worker, but spared time for his other passion—tennis, which he played every weekend throughout the year. In 1937, acting on the recommendation of his ten-year-old son, Rayner, he published Tolkien’s *The Hobbit*. Again at the recommendation of Rayner, he published *The Lord of the Rings*. Because that book was so difficult to describe, Unwin asked Lewis if he would write something to serve as a ‘blurb’ for its cover. Lewis included such a piece with this letter. Unwin was knighted in 1946.

[231](#) Mrs Farrer took exception to Lewis's portrayal of God as, not male, but *masculine*. In *That Hideous Strength*, ch. 14, part V, p. 350, Ransom tells Jane Studdock: 'You are offended by the masculine itself: the loud, irruptive, possessive thing—the gold lion, the bearded bull—which breaks through hedges and scatters the carefully made bed. The male you could have escaped, for it exists only on the biological level. But the masculine none of us can escape. What is above and beyond all things is so masculine that we are all feminine in relation to it.'

[232](#) Lewis was referring to the love of the dwarf, Gimli, for Galadriel, Queen of the Elves, in *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*, Bk. II, ch. 7: ‘The Dwarf, hearing the names given in his own ancient tongue, looked up and met her eyes, and it seemed to him that he looked suddenly into the heart of an enemy and saw there love and understanding.’

[233](#) In *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Bk. II, ch. 8, 'Farewell to Lórien', the Fellowship takes leave of the security of Lothlórien to destroy the Ring.

[234](#) In the final chapter of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, the noble Boromir covets the Ring so badly he tries to take it from Frodo: “It is by our own folly that our Enemy will defeat us,” cried Boromir. “How it angers me! Fool! Obstinate fool! Running wilfully to death and ruining our cause. If any mortals have claim to the Ring, it is the men of Nmenor, and not Halflings. It is not yours save by unhappy chance. It might have been mine. It should be mine. Give it to me!”

[235](#) See the letter to Sir Stanley Unwin of 4 December 1953.

236 'make haste slowly'.

[237](#) The Roman poet Lucretius (c. 99–c. 55 BC).

[238](#) Lewis was referring to D. E. Harding's *The Hierarchy of Heaven and Earth*.

[239](#) *ibid.*, Preface, p. 12: 'It would be affectation to pretend that I know whether Mr. Harding's attempt, in its present form, will work. Very possibly not. One hardly expects the first, or the twenty-first, rocket to the Moon to make a good landing. But it is a beginning.'

[240](#) See **Dorothy L. Sayers** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1065–72.

[241](#) Lewis had received one of Sayers' Christmas cards. The text, 'The Days of Christ's Coming', was by Sayers, with a painting by Fritz Wegner, and the card was printed by Hamish Hamilton. The picture had 27 numbered doors to be opened from 14 December to 7 January.

[242](#) Kathleen Nott had just published *The Emperor's Clothes* (London: Heinemann, 1953), described on the jacket as 'An attack on the dogmatic orthodoxy of T. S. Eliot, Graham Greene, Dorothy Sayers, C. S. Lewis, and others.'

243 A Scots word for money or silver.

[244](#) Sayers' first part of Dante's *Divine Comedy* had been published in 1949. She was now working on her translation of the *Purgatorio*.

[245](#) David Gresham was in fact nine and a half years old and Douglas eight.

[246](#) The 'Little Kingdom' of J. R. R. Tolkien's *Farmer Giles of Ham* (1949) is set in that pleasant area east of Oxford which includes Thame, Long Crendon and Worminghall.

[247](#) Arthur C. Clarke, *Childhood's End* (New York: Ballantine, 1953).

[248](#) H. G. Wells, *The First Men in the Moon* (1901).

[249](#) Olaf Stapledon (1886–1950), whose *Last and First Men* (1930) and *Star Maker* (1937) are mentioned in *CL II*, pp. 236, 594.

[250](#) i.e., Richard Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelung*, one of Lewis's oldest loves. See the references to it in *CL* I, pp. 29, 139n, 381–2.

[251](#) Clarke, *Childhood's End*, ch. 21, p. 163.

[252](#) *ibid.*, p. 164.

[253](#) Luke 14:26.

[254](#) But in Book V when they have returned to Sicily, the women try to burn the ships so they need not go to Latium. See *CL* 11, p. 750, N. 148. In Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book III Aeneas and his companions build a fleet and set off in search of the land that first bore the Trojan race (Italy). They have many strange adventures along the way, but eventually reach Libya.

[255](#) That is, from matters of the soul (*psyche*) to those of the spirit (*pneuma*).

[256](#) Dante, *Inferno*, IV, 42.

257 The letter was unsigned.

[258](#) Her husband, Henry Gerard Walter Sandeman, died on 19 January 1953.

[259](#) Matthew 19:5–6; Mark 10:8–9.

[260](#) Titirangi School for the Deaf had now merged with the Kelston Deaf Education Centre, New Lynn, Auckland, and Bodle had moved to New Lynn to continue her teaching.

[261](#) Herbert, *The Temple*, 'The Church-porch', Stanza 72, 5-6: 'If all want sense, God takes a text, and preacheth Patience.'

[262](#) The Rev. Canon Ronald Edwin Head (1919–91) was appointed Curate of Holy Trinity, Headington Quarry, in 1952, and Vicar in 1956. When he arrived in the parish Holy Communion was celebrated at 8 a.m. and Morning Prayer at 11 a.m. He was responsible for reversing the times of these services.

[263](#) Lewis may have been remembering Joanna Baillie (1762–1851), ‘The Storm-Beat Maid’ (1790), XL, 1: ‘I’ll share the cold blast on the heath.’

[264](#) The four women are characters in the works of William Shakespeare. Imogen is the heroine of *Cymbeline* (1623), Portia the heroine of *The Merchant of Venice* (1600). Miranda is a character in *The Tempest*, and Perdita appears in *The Winter's Tale* (1623). While Miranda and Perdita grew up in sheltered circumstances and made happy marriages, Imogen and Portia had complicated and eventful lives which nevertheless turned out well in the end.

[1](#) Matthew 15:32; Mark 8:3.

² Lewis had sent her a copy of his poem 'The Nativity', which appears in *CP*, p. 136.

[3](#) *Book of Common Prayer*, 'A Collect or Prayer for all Conditions of Men'.

⁴ Daniel Marcus 'Dan' Davin (1913–90), Oxford academic publisher, and Deputy Secretary to Delegates of the Oxford University Press, 1974–8, was born on 1 September 1913 in Invercargill, New Zealand. After taking a first class MA in English (1934) and another in Latin (1935) from the University of Otago, he won a Rhodes Scholarship to Balliol College, Oxford, where he took a First in Classics in 1939. Davin served with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, 1939–40, and with the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, 1940–5. When the war ended he was invited to take a job at the Oxford University Press. He spent the rest of his working life (1945–78) there, rising from editor to academic publisher. Davin, the author of many books, died on 28 September 1990.

⁵ Norman Davis (1913–89) was, like Daniel Davin, from New Zealand. On taking an MA from the University of Otago in 1933, he was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship to Merton College, Oxford, where he studied English literature. After taking his degree in 1936 he was a lecturer in English at the University of London, and then at Oxford University. He was Professor of English at Glasgow University, 1949–59, and Merton Professor of English Language and Literature, Oxford, 1959–80.

6 Lewis was making final corrections to his *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*.

⁷ *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 597.

[8](#) John Evelyn (1620–1706) published a number of books on gardening and related interests, among which were *Fumifugium or The Inconvenience of the Air and Smoke of London Dissipated* (1661).

⁹ Henry King (1592–1669), Bishop of Chichester, and a friend of John Donne (1572–1631) and Izaak Walton (1593–1683), is best known for his ‘Exequy on his Wife’, which appears in *The Oxford Book of English Verse: 1250–1900*, ed. Arthur Quiller-Couch (1919).

10 In William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* (1597).

[11](#) Berowne was one of the lords attending the King of France in William Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598).

[12](#) Mercutio, in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, was the lively friend of Romeo who was killed in a brawl by Juliet's cousin.

[13](#) Charles Dickens, *The Pickwick Papers* (1836–7).

14 i.e., 'deuced'.

[15](#) Humpty Dumpty in Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*, ch. 6.

16 Latin for 'Jupiter'.

[17](#) Aeneas' mother was Venus, daughter of Jupiter. After the fall of Troy, he led a band of Trojan refugees to Italy and became the founder of Roman culture.

[18](#) Brut or Brutus, the legendary founder of Britain, great-grandson of Aeneas. An account of the founding of Britain is found in Geoffrey of Monmouth (d. 1155), *Historia Regum Britanniae* (Paris, 1508); translated as *Histories of the Kings of Britain* by Sebastian Evans (London: Dent, Temple Classics, 1904).

[19](#) See the biographies of Lewis's doctor, Robert Emlyn Havard, in *CL* II, p. 182n and *CG*. Dr Havard was married to the former Grace Mary Middleton, who died in 1950.

20 Cerdic (d. 534) was founder of the Saxon kingdom of Wessex.

[21](#) i.e., Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

[22](#) William Wordsworth, 'England, 1802', IV, 13–14: 'In everything we are sprung/Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.'

[23](#) John Milton, 'At a Solemn Music' (1645), 1: 'Blest pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy.'

[24](#) The new headmaster of Malvern College was Donald Lindsay (1910–2003), who held the post until 1971.

[25](#) 'Bound by eternal love.' CF. Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, Book I, Prologue, 34: 'aeterno devictus vulnere amoris': 'Conquered by the eternal wound of love.'

[26](#) Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (1813).

[27](#) Charles Lamb, *Letters, to which are added those of his sister, Mary Lamb*, ed. E. V. Lucas, 3 vols. (Dent, 1935).

[28](#) Dom Bede Griffiths, 'The Incarnation and the East', *The Commonweal*, LIX (25 December 1953), pp. 300–1: 'Christ has to become incarnate in the East, not as a Western teacher come to destroy what they have learned from tradition, but as He came to the Jews, as the fulfilment of all their hopes and desires. Doubtless this will present the same test for the East as it presented to the Jews. There will be the temptation to cling to the old forms and refuse to allow them to grow into the new life which Christ brings. But there must be nothing done on our part, as far as we are able, to alienate Christ from them. We have to remember that Christ belongs neither to the West nor to the East...Our religion...transcends the division of East and West, and offers the one ground on which the two can be united.'

[29](#) 'The Pope and Religious Tolerance', *ibid.*, p. 299: 'Pope Pius XII recently enunciated two principles...Speaking before an audience from the fifth national convention of the Union of Italian Catholic Jurists, the Holy Father dealt with the problems of religious liberty in the community of nations. The two principles he laid down are: "First, what does not correspond to truth and the moral norm objectively has no right either to existence, to propaganda, or to action. Second, nevertheless, in the interest of a higher and broader good, it is justifiable not to impede this error by state laws and coercive measures."'

[30](#) Wordsworth, 'Ode: Intimations of Immortality', 191: 'In years that bring the philosophic mind.'

[31](#) Plato, *Laws*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, Book VII: 'Let us assume, then, as a first principle in relation both to the body and soul of very young creatures, that nursing and moving about by day and night is good for them all, and that the younger they are, the more they will need it; infants should live, if that were possible, as if they were always rocking at sea.'

[32](#) See the letter to Gebbert of 16 July 1953.

[33](#) Matthew 4:3.

[34](#) *ibid.*, 4:8–9.

[35](#) *ibid.*, 4:6.

[36](#) Thomas T. Lynch, 'Lord, On Thy Returning Day' (1855), II, 5–6: 'Hearts that hasty time has grieved/Are by Sabbath calm relieved.'

[37](#) Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 'The Children's Hour' (1863), 1–4: 'Between the dark and the daylight,/When the night is beginning to lower,/Comes a pause in the day's occupations, that is knowing the children's hour.'

[38](#) Arthur C. Clarke, *Expedition to Earth* (1954).

[39](#) Joy Gresham showed Clarke the letter she received from Lewis about *Childhood's End* (22 December 1953), and on 17 January 1954 Clarke wrote to Lewis: 'Joy Gresham showed me your letter...which naturally pleased me a great deal...Sidgwick and Jackson are publishing the book here in the Spring...I wonder if it would be asking too much of you if you would give us permission to quote some of the passages from your letter?' (MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol. 21). When *Childhood's End* was published in paperback in the UK by Pan Books of London in 1956 Lewis was quoted on the back: 'There has been nothing like it for years...an author who understands there may be things that have a higher claim on humanity than its own survival.'

[40](#) *If: Worlds of Science Fiction*, I, no. 2 (May 1953).

[41](#) Clarke's story 'Jupiter Five' was reprinted in his *Reach for Tomorrow* (1956).

42 Mark Clifton.

[43](#) Kris Neville.

44 Richard E. Stockham.

[45](#) In *The Horse and His Boy*, ch. 7.

[46](#) *ibid.*, ch. 6.

[47](#) *ibid.*, ch. 13.

[48](#) *ibid.*, ch. 8.

[49](#) *ibid.*, ch. 11.

[50](#) *ibid.*, frontispiece.

[51](#) *ibid.*, ch. 4.

[52](#) Affection or Storge is one of the loves dealt with in Lewis's *The Four Loves* (1960).

[53](#) Agape or Charity is also treated in *The Four Loves*.

[54](#) It appears that Lord David Cecil (1902–86), a member of the Inklings, made this comment about Sir Walter Scott to Lewis in private. Cecil is the author of *Sir Walter Scott* (1933). See the biography of Cecil in *CL* II, p. 182n.

[55](#) Arthur Pendennis is the main character in William Makepeace Thackeray's *The History of Pendennis* (1848–50); Lady Castlewood is a character in Thackeray's *The History of Henry Esmond* (1852). *Pharisiennes* would be female Pharisees.

[56](#) See the letter to the Kilmer children below.

[57](#) These eight children, all brothers and sisters, lived with their parents in Washington, DC. They were friends of Mary Willis Shelburne whom they knew as 'Aunt Mary Willis'.

58 The *Hrossa* are one of the species of beings in *Out of the Silent Planet*.

[59](#) Palmer was giving a talk to the Oxford University Poetry Society on 2 March 1954.

[60](#) Anthony Thwaite (1930–), poet, was an undergraduate at Christ Church, and President of the Oxford University Poetry Society. After taking his degree he was a visiting lecturer in English Literature at Tokyo University, a BBC radio producer, and co-editor of *Encounter*, 1975–85. In 1990 he was awarded the OBE for his services to poetry. His works include *Poetry Today 1960–1973* (London: Longman, 1985) and *Selected Poems 1956–1996* (London: Enitharmon Press, 1997).

[61](#) Lewis doubtless had in mind Cecil Day-Lewis, translator of the *Aeneid* (1952) and Edward Fairchild Watling, who translated *Antigone* (1954).

[62](#) Lewis had arranged for Joy Gresham to lunch with him and Pitter at the Eastgate Hotel. Pitter said in a note to this postcard: 'It was at this luncheon that I met Mrs. Gresham for the first and last time' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 123).

[63](#) Lewis was replying to Sayers' letter of 21 December 1953. See Dorothy L. Sayers, *Letters*, vol. IV, *1951–1957: In the Midst of Life*, ed. Barbara Reynolds (2000), pp. 116–18.

[64](#) Bedford and Cavor are the first men to travel to the Moon in H. G. Wells's *The First Men in the Moon*.

[65](#) i.e., the hero of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719).

[66](#) *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, founded in 1949, has published many important stories.

[67](#) William Shakespeare, *As You Like It* (1623), I, ii, 16–17: ‘tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,/Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.’

[68](#) See the letter to Van Deusen of 28 November 1953.

[69](#) 1 Kings 18:36-8.

[70](#) Luke 11:1.

[71](#) Michel Eyquem de Montaigne, *Essays* (1580–1595), XVII: ‘That to Study Philosophy is to Learn to Die’.

[72](#) Genesis 2:24.

[73](#) Paul Piehler (1929–) was born on 26 June 1929, the son of H. A. Piehler. He was educated at King William's College, Isle of Man, and Magdalen College, Oxford, where he read English with Lewis. Taking his BA in 1953, he taught English at Helsinki University, 1952–4, at Columbia University, New York City, 1955–60, and at Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire, 1960–1. Piehler was Assistant Professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley, 1961–8, and Associate Professor of English at McGill University, Montreal, 1968. Following his retirement in 1993 he founded the Atlantis Project, which encourages university faculties to participate in a project using the tutorial system that has worked so well at Oxford and Cambridge. He is the author of *The Visionary Landscape: A Study in Medieval Allegory* (1971), and 'Milton's Iconoclasm' in *Evolution of Consciousness: Studies in Polarity*, ed. Shirley Sugerman (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1976).

[74](#) Little Emily is a character in Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield* (1849–50); Little Nell and the Marchioness are characters in Dickens's *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841).

75 'good-heartedness'.

76 'other things being equal'.

[77](#) In a letter Newman later described the statue of Reepicheep as ‘a rather primitive effort stitched out of felt’ (Wade Center).

[78](#) Herbert, *The Temple*, 'Conscience', 1.

[79](#) Katharine Farrer, *The Cretan Counterfeit* (London: Collins, 1954).

[80](#) Lewis devoted an essay to this idea. ‘Prudery and Philology’ was first published in *The Spectator*, CXCIV (21 January 1955), pp. 63–4, and is reprinted in *Compelling Reason*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Fount, 1998) and *EC*.

[81](#) See the letter to Katharine Farrer of 9 February 1954.

[82](#) Psalm 136:1–9: ‘O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious: and his mercy endureth for ever...The moon and the stars to govern the night: for his mercy endureth for ever.’

[83](#) In Euripides's *Hippolytus* (429 BC), Aphrodite, Goddess of Love, is angry with Hippolytus, son of Theseus, for preferring Artemis, Goddess of Chastity, above her. She makes Theseus' young wife Phaedra fall in love with Hippolytus; but when he scorns her she hangs herself, first having written a letter denouncing him as a seducer. Hippolytus is banished by his father, and dies when he is thrown from his chariot. Theseus learns the truth about Phaedra too late.

84 i.e. a detective novel.

85 O. T. Bryant was writing from Fillmore, California.

[86](#) In his letter of 19 January 1954 Bryant mentioned having read Lewis's essay, 'The Return of Christ: Let's Face the Difficulties'. This was a reprint of 'Christian Hope—Its Meaning for Today', *Religion in Life*, 21 (Winter 1951–2), pp. 20–32 (see note 155 to the letter to Kathryn Stillwell of 24 October 1957), itself reprinted as 'The World's Last Night' in *The World's Last Night and Other Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1960). 'While agreeing with you,' he said, 'I would like to qualify one or two points. Wiser men than myself have pointed out that when Christ said, "this generation shall not pass away till all these things be done" [Matthew 24:34; Mark 13:30; Luke 21:32] He was not referring to the day in which He was living, but to the End-time when these events should transpire...With regard to our Lord's human ignorance of the time of His Return—is there not such a thing as a man accepting ignorance for the sake of one whom he dearly loved? I have heard of a case where a fellow refused to be entrusted with a secret because his wife was to be "out of it". A man has to be greatly in love to take a stand like that. But can we exaggerate the devotion of Christ to His Bride, His Church?'

[87](#) Matthew 7:23.

[88](#) I Corinthians 13:12: 'Then shall I know even as also I am known.'

[89](#) John Keats, *Letters*, ed. Maurice Buxton Forman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), Letter 64 to J. H. Reynolds of 3 May 1818, p. 141: ‘axioms in philosophy are not axioms until they are proved upon our pulses’.

[90](#) Luke 7:31-5.

[91](#) In Farrer's *The Cretan Counterfeit*, p. 96. See Lewis's letter to Farrer of 3 February 1954.

[92](#) The 'pathetic fallacy' is a phrase coined by John Ruskin in *Modern Painters* (1856), Vol. III, Pt. 4, to mean the tendency of writers and artists to ascribe human emotions and sympathies to Nature.

[93](#) T. S. Eliot, *Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917), 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock', 1-2: 'Let us go then, you and I,/When the evening is spread out against the sky/Like a patient etherised upon a table.'

[94](#) 'classic example'.

[95](#) Luke 13:16.

[96](#) Mark 10:23: 'And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!'

97 It is not known if *Alma Mater* was ever published.

[98](#) Sir Arthur Grimble, *A Pattern of Islands* (1952).

99 e.g., 1 John 4:9.

100 These were to be the subject of *The Four Loves*.

[101](#) Aristotle, *De Anima (On the Soul)*, II, 413a23.

[102](#) 1 Corinthians 15:35–50.

[103](#) Palmer had been invited to dinner by the Oxford University Poetry Society before his talk on 2 March.

[104](#) F. Anstey, *In Brief Authority* (1915).

[105](#) F. Anstey, *Vice Versa: A Lesson to Fathers* (1882). See the reference to this in *CL II*, p. 342n.

[106](#) Green's *The Buzzard*, a novel for children, was in the end never published.

[107](#) *Polly and Digory* was the original title of the Narnian story eventually published as *The Magician's Nephew*.

[108](#) See the letter to Herbert Palmer of 8 November 1945 (*CL* II, p. 678).

[109](#) i.e., Lewis's interplanetary trilogy.

[110](#) Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (1852–3), ch. 9: ‘Lady Dedlock is the most accomplished lady in the world, to whom I would do any homage that a plain gentleman, and no baronet with a head seven hundred years thick, may.’

[111](#) Polarity is a philosophical concept developed by Owen Barfield. It is mentioned in a number of his books, but the most complete expression is found in *Speaker's Meaning* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1967), ch. 1. Most readers will find it easier to understand the definition given by Barfield's friend, G. B. Tennyson, who in *A Barfield Reader*, ed. G. B. Tennyson (Hanover, New Hampshire: Wesleyan University Press, 1999), defined polarity as 'The interdependent and mutually fructifying forces of objective being and consciousness. The two can be distinguished in thought but not divided one from the other. They are necessary sides of the same coin. The one force is poetic and expansive, the other prosaic and specifying; one is the world of objects, the other the world of the self. They "exist by virtue of each other *as well as* at each other's expense." On their interaction depends the evolution of consciousness' (p. xxxiii).

[112](#) '*Me Meum*' is one of Sayers' unpublished poems.

[113](#) A method of disproving a proposition by showing the absurdity of its conclusion. It is referred to as proof by contradiction.

[114](#) i.e., Michael Williams, the son of Charles Williams.

[115](#) Dorothy L. Sayers, *Gaudy Night* (1935), one of the Lord Peter Wimsey detective novels.

[116](#) This poem was published in a slightly revised form as 'Evolutionary Hymn' in *The Cambridge Review*, LXXIX (30 November 1957), p. 227, and it was revised again before it was published in *Poems* and *CP*.

[117](#) Marie Stopes (1880–1958) was a pioneer birth control campaigner and the author of *Married Love* (1918).

[118](#) This poem was published in Don W. King, *C. S. Lewis, Poet* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2001), p. 296.

[119](#) Lewis changed the first line of his poem to read: 'D. H. Lawrence, Sigmund Freud'. Sayers probably convinced him to make this change because Marie Stopes was still alive.

[120](#) Charles Williams's son, Michael, who was working in the London bookshop, Bumpus of Oxford Street.

[121](#) Warnie's *The Splendid Century*.

[122](#) Romans 7:5.

[123](#) Matthew 5:28: 'Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.'

[124](#) Helmut Kuhn (1899–1991), professor of philosophy, was born in Lüben, Silesia, Germany, on 22 March 1899. He studied philosophy at the University of Breslau, taking a PhD. in 1930. His experience of the Third Reich caused him to convert to Roman Catholicism, and in 1937 he immigrated to the United States after being denounced as anti-Nazi. He taught philosophy at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1938–47, but returned to Germany in 1948 as Professor of Philosophy at the University of Erlangen. He was Professor of Philosophy in the University of Munich, 1953–67. In 1953 he and Hans-Georg Gadamer founded the influential *Philosophische Rundschau* (*Philosophical Review*). He is the author of *Encounter with Nothingness: An Essay on Existentialism* (1949), mentioned in the letters to Dorothy L. Sayers of 9 November and 21 November 1949 (*CL II*, pp. 995, 999).

[125](#) Kuhn was translating *The Great Divorce* into German.

[126](#) i.e. Blamires's *The Devil's Hunting-grounds*. The story is about a sojourn in Purgatory.

[127](#) There are two great cities in Blamires's Purgatory, Helicon for Gnostics and Fordshaw for 'Backward Believers'.

[128](#) 'Juvenal, *Satires*, I, 85–6: *Quicquid agunt Homines, votum timor ira voluptas/gaudia discursus*: 'All the doings of mankind, their wishes, fears, anger, pleasures, joys, and varied pursuits.

[129](#) Francis Bacon, *Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral* (1625), XI, 'Of Great Place': 'Even reproofs from authority ought to be grave, and not taunting.'

[130](#) Lewis appears to have failed to get down the complete sentence he had in mind.

[131](#) *The Magician's Nephew* is dedicated 'To The Kilmer Family'.

[132](#) David and Douglas Gresham.

[133](#) On 2 March 1954 the Oxford University Poetry Society invited Palmer to take part in an experimental 'Brains Trust' programme. The panel included Kingsley Amis, G. S. Fraser, Herbert Palmer and James Kirkup, and those in the audience were invited to ask questions. Lewis was persuaded to act as chairman. A brief account is found in Alan Denson, *Herbert Palmer (1880–1961): A Biographical Survey and Calendar of Recordings*, foreword by Phoebe Hesketh (New Deer, Aberdeenshire: Oliver Alden, 1994). Anthony Thwaite wrote of the occasion (p. 196): 'It was an extremely entertaining, funny, slightly chaotic occasion, with Palmer fulminating against "the moderns", Kirkup being extremely "camp"...and Amis wonderfully witty: Lewis benignly chairing.'

Kingsley Amis (1922–95), writer, went up to St John's College, Oxford, in 1941 to read English. At Oxford he became a Communist, his ambitions purely poetical. His education was interrupted by the Second World War and he joined the Royal Signals in 1943, returning to Oxford in 1945. He was awarded a First in 1947. He published volumes of poetry, *Bright November* (1947) and *A Frame of Mind* (1953), but he achieved popular success with his first novel, *Lucky Jim* (1954), which caused him to be hailed as an 'angry young man'. His later work is known for its satiric comedy. He is the father of the novelist, Martin Amis. See the conversation about science fiction between Lewis, Amis and Brian Aldiss, recorded as 'Unreal Estates', in *Of This and Other Worlds* and *EC*.

George Sutherland Fraser (1915–80), Scottish poet and literary critic, was a lecturer at the University of Leicester, 1959–79. His first major critical work was *The Modern Writer and his World* (1953).

James Kirkup (1918–) poet, novelist and playwright, took his degree from Durham University. He taught at Leeds University, 1950–2, after which he became Professor of English at Kyoto University, Japan. His works include *The Poet and His Lice* (1952), *The Dustbin* (1954) and *Sorrows, Passions and Alarms: An Autobiography of Childhood* (1959). In 1977 his poem about a Roman centurion's love for Christ, 'The love that dares to speak its name', was the subject of a blasphemy action when it was published in *Gay News*.

[134](#) Bodle said of this letter: 'I had spoken of problems in my relationship with my father'
(Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol. 249).

[135](#) John 9:4: 'I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.'

[136](#) These stories by Hans Christian Andersen (1805–75) appear in numerous collections of his work.

[137](#) Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813–55), Danish philosopher.

[138](#) Matthew 18:12–14; Luke 15:3–7.

[139](#) William Law (1686–1761), author of *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (1728).

[140](#) *These Found the Way: Thirteen Converts to Protestant Christianity*, ed. David Wesley Soper (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1951).

[141](#) See the letter to George and Moira Sayer of 8 January 1954.

[142](#) Barry Shipman (1912–94) was the author of a number of film scripts, including that of *Commando Cody: Sky Marshal of the Universe* (1953).

[143](#) I. O. Evans, *Olympic Runner: A Story of the Great Days of Ancient Greece* (1955).

[144](#) The *Magnificat* is the title given to the Canticle of Mary. It is the opening word of the Vulgate text of Luke 1:46–55: ‘Magnificat anima mea, Dominum’, etc.

[145](#) James 1:20.

[146](#) i.e., Fr Walter Adams SSJE.

147 i.e. modern poets who utter incomprehensible words and phrases or 'abracadabras'.

[148](#) In '*De Descriptione Temporum*', Lewis said that in a collection of essays on T. S. Eliot's 'A Cooking Egg' 'we find seven adults (two of them Cambridge men) whose lives have been specially devoted to the study of poetry discussing a very short poem which has been before the world for thirty-odd years; and there is not the slightest agreement among them as to what, in any sense of the word, it means' (*SLE*, p. 9).

[149](#) Lord Dunsany (Edward John Moreton Drax Plunkett), *The Charwoman's Shadow* (1926).

[150](#) Martin Lings had been Lewis's pupil. He was a lecturer in English at Cairo University, 1940–51, and in 1952 he returned to England and took a degree in Arabic from the University of London. See **Martin Lings** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1052–3.

[152](#) George Du Maurier, *Peter Ibbetson* (1891).

[153](#) Du Maurier used the phrase 'Parva sed Apta' in the Introduction to Part I of *Peter Ibbetson*.

[154](#) little girl' 'little house' 'little mouse'.

[155](#) Whipsnade Zoo, now Whipsnade Wild Animal Park, in Dunstable, Bedfordshire. On Lewis's previous, memorable visit to Whipsnade see *SBJ*, ch. 15, and *CL I*, p. 972.

[156](#) Fr Martin Cyril D’Arcy SJ (1888–1976) was a distinguished Jesuit scholar. After reading Classics at Campion Hall, Oxford, 1912–14, he taught at Stonyhurst College. He returned to Oxford in 1927 to teach philosophy at Campion Hall and the University. During this period he became the foremost apologist for Roman Catholicism and received into the Church a number of distinguished converts, including Evelyn Waugh. In 1933 he became Master of Campion Hall. It was during his years in Oxford that Lewis came to know him, partly through their joint membership of the Dante Society. D’Arcy left Oxford in 1945 to become Provincial of the English Jesuit Province. His many books include *The Nature of Belief* (1931) and *The Mind and Heart of Love* (1945). During his visits to the United States he lectured at Georgetown, Fordham, Boston College, and Notre Dame.

[157](#) Esther Smith of Newry, Co. Down, was Greeves's housekeeper.

[158](#) John Gilbert Lockhart (1891–1960), author and publisher, was educated at Marlborough College and Trinity College, Oxford. He served in the First World War with the Wiltshire Regiment, 1914–18. Lockhart worked with the publishers Philip Allan & Co, Ltd., 1922–39. He joined Geoffrey Bles Ltd in 1939, working principally on the religious side of the list, and remained with Bles until his death in 1960. Lockhart was descended collaterally from John Gibson Lockhart (1794–1854), son-in-law of Sir Walter Scott. His best-known work is a biography of the former Archbishop of Canterbury, *Cosmo Gordon Lang* (1949).

[159](#) See the biography of Sir William and Lady Collins in *CG*.

[160](#) Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 43.

[161](#) See **Jocelyn Gibb** in the Biographical Appendix.

[162](#) Joan Lancaster was a little girl who when she first wrote to Lewis was staying with her family at 5929 Bayshore Road, Sarasota, Florida.

[163](#) See **Dr Margaret ‘Peggy’ Pollard**, Cornish poet and linguist, in the Biographical Appendix.

[164](#) See *The Problem of Pain*, ch. 9, p. 106: ‘So far as we know beasts are incapable either of sin or virtue.’

[165](#) St Francis of Assisi (1181–1226) is the patron saint of animals.

[166](#) On 15 May 1954 Queen Elizabeth II was returning from a six-month tour of the Commonwealth, and for the occasion of her arrival back in England her new Master of Music, Sir Arthur Bliss, wrote a cantata called 'A Song of Welcome'. Cecil Day-Lewis, Oxford's Professor of Poetry, was expected, despite his leftish stance, to provide words for the cantata. For details of 'A Song of Welcome' see 'Master of the Queen's Music', *The Times* (17 May 1954), p. 4.

[167](#) Nathan Comfort Starr, *King Arthur Today: The Arthurian Legend in English and American Literature, 1901–1953* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1954).

[168](#) Phoebe Hesketh, *Out of the Dark: New Poems* (London: Heinemann, 1954).

[169](#) *ibid.*, p. 80, 'Vision', 1.

[170](#) *ibid.*, 2.

[171](#) *ibid.*, 7.

[172](#) *ibid.*, p. 4, 'The Old Bell-Ringer', 1.

[173](#) *ibid.*, 4.

[174](#) *ibid.*, p. 10, 'The Lonely Heart', 7.

[175](#) *ibid.*, p. 21, 'Four Aspects of Love', I, 4.

[176](#) *ibid.*, p. 28, 'Snow', 8.

[177](#) *ibid.*, p. 33, 'The Stoat', 20.

[178](#) *ibid.*, p. 36, 'Wild Deer', 9.

[179](#) *ibid.*, p. 60, 'The Quenchless Flame', 55.

[180](#) *ibid.*, p. 59, 18.

[181](#) *ibid.*, p. 60, 65.

[182](#) *ibid.*, 65–7: ‘Spirit must cease—renunciation sore/Aimed at the heart of him who selfless
bore/Our sorrows with a biting crown of thorns.’

[183](#) *ibid.*, p. 61, 85.

[184](#) William Wordsworth, *Laodamia* (1815).

[185](#) Hesketh, *Out of the Dark*, 'The Old Bell-Ringer', p. 4.

[186](#) *ibid.*, pp. 21–2, ‘Four Aspects of Love’.

[187](#) *ibid.*, pp. 67–9, ‘Resurrection’, 7–9: ‘Then Judas went forth darkly from the house;/Not all the sad prophetic words had served/To swerve him from a traitor’s cold intent.’

[188](#) *ibid.*, pp. 67–8, 22–30: ‘The Spirit wills/And gets its strength dragged down by weakness, faints/In feather-bed indulgence./He woke the three and turned away again/And prayed alone, grasping the quickened thorn–/Prophetic point of truth that starred His brain/With undesired accepted sacrifice:/O Father, if this cup pass not away/Except I drink it, Thy will be done!’ Cf. Matthew 26:42.

[189](#) *ibid.*, p. 23, 'The Breath of all the World', 1-4: 'This is the war of Head against the Heart-/And Age, the surest ally, fights for Head/With knowledge and experience outspread/To overwhelm the foe before the start.'

190 Lord David Cecil had fallen and hurt himself.

[191](#) John Milton, *Samson Agonistes* (1671), 717.

[192](#) Pitter said of this reference to Herbert Palmer: 'Phoebe Hesketh: Palmer would have spoken of her poetry, which he worked hard to promote. She has a real gift, but started late, and Palmer tried to force the pace so that she could catch up. His rage with writers, critics, editors and publishers was hard to bear; he had no mercy on his hearers. More than once I have sat and watched the fire go out while he raved...But he had the gift...I shall always maintain that he was a shrewd and just critic of minor work: great reputations maddened him & distorted his view, perhaps owing to the neglect (as he felt) of his own work' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 125).

[193](#) Edgar Lee Masters (1868–1950), *Spoon River Anthology* (1915).

[194](#) Robinson Jeffers (1887–1962), American poet, author of *Tamar and Other Poems* (1924).

[195](#) 'A crook-necked herd'.

[196](#) Robert Frost (1874–1963), whose works include *North of Boston* (1914) and *Mountain Interval* (1916).

[197](#) i.e., at the Socratic Club. Lewis was referring to logical positivism, a trend in philosophy antithetical towards Christianity. Logical positivism appealed to the meaning of words and the grammatical structures that constitute them. If the sentences under examination could not pass their verifiability test, they labelled such utterances meaningless.

One of the members of the Socratic Club at this time was Basil Mitchell, then Tutor in Philosophy at Keble College. In an essay, 'Modern Philosophy and Theology', in *The Socratic*, no. 5 (1952), he explained what Lewis meant by the 'Logical Positivist menace': 'The dominant tendency in modern philosophy...may be roughly called Empiricism...The empirical challenge to religious belief has had two...main phases—The first was directed principally against Natural or Rational Theology, the attempt to demonstrate the existence of God by means of the traditional arguments...All this meant was that the Christian could not claim to *prove* his Faith...But the next phase of Empiricism challenged even this...It first became central and explicit in the thought of the Logical Positivists. They declared that it was not the function of philosophy to distinguish true assertions from false ones, but to discriminate between the meaningful and the meaningless—or what, for them, amounted to the same thing, between science and metaphysics...It will be clear at once, that on such a criterion all statements about a transcendent God must be judged meaningless...what was now being assailed was not the arguments by which these beliefs were supported, but their claim to significance' (pp. 3–5).

[198](#) 'How long, O Lord?' Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici* (1642), First Part, V, xlvi: 'That general opinion that the World grows near its end, hath possessed all ages past as nearly as ours. I am afraid that the Souls that now depart, cannot escape that lingering expostulation of the Saints under the Altar, *Quousque, Domine?* How long, O Lord? and groan in the expectation of that great Jubilee.' The Vulgate at Psalm 12 (13): 1 and Revelation 6:10 has *Usquequo Domine?* with the same meaning.

[199](#) Griffiths' autobiography, *The Golden String* (1954). See **Dom Bede Griffiths** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1043–9.

[200](#) i.e., Fr Ronald Head.

[201](#) Matthew 18:21–2.

[202](#) 1 Peter 5:7.

203 Skinner was trying to find a publisher for the second part of his epic poem.

[204](#) Edwin Arlington Robinson (1869–1935), whose works include an Arthurian trilogy, *Merlin* (1917), *Lancelot* (1920), *Tristram* (1927).

[205](#) Robert Penn Warren (1905–89). See the letter to Warren of 8 May 1954.

206 'heaven forbid', lit. 'may the omen be absent'.

207 He was probably referring to *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*.

208 The Roman goddess of childbirth.

[209](#) Because Lewis later experienced what Charles Williams called the ‘Way of Exchange or Substitution’ it will be useful to have it defined. Williams wrote about it in *He Came Down from Heaven* but the best summary comes in *Arthurian Torso*, ‘Williams and the Arthuriad’, p. 123: ‘The doctrine, which he called that of Exchange or Substitution, may be summed up in three propositions. (1) The Atonement was a Substitution, just as Anselm said. But that Substitution, far from being a mere legal fiction irrelevant to the normal workings of the universe, was simply the supreme instance of a universal law. “He saved others, himself he cannot save” [Matthew 27:42] is a *definition* of the Kingdom. All salvation, everywhere and at all times, in great things or in little, is vicarious...(2) We can and should “bear one another’s burdens” [Galatians 6:2] in a sense much more nearly literal than is usually dreamed of. Any two souls can...make an agreement to do so: the one can offer to take another’s shame or anxiety or grief and the burden will actually be transferred...(3) Such “exchanges”, however, are not only made by mutual compact. We can be their beneficiaries without our own knowledge or consent, as when our god-parents become our substitutes at the font. Such is the coinherence of all souls that they are not even limited by Time.’ See the letter to Sheldon Vanauken of 27 November 1957.

[210](#) Luke 15:4: 'What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?'

[211](#) *Major British Writers*, ed. G. B. Harrison, vol. I (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1954). Lewis's preface to Spenser is reprinted as 'Edmund Spenser, 1552–99' in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*, ed. Walter Hooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966).

[212](#) Robert Penn Warren (1905–89), American poet, was born in Guthrie, Kentucky and took a BA from Vanderbilt University in 1924. He studied at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, returning to the United States in 1930. He taught at Vanderbilt, Louisiana State, the University of Minnesota, and Yale University. While Warren was regarded as one of the best poets of his generation, he was better known as a novelist. His *All the King's Men* (1946) won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1947. His southern background was later exchanged for a life in New England. His poems include *Sacred Poems 1923–43* (1944), *Promises: Poems, 1954–1956* (1957) and *Now and Then: Poems, 1976–1978* (1979). Among his critical works are *Understanding Poetry* (1938). He was appointed the first US Poet Laureate in 1985.

[213](#) Robert Penn Warren, *Brother to Dragons: A Tale in Verse and Voices* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1953).

[214](#) Robert Henryson, *The Moral Fabillis of Esope* (1570).

[215](#) i.e., Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Books I and II.

[216](#) Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, III, i, 56.

[217](#) *Cambridge University Record*, LXXXIV, no. 19 (20 January 1954), p. 663.

[218](#) *ibid.*, no. 30 (31 March 1954), p. 986.

[219](#) See the biography of Henry Stanley Bennett in *CL* II, p. 435 n.

[220](#) Dom David Knowles (1896–1974), Benedictine monk and monastic historian, was Regius Professor of Modern History, Cambridge University, 1954–63. See his biography in the *Oxford DNB*.

[221](#) See the biography of Frank Percy Wilson in *CL* II, p. 167 n.

[222](#) See **Basil Willey** in the Biographical Appendix.

[223](#) See **E. M. W. Tillyard** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1073–4.

[224](#) Magdalene College Archives, Group F, Private Papers, F/CSL.

[225](#) See **Sir Henry Willink** in the Biographical Appendix.

[226](#) Fred Paxford, his gardener and handyman.

[227](#) This was Geoffrey Victor Smithers (1909–2000), who came to Oxford in 1930 as a Rhodes Scholar from Natal and took a First in English from Hertford College, Oxford. He was assistant lecturer in English at King's College, London, 1936, and a lecturer in English language at University College, London, 1938–54. In 1954 he became Reader in Medieval English at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of Merton College. Smithers was Professor of English at the University of Durham, 1960–74. His publications include *Kyng Alisaunder*, Vol. I (1952), Vol. II (1957), (with J. A. W. Bennett and Norman Davis) *Early English Verse and Prose* (1966), and *Havelok* (1987).

[228](#) In his 'Notes on the Letters' Vanauken, now teaching at Lynchburg College, said of this letter: 'V & Jean counselling some Xtian homos; V asked CSL for advice. CSL speaks of this letter as "an *interim* report" and he did send a further letter, which was lent to a homo & lost' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 152 b).

[229](#) John 9:1–3: ‘And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.’

[230](#) William Wordsworth, 'Character of the Happy Warrior' (1807), 1–14: 'Who is the happy Warrior?.../It is the generous Spirit.../Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,/And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train!/Turns his necessity to glorious gain.'

[231](#) The 'crisis' probably turned on appointments within the English faculty; there was no crisis about Lewis's replacement at Magdalen College, Oxford. He was succeeded by his fellow Inkling, Jack Arthur Walter Bennett (1911–81), a distinguished medievalist, who was born in New Zealand, and matriculated at Merton College, Oxford, in 1933. Bennett took a First in English in 1935 and received his D.Phil. in 1938. During the Second World War he spent five years in the British Information Services, and in 1945 he was elected to a Fellowship at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he took over the teaching of Anglo-Saxon from Lewis. He was given the pupils Lewis would have had after the latter left to go to Cambridge. In 1964 Bennett succeeded Lewis as Professor of Medieval and Renaissance English at Cambridge. He was the editor of *Medium Aevum*, 1956–80.

[232](#) Luke 1:43: 'And whence is this to me?'

[233](#) Dame Helen Louise Gardner (1908–1986), literary scholar and university teacher, was educated at North London Collegiate School for Girls and St Hilda’s College, Oxford, where in 1929 she took a First in English Language and Literature. She taught at the University of Birmingham, 1931–41. In 1941 she returned to St Hilda’s to become a tutor (1941–54), and later Fellow (1942–66). In 1954 she was made Reader in Renaissance Studies and after one setback was elected in 1966 Merton Professor of English Language and Literature, with a Fellowship at Lady Margaret Hall. She is chiefly associated with the poets John Donne and T. S. Eliot. Her masterly edition of *John Donne’s Divine Poems* (1952) was followed by other editions of Donne, while she paid tribute to Eliot’s genius in *The Art of T. S. Eliot* (1949). Gardner was a devout Anglican in the tradition of the seventeenth-century divines. See her obituary of Lewis, ‘Clive Staples Lewis 1898–1963’, *The Proceedings of the British Academy*, LI (1965), pp. 417–28.

[234](#) Sir Henry stated in his letter of 14 May how much he enjoyed Lewis's writings on Charles Williams.

[235](#) Magdalene College Archives, Group F, Private Papers, F/CSL.

[236](#) *ibid.*

[237](#) Psalm 17:13.

[238](#) Psalm 81:10.

[239](#) 1 John 2:15.

[240](#) The expression comes from the title of Rudyard Kipling's story, 'The Uncovenanted Mercies', in *Limits and Renewals* (1932).

[241](#) Dante Alighieri, *Paradiso*, XX, 67–72. Rhipheus was a Trojan hero slain during the sack of Troy (see Virgil, *Aeneid* II, 339). Dante put the Emperor Trajan in Heaven (*ibid.*, 44–5) because according to legend, Pope Gregory the Great through his prayers brought Trajan back from Hell and baptized him to salvation. On Lewis's interest in the salvation of the virtuous infidels see *CL* II, p. 135 n.

[242](#) There is much about divine mercy in the novels of Graham Greene, particularly in *Brighton Rock* (1938), Part II, xi, where the priest at the end says ‘no-one can conceive the strangeness of the mercy of God’.

[243](#) Mrs Pollard had probably mentioned what are called the 'legendary saints' of the Catholic Church. An example is St Ursula, a fourth-century virgin and martyr. She was extremely popular in the Middle Ages, but her cult was finally suppressed in the reform of 1969 because there is no evidence that she ever existed.

[244](#) Lewis probably had in mind his notable contribution to this idea. In *The Last Battle*, ch. 15, Emeth the Calormene, who believes he has worshipped the false god, Tash, all his life, meets Aslan: ““The Glorious One”, he said, “bent down his golden head and touched my forehead with his tongue and said, Son, thou art welcome. But I said, Alas, Lord, I am no son of thine but the servant of Tash. He answered, Child, all the service thou has done to Tash, I account as service done to me...If any man swear by Tash and keep his oath for the oath’s sake, it is by me that he has truly sworn, though he know it not, and it is I who reward him. And if any man do a cruelty in my name, then, though he says the name Aslan, it is Tash whom he serves and by Tash his deed is accepted.”” See also the letter to Chad Walsh of 23 May 1960.

[245](#) Matthew 2:14.

[246](#) *ibid.*, 21:1–9.

[247](#) 'Ad majorem Dei gloriam': 'For the greater glory of God'—the motto of the Society of Jesus.

[248](#) Jane Austen, *The Watsons* (1871), Part I.

[249](#) In Catholic theology, Limbo designates the place or condition of those who have died without the conditions necessary for entrance into Heaven, but also without the guilt necessary for condemnation to Hell. See *CL II*, p. 256 n.

250 In the United States fifth grade children would be about ten years old.

[251](#) Magdalene College Archives, Group F, Private Papers, F/CSL.

[252](#) Matthew Arnold, *In Utrumque Paratus* (1849): 'prepared for either'. Also, *Aeneid* 2, 61.
See note 95 on p. 29.

[253](#) i.e., Mrs Hooker, who had pretended to be Lewis's wife.

[254](#) Helen Gardner, 'Clive Staples Lewis 1898–1963', *The Proceedings of the British Academy*, Vol. LI (1965), pp. 427–8.

[255](#) Magdalene College Archives, Group F, Private Papers, F/CSL.

[256](#) *ibid.*

[257](#) Luke 1:43: 'Et unde hoc mihi ut veniat mater Domini mei ad me?' (Vulgate): 'And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?'

[258](#) Richard Selig (1929–57) was born in New York City on 29 October 1929, the son of Ambrose Selig. He graduated from McKinley High School in Washington, DC, in 1952. He was a Rhodes Scholar at Magdalen College, Oxford, 1953–6, where Lewis was his tutor. After Lewis left for Cambridge in 1955, Selig’s tutor was another member of the Inklings, J. A. W. Bennett. While at Oxford he met Mary O’Hara, the Irish singer and harpist, and they were married on 24 July 1956, returning to the USA shortly afterwards. Selig took a job in New York with the Western Electric Company, although his ambition was to write poetry. In September 1957 he was admitted to hospital, where he was treated for Hodgkin’s disease. He died on 14 October 1957. See Selig’s *Poems* (Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1962) and *The Unicorn* (1983). The story of his marriage is told in O’Hara’s *The Scent of the Roses* (1980). A good study of his poetry is John Kirkpatrick, ‘A Lewis Pupil: Richard Selig, 1929–57’ in *CSL: The Bulletin of the New York C. S. Lewis Society*, Vol. 15, No. 12 (October 1984), pp. 1–7.

[259](#) *Richard Selig*, *The Fantasy Poets*, No. 23 (Eynsham, Oxford: Oxford University Poetry Society, 1954).

[260](#) *ibid.*, p. 1, 'The Island'.

[261](#) *ibid.*, 10–11: ‘Its gnarled tendons snap like twigs and the mild-/mannered worms lunch on its rageless spleen.’

[262](#) *ibid.*, p. 4, 'Marriage Song', 5–6.

[263](#) *ibid.*, 'The Way Up', IV, 1: 'That each form be proper to its home.'

[264](#) *ibid.*, p. 5, 'Song for a Tempest', 2: 'Be permanent as bone.'

[265](#) 'The Saga of King Olaf' is one of the poems in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (1863).

[266](#) Matthew Arnold, *Sohrab and Rustum* (1853).

[267](#) Thomas Babington Macaulay, *Lays of Ancient Rome* (1842).

[268](#) G. K. Chesterton, *The Ballad of the White Horse* (1911).

[269](#) Lewis learned to write with a nib pen, dipped into an inkwell every four or five words. When he was an undergraduate at Oxford he began using fountain pens, but he gave them up after several years and resumed writing with a nib pen, a practice he carried on for the rest of his life. See *CL* I, p. x.

[270](#) Their new baby sister.

[271](#) i.e., St Mary Magdalen.

272 i.e., T. S. Eliot.

[273](#) See the letter to Dorothy L. Sayers of 16 December 1953. The debate was held at St Anne's Church, Soho, London, on 24 October 1954. A first-hand account by John Wren-Lewis, 'The Chester-Lewis', was published in *The Chesterton Review*, XVII, nos. 3, 4 (August, November 1991): 'A leading humanist theoretician and literary critic named Kathleen Nott published a book called *The Emperor's Clothes* (London: Heinemann, 1953) which was a swinging attack on the group of fashionable *literati* who urged a return to Christian orthodoxy as the only solid basis for real culture: she focused in particular on Eliot, Sayers, Lewis and Graham Greene. Dorothy Sayers felt that her case should be answered, and that it might even be answered collectively by some of its main "victims" at St Anne's in public debate...[Nott's] first response was that she did not enjoy platform debates, and felt that such an unevenly numbered encounter on the enemy's turf was hardly fair. I eventually persuaded her to a conditional agreement, the condition being that Eliot should appear, since her book was mainly concerned with her disagreements and her substantial agreements with him on the nature of poetry...Just before the day, word came from Eliot that he was not well enough to appear, and Miss Nott accordingly pulled out too, but since it was too late to cancel the evening completely, her friend, G. S. Frazer, stood in and faced Sayers and Lewis before a packed and lively audience' (p. 564).

[274](#) Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 46.

[275](#) Douglass wrote a memoir of her correspondence and meeting with Lewis, 'An Enduring Friendship', published in *Remembering C. S. Lewis*.

[276](#) i.e., the request from Jane Douglass.

[277](#) Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 50.

[278](#) Sir Allen Lane (1902–70), publisher, joined the firm of John Lane The Bodley Head in 1919. He failed, however, to persuade the firm that cheap paperback reprints might be their salvation, and in 1935 he struck out on his own. In July 1935 he published the first ten Penguins at 6d. each. The public took these paperbacks to their heart, and they are one of the most successful paperback series in publishing history.

[279](#) Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 52.

[280](#) These were the alterations Lewis wanted to make in response to ‘A Reply to Mr C. S. Lewis’s Argument that “Naturalism” is Self-Refuting’, Elizabeth Anscombe’s paper on *Miracles*. See the letter to Stella Aldwinckle of 12 June 1950, n. 120, and that to Jocelyn Gibb of 11 July 1959.

[281](#) On 9 July 1954 Gibb wrote: 'I have heard from Lane about their taking either THE GREAT DIVORCE or MIRACLES in Penguins. He is not very keen to take either of these but would do THE PROBLEM OF PAIN, which I did not suggest to him although I mentioned it in conversation as being the first book. What do you think about it? Sales are still better than with either of the other two and are fairly steady, although they have dropped more proportionately than in the case of THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS since increased production costs compelled us to raise the price to 7s. 6 d. In asking whether you would consider the question I think it right to say that undoubtedly it would help the other books, both past and future, if a new public could be gained through Penguins' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 58).

282 Joan wrote this letter from Chautauqua, New York, where her family lived.

[284](#) *In That Hideous Strength.*

[285](#) i.e., the White Witch in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

[286](#) The witch in Homer's *Odyssey*.

[287](#) Alcina is the witch in Matteomaria Boiardo (1441–94), *Orlando Innamorato* (1487), and in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*. She was mistress of an enchanted garden and changed her lovers into beasts, stones or trees.

288 The Stone Table in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

[289](#) Mr Sensible is a character in *The Pilgrim's Regress* (1933), Bk. 5, ch. 4 who represents, it says in that chapter, 'cultured worldliness'.

[290](#) Philip Dormer Stanhope Chesterfield, Lord Chesterfield (1694–1773), who is chiefly remembered for his ‘Letters’ to his son Philip Stanhope (1732–68).

[291](#) Walter Pater (1839–94), whose *Marius the Epicurean* (1885) Lewis discussed in his letter to Arthur Greeves of 10 January 1932 (*CL* II, pp. 34–5).

[292](#) Matthew Arnold (1822–88), poet and critic. In his youth Arnold published many poems, including *Poems, Second Series* (1855) which contained many of which Lewis was very fond. In his later years Arnold turned increasingly to prose, and work such as *Essays in Criticism* (1865–88) established him as an influential literary critic. It was, however, as a critic that Lewis thought Arnold dangerous: in his essay ‘Christianity and Culture’, published in *Theology* (June 1940) and reprinted in *Christian Reflections*, Lewis blamed Arnold for the present ‘inordinate esteem of culture’ (p. 15).

[293](#) George Edward Bateman Saintsbury (1845–1933), author of *A Short History of English Literature* (1898), mentioned in the letter to Arthur Greeves of 4 August 1917 (*CL* I, p. 332).

[294](#) Sir Walter Alexander Raleigh (1861–1922) was the first Professor of English Literature at Oxford. See the discussion of his *Letters* in the letter to Albert Lewis of 5 June 1926 (*CL* I, pp. 665–7).

[295](#) See the biography of George Gordon (1881–1942) in *CL I*, p. 643 n.

[296](#) On the influence of Dante on *The Great Divorce* see the letter to Kinter of 28 March 1953.

[297](#) Politian (or Poliziano) (1454–94) was an Italian humanist and a friend of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Roger Ascham (1515–68), English humanist, was the author of *The Schoolmaster* (1570). On Ascham see *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 279–83.

[298](#) *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, Introduction, pp. 18–19: ‘The humanists did two things, for one of which we are their endless debtors. They recovered, edited, and expounded a great many ancient texts in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew...If this had been all, their name would have been a blessing. But they also initiated that temper and those critical principles which have since come to be called “classicism”...The neo-classics are the humanists’ lawful heirs. The worst of all neo-classical errors, that which turned Aristotle’s observations on Greek tragedy into arbitrary “rules” and even foisted on him “rules” for which his text furnishes no pretext at all, began...in 1570 with Castelvetro (*Poetica d’aristotele*, IV, ii).’

[299](#) In *King Arthur Today* Starr praises the work of Nennius (fl. c. 830). In his *Historia Brittonum* Nennius gives an account of an historical Arthur who, as *dux bellorum*, after Hengist's death led the Britons against the Saxons in twelve battles.

[300](#) i.e., the 'Bird and Baby'—or Eagle and Child—the pub in St Giles, Oxford, where the Inklings met.

[301](#) They planned to meet in Liverpool on Lewis's return from a holiday in Ireland.

[302](#) Dr F. Morgan Roberts (1928–), Presbyterian pastor, has served in churches in Birmingham, Michigan, Louisville, Kentucky, and Mount Vernon and Newburgh, New York. When serving as Pastor of Shadyside Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, 1985–94, he published *Are There Horses in Heaven? And Other Thoughts: Sermons Preached in the Shadyside Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania* (Pittsburgh: Lighthouse Point Press, 1996). In a letter of 2 February 1966 to Clyde S. Kilby, Roberts said: ‘I had written [to Lewis] following a study of “Perelandra” and I asked several questions concerning his view of the devotional life’ (Wade Center). In *L* this letter was attributed to Ursula Roberts, although in *WHL* it was addressed to ‘Mr Roberts’.

[303](#) Mrs McCaslin was now writing from 101 South 21st Avenue, Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

[304](#) Lewis confused Rosencrantz with Guildenstern. When Hamlet invites Guildenstern to play the recorder he replies: 'But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill' (Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, III, ii, 384–5).

[305](#) This letter was first published in *CSL: The Bulletin of the New York C. S. Lewis society*, 16, no. 5, whole no. 185 (March 1985), p. 7.

[306](#) *Mere Christianity*, Bk. III, ch. 1, p. 74: ‘Perhaps my bad temper or my jealousy are gradually getting worse—so gradually that the increase in seventy years will not be very noticeable. But it might be absolute hell in a million years: in fact, if Christianity is true, Hell is the precisely correct technical term for what it would be.’

[307](#) *Aida*, an opera by Giuseppe Verdi, was first performed in 1871.

308 p.p.

[309](#) Romans 10:14: 'How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?'

[310](#) 1 Corinthians 1:12–14: ‘Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?’

[311](#) *George MacDonald: An Anthology* (London: Bles, 1946).

[312](#) Miss Margaret Radcliffe was a one-legged nurse who wrote to Lewis constantly. It was her ambition to live at The Kilns and look after him, and he had constantly to tell her that he did not need her help. Neither his letters nor hers survive. When Lewis died, she turned her attention to Warnie whom she also wanted to look after. He let it be known that if she moved to Oxford he would emigrate to Ireland.

[313](#) *The Horse and His Boy.*

[314](#) In Sayers' *Gaudy Night*, ch. 11, Harriet Vane is sitting on Shotover Hill—which overlooks The Kilns—when 'A detached pentameter, echoing out of nowhere, was beating in her ears—seven marching feet—a pentameter and a half:—To that still centre where the spinning world/Sleeps on its axis.' Lewis suggested it derived from Milton, *Paradise Lost*, VIII, 164–5: 'With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps/On her soft axle.'

[315](#) *The Splendid Century.*

[316](#) Gebbert was getting a divorce.

[317](#) i.e., her son, Charles Marion.

[318](#) The name of this correspondent has been withheld.

[319](#) Geoffrey Bles.

[320](#) 'Strawberry' in *The Magician's Nephew* (1955).

[321](#) *ibid.*, ch. 7.

[322](#) *ibid.*, ch. 12.

[323](#) *ibid.*

[324](#) *ibid.*, ch. 10.

[325](#) *ibid.*, ch. 4.

[326](#) Ibid., chs. 10 and 14.

[327](#) This illustration, perhaps redrawn, appears in *The Magician's Nephew*, ch. 7.

[328](#) The letter was signed by Warnie.

[329](#) Ruth Starr Rose (1887–1965), painter, was Starr’s elder sister. She was born in Wisconsin and educated at National Cathedral School, Washington, DC, and Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, New York. Rose studied at the New York Art Students League, and under George Miller, master printer. She is noted for her work as a lithographer and silk screen printmaker. The Library of Congress has permanent exhibits of her work in both media. She was married to Searles Rose.

[330](#) i.e., Florence 'Michal' Williams, the widow of Charles Williams.

[331](#) Blamires wanted to dedicate the second of his trilogy of novels, *Cold War in Hell* (London: Longmans, 1955), to Lewis. In the end he dedicated it to his wife.

[332](#) 'was there any....'

[333](#) i.e., *Le Lion et la Sorcière Blanche*, trans. Émile-R. Blanchet.

[334](#) Donald A. Roberts, a member of the Milton Society of America.

[335](#) The original of this letter is in the archives of the Milton Society of America.

[336](#) William B. Hunter, Jr, was secretary of the Milton Society of America in 1954.

[337](#) In her letter of 23 October 1954 Gebbert said: 'Once my divorce court ordeal is over in November, I hope and pray I'll be able to return to normal. The nightmare has been long, and one I know I shan't ever forget, but the waking up is looked forward to' (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 261).

[338](#) Gebbert said in her letter of 23 October: 'A bottle of Gilbey's Scotch is on its gurgling way to you both from Marshall Ellis, Ltd., Canada' (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 261).

[339](#) Mark Twain mentions the Holy Grail in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, ch. 9.

[340](#) In Charles Williams's *War in Heaven* (1930), Archdeacon Davenant discovers that his chalice is the Holy Grail.

[341](#) The horse Bree in *The Horse and His Boy*.

[342](#) In Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, Part IV, the horses, or Houyhnhnms, are endowed with reason and theirs is a rational, clean and simple society—in contrast to the Yahoos, who are beasts in human shape.

[343](#) Of *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*.

[344](#) Luke 13:15–16: ‘The Lord then answered him...And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?’

[345](#) Hebrews 2:10.

[346](#) Mrs Shelburne had possibly asked Lewis if he had heard of Etienne Charlier's *Aperu sur la Formation Historique de la Nation Haitienne* (Port-au-Prince: Presses Libres, 1954).

[347](#) Luke 7:37–8: ‘A woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.’

[348](#) Newby had asked in a letter of 2 November 1954: 'We are fast approaching the four-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Sir Philip Sidney and the Third Programme would be very glad if you cared to broadcast a twenty-minute talk to mark the occasion.'

[349](#) On 11 November 1954 Gibb wrote to Lewis: ‘The Associated Examining Board for the General Certificate of Education (Advanced Level) has adopted THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS as one of the set books in their English syllabus for the year 1955–56. I am sure you will agree that this is an excellent thing, not only for the sales of the book which will follow, but because of the places where the book will be used...I think you will be interested to hear that the company you keep with the other books on the syllabus is as follows: Erewhon–Samuel Butler, Decade of Decision–F. Hoyle, Literature and Science–B. Ifor Evans’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 68).

[350](#) Dorothy L. Sayers, *Introductory Papers on Dante* (1954).

[351](#) *ibid.*, “If I could in-thee myself as thou dost in-me thyself,” says Dante, courageously coining new words for the unknown.’

[352](#) 'I haven't seen one, and I don't think I can.' See *Inferno* XX, 18.

[353](#) *Introductory Papers on Dante*, p. 20: 'All truth is shadow except the last truth. But all truth is substance in its own place, though it be best shadows in another place. And the shadow is a true shadow, as the substance is a true substance.' Isaac Penington (1616–79) was a Quaker mystic.

[354](#) *ibid.*, p. 27: ‘There is the crash and roar as of a great wind, shaking the banks, and then [the angel] comes looming through the mist, with the lost souls fleeing before him like frightened frogs. He comes, not like brightness, but like “glory obscur’d”—not like joy, but like judgement.’

[355](#) *ibid.*, p. 33: ‘Here is another picture—Ugolino nailed up in the Tower of Famine, watching his sons drop dead of hunger.

’Already I

Was Blind; I took to fumbling on them; two

Long days I groped there, calling on the dead; Then famine did what sorrow could not do.

“‘Already I was blind—*già cieco*” “with grief”, say the nineteenth-century commentators, sitting in their snug libraries after dinner. But we who have seen the pictures of Belsen and Buchenwald know better—we know now, as Dante knew, that starved men lose their eyesight.’

[356](#) *Inferno*, I, 60: *Dove'l sol tace*: 'Where the sun is silent'.

[357](#) Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound* (1820), IV, 415.

[358](#) Sayers, *Introductory Papers on Dante*, p. 44–5: ‘If the reader will take his Bible...and turn to the ninth chapter of St Mark, the 43rd and following verses, he will find this passage: ‘Jesus said: If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched....
‘There seems to be a kind of conspiracy, especially among middle-aged writers of vaguely liberal tendency, to forget, or to conceal, where the doctrine of Hell comes from. One finds frequent references to “the cruel and abominable *Mediaeval* doctrine of hell”, or “the childish and grotesque *Mediaeval* imagery of physical fire and worms”. People who write about Dante are often concerned to sneer at him, or alternatively to pity him, for being compelled by “the crude superstition of his age” to believe in these things under menace of excommunication and torture...But the case is otherwise; let us face the facts. The doctrine of Hell is not “mediaeval”: it is Christ’s. It is not a device of “mediaeval priestcraft” for frightening people into giving money to the Church: it is Christ’s deliberate judgement on sin.’

[359](#) *ibid.*, p. 47: '[God] did not want to gain anything for Himself: that is impossible; for all things come from Him, and He could no more *add* anything to Himself by making a universe than a poet can add anything to *himself* by writing a poem.'

[360](#) *ibid.*, pp. 58–9: ‘There is an interesting difference between Dante’s conception and that of the Moslem writer Ibn Arabi...In Ibn Arabi’s Heaven, envy is excluded, apparently, only by ignorance and lack of imagination. But in Dante’s Christian Heaven, it is excluded by love. The lower know that the higher exist, and “it is a joy to the whole realm”: they look up the ranks of the great ones soaring above them, and are filled with rapture and love. They envy them no more than you or I envy Dante or Shakespeare for being great and glorious. Why should they envy, or why should we? We are thrilled with delight to know that beings so noble can exist.’

[361](#) The reference on p. 58 is to George Santayana, *Three Philosophic Poems* (1910).

[362](#) Sayers, *Introductory Papers on Dante*, pp. 63–4: ‘We need not now examine the Adam-and-Eve myth with the intention of arguing about how far it is pure parable and how far it may represent something that historically happened... We may in passing note three things: first, that the fashionable habit of calling the prohibition of the Fruit of Knowledge an “arbitrary taboo” is a quite unjustifiable travesty of the Bible story. There, God is represented as saying to Adam and Eve: “Do not eat: if you do, it will kill you”—and I do not know what else one could reasonably say to anybody when begging him to refrain from taking strychnine or prussic acid. The second thing is a consideration that naturally would not occur to Dante, with his limited knowledge of the cosmos, but is bound to occur to us; namely, that if there are, in the universe, other rational material beings besides Man, there is no need to suppose that they have fallen into the same error. Thirdly: since Man is, of his nature, a being susceptible of development, it is possible in his case for God (with man’s own assent and cooperation) to undo the consequences of the Fall—or rather, not to undo, but to redeem them.’

[363](#) Lewis probably had in mind the concluding chapter of von Hügel, *Eternal Life* (1912; 2nd rev. edn 1913), p. 383: ‘Eternal Life precludes space and clock-time because of the very intensity of its life. The Simultaneity is here the fullest expression of the Supreme Richness, the unspeakable Concreteness, the overwhelming Aliveness of God; and is at the opposite pole from all empty unity, all mere being—any or all abstractions whatsoever.’

[364](#) Gigadibs is a fashion-conscious literary man who first appeared in Robert Browning, *Bishop Blougram's Apology* (1882), I, 13. He was to appear again as 'Master Gigadibs' in Rudyard Kipling's *Stalky & Co.* (1899), 'Slaves of the Lamp', Part I.

[365](#) i.e., in the style of *The Vision or Hell, Purgatory and Paradise of Dante Alighieri*, trans. Henry Francis Cary (1814).

[366](#) Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II, ii, 346–7.

[367](#) Sayers, *Introductory Papers on Dante*, p. 109.

[368](#) Jill's eldest daughter, three-year-old Nicola.

[369](#) Susie was the dog Jill gave Jack and Warnie.

[370](#) 'poem'.

[371](#) Joseph McCarthy (1908–57), an American politician who was senator for Wisconsin, 1947–57. During his years as chairman of the Government Committee on Operations of the Senate he held public hearings in which he accused army officials, film stars, and various public figures of being Communists. He was censured by the Senate in December 1954.

[372](#) Dante.

[373](#) The Kinds of literature known to Dante would have included Epic, Romance, Lyric, Allegory and Comedy.

[374](#) 'in which common women also communicate'. Dante, Section 11 of his *Letter to Can Grande della Scalla* (1291–1329), to whom he sent a fair copy of *Paradiso*.

[375](#) His inaugural lecture at Cambridge.

[376](#) These corrections to the original printing of *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* were made in subsequent reprints.

[377](#) In *A SEVERE MERCY*, ch. 6, 'The Barrier Breached', pp. 155–7, Vanauken wrote that his wife Davy had been admitted to the University Hospital at Charlottesville, Virginia: 'It was mid-July [1954] when I went up in the MG with Flurry, and I thought I would see the doctor first. He said: "She's a very sick girl. I'd say no more than one chance in ten. Maybe six months."...The world had changed for ever by the time I replied, an instant later. Quietly I asked him—so quietly that perhaps he thought I didn't care—what it was. It was her liver, he said: it had passed the point of no return. They did not know why. She would die in coma...I began to act. Telegrams and telephone calls went forth to friends, particularly Christian friends, including C. S. Lewis.'

[378](#) p.p.

[379](#) The name in this and the following letter was typed.

[380](#) See **Alastair Fowler** in the Biographical Appendix. Fowler had completed a degree at the University of Edinburgh, and he was at this time a member of Pembroke College, Oxford, pursuing a doctorate under Lewis.

[381](#) Fowler's wife Jenny gave birth to a daughter, Alison, on 18 November 1954.

[382](#) Walter Hooper (1931–) was born in Reidsville, North Carolina, on 27 March 1931, the son of Arch Boyd Hooper and Madge (Kemp) Hooper. He attended Reidsville High School, and read English at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, taking his BA in 1953. During his service in the US Army, 1954–6, he began corresponding with Lewis. He taught at the Chapel Hill Elementary School, Chapel Hill, 1956–8, while working on a master's degree at the University of North Carolina. He was a student at the Virginia Theological Seminary, 1958–60, head of the English Department at Christ School, Arden, North Carolina, 1960–1, and instructor in English at the University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky, 1961–3. He met Lewis on 7 June 1963, and spent the summer as his secretary. While Hooper was in the US teaching one final term, Lewis died. Hooper returned to Oxford where Warnie Lewis invited him to edit his brother's literary remains. He is the co-author with Roger Lancelyn Green of *C. S. Lewis: A Biography*, the author of *C. S. Lewis: A Companion & Guide* (1996), and the editor of *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis*.

[383](#) Hooper was in the US Army and was stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He wrote to thank Lewis for his books, and to say that although he was a Christian when he read them, they had made the faith clear.

[384](#) See the biography of the Rev. Canon John Bertram Phillips (1906–82), writer, translator and broadcaster, in *CL* II, p. 585 n.

[385](#) Phillips, who was vicar of St John's, Redhill, Surrey, had asked Lewis to come down and give a talk to the young people in his parish.

[386](#) *BF*, p. 242.

[387](#) Lewis sent Arthur a copy of his article 'A Note on Jane Austen', which appeared in *Essays in Criticism*, IV (October 1954), p. 43–4, and is reprinted in *SLE*.

[388](#) This was a copy of his article 'The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment', and 'A Reply to C. S. Lewis' by Norval Morris and Donald Buckle, both published in *Res Judicatae*, VI (June 1953), pp. 224–30, 231–7. The first of these is reprinted in *First and Second Things* and *EC*.

[389](#) i.e., *This Ever Diverse Pair*.

[390](#) Gibb wrote in a letter of 3 December 1954: 'The reviews of THE HORSE AND HIS BOY have come through from the Macmillan Company in New York and I am sending a copy to you...In sending on these reviews Macmillan's say that the Book has been more widely reviewed than children's books usually are over there and has excited tremendous enthusiasm' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 70).

[391](#) Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros: A Study of the Christian Idea of Love*, authorized trans. A. G. Hebert (London: SPCK, 1932–9; rev. edn, *Agape and Eros*, authorized trans. Philip S. Watson, London: SPCK, 1953).

[392](#) Some of Lewis's first thoughts on Nygren's book are found in his letter to Janet Spens of 8 January 1935 (*CL* II, pp. 153–4). Lewis was still thinking his way towards the conclusions he reached regarding the various natural loves and their relation to Agape in *The Four Loves*.

[393](#) On the Logical Positivists see the letter to Dom Bede Griffiths of 22 April 1954.

[394](#) *Concerning Gifts* was a short essay on Christmas published privately by Mary Margaret McCaslin in 1954.

[395](#) Douglass had written to Lewis from Basil Street Hotel, Knightsbridge, London.

[396](#) Following the death of Don Giovanni Calabria, Lewis continued the correspondence in Latin with Don Luigi Pedrollo, with whom he had corresponded in 1950. See **Don Luigi Pedrollo** in the Biographical Appendix.

[397](#) John Frederick Charles Fuller (1876–1966), British general, military historian and strategist, was educated at Malvern College and the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. In the First World War, he recognized the importance of mechanized warfare and planned the stunning tank attack at Cambrai in 1917. His remarkable ideas are expressed in his numerous books, which include *Tanks in the Great War* (1920) and *On Future Warfare* (1928). He established himself as a leading military commentator of the day.

[398](#) Michel Gordey, *Visa to Moscow*, trans. Katherine Woods (London: Gollancz, 1953).

[399](#) Gibb had sent Lewis specially bound copies of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Horse and His Boy*.

[400](#) Jane Austen, *Emma* (1816), ch. 2: 'Mr Woodhouse saw the letter, and he says he never saw such a handsome letter in his life.'

[401](#) In Rudyard Kipling, *Debts and Credits* (1926).

[402](#) After Lewis sent Sayers a notice of his change of address from Magdalen, Oxford, to Magdalene, Cambridge, Sayers sent Lewis an allegorical card.

[403](#) Sayers replied in verse, dated 29 December 1954, in which she explained the meaning of her card. This reply is reproduced in Sayers, *Letters*, vol. IV, pp. 197–8.

¹ Lewis made the original George MacDonald a character in *The Great Divorce*.

² Helmut Kuhn, 'C. S. Lewis: Der Romancier der Unerbittlichen Liebe' ['The Novelist of Inexorable Love'], *Wort und Wahrheit*, Freiberg (10 January 1955), pp. 113–26.

³ After leaving Oxford Pitt had taught English for a while at the University College of South Wales. She was a Fellow of Newnham College, Cambridge, 1953–8. She sent Lewis a letter welcoming him to their new university.

⁴ See the entry on Magdalene College, Cambridge, in *CG*, pp. 773–4.

⁵ Lewis was describing the village of Headington Quarry, in which Holy Trinity Church stands. The Kilns was not in Headington Quarry but half a mile away on the Risinghurst Estate.

[6](#) There is a photograph of the brick kilns in Walter Hooper, *Through Joy and Beyond: A Pictorial Biography of C. S. Lewis* (New York: Macmillan, 1982), p. 54. The brick kilns were destroyed in 1968 when houses were built on land attached to The Kilns.

⁷ Trehern had obviously read Lewis's *The Allegory of Love* (1936), and perhaps asked why Lewis did not cite Thomas Speght, the Elizabethan schoolmaster who edited Chaucer.

[8](#) Thomas Speght (fl. 1566–1602) edited *The Works of Our Ancient and Learned English Poet, Geoffrey Chaucer* (1598). Speght's notes and introductory material are more elaborate than in any previous edition of Chaucer, and he was the first to provide a substantial glossary.

[9](#) Luke 6:33.

[10](#) Colin Eccleshare (1916–89), publisher, was educated at St Catharine’s College, Cambridge, taking his BA in 1938. He joined the staff of Cambridge University Press in 1939, but left to serve in the Second World War. Returning to Cambridge University Press he was assistant London manager, 1946–63, and London manager, 1963–72. He was director of group projects, 1972–7, and director of Educational Associates Ltd. (Hong Kong), John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 1979–85.

[11](#) See **Henry Victor Dyson ‘Hugo’ Dyson** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* I, pp. 988–90.

[12](#) See the biography of Thomas Dewar Weldon, Fellow and Tutor in Philosophy at Magdalen College, Oxford, in *CL* I, p. 763n.

[13](#) Psalm 22:6.

14 See **Fr Peter Milward SJ** in the Biographical Appendix.

¹⁵ Peter Milward, 'The Angels in Theology', *The Irish Theological Quarterly*, XXXI, no. 3 (July 1954), pp. 213–25. Fr Milward sent Lewis a copy of this article from Japan, in pursuance of their discussion of angels in his rooms at Magdalen earlier in the year.

[16](#) *Revelations of Divine Love Recorded by Julian, anchoress at Norwich Anno Domini 1373, A Version from the MS. In the British Museum*, ed. Grace Warrack (London: Methuen, 1901). See the references to this book in *CL II*.

[17](#) Gilfedder suggested Lewis had become sick of the gossip at Magdalen College about his Christianity.

[18](#) Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 8, 'The Way of Grief', pp. 155–7.

[19](#) St Stephen's Episcopal Church, Culpeper, Virginia.

[20](#) The church of St Margaret of Antioch, which stands half a mile from the village of Binsey. It was built in about 730, and belonged originally to Godstow Priory which was destroyed during the Reformation. The church is looked after by Christ Church, Oxford.

[21](#) Mrs Jessup's letters to Lewis have not survived. However, it is possible that she had become a lay member of one of the religious orders for women in the Anglo-Catholic branch of the Episcopal Church.

22 Loge, the god of fire, is a character in Richard Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelung*.

[23](#) Lewis wrote about those treasured volumes in *SBJ*, ch. 5. They were *The Rhinegold & The Valkyrie*, by *Richard Wagner*, illus. Arthur Rackham, trans. Margaret Armour (London: William Heinemann, 1910) and *Siegfried & The Twilight of the Gods*, by *Richard Wagner*, illus. Arthur Rackham, trans. Margaret Armour (London: William Heinemann, 1911).

[24](#) See **Spencer Curtis Brown** in the Biographical Appendix.

[25](#) Gibb wrote to Lewis on 18 February 1955: 'I did enjoy our talk yesterday. I was perhaps a little saddened that we should have disappointed you to the extent of your giving your new book to Curtis Brown. It is not so much the loss of the serial rights that worries me as the possibility that we may not have the United States rights either' (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. b. 90., fol. 2).

[26](#) Gibb wanted Lewis to edit an illustrated edition of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* for Geoffrey Bles, but in the end Lewis refused.

[27](#) According to Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 8, p. 186: 'I [mentioned] to Lewis...the change in my once-famous "luck". Long before, friends had thought me lucky: my First Honours in college (because I had been lucky enough to get the right questions), my happy marriage (because I had been lucky enough to find the right girl). But, since Christianity, several things had not been so fortunate, culminating in Davy's death.'

[28](#) *The Letters of Saint Teresa, A Complete Edition Translated from the Spanish and Annotated by the Benedictines of Stanbrook*, Introduction by Cardinal Gasquet, 4 vols. (London: Thomas Baker, 1924), vol. IV, p. 288. Letter CCCCXXVIII, Prefatory Note: ‘St. Teresa reached Burgos on Jan. 26 [1582], after a terrible journey over the Castilian plains, through violent storms of rain, snow and hurricanes of wind. The rivers had overflowed and the roads were hidden beneath the water. [Francisco de Ribera (1537–91)] says that on one occasion the Saint saw the waggon containing her daughters swerve over a precipice as though about to fall into the river, but a lad who was with them seized the wheel and held up the cart in a manner that seemed miraculous...The nuns made their confessions before starting, asked the Mother for her blessing, and recited the *Credo*. She was not in the least disturbed, but said calmly: “Well, my daughters, what better fate could you wish for than to die here as martyrs...for love of our Lord? Stay where you are, for I want to go first, and if I am drowned, I beg of you not to cross but to return to the inn.” She reached the other side as our Lord promised her she should. She hurt her leg in crossing and was heard to say on the opposite bank: “O Lord, after so many trials , *this* happens!” “Teresa, this is the way I treat My friends,” was the reply. “Ah, My God, that is why you have so few!” she answered.’

[29](#) 2 Corinthians 1:21–2: ‘Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God. Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.’ Ibid., 5:5: ‘Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.’

30 Vanauken had sent him a photograph of Jean.

[31](#) Coventry Patmore, *The Angel in the House* (1863); *The Victories of Love* (1877).

[32](#) At the time Lewis was writing, the Catholic Church opposed cremation because it seemed to deny the resurrection of the body. In 1963 it was decided to allow cremation in certain circumstances provided the reasons for choosing it did not counter Christian belief. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992) states (No. 2301): ‘The Church permits cremation, provided that it does not demonstrate a denial of faith in the resurrection of the body.’

[33](#) Brother Lawrence (c. 1614–91), *The Practice of the Presence of God* (London: W. Walker, 1907), Letter 11: ‘But those who consider sickness as coming from the hand of God, as the effects of His mercy, and the means which He employs for their salvation, commonly find in it great sweetness and sensible consolation.’

[34](#) Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34.

[35](#) i.e., Dom Bede Griffiths's autobiography, *The Golden String*.

36 Mrs Shelburne's cat.

[37](#) While still at Magdalen, Oxford, Lewis had been supervising Fowler's doctoral dissertation. When he was appointed a professor at Cambridge, he had to pass Fowler on to someone else.

38 'The Rest of Time' was a science-fiction story Fowler was writing.

[39](#) 'wife and child', 'family'.

[40](#) Lewis began writing his autobiography in 1948, but his long-standing commitment to write *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* and the burst of inspiration which led to the Chronicles of Narnia caused him to work on it only intermittently for seven years. It was now finally complete, and he handed it over to Curtis Brown Ltd with the understanding that they would negotiate a contract with Geoffrey Bles Ltd. Gibb wrote to Lewis on 22 February 1955: 'Yes, I quite realise that you have committed the typescript to Curtis Brown in advance; but I am not quite clear as to whether they are to handle the American rights for you' (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. b. 90, fol. 6).

[41](#) Lewis was reading a typescript of Skinner's *The Return of Arthur, Part I*. As before, references are to the complete edition, *The Return of Arthur: A Poem of the Future*.

[42](#) i.e, the blurb for *The Lord of the Rings* accompanying the letter to Sir Stanley Unwin of 4 December 1953.

[43](#) Skinner, *The Return of Arthur, Part II*, III, xxvi, 7: 'I guess it had to do with Mr. Blaise.'

[44](#) *ibid.*, xlvi, 1: 'Blaise-Merlin-heard all this with close attention.'

[45](#) In his *Biographia Literaria* (1817), ch. 1, Samuel Taylor Coleridge describes the headmaster of his school, the Rev. James Bowyer.

[46](#) Richard Mulcaster (c. 1530–1611) was the headmaster of Merchant Taylors' School when Edmund Spenser was a pupil.

47 i.e., the general public.

[48](#) Skinner, *The Return of Arthur, Part II*, I, i, 4–5: ‘Though nowadays it isn’t by the last/But coming centuries we feel outclassed.’

[49](#) *ibid.*, xxii, 17.

[50](#) *ibid.*, xxxi: ‘And total—from which direct of perditions, he/Was saved by war, and human inefficiency.’

[51](#) *ibid.*, xliii, 1.

[52](#) *ibid.*, II, ii.

[53](#) *ibid.*, xi, 2: 'The poles, for instance, long since stripped of wiring.'

[54](#) *ibid.*, xxxviii, 5: ‘See Helen’s beauty in a brow of Girton.’

[55](#) *ibid.*, IV, xx, 4.

[56](#) *ibid.*, III, xviii, 1–2: ‘For like a wind across their woolly ocean/Of backs, a sudden agitation passed.’

[57](#) *ibid.*, xxii, 1–2: ‘And like a torrent that has breached its dykes/Engulfed the whole lane in a tide of mutton.’

[58](#) *ibid.*, xxix, 1: 'They went indoors together. She was glad.'

[59](#) *ibid.*, xxxii, 4.

[60](#) *ibid.*, IV, x, 5–6: ‘That she was fond of him might be implied./But love—the desert feeling,
when apart.’

[61](#) *ibid.*, xxii.

[62](#) *ibid.*, xxxii.

[63](#) *ibid.*, xl.

[64](#) *ibid.*, xlv, 3.

[65](#) *ibid.*, xlix, 7: ‘*Magus ex machina* and so avert it.’

[66](#) *ibid.*, V, iii, 1.

[67](#) *ibid.*, x.

[68](#) *ibid.*, xviii, 6.

[69](#) *ibid.*, xxiv, 5.

[70](#) *ibid.*, xxix, 3.

[71](#) *ibid.*, xliii; V, xlii.

[72](#) *ibid.*, VI, i.

[73](#) *ibid.*, v. Line 5 was altered to read: ‘The lives of beasts, too, centred round their dens.’

[74](#) *ibid.*, xi: 'And as a schoolboy, by his Sunday self,/Haunting the library (Limbo of his hell)/Takes down by chance a Shelley from the shelf.'

[75](#) *ibid.*, xxxii–xxxv.

[76](#) *ibid.*, xliii, 5.

[77](#) *ibid.*, VII, i, 7: 'From the horizon's highlands, silver-white.'

[78](#) *ibid.*, xvi, 4: 'Of the sheer cliff spectacularly spirted.'

[79](#) *ibid.*, xxxiv.

[80](#) *ibid.*, lxvii, 1–2: ‘...There’s no doubt that what he said/In our ears would have sounded stale and trite.’

[81](#) *ibid.*, VIII, li, 7.

[82](#) *ibid.*, IX, xx, 2: 'That is, in men and Russians.'

[83](#) *ibid.*, xlvi, xlix.

[84](#) *ibid.*, lii, 7.

[85](#) *ibid.*, lix.

[86](#) *ibid.*, X, iv, 6.

[87](#) *ibid.*, lxxi.

[88](#) *ibid.*, XII, ii.

[89](#) *ibid.*, xxxvii, 3.

[90](#) *ibid.*, lxi, 3: 'The floodlit Marxmast, solemn, monolithic.'

[91](#) *ibid.*, lxiii, 7: ‘Of *trompe l’oeil*, all the merchandise profuse.’

[92](#) Skinner, *The Return of Arthur, Part II*, II, xxiii ff.

[93](#) See the biography of Jonathan Francis Goodridge in *CL* II, p. 936n. He had been Lewis's pupil and was looking for a teaching job.

[94](#) Sir David Lyndsay, *The Complaynt of Sir David Lindsay* (1559), 471–2: ‘Quen kirkmen yairnis no dignitie,/Nor wyffis no soveranitie.’

95 Appleyard was a clergyman known to Mrs Jessup.

96 Ransom, the hero of *Out of the Silent Planet*.

[97](#) The *pfifltriggi* are one of the species of beings in *Out of the Silent Planet*.

[98](#) Cf. the letter to Mrs Jessup of 15 October 1951.

[99](#) The Hesperides were nymphs who lived far away in the West guarding a tree that produced golden apples. The Hyperboreans were a legendary people believed to live 'beyond the north wind', at the edge of the world, in a land of unbroken sunshine.

[100](#) Robert Louis Stevenson, *Treasure Island* (1883), ch. 8: ‘a face as big as a ham’.

[101](#) *The Twentieth Century*, CLVII, no. 936 (February 1955). Herbert Butterfield (1900–79) was Professor of Modern History, University of Cambridge, 1944–68, and Master of Peterhouse, Cambridge, 1955–68. Fr Michael Clive Knowles, OSB (1896–1974) was Professor of Medieval History in the University of Cambridge, 1947–54, and Regius Professor of Modern History, 1954–63.

[102](#) E. M. Forster, 'A Letter', *The Twentieth Century*, CLVII, no. 936 (February 1955), pp. 99–101: '[Humanism] expresses more nearly what I feel about myself, and it is Humanism that has been most precisely threatened during the past ten years. Humanism covers my main belief and my main disbelief. My belief in the individual and in his duty to create and to understand and to contact other individuals...In the present rise of obscurantism among intellectuals, Humanism is seldom directly attacked. Perhaps they do not consider it sufficiently important. "Elbowed out" would be the better phrase. Its stronghold in history, the Renaissance, is alleged not to have existed. Its conception of human nature and its hopes for it are implicitly denied by emphasizing the arbitrary theory of Original Sin. It is regarded, at most, as a weakness in the wall of western defence, through which a rival ideology might percolate. I have found it something more positive than this, something life-giving, something which has made the world of the past fifty years exciting and valuable and sometimes comprehensible.'

[103](#) i.e., *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*.

[104](#) Henry Best, *Personal and Literary Memorials* (1829), ch. 15, p. 68: ‘The Duke of Gloucester, brother of King George III, permitted Mr. Gibbon to present to him the first volume of *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. When the second volume of that work appeared, it was quite in order that it should be presented to His Royal Highness in like manner. The prince received the author with much good nature and affability, saying to him, as he laid the quarto on the table, “Another dmn’d thick, square book! Always scribble, scribble, scribble! Eh! Mr. Gibbon?”’

[105](#) Kathleen O'Hara (1885–1973) was Pitter's colleague in the business they ran together, and they shared the house at Long Crendon. See the biography of Ruth Pitter in *CL II*, pp. 1060–4.

[106](#) Newby wrote to Lewis on 8 March 1955: 'We have read your inaugural lecture *De Descriptione Temporum* and would like you to broadcast it in the Third Programme. A number of modifications and omissions will be necessary to remove it from the special occasion for which it was designed, but the lecture can be broadcast substantially as it is written.'

[107](#) *The Rambler*, ed. W. J. Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss, Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, vol. III (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), no. 68 (10 November 1750), p. 360: 'To be happy at home is the ultimate result of all ambition, the end to which every enterprise and labour tends, and of which every desire prompts the prosecution.'

[108](#) Newby wrote to Lewis on 17 March 1955: 'We are very glad indeed to learn that the afternoon of Friday 1st April is convenient for you to record a broadcast version of your inaugural lecture...I should be grateful if you could arrive at Broadcasting House at 2.30 p.m...I enclose two copies of the lecture. In one of them I have marked possible cuts, designed more than anything else to remove the lecture from the special Cambridge setting. These are, of course, only my suggestions and you must certainly consider yourself free to accept or reject as you think best...I have today sent off the billing to *Radio Times*.'

[109](#) Because Lewis rarely saved letters, he would probably have had no record of the address to which he wrote to Kuhn on 6 January 1955.

[110](#) Van Deusen had sent Lewis some stationery with the address of The Kilns printed at the top. He used it in writing this letter.

[111](#) Cf. *SBJ*, ch. 14, p. 171: ‘All images and sensations, if idolatrously mistaken for Joy itself, soon honestly confessed themselves inadequate. All said, in the last resort, “It is not I. I am only a reminder. Look! Look! What do I remind you of?”’

[112](#) *The Apocryphal New Testament: being the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, Epistles and Apocalypses: with other narratives and fragments*, trans. Montague Rhodes James (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924).

[113](#) Dorsett, *And God Came In*, ch. 4, p. 116.

114 The Farrers had just returned from a holiday in Sicily.

[115](#) 'Mighty heroes lived before Woolworth'. Lewis, who had in mind the chain store F. W. Woolworth, was making a play on Horace, *Odes*, book 4, poem 9, line 25: 'Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona': 'Mighty heroes lived before Agamemnon'.

[116](#) i.e. Warnie.

[117](#) A character in Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows* (1908).

[118](#) 'a little force'.

[119](#) Terence, *The Woman of Andros* act 3, scene 1, line 473: 'Juno Lucina [Goddess of childbirth], help me.'

[120](#) John Wyndham, *The Day of the Triffids* (1954).

[121](#) Pierre Barbet, *The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, trans. from the French by the Earl of Wicklow (Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds, 1954).

[122](#) Song of Solomon 5:8: 'I am sick of love.'

[123](#) George Macaulay Trevelyan (1876–1962), historian and Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, 1940–51. See his letter to Lewis of 2 February 1943 (*CL* II, p. 552).

[124](#) The artist, Fritz Wegner, illustrated Sayers's pamphlet, *The Story of Noah's Ark*, retold by D.L.S. (London: Hamish Hamilton, 12 September 1955). Wegner's painting for *The Story of Noah's Ark* is reproduced in Sayers, *Letters*, vol. IV, between pp. 204 and 205.

[125](#) Dorothy L. Sayers, *The Man Born to be King: A Play-Cycle on the Life of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (1943).

[126](#) In a letter of 4 April 1955 Sayers asked if she could reprint her essay ‘...And Telling you a Story’ from *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*. The essay was reprinted in her *Further Papers on Dante*. See Sayers, *Letters*, vol. IV, p. 221.

[127](#) Warnie's 'The Galleys of France', first published in *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*, was reprinted in *The Splendid Century*.

[128](#) Lewis arranged for all the royalties from *Essays Presented to Charles Williams* to go to Williams's widow, Florence 'Michal' Williams. See the letter to Florence 'Michal' Williams of 13 March 1947 (*CL* II, pp. 767–8).

[129](#) The reference is to *The Twentieth Century*, 'The Cambridge Number', CLVII, no. 936 (February 1955). In her letter of 4 April 1955 Sayers said: 'I have just been reading your Inaugural, of which I had previously only heard reports. In particular, there was that "Cambridge" number of *The Twentieth Century*, which appears to be completely dominated by it, and moreover permeated from end to end by a curious uneasy awareness of Christianity, the like of which I have seldom encountered in so concentrated a form' (Sayers, *Letters*, vol. IV, p. 222).

[130](#) See note 99 to the letter to Ruth Pitter of 5 March 1955.

[131](#) Forster, 'A Letter', p. 99: 'How indeed do I define myself? If I say I am an atheist the obvious retort is "That sounds rather crude" if I say I am an agnostic the retort is "That sounds rather feeble" if I say I am a liberal the answer is: "You can't be; only Socialists and Tories," and if I say I am a humanist there is apt to be a bored withdrawal. On the whole humanist is the best word, though. It expresses more nearly what I feel about myself, and it is Humanism that has been most precisely threatened during the past ten years.'

[132](#) A seventeenth-century exclamation of derision, remonstrance or surprise. See Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton, *The Honest Whore* (1604, 1630), III, ii, 48: 'Marry gup, are you grown so holy, so pure, so honest with a pox?' Lewis uses it in his poem 'Impenitence' (reprinted in *CP*), vii, 1–4: 'Marry, Gup! Begone, you/Fusty kill-joys, new Manicheans! here's a/Health to Toad Hall, here's to the Beaver doing/Sums with the Butcher!'

[133](#) In a footnote to his inaugural lecture, ‘*De Descriptione Temporum*’, Lewis said of T. S. Eliot’s poem, ‘A Cooking Egg’: ‘In music we have pieces which demand more talent in the performer than in the composer. Why should there not come a period when the art of writing poetry stands lower than the art of reading it?’ (*SLE*, p. 9). In her letter of 4 April 1955, Sayers commented: ‘I have been greatly bothered by the various “explanations” offered for poems by persons younger and cleverer than myself...I suppose, by the way, that almost the only older poet about whom the same diversity of opinion exists, and has always to some extent existed, is [William] Blake’ (Sayers, *Letters*, vol. IV, p. 223).

[134](#) A form of light verse dealing with events in polite society.

[135](#) T. S. Eliot, *Poems* (1920), 'A Cooking Egg'.

[136](#) Lewis dealt with what he called 'Privatism' in *Arthurian Torso*, ch. 6, p. 188: "'Privatism". This occurs when the poet writes what the reader, however sensitive and generally cultivated he may be, could not possibly understand unless the poet chose to tell him something more than he has told. Thus I was informed that I had been wasting my time trying to puzzle out certain lines in a modern poet because the real explanation lay not in the poems but in certain events that had happened while the poet was spending a week-end in my informant's house. In so far as the poem was addressed to a circle of friends such "privatism" is not a literary fault at all: in so far as the poem was exposed without warning for sale in the shops it seems to me to be simply a way of "obtaining money under false pretences".'

[137](#) Lewis's sonnet, 'Legion', was published in *The Month*, XIII (April 1955), p. 210. It is reprinted in *Poems* and *CP*.

[138](#) Joy Davidman, *Smoke on the Mountain: An Interpretation of the Ten Commandments* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954); *Smoke on the Mountain: An Interpretation of the Ten Commandments in Terms of Today*, foreword by C. S. Lewis (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1955).

[139](#) i.e., his new book, *Cold War in Hell*.

[140](#) On 12 April 1955 Curtis Brown wrote to Gibb about the contract for *Surprised by Joy*: ‘I sent the contract off to [Lewis] and he has sent it back with a letter saying: “I am afraid...Clause 16 won’t do for–(a) the next, and probably last, of my children’s books must (morally) go first to Lane who have been on this series since Bles died and of whom I have no complaint; (b) I may, any time, produce something for which a university press is the natural publisher”’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 96). Curtis Brown had, perhaps, misunderstood Lewis’s letter: although Geoffrey Bles had retired, he did not die until 1957.

[141](#) 'truth' 'poetry'. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe published a succession of volumes entitled *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (1811–33) in which he recalled the experiences that had most influenced his artistic development.

[142](#) 1 Kings 18:28.

[143](#) Jagannath, Lord of the World, is the name given to a particular form of the Hindu god, Vishnu.

[144](#) 'spiritual discipline'.

[145](#) In Charles Lamb's story, 'Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist', in *Essays of Elia* (1823).

[146](#) On the industrialization of Oxford by Lord Nuffield see *CL II*, p. 160n.

[147](#) Bodle said of this letter: 'The Minister of Education had addressed a group of teachers on the temptations facing the young and said it was the job of the teachers to arm them in the fight. I let off steam in my letter to Lewis and also wrote to the Minister who, I knew, was a Christian. All I got back from the Minister was sympathetic sounds' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol. 249).

[148](#) Frank Percy Wilson was now supervising Fowler's doctoral dissertation.

[149](#) John Walter Jones (1892–1973) was Tutor in Law at the Queen’s College, Oxford, 1927–48, and Provost, 1948–62. Fowler was a candidate for election as a junior research fellow at The Queen’s College and had in mind an application to Christ Church (‘The House’).

[150](#) i.e. the Long Vacation, which runs from the end of Trinity Term to the start of Michaelmas Term.

[151](#) Laura Philinda (Campbell) Krieg (1917–) was born on 2 September 1917, in Maplewood, New Jersey, the daughter of John Wood Campbell, Sr, an engineer, and Laura (Harrison) Campbell. She was educated at Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, where she completed the first three years. She continued her education informally in Paris, where she lived until 1941. In 1943, she married William Laurence Krieg, an officer of the United States Foreign Service. In 1952, when the family was stationed in Guatemala, Philinda was converted to Christianity by Dr Merrill Hutchins, Minister of Guatemala Union Church. Shortly afterwards she discovered the Narnia books and read them aloud to her son, Laurence, then six years old. He was troubled by his love for Aslan, which he felt was greater than his love for Jesus, and that was the reason she wrote to Lewis. Philinda Krieg is retired and living in Sarasota, Florida.

[152](#) In his 'Notes on the Letters' Vanauken stated that he wrote to Lewis about 'the depth & sharing of the love with Jean, and of their not having children lest the children come between them...and of their long-standing plan to die together. But V had refrained from suicide at her death because of her plea and because of Xtianity. Now, though, V asked, seriously, whether suicide, if done for love and not despair, might be allowed' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 152b).

[153](#) Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5.

[154](#) For the biography of Rhoda Griggs, see **Alice Griggs** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, p. 1050.

[155](#) This letter was first published in *The Times* (14 May 1955), p. 9, under the title 'Charles Williams'.

[156](#) Hebrews 6:20; 7:1–28.

[157](#) 2 Kings 2:23–4.

[158](#) Genesis 9:20-1.

[159](#) Romans 13:13; Ephesians 5:18; 1 Timothy 3:3.

[160](#) Mark 7:24–30.

[161](#) A review of '*De Descriptione Temporum*' appeared in *Time* magazine, 65 (2 May 1955), p. 94, accompanied by a photograph of Lewis by Hans Wild.

[162](#) The Associates of Holy Cross. See the letter to Van Deusen of 26 January 1953.

[163](#) Romans 8:28.

[164](#) Acts 16:3.

[165](#) *ibid.*, 18:18.

[166](#) Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday* (1600), III, v, 'The Merry Month of May and other songs and ballads'.

[167](#) science fiction.

[168](#) Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1953).

[169](#) 'World' is one of the words included in Lewis's Cambridge lectures on 'Some Difficult Words', and it is included in *Studies in Words* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960; 2nd edn, 1967).

[170](#) i.e., the illustrations for *The Last Battle*.

[171](#) This was probably the illustration of Aslan standing by the Door in *The Last Battle*, ch. 14.

[172](#) In a letter of 27 March 1955 Gebbert wrote: 'Mother and I and the Tycoon spent five days in...Las Vegas...The postcards marked EL RANCHO show where we stayed. They have a large swimming pool, separate bungalows and a wonderful dining room. We were also only a few miles from Yucca Flats where all the Atom bombs are being tested, and on last Tuesday morning, we were awakened by every pane of glass in the windows rattling and being almost shaken out of bed. It felt and sounded like an earthquake (which we know so well)–but it was an A-bomb test!' (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fols. 266–7).

[173](#) In her letter of 19 May 1955, Gebbert wrote: 'I'm reading a wonderful book at the moment, but need your help in some translation. It's Gerald Bullett's "The English Mystics." Have you ever read it? On Chapter 1 of my edition, he says: "All that is positively known of him (John the Scot), apart from his writings, is that he spent some years in France at the court of Charles the Bald, by whom he was appointed head of the *schola palatina*, and with whom he seems to have been on terms of familiar friendship. The story is told that one day, seated at table with him, the king asked: '*Quid distat inter sottum et Scottum?*' To which Erigena blandly replied: '*mensa tantum.*'"' (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 268).

[174](#) *ibid*: ‘And on Page 66, we find: “The indefatigable William Land [Laud] (nicknamed *parva Laus* by Oxford contemporaries)...”William Laud (1573–1645), Archbishop of Canterbury, 1633–45, was educated at St John’s College, Oxford, and became a Fellow of the College in 1593. He was ordained in 1601 and was made President of St John’s College in 1611. He became a bishop in 1621 and Chancellor of the University of Oxford in 1630. A High Churchman who believed in the Divine Right of Kings, Laud supported King Charles I. He misjudged the Puritans, and despite the fact that he repudiated Catholicism, he was executed in 1645.

[175](#) *ibid.*: ‘And on Page 128, “In the Divine Dialogues, under the transparent disguise of fiction, he (M Henry More) has recorded a dream-experience of his own: how he was approached by a ‘very grave and venerable person’ who gave him ‘the two keys of Providence, that thou mayest be able to open the treasure of that wisdom thou so anxiously and yet so piously seekest after.’ Each key was found to contain a scroll inscribed with a maxim. The first key, of silver, carried the words: *Claude fenestras ut luceat domus*. The second, of gold: *Amor Dei lux animae*.”’

[176](#) Richard Ward, *The Life of the Learned and Pious Dr. Henry More, Late Fellow of Christ's College in Cambridge* (1710), p. 56: 'He was transported...with Wonder, as well as Pleasure, even in the Contemplation of those things that are here below. And he was so enamoured...with the Wisdom of God in the Contrivance of things; that he hath been heard to say, A good man could be sometimes ready, in his own private Reflections, to kiss the very Stones of the Street.' See the reference to More in *CL I*, p. 623.

[177](#) In *SBJ*, ch. 13, the words, 'Kant's distinction between the Noumenal and the Phenomenal self', merged with words on the next page, 'Bergson showed me.'

[178](#) The title of the book, *Surprised by Joy*, was taken from the poem by Wordsworth, 'Surprised by Joy—impatient as the wind'. Lewis quoted the whole line on the title page of the book.

[179](#) In his 'Notes on the Letters' Vanauken said: 'V had written that we are hurried always by time, never able to enjoy any experiences completely because of it' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 152b).

[180](#) 1 Corinthians 6:16.

[181](#) Romans 6:5.

[182](#) Dante, *Paradiso*, XXXI, 93.

[183](#) Matthew 6:33.

[184](#) The 'Five Sonnets' published in *Poems*, pp. 125–7, and *CP*, pp. 139–41.

[185](#) Taprobane is now Sri Lanka.

[186](#) Crim Tartary, a name for the Crimea, is mentioned in William Makepeace Thackeray's *The Rose and the Ring* (1855).

[187](#) This was not true.

188 Of a story Fowler was writing.

[189](#) i.e., supernumerary characters.

[190](#) Spencer Curtis Brown had helped Lewis to see that Geoffrey Bles had not given him a fair share of profits from his books. Lewis's royalties had risen since Curtis Brown Ltd became his literary agent.

[191](#) i.e. *George MacDonald: An Anthology*.

[192](#) At the beginning of *SBJ*, ch. 4, Lewis quoted the opening five lines of George Herbert's 'The Collar' from *The Temple*.

[193](#) Austin Farrer's article, 'The Queen of Sciences', appeared in *The Twentieth Century*, CLVII, no. 940 (June 1955), pp. 489–94.

[194](#) Henri Estienne, *Les Prémices* (1594), Bk. 4, epigram 4: 'Si jeunesse savait; si vieillesse pouvait': 'If youth knew; if age could.'

[195](#) Herbert Palmer, *The Ride from Hell: A Poem-Sequence of the Times for Three Voices* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1958).

[196](#) St François de Sales , *Introduction to the Devout Life*, trans. Michael Day (1609; London: Dent, 1961), Part III, ch. 9: ‘On Gentleness towards Ourselves’.

[197](#) Samuel Johnson, *Lives of the English Poets*, ed. George Birkbeck Hill, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), vol. I, 'Milton', p. 157.

[198](#) Gibb wrote to Joy Gresham about the corrections, but her reply has not survived.

[199](#) In her letter of 15 June 1955 Gebbert said: ‘You asked about the Tycoon’s mastery of English. Well, wonder of wonders, he put his first sentence together last month. It happened one morning as the two of us were playing in the garden (looking for snails). There was a clicking at the front gate and the Tycoon looked up, glanced at me and shouted “Man with wa-wa!” He was referring to the Monday delivery of bottled water, but how he knew it was the water-man I’ll never know, as he didn’t see him—just heard the clicking of the gate. At any rate, it’s been his first and last sentence in a month, but still and all, a good start, wouldn’t you say?’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 273).

[200](#) *ibid.*: 'I would like to find me a quiet planet peopled strictly by INTELLIGENCE (not necessarily human), and where there are no aches or pains or financial worries.'

[201](#) Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I, v, 266–7: ‘There are more things in heaven and earth,
Horatio,/Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.’

[202](#) Gebbert said in her letter of 15 June 1955: ‘Our American magazine TIME, in the issue for May 2, 1955, has a fine photo of you and an article about “his recently published inaugural lecture at Cambridge.” Has it been published in this country? If so, I must have a copy for my Lewis shelf. The article in TIME tells us that your subject matter was that “between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance stands history’s Great Divide” (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 273).

[203](#) *The Comedy of Dante Alighieri the Florentine, Cantica II: Purgatory <Il Purgatorio>*, trans. Dorothy L. Sayers (London: Penguin, 1955). *The Comedy of Dante Alighieri the Florentine: Cantica I: Hell <L'Inferno>* had been published by Penguin in 1949. Sayers' translation of Dante was completed by Barbara Reynolds and published as *The Comedy of Dante Alighieri the Florentine, Cantica III: Paradise <Il Paradiso>*, trans. Dorothy L. Sayers and Barbara Reynolds (1962).

[204](#) Calderon (Pedro Calderón de la Barca) (1600–81), the Spanish dramatist, wrote a number of plays, the best known of which is *El Alcalde de Zalamea* (c. 1643).

[205](#) *The Song of Roland: Done into English, in the Original Measure*, by Charles Scott Moncrieff (London: Chapman & Hall, 1919).

[206](#) *The High History of the Holy Grail*, trans. Sebastian Evans (London: Temple Classics, 1898).

[207](#) i.e., 'Edmund Spenser, 1552–99' in *Major British Writers*, vol. I.

[208](#) William Law, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (1728).

[209](#) *The Owl and the Nightingale* (c. 1210), 687–8. The words mean that when things have come to the worst they must needs mend.

[210](#) This essay, 'C. S. Lewis and the Problem of Modern Man', appeared in Japanese translation in *Sophia*, 6, no. 1 (Spring 1957), pp. 58–72. Quotations here are taken from the author's typescript in the Bodleian Library.

[211](#) Milward, 'C. S. Lewis and the Problem of Modern Man', p. 1: 'The name of C. S. Lewis is inextricably associated in the public mind with his masterpiece of human and diabolical psychology, the "Screwtape Letters"...He has himself encouraged this association by undersigning his name on the title-pages of his other books, as "the author of the Screwtape Letters."'

[212](#) *ibid.*: ‘The earlier allegory of “The Pilgrim’s Regress”...is an allegorical and universalised account of his own spiritual conversion and shows the gradual development of a modern mind from atheism to Christianity.’

[213](#) *ibid.*, p. 2: 'We must turn to the series of broadcast talks, which were delivered again during the war years as a means of raising the public morale in England.'

[214](#) *ibid.*: '[His] broadcast talks...have been collected in three small volumes, entitled "The Case for Christianity", "Christian Behaviour", and "Beyond Personality."'

[215](#) *ibid.*: 'Together they form an admirably lucid presentation of the Christian ideal of morality and religion.'

[216](#) *ibid.*: ‘Since the end of the war...we find that he has gradually moved away from the apologetic exposition of Christian teaching as a lay preacher in the modern world, to more literary and scholarly pursuits.’

[217](#) *ibid.*, p. 4: ‘The intrinsic tendency of...experimental science is to focus the attention on material objects, and away from the moral and religious end of Man...The increasing admiration which it fosters for merely human achievements, along with a certain adoration of the power of the human mind, causes inevitably a weakening of the religious instinct.’

[218](#) *ibid.*, p. 9: ‘The most specious of all these ideas...in the eyes of Lewis, is the Philosophy of Science, or Bergson’s theory of Emergence or Creative Evolution...Matter is discovered to possess some mysterious power inherent in itself.’ See the reference to Henri Bergson’s *Creative Evolution* (1911) in the letter to Owen Barfield of 19 August 1948 (*CL* II, pp. 870–2).

[219](#) *ibid.*, p. 13: 'It is significant that in the trilogy of novels Ransom, the hero, is a philologist, and that his friends in "That Hideous Strength" are also philologists, while his opponents are scientists or else the camp-followers of modern science.'

[220](#) *ibid.*, p. 16: ‘The purpose of man on earth...is to be seen against these ultimate issues: to choose the good, which is the way to heaven, and to avoid the evil, which is the road to hell...In pursuing this purpose, a man is following that fundamental instinct of his nature.’

[221](#) *ibid.*, p. 18: ‘If...a man is to achieve his purpose in life, he must not only follow his “sweet desire”, but also strongly act against his selfish desire which would set up self against God... This is what Lewis, in “The Problem of Pain”, terms “the tribulational system”, which is shunned by our human nature, but blessed by God as the divinely appointed means of our redemption.’

[222](#) *ibid.*, p. 19: ‘Thus we are enabled to enter heaven, and so to become more human than we ever succeeded in being on earth, in virtue of our union with Christ, Who alone is perfect Man, fully personal in His human nature, and in Whose nature our imperfect nature is to be perfected.’

[223](#) 'God forbid!'

[224](#) Milward, 'C. S. Lewis and the Problem of Modern Man', p. 19: 'We realise our collective nature in human society; since union with Christ is not just an affair of the individual, but associates him with his fellow-Christians in the Church.'

[225](#) Martin Buber, *Ich und Du* (1923), translated as *I and Thou* by Ronald Gregor Smith (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937).

[226](#) Cf. the Nicene Creed: 'We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate...'

227 *The Magician's Nephew.*

[228](#) *Of Till We Have Faces.*

[229](#) Plautus (254–184 BC), *Mostellaria*, I, iii, 273: ‘Mulier recte olet, ubi nihil olet’: ‘A woman smells right when nothing smells.’

[230](#) Reviewing *The Magician's Nephew* in *The Spectator*, 195 (8 July 1955), p. 52, Amabel Williams-Ellis said: 'The present reviewer cannot swallow Aslan, the *deus ex machina* of all his fairy tales. This personage is a highly moral and decorative lion who not only talks, admonishes and prophesies, but also sings. Surely, Mr. Lewis should, all along, have had the courage of his convictions, and given Aslan the shape as well as the nature and function of an archangel.' Sayers wrote in a letter, 'Chronicles of Narnia', in *The Spectator*, 195 (22 July 1955), p. 123: 'May I say...that the Lion Aslan in Professor C. S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia* has most emphatically *not* the "nature and functions" of an archangel, and for that reason has not been given the form of one? In these tales of the Absolutely Elsewhere, Aslan is shown as creating the worlds (*The Magician's Nephew*), slain and risen again for the redemption of sin (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*), incarnate as a Talking Beast among Talking Beasts (*passim*), and obedient to the laws he has made for his own creation (*The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, p. 146). His august Archetype—higher than the angels and "made a little lower" than they—is thus readily identified as the "Lion of the Tribe of Judah." Apart from a certain disturbance of the natural hierarchies occasioned by the presence in the story of actual human beings, Professor Lewis's theology and pneumatology are as accurate and logical here as in his other writings. To introduce the historical "form" of the Incarnate into a work of pure fantasy would for various reasons, be unsuitable. Whether, on the other hand, a Talking Beast should be credited with the power of song is a matter for the aesthetics of Fairyland, where cats play the fiddle, horses have the gift of prophecy, and little pigs build houses and boil the pot for dinner. There would seem to be no very valid objection to it.'

[231](#) 'great translator'. The French poet Eustache Deschamps (1340–1415), a French contemporary of Chaucer, addressed a ballad to the English poet calling him 'grant translateur'—the medieval French for what would be in modern French 'grand traducteur'. Lewis has simply given feminine endings: *grante translateuse*.

[233](#) Fairy Hardcastle is the dreadful policewoman in *That Hideous Strength*. Pitter wrote of this: 'Mr Sayer & Lewis had asked their way of a neighbour of ours thus attired, who always did remind me of Fairy Hardcastle, though of course we must hope that no human being could come anywhere near that horror' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 132).

[234](#) In her note on this letter Pitter said: “‘Eggs of ambivalence’ refers to an epigram of mine on Lewis’s going to Cambridge—in his inaugural lecture he referred to himself as a Dinosaur, a rare survival.

Lewis appears, the Trojan Dinosaur,

Eggs of ambivalence distend his Maur.

What meant the Father who convey’d him in?

I wish I knew the mind of those grave Min.

‘The “ambivalence” suggests that under the guise of a harmless Professor...he had been smuggled in to blow some People out of the water. The second rhyme is more respectable than the first. “Min” for “men” is pure Essex, and I am fond of it: in that still half-barbarous county we (the women with grievances) attribute all that goes wrong to *The Min*—“Blast the Min”!’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fols. 132–3).

[235](#) John Earle, *Microcosmographie* (1628), 'Of A Patient Man': 'He trieth the sea after many shipwrecks, and beats still at that door which he never saw opened.'

[236](#) Louis MacNeice (1907–63), poet and critic, was born in Belfast, but lived in Carrickfergus, 1908–31, where his father was rector of the church. He was educated at Marlborough and Merton College, Oxford. Along with W. H. Auden, Stephen Spender and Cecil Day-Lewis, MacNeice formed the leading group of poets of the 1930s. His work, which is colloquial and ironic, includes *Blind Fireworks* (1930), *Poems* (1935), *The Earth Compels* (1938), *Springboard* (1940) and *Visitations* (1957).

[237](#) Terza rima is the poetic measure adopted by Dante in the *Divine Comedy*. It consists of lines of five iambic feet with an extra syllable, in sets of three lines, the middle line of each rhyming with the first and third lines of the next set. For instance, the rhyme scheme is aba bcb cdc ded (and so forth) for as long as the poet wishes to continue. Lewis thought MacNeice was abusing it in his *Autumn Sequel* (1954).

[238](#) Luigi Alamanni (1495–1556), author of *La Coltivazione* (Paris, 1546) and *Opere Toscane* (Lyons, 1532).

[239](#) Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503–42), poet, was educated at St John's College, Cambridge, and held various diplomatic posts with Henry VIII. Because he was closely associated with Anne Boleyn before the King married her, he suffered imprisonment, but not death. Lewis wrote about Wyatt's poems in *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, Bk. II, ch. 2, pp. 223–30.

[240](#) 'closer to prose'.

[241](#) Lewis gives an example of Alamanni's influence on Thomas Wyatt in *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, Bk. II, ch. 2, p. 226.

[242](#) Andrew Marvell, 'The Definition of Love' (1681), 1–4: 'My love is of a birth as rare/As 'tis for object strange and high:/It was begotten by Despair/Upon Impossibility.'

[243](#) James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, ed. George Birkbeck Hill, 6 vols. (1934), Saturday 3 April 1773, vol. II, p. 210: ‘Sir, Dr. Goldsmith would no more have asked me to write such a thing as that for him, than he would have asked me to feed him with a spoon, or to do any thing else that denoted his imbecility.’

[244](#) Barbara Reynolds said in Sayers, *Letters*, vol. IV, p. 252n: ‘Encouraged by...his admiring comment on *Introductory Papers on Dante*, D.L.S. asked if he would consider writing a preface to her second volume of lectures, *Further Papers on Dante*, which she was then planning.’

[245](#) In her letter of 8 August 1955, Sayers said: ‘About Pauline Baynes—yes, I did really mean bad drawing—of what is commonly called an “effeminate” kind, because it is boneless and shallow; just the opposite of, say, Blake’s bad drawing, which is lumpy and muscle-bound in a sort of caricature of virility...I can “take” Aslan, though I know some intelligent Christians who can’t—but I cannot “take” (for instance) the frontispiece to *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. It makes me uncomfortable, and if anybody were to call it blasphemous I couldn’t honestly disagree. I rather thought there might be some charitable motive lurking in the background—and that’s fine, so long as it doesn’t do positive harm’ (Sayers, *Letters*, vol. IV, p. 253).

[246](#) 'under seal'.

[247](#) Of Farrer's *Gownsmen's Gallows* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1957).

[248](#) 'prostitute', lit. 'girl of joy'.

[249](#) Farrer, *Gownsmen's Gallows*, ch. 19.

[250](#) Helena Petrovna Hahn Blavatsky (1831–91), Russian-born theosophist who in 1875 founded the Theosophical Society in New York. Her occult books include *Iris Unveiled* (1877).

[251](#) In a portion of Sayers' letter of 8 August 1955 not included in *Letters*, vol. IV, she said: 'Yes, I know that's what MacNeice and Co. are doing, but I think they are overdoing it. If you deform a structure beyond a certain point you lose its peculiar virtues without adequate compensation.'

[252](#) Giangiorgio Trissino (1478–1550), Italian poet, who wrote the epic, *Sofonisba* (1515).

[253](#) See note 245.

[254](#) William Shakespeare, *Henry IV Part 1* (1598), I, ii, 119–20: ‘What hole in hell were hot enough for him?’

[255](#) In a letter of 5 August 1955 Gebbert said: ‘Mother and I *are* trying to sell our home here in Beverly. It’s a costly one to keep up; also, we’re living in the midst of such great wealth. I should dislike the Tycoon trying to “keep up” with the neighboring children; to see and be around such luxury and not being able to have the same. It’s almost unbelievable, but youngsters around here own their own automobiles by the age of 16; are on private yachts week-ends and on European jaunts each summer. I want the Tycoon brought up in simple surroundings with the basic values respected. (Not, mind you, that I’m against week-end yachting and European jaunts—oh no! I would love for the Tycoon to have all that if I were certain he could still retain humility and not let the atmosphere do him harm.) We’re planning on moving far up North—near San Francisco’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 276).

[256](#) This was probably Frank Henry, brother of Vera Henry, who lived near Drogheda. He had a car and used to drive Warnie around during the latter's holidays in Eire. For his biography, see the letter to Jocelyn Gibb of 15 October 1958.

[257](#) An error for Friday.

[258](#) p.p.

[259](#) Charles Wayne Shumaker (1910–99) was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, on 8 February 1910 and took a BA from Harvard in 1931 and a Ph.D. in 1943. After teaching in a number of colleges, he was Associate Professor and then Professor of English Literature at the University of California, Berkeley, 1946–77. He is the author of *The Occult Sciences in the Renaissance* (1972) and *Unpremeditated Verse: Feeling and Perception in Paradise Lost* (1972). He died on 6 March 1999.

[260](#) This letter was first published in *The Listener*, LIV, no. 1385 (15 September 1955), p. 427, under the title 'Portrait of W. B. Yeats'.

[261](#) The two meetings are recounted in letters to his brother of 14 March 1921 and to Arthur Greeves of June 1921. See *CL* I, pp. 530–2, 564–5.

[262](#) St. John Ervine, 'Portrait of W. B. Yeats', *The Listener*, LIV, no. 1383 (1 September 1955), pp. 331–2.

[263](#) See the biography of Father Cyril Charlie Martindale SJ (1879–1963), a friend of Yeats, in *CL* I, p. 531n.

[264](#) Lewis was referring to his review of *The Works of Sir Thomas Malory*, ed. Eugène Vinaver (1947), entitled ‘The “Morte Darthur”’ and which appeared in *The Times Literary Supplement* (7 June 1947). In this review, reprinted in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*, Lewis said on p. 110: ‘We are not reading the work of an independent artist...Whatever he does Malory’s personal contribution to the total effect cannot be very great, though it may be very good. We should approach the book not as we approach Liverpool Cathedral, but as we approach Wells Cathedral. At Liverpool we see what a particular artist invented. At Wells we see something on which many generations laboured, which no man foresaw or intended as it now is, and which occupies a position half-way between the works of art and those of nature.’

[265](#) In Denis de Rougemont, *L'Amour et l'Occident* (1939), trans. Montgomery Belgion, published in Great Britain as *Passion and Society* (London: Faber & Faber, 1940), and in the United States as *Love in the Western World* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1940). An augmented edition of *Love in the Western World* was published by Princeton University Press in 1983 with a 53-page postscript by De Rougemont. On De Rougemont see *CL II*, p. 379.

[266](#) St Ignatius of Loyola (1491–1556), founder of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits).

[267](#) A photo of Lewis by Walter Stoneman which was printed on the cover of *Surprised by Joy*.

[268](#) Proofs of the American edition of *Surprised by Joy*, published on 1 February 1956.

[269](#) i.e., the book eventually to be titled *Till We Have Faces*.

[270](#) George Gilbert Aimé Murray (1866–1957), classical scholar, was born in Sydney, Australia, on 2 January 1866, the son of Sir Terence Aubrey Murray and Agnes (Edwards) Murray. Shortly after his father died in 1873 Gilbert's mother took him to live in England. He was educated at Merchant Taylors' School and St John's College, Oxford, where he took First Class honours in both Classical Moderations (1885) and *Literae Humaniores* (1888). Murray served as Professor of Greek at Glasgow University, 1889–99, returning to Oxford as Fellow of New College in 1905. He was Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, 1908–36. His publications include *Rise of the Greek Epic* (1907), *Four Stages of Greek Religion* (1912) and *Euripides and His Age* (1913). He died on 20 May 1957. See Gilbert Murray, *An Unfinished Autobiography: with Contributions by his Friends*, ed. Jean Smith and Arnold Joseph Toynbee (1960).

[271](#) The period immediately after the First World War when Lewis was going to Murray's lectures. See *CL* I, p. 426.

[272](#) 'good teacher' 'good enemy'. Murray was an agnostic.

[273](#) Gilbert Murray, *Are Our Pearls Real?*, Jubilee Addresses Delivered at the Fiftieth Annual General Meeting of the Classical Association held at University College, London, April 7th to 10th 1957 (London: John Murray, 1954).

[274](#) Gilbert Murray, *Religio Grammatici: The religion of a 'man of letters'* (London: Classical Studies, 1918).

[275](#) *The Aeneid of Virgil*, trans. C. Day-Lewis (London: Hogarth Press, 1952). The expression does not in fact appear in this translation.

[276](#) *The Transformations of Lucius: Otherwise known as The Golden Ass*, trans. Robert Graves (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1950).

[277](#) In the preface to William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads, With a Few Other Poems* (1798) Wordsworth praised 'the real language of men'. See *CL* II, p. 893n.

[278](#) In his *Res Gestae*, section 1, the Emperor Augustus explained that he had acted ‘res publica ne quid detrimenti caperet’: ‘in order that the republic should not suffer’.

[279](#) Edith Sitwell, *Sleeping Beauty* (1924).

[280](#) Carl Ferdinand Howard Henry (1913–2004) was born in New York and took his BA from Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, in 1938. After taking a Ph.D. from Boston University in 1949 he taught theology at a number of colleges and seminaries. Henry was the founder of the evangelical periodical, *Christianity Today*, which he edited, 1956–68. He wrote to ask if Lewis would contribute some articles to *Christianity Today*.

[281](#) i.e., the 'book about private prayers for the laity' mentioned in the letter to Don Giovanni Calabria of 5 January 1953.

[282](#) I. O. Evans, *Olympic Runner: A Story of the Great Days of Ancient Greece* (London; New York, Hutchinson, 1955).

[283](#) William Golding, *The Inheritors* (1955).

[284](#) Mrs Janet Wise was living with her husband at The Residency, Mukalla, Hadhramaut (part of the Eastern Aden Protectorate of Arab Sultanates) when she wrote to Lewis. When this letter was published in *The Canadian C. S. Lewis Journal*, no. 53 (Winter 1986), pp. 1–3, Mrs Wise said of it: ‘I wrote to [Lewis] having been much disturbed by some letters in the *Airmail Times*...showing the (now widespread) disbelief in the authority of the Bible and, worse still, the Gospels. It appeared that the unforgivable sin to these clerics was to be a FUNDAMENTALIST! I regarded myself, and still do, as an *intelligent* Fundamentalist and wished to have some list of modern books on theology to try to find out how on earth they came to their disbeliefs. I had plenty of time in those days—and needed only a list and a bookseller to write to. You may be interested in the letter [Lewis] wrote me—as usual, courteous, painstaking and immensely interesting.’

[285](#) In 1 Samuel 16–1 Kings 2; 1 Chronicles 2–29.

[286](#) John Calvin, *Sermons on the Book of Job* (1574), 'Second Sermon on First Chapter of Job'.

[287](#) i.e. the headmaster of Malvern College, Donald Lindsay.

[288](#) This is the only known reference to Lewis having been threatened by a possible cancer.

[289](#) In the *Book of Common Prayer*. One of the supplications in the Litany is: ‘By thine Agony and bloody Sweat; by thy Cross and Passion; by thy precious Death and Burial; by thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost—Good Lord, deliver us.’

[290](#) See **Barbara Reynolds** in the Biographical Appendix.

[291](#) In 'Memories of C. S. Lewis in Cambridge', *The Chesterton Review*, XVII, nos. 3, 4 (August/November 1991), p. 381, Reynolds recalled the evening when Lewis came to a discussion at her house in Cambridge: 'The subject that evening was "Dante and the English Reader." It was an informal occasion, just a few friends gathered round the fire in my book-lined sitting-room. The Professor of Italian, E. R. Vincent, was present. So too was another of my colleagues, Father Kenelm Foster, o.p., a specialist in Dante studies. As I later wrote to Dorothy Sayers, "Lewis contributed a great deal of wisdom and *bonhomie*." I remember that he considered that Italians tended to misunderstand Dante. The reason for this, he suggested, was that Dante's language is nearer in meaning and association to mediaeval Latin than to modern Italian, "but of course you'd never get an Italian to agree." He suggested that a veil of classicism had descended in the intervening centuries which blurred the impact of Dante's poetry for modern Italian readers.'

[292](#) A mistake for November.

[293](#) 'Dante's Staius', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*, p. 101.

[294](#) *ibid.*, pp. 101–2.

[295](#) The correspondence with Dunbar is treated at length in Dr Andrew Cuneo's unpublished doctoral thesis, 'Selected Literary Letters of C. S. Lewis' (2001) (Bodleian Library: MS. D.Phil. c. 16354).

[296](#) See **Nan Dunbar** in the Biographical Appendix.

[297](#) The passage Lewis and Dunbar were concerned with in Statius, *Thebaid*, II, 230–235, reads as follows: ‘ibant insignes vultuque habituque verendo/candida purpureum fusae super ora pudorem/deiectaeque genas; tacite subit ille supremus/virginitatis amor, primaeque modestia culpae/confundit vultus; tunc ora rignantur honestis/imbribus, et teneros lacrimae iuvere parentes’: ‘Distinguished, they went, with their expression and clothing showing due reverence, with red-tinged modesty (*pudorem*) covering over their fair faces, the eyes cast down; that last love of their maidenhood insinuates itself quietly, and their modesty at this initial offence (*culpae*) spreads over their features; then their faces are wet with an honoured torrent, and these tears delight their tender parents.’

[298](#) Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Bk. I, 478.

[299](#) *ibid.*, Bk. I, 483. The complete line reads: 'illa velut crimen taedas exosa iugales': 'She [Daphne], hating the wedding torches, as if they were a matter for reproach.'

[300](#) Euripides, *Andromache*, 223. The full phrase is: 'εἴ τί σε σφάλλοι Κύπρις' : 'If Cypris (Aphrodite) ever tripped you in any way...'

[301](#) Virgil, *Aeneid*, IV, 15–17: ‘si mihi non animo fixum immotumque sederet/ne cui me vinclo vellem sociare iugali,/postquam primus amor deceptam morte fefellit...’: ‘If this were not planted fixed and immoveable in my mind: that I should not want to ally myself to anyone in a conjugal bond, after my first love proved vain to me, cheated by death...’

[302](#) *ibid.*, 172: 'coniugium vocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam': 'Marriage she calls it; by that name she covers over her offence.'

[303](#) Statius, *Thebaid*, II, 255. The full passage, starting at the end of line 253, is as follows: ‘hic more parentum/Iasides, thalamis ubi casta adolesceret aetas,/virgineas libare comas primosque solebant/excusare toros’: ‘Here, following the custom of their parents, the daughters of Iasus, when the age of innocence had progressed to the age for marriage, were accustomed to dedicate their locks of their hair as maidens and ask to be excused from (*excusare*) a first marriage.’ Dunbar would probably prefer that the meaning of *excusare* would be something as follows: ‘... and make excuses [to Minerva] for the first marriage’.

[304](#) i.e., Pallas Athena or Minerva.

[305](#) Statius, *Thebaid*, VIII, 625–8: ‘ecce ego, thalamus, nec si pax alta maneret, tractarem sensu—pudet heu!—conubia vidi/nocte, soror; sponsum unde mihi sopor attulit amens/vix notum visu?’ ‘Behold! I who should not be dealing with marriage, even if a deep peace persisted—for shame alas!—I saw nuptials (*conubia*) in the night, sister: from where did demented sleep carry to me my betrothed (*sponsum*) barely known by sight?’

[306](#) *ibid.*, 645: ‘...tenuit saevus pudor’: ‘fierce shame held her’.

[307](#) Dunbar would not budge from her position. She wrote by return of post challenging the three examples Lewis had used to support Statius's views. According to Cuneo, 'Selected Literary Letters of C. S. Lewis', p. 81: 'In example one, she considered a feeling of *culpa* to be a standard reaction of a female Greek about to be married, not a development in ethical sensibility. In example two, *excusare* refers to a ritual act expected of brides who wished to excuse themselves to a goddess of virginity. Lastly, in example three, Ismene relates her dream, according to Dunbar, because she is ashamed of its sexual content; this explains the violent reaction of Atys's mother.'

[308](#) i.e., *locus communis*: ‘commonplace’.

[309](#) Statius, *Thebaid*, II, 256.

[310](#) *ibid.*, VIII, 626.

[311](#) *ibid.*

[312](#) *A Latin Dictionary Founded on Andrews' edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary*, rev. and enlarged edn by C. T. Lewis and C. Short (1879).

[313](#) Statius, *Thebaid*, VIII, 627.

[314](#) Euripides, *Electra*, 481: lit. 'bed' or 'marriage-bed'.

[315](#) 'from where', referring to Statius, *Thebaid* 8.627, i.e. to Statius, *Thebaid*, VIII, 627.

[316](#) Lavinia is the daughter of Latinus, king of the Latini. She subsequently becomes wife to Aeneas.

[317](#) Alan E. Boucher, Programme Assistant, School Broadcasting Department of the BBC, wrote to Lewis on 17 October 1955: 'I wonder whether you would consider giving a twenty minute talk for Sixth Forms...under the heading "The Christian Writer in the Modern World".'

[318](#) 'On Science Fiction', read to the Cambridge University English Club on 24 November 1955, and published in *Of This and Other Worlds*.

[319](#) In 'Selected Literary Letters of C. S. Lewis', p. 83, Cuneo explained that Dunbar, unsatisfied with Lewis's letter of 17 October 1955, 'writes back immediately, trying to press her point about the meaning of *culpa* one last time. She senses his concern that *conubia* might well mean marriage, not spouse, for spouse is accounted for by *sponsum*. Why would Statius repeat himself, she asked Lewis? The words refer to two different nouns. Nevertheless, she admits that Virgil uses a word for marriage, *conjugium*, to mean spouse—and several times (cf. *Aeneid* 7:423, 433 and 11:270). Dunbar concludes by emphasizing how Ismene's shame over the dream can best be connected to the belief that the dream was of sexual union; after all the verb *attulit* indicates that Atys was in very close proximity to Ismene.'

[320](#) Statius, *Thebaid*, II, 233.

[321](#) *ibid.*, VIII, 626.

[322](#) Homer, *Odyssey*, VI, 66.

[323](#) *ibid.*: ‘She was ashamed to speak (of marriage)’.

[324](#) Virgil, *Aeneid*, III, 1–3: ‘Postquam res Asiae Priamique evertere gentem/immeritam visum superis, ceciditque superbum/Ilium et omnis humo fumat Neptunia Troia...’: ‘After it seemed best to the gods to overturn the kingdoms of Asia and the undeserving race of Priam, and proud Ilium fell, and all of Neptune’s Troy lay smouldering on the ground...’

[325](#) Statius, *Thebaid*, VIII, 627.

[326](#) 'the act of love'.

[327](#) 'special pleading'.

[328](#) i.e. Lewis and Short, *Latin Dictionary*.

[329](#) 'you have won': the dying words of Julian the Apostate addressed to 'The Galilean'.

[330](#) Laurence John Krieg (1945–) was born in Caracas, Venezuela on 11 December 1945, the first of three children of William Laurence Krieg and Laura Philinda (Campbell) Krieg. His father was a member of the United States Foreign Service, and the family moved from Caracas in 1946 to Bethesda, Maryland, in 1948, and to Guatemala in 1951. They returned to Bethesda in 1954, moving to Chile in 1958, where Laurence attended the Grange School. After the Krieg family returned again to Bethesda in 1961 he attended high school, graduating in 1964. He took his BA in 1968 from the College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio. Inducted into the army the same year, in 1969 he served in Vietnam. On his discharge in 1970 he entered the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor where he specialized in linguistics, taking a MA in 1974 and a Ph.D. in 1980. He took a job with Computer Sciences, Inc., in 1981, before moving to MDSI Manufacturing Data Systems, Inc., and joined the faculty of Washtenaw Community College, Ann Arbor, in 1983. In 2000 he became chairman of Internet Professional Department. Despite the technical turn of his career, he still considers Lewis his mentor and guide.

[331](#) Lewis was confused. Rabadash fights the panthers in *The Horse and His Boy*, ch. 13.

[332](#) James 1:20.

[333](#) There had been much speculation in the media as to whether Princess Margaret, the sister of Queen Elizabeth II, would marry divorced Group Captain Peter Townsend. On 31 October 1955 the Princess announced that she would not marry him.

[334](#) Cuneo, 'Selected Literary Letters of C. S. Lewis', p. 85.

[335](#) Dunbar had written to Lewis to say she had found a word in Justin Martyr, the Apologist (c. AD 100–65) referring to a point in his lecture.

[336](#) Lewis had earlier put these words into Screwtape's mouth in *The Screwtape Letters*, Letter 21, p. 81: 'Men are not angered by mere misfortune but by misfortune conceived as injury.' He was unable to find these words in the works of Hobbes.

[337](#) The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives ‘Injury, as distinct from harm, may raise sudden anger’ from Bishop Joseph Butler’s *Analogy of Religion* (1736). Dunbar attempted to find a similar specimen from Hobbes and her searches may have resulted in what appears of Hobbes in *Studies in Words*.

[338](#) Lewis was referring to his conversation with Greeves in September about the possibility of marrying Joy Gresham at a register office.

[339](#) On the Waverley novels of Sir Walter Scott see *CL* II, p. 898n.

[340](#) 1 Corinthians 15:47.

[341](#) Psalm 116:7.

[342](#) Gebbert, her son, and her mother had now moved to Carmel, California, and they gave their address as Box 3966, Carmel, California, USA.

[343](#) Shelburne's review of *Surprised by Joy*.

[344](#) St François de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life* (1619), Part III, ch. 10, 'Avoidance of Over-Eagerness and Anxiety', p. 110: 'It is one thing to manage our affairs with care, another to do so with worry, over-eagerness and anxiety. The angels take care of our salvation with diligence yet without any worry, anxiety or over-eagerness, for care and diligence accord with their charity while worry, anxiety and over-eagerness would not accord with their happiness; since care and diligence may be accompanied by peace and tranquillity but not worry, anxiety and even less over-eagerness. Carry out all your duties...with care and diligence, for this is God's will, but as far as possible avoid being worried or anxious about them...All eagerness disturbs our judgement, and hinders us from doing well the work we are eager to do.'

[345](#) See Sayers's review of *Surprised by Joy* in *Time and Tide*, 36 (1 October 1955), pp. 1263–4.

[346](#) In 1967 Banner and his wife Josefina de Vasconcellos (1904–2005), through associations with Pelham House Approved School in West Cumbria, helped found Outpost Emmaus, an centre offering outdoor activities for disadvantaged boys at Beckstones in the Duddon valley.

[347](#) Banner had done a drawing of (Sir) Christopher John Chataway (1931–), champion athlete, and later a television news broadcaster and Conservative politician. Chataway was educated at Sherborne School and went up to Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1950. His studies in Politics, Philosophy and Economics were overshadowed by his success as a long-distance runner. In the Helsinki Olympics of 1952, he took fifth place in the 5,000 metres, and gained second place in the same event at the 1954 European Athletics Championship. Two weeks later he set a world record time of 13 minutes 51.6 seconds in the event. Chataway took his BA in 1954, and in 1955 became a newscaster for Independent Television News. He worked for the current affairs department of BBC TV, 1956–9. Long interested in politics, he was elected as a Conservative to the London County Council in 1958. When the Conservatives were defeated in 1974 he went into business, becoming managing director of Orion Bank and a director of British Electrical Traction Ltd. He was knighted in 1995.

[348](#) H. C. Chang, *Allegory and Courtesy in Spenser: A Chinese View* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1955).

[349](#) 'daemon'.

[350](#) The equivalent of Oxford's Senior Common Room, the room in which dons have informal meals.

[351](#) Chad Walsh, *Behold the Glory* (New York: Harper, 1956). See the letter to Walsh of 28 February 1956.

[352](#) i.e. God's plan for the Catholic Church. God is named 'The Landlord' in *The Pilgrim's Regress*.

[353](#) Of Surprised by Joy.

[354](#) George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss* (1860); *Adam Bede* (1859).

[355](#) Dunbar was delighted that literature, and not just antiquity, had become part of her conversation with Lewis. According to Cuneo, 'Selected Literary Letters of C. S. Lewis', p. 87, 'After dipping into Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and finding "all sorts of splendid things", she expressed her regret to him that there was no more time to read such books.'

[356](#) Horace, *Epistles*, I, xiv, 43: 'Optat ephippia bos piger, optat arare caballus': 'The lazy ox wishes for horse-trappings, and the steed wishes to plough.'

[357](#) Jean Froissart (c. 1337–c. 1410), French chronicler and poet, whose *Chronicles* Lewis wrote about in *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 153–6.

[358](#) Snorri Sturluson (1178–1241), Icelandic historian. See *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 117.

[359](#) Jean de Joinville (c. 1224–1317), the author of the *Chronicle of St Louis*, is mentioned in *The Discarded Image*, ch. 7, pp. 177–8.

[360](#) See Robert Lindsay of Pitscottie (1532–92) in *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 117–18.

[361](#) Lewis was referring to Gavin Douglas (1475–1522), best known for his Scots translation of the *Aeneid* which was entitled the *XIII Bukes of the Eneados* (1553). Dunbar told Lewis she would read it in the Christmas vacation, and she did.

[362](#) See **Muriel Bradbrook**, Cambridge lecturer in English Literature, in the Biographical Appendix.

[363](#) Gibb was planning a third edition of *The Abolition of Man*.

[364](#) On 8 December 1955 Gibb wrote to Lewis: 'We have had a letter from your German publisher, Jacob Hegner, who is anxious to do an omnibus volume of your children's stories, unillustrated. I have a sort of idea you may not be very keen on that... "Irish Digest" have asked us if we will permit them to print a condensed portion of *Surprised by Joy* in one of their issues' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 126).

[365](#) Those Inklings who had met her thought Pauline Baynes very beautiful.

[366](#) A reference to Genesis 9:20–3: ‘Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father: and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father’s nakedness.’ The Sin of Ham is traditionally understood to be the fact that Ham did not cover his father’s nakedness.

The passage published in *The Irish Digest*, LV, no. 3 (January 1956) was entitled ‘My Father’s Eloquent Mistake’. It consisted of the last few pages of *SBJ*, ch. 2, beginning with the paragraph that opened: ‘In attempting to give an account of our home life...’

[367](#) Blamires's trilogy consisted of *The Devil's Hunting-grounds*, *Cold War in Hell*, and most recently *Blessing Unbounded: A Vision* (London: Longmans, 1955). Michael Longman, the publisher, had appealed to Lewis for help in advertising *Blessing Unbounded*, saying in a letter to Blamires of 9 December 1955: 'We...plan to advertise in the *Church Times*, using, with permission, what C. S. Lewis kindly wrote about the book when I sent him a copy. He thought this last one is definitely the best of the three and he admires "the way in which he leads us time after time up the garden path; each time you think you're in for a well-worn type of ridicule directed against a too-familiar target, and each time you find that the purpose is quite different." He also says "The landscape is well done too and very economically. Annot was a dangerous figure to introduce, but I think he has succeeded. So, I hope, will the book" and he asks me to pass on his cordial good wishes. Incidentally he remarked that he thought that any opinion of his about the book, which we quoted in the advertisement, would put off as many people as it might attract, but I think in the present circumstances (even if it is true) that risk is justified' (letter in possession of Harry Blamires).

[368](#) *The Wanderer*, 50, 'sorrow is renewed' (when the exile wakes after dreaming of home).

[369](#) Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembrokes Arcadia* (1590) Bk. III, Ch. 27: 'Hope is the fawning traitor of the minde.'

[370](#) Continuing their correspondence about fantasy and imagination, Sayers said in a letter of 21 December 1955: 'I think the trouble is that the unscrupulous old ruffian inside one who does the actual writing doesn't care tuppence where he gets his raw material from. Fantasy, memory, observation, odds and ends of reading, and sheer inventions are all grist to his mill, and he mixes everything up together regardless. The critics can't sort it out...so they just explain it all by "fantasy", and make up imaginary biography to explain the bits they can't account for' (Sayers, *Letters*, vol. IV, p. 260).

[371](#) J. R. R. Tolkien, 'On Fairy-Stories' in *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*.

[372](#) Anthony Trollope, *An Autobiography* (1883).

[373](#) 'as such'.

[374](#) 'man the toolmaker'. The phrase comes from Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*.

[375](#) Sayers asked in her letter of 21 December 1955: 'Is the Imagination (in our sense) going to become, eventually, the exclusive appanage of those who study Humanities? I hear disquieting reports from the new towns and the dormitory suburbs' (Sayers, *Letters*, vol. IV, p. 262).

[376](#) Émile Coué (1857–1926), a French doctor who popularized a system of psychotherapy based on autosuggestion.

[377](#) Prisoner of war.

[378](#) Matthew 25:34–46.

[379](#) Romans 8:2–4: ‘For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.’

[380](#) St Augustine, *Homilies on the First Epistle of John*, Homily VII, Section 8: 'dilige et quod vis fac'.

[381](#) Psalm 36:11: 'O let not the foot of pride come against me: and let not the hand of the ungodly cast me down.'

[382](#) Psalms 36:8: 'They shall be satisfied with the plentousness of thy house: and thou shalt give them drink of thy pleasures, as out of the river.'

[383](#) i.e., the Blessed Virgin Mary.

[384](#) 'in my opinion'.

[385](#) 'a refuge for ignorance'.

[386](#) Wisdom of Solomon, 16:20: 'Instead of these things you gave your people food of angels, and without their toil you supplied them from heaven with bread ready to eat, providing every pleasure and suited to every taste.'

[387](#) Ronald Knox, *Enthusiasm* (1950).

[388](#) Rougemont, *L'Amour et l'Occident*, Book VII, ch. 5: 'Love ceases to be a demon only when he ceases to be a god.'

[389](#) St Ignatius of Loyola was a handsome young knight who loved romances of chivalry. He was badly wounded in battle and, while recovering, the only thing he could find to read were the lives of the saints. He began to see their lives as chivalric, and it brought him joy and peace. His conversion reached its climax when, as he said in his autobiography, he saw 'an image of Our Lady with the Holy Child Jesus'.

[390](#) *Amadis of Gaul* is a Spanish or Portuguese romance that has come down to us in the form given it by Garcia de Montalvo in the second half of the fifteenth century, and printed early in the sixteenth century.

[391](#) In Evelyn Underhill's *The Golden Sequence* (1933), Gebbert had come across the words of the 'Veni, Sancte Spiritus', or 'Golden Sequence'. This is the sequence for the Mass for Pentecost, and is regarded as one of the greatest masterpieces of sacred Latin poetry. It is not known who wrote it, but it is commonly thought it was the work of Stephen Langton (d. 1228), Archbishop of Canterbury. It consists of thirty-one lines, those Gebbert asked Lewis to translate being: 'Sine tuo numine/nihil est in homine/nihil est innoxium' which is translated in the Catholic Missal in the Mass for Pentecost: 'Where you are not, man has naught,/Nothing good in deed or thought,/Nothing free from taint of ill.'

[392](#) Deuteronomy 33:27.

[393](#) Lewis was referring to the literary critic, Sir William Empson (1906–84), whose *The Structure of Complex Words* (1951) is his *tour de force* on how attentiveness to double meanings can enrich our appreciation of literature and language.

[394](#) It is not known how Sayers described them.

[395](#) Gundreda Forrest (1888–1978), Lewis’s cousin, was the daughter of Sir William Quartus Ewart (1844–1919) and Lady Ewart (1849–1929) who lived at Glenmachan, Strandtown. They were described in *SBJ*, ch. 3, as ‘Cousin Quartus’ and ‘Cousin Mary’, and Gundreda Ewart as ‘the most beautiful woman I have ever seen’. See **The Ewart Family** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* I, pp. 990–2.

[396](#) 'Mountbracken' is the name given the Ewart family home, Glenmachan, in *SBJ*, ch. 3.

[397](#) Lewis described Gundreda's sister, Kelso 'Kelsie' Ewart (1888–1966) as follows: 'K. was more like a Valkyrie...with her father's profile. There was in her face something of the delicate fierceness of a thoroughbred horse' (ibid.). Kelsie never married and lived near Glenmachan all her life.

[398](#) Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I, ii, 187: 'I shall not look upon his like again.' Samuel Graham was the Ewart family coachman and Palmer the family butler. Warnie Lewis described both of them in LP III: 258.

[399](#) William Adrian John Forrest (1929–) and Rachel Primrose Forrest (1928–) are the children of Gundreda and her husband John Vincent Forrest (1873–1953). In 1949 Primrose Forrest married Oscar William James Henderson, formerly of the Irish Guards.

1 Jill Freud's dog.

² See **Muriel Bradbrook** in the Biographical Appendix.

3 Bradbrook had invited Lewis to Girton College to meet Nan Dunbar.

⁴ Thomas Malory, *Le Morte Darthur*, Bx. XIX, Ch. 8: 'Unless I'm sick or in prison.'

5 While this letter is in Lewis's hand, the reference number was added by Warnie.

⁶ In his reply of 26 January 1956, Gibb said: 'I am sorry to say it is too late to make either of these corrections in the second printing but we have placed them ready for the third' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 129). The first of these errors was corrected in the third impression of the book, and in *SBJ*, ch. 14, p. 166 the passage reads: 'George Herbert...was a man who seemed to me to excel all the authors I had ever read in conveying the very quality of life as we actually live it from moment to moment; but the wretched fellow, instead of doing it all directly, insisted on mediating it through what I would still have called "the Christian mythology".' The second error occurred in ch. 15, and the sentence in question read: 'I was by now too experienced in literary criticism to regard the Gospels as myths...And yet the very matter which they set down in their artless, historical fashion—those narrow, unattractive Jews, too blind to the mythical wealth of the Pagan world around them—was precisely the matter of the great myths.' This has never been corrected to 'so blind' in either the English or the American editions of the book.

7 Henrik Ibsen, *Peer Gynt* (1867).

[8](#) Old English.

[9](#) William Langland (c. 1330–c. 1386), *Piers Plowman*.

10 *Behold the Glory*. See the letter to Chad Walsh of 3 December 1955.

[11](#) Cuneo, 'Selected Literary Letters of C. S. Lewis', p. 89.

[12](#) *ibid.*

¹³ Lewis refers here to the first half of Aristotle's poem, 'Ode to Arete', quoted by Diogenes Laertius (first half of the third century AD) in his life of that philosopher. The following translation is from Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, trans. R. D. Hicks (London; New York: Heinemann, Putnam, 1925), vol. 1, p. 451: 'O Virtue, toilsome for the generation of mortals to achieve, the fairest prize that life can win, for thy beauty, O virgin, it were a doom glorious in Hellas even to die and to endure fierce, untiring labours. Such courage dost thou implant in the mind, imperishable, better than gold, dearer than parents or soft-eyed sleep. For thy sake Heracles, son of Zeus, and the sons of Leda endured much in the tasks whereby they pursued thy might. And yearning after thee came Achilles and Ajax to the house of Hades, and for the sake of thy dear form the nursling of Atarneus too was bereft of the light of the sun. Therefore shall his deeds be sung, and the Muses, and the daughters of Memory, shall make him immortal, exalting the majesty of Zeus, guardian of strangers, and the grace of lasting strangers.' The 'nursling of Atarneus' is Hermias, tyrant of Atarneus, in whose honour the poem was written, said to have given in marriage to Aristotle either a daughter or a niece. Shortly afterwards Lewis published a translation of the 'Ode to Arete' as 'After Aristotle: 'Ἀρετὰ πολύμοχθε' in *The Oxford Magazine*, LXXIV (23 February 1956), p. 296. It is reprinted in *CP*.

[14](#) Presumably the Greek playwright Menander (344/3–292/1 BC). If so the reference is odd since, as a comic writer, one would not normally have thought him emblematic of the best that Greece had to offer by way of poetry. The praise of Aristotle's poem may also be said to be over-florid, but Lewis's translation suggests that he valued the poet highly.

[15](#) Translation by Nan Dunbar from Cuneo, 'Selected Literary Letters of C. S. Lewis', p. 89.

¹⁶ In a letter of 26 January 1956 Gibb said: 'I enclose copies of the Swedish edition of *The Problem of Pain* and the German edition of *The Great Divorce*. Doesn't "Die Grosse Scheidung" sound much better than the English title? I wonder what you will think of its illustrations: Herr Seewald certainly has ideas' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 129). The Swedish edition of *The Problem of Pain* was called *Lidandets Problem*, trans. Aslög Davidson (Lund: Gleerup, 1955). The German edition of *The Great Divorce* was *Die Grosse Scheidung, oder Zwischen Himmel und Hölle* [*The Great Divorce, or: Between Heaven and Hell*], trans. Helmut Kuhn, with illustrations by Richard Seewald (Köln: Hegner, 1955). Lewis and Gibb admired Seewald's illustrations to *Die Grosse Scheidung* because of his ability to convey so much with a few simple lines. Besides this, he fulfilled Lewis's desire to make everything in heaven real and solid and the damned blurred and indistinct. To illustrate ch. 8, in which a female Ghost tries to hide from two of the Solid People, two naked males are portrayed as massive, solid and radiant, while the landscape is seen through the body of the naked Ghost.

17 Krieg wrote this letter from 5208 Glenwood Road, Bethesda, Maryland.

[18](#) In a letter to Lewis of 23 January 1956, Krieg said: 'I've been helping Laurence with his Sunday School lessons recently, and I'm sorry to say that while they aren't too easy, they are extremely dull. As you know, my son is genuinely interested in Christianity, and willing to work at learning about it. So it pains me to see his very real interest being nearly killed by uninspired lessons. Surely it would be possible to write a series of lessons more clearly and catchingly!'

[19](#) Lewis was remembering, not *The Problem of Pain*, but *Mere Christianity*, Bk. III, ch. 6, pp. 108–9: ‘No feeling can be relied on to last in its full intensity, or even to last at all. Knowledge can last, principles can last, habits can last; but feelings come and go.’

[20](#) Pitter said of this letter: ‘This was apropos of some “quotation” I suspected Lewis of having invented, and I instanced Sir W. Scott’s fondness for false authorities in his picturesque sub-headings’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 136). At the top of Sir Walter’s Scott’s *The Antiquary* (1816), ch. 9, is a poem said to be quoted from ‘Old Play’.

[21](#) The scholarly enterprise of hunting for sources.

²² Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, February 1767, vol. II, pp. 41–2: ‘At Sir Joshua Reynolds’s, where a circle of Johnson’s friends was collected round him to hear his account of this memorable conversation [with King George III], Dr. Joseph Warton...was very active in pressing him to mention the particulars...He told them, “I found his Majesty wished I should talk, and I made it my business to talk. I find it does a man good to be talked to by his Sovereign. In the first place, a man cannot be in a passion–.” Here some question interrupted him, which is to be regretted, as he certainly would have pointed out and illustrated many circumstances of advantage, from being in a situation, where the powers of the mind are at once excited to vigorous exertion, and tempered by reverential awe.’

[23](#) Pitter wrote about this: 'I had been received by the Queen (in October of this year) to present her Gold Medal for Poetry, and I felt that it did me good. One plugs away for half a century, getting little praise and less cash, then suddenly one is summoned to the Palace and given a medal. All is now well: if the highest in the land approves one, we can do without those in between. Besides, it was an Adventure: and to crown all, as I left the Queen, there outside the drawing-room door stood *Albert Schweitzer*, waiting to be received in his turn!' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 136).

[24](#) Mary Norton, *The Borrowers* (1952); *The Borrowers Afield* (1955).

[25](#) Katharine Mary Briggs, *Hobberdy Dick* (1955).

[26](#) Margaret Kennedy, *The Feast* (1950).

27 As defined in *Surprised by Joy*.

[28](#) See the letter to Van Deusen of 16 December 1955.

[29](#) See Lewis's treatment of Psalms 19 and 36 in *Reflections on the Psalms* (London: Bles, 1958; Fount, 1998).

[30](#) Psalm 19:6.

[31](#) There was a review of *Surprised by Joy* in *Time*, LXVII, no. 6 (6 February 1956), p. 54, entitled 'The Reluctant Convert'. Accompanying the review is a photo of Lewis in his Cambridge rooms lighting his pipe. While the photograph was ascribed to Barrington Brown, it was actually the work of John S. Murray. There is a copy of it in Hooper, *Through Joy and Beyond*, p. 131.

[32](#) *Surprised by Joy* is dedicated to Griffiths.

33 The main character in Rider Haggard's *She*.

[34](#) Lewis was probably referring to Griffiths' *Christian Ashram: Essays towards a Christian–Hindu Dialogue* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1966), published in the USA as *Christ in India* (1966).

[35](#) Sir Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, 3 vols (London: Cambridge University Press, 1951–4).

[36](#) Jules Verne, *Around the World in Eighty Days* (1873).

[37](#) Jules Verne, *A Journey to the Centre of the Earth* (1864).

[38](#) Charles Fort (1874–1932), author of *The Book of the Damned* (1919). Fort's main purpose in this book seems to have been to embarrass scientists by collecting stories on 'the borderland between fact and fantasy' which science could not explain or explain away. He had no interest in the accuracy of his data, nor was he concerned to make sense of his collection of weird stories.

[40](#) Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 134.

[41](#) *ibid.*, fol. 136.

[42](#) *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold* (London: Bles, 1956), ch. 12, p. 141.

[43](#) *ibid.*, ch. 13, pp. 155, 162.

[44](#) *ibid.*, p. 155; ch. 17, p. 206.

[45](#) *ibid.*, ch. 16, p. 193: 'My aim was to build up more and more that strength, hard and joyless, which had come to me when I heard the god's sentence; by learning, fighting, and labouring, to drive all the woman out of me.'

[46](#) *ibid.*, ch. 17, p. 206.

[47](#) *ibid.*, ch. 19, p. 229.

[48](#) *ibid.*, pp. 233–4: ‘Would Bardia–? then back came my loneliness...’

[49](#) *ibid.*, ch. 20, p. 242: ‘Sometimes I would say to myself, “[Ansit] has lain in his bed, and that’s bad. She has borne his children, and that’s worse. But, has she ever crouched beside him in the ambush? Ever ridden knee to knee with him in the charge?...She’s his toy, his recreation, his leisure, his solace. I’m in his man’s life.’”

[50](#) Peggy Waldman, the wife of Milton Waldman, often read books for Geoffrey Bles.

[51](#) Lewis probably had in mind the sculptures from the Temple of Aphaia on the island of Aegina. See John Boardman, *Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period* (1978), especially the statue of Athena from the west pediment, fig. 206. 1.

[52](#) The Rev. Edward Frederick Yorke (1906–97) was born on 14 November 1906, and educated at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, taking his BA in 1928. He read Theology at the Bible Churchman’s College, Bristol, and was ordained in 1932. After serving in a number of parishes in the Bristol Diocese, he was attached to the Diocese of London from 1950–66. During his time in London he was Home Secretary to the Church Missions to the Jews. He was Rector of Denver, Diocese of Ely, 1966–71. He retired to Poole in 1971 and died there on 19 May 1997.

[53](#) In a letter of 2 February 1956 Yorke asked if Lewis would write a preface to his booklet, *One Church, One Faith, One Lord: A Study in the Relationship between the Old and the New Israel* (London: Church Missions to the Jews, 1956).

[54](#) In a letter to Lewis of 12 February 1956 Krieg said: 'I'm one at heart with Laurence's stern and rockbound teacher, Miss Wood, and between the two of us we keep the poor boy thoroughly occupied with his studies...As for reading the Bible, Laurence does so. He is far more familiar with the early history of the Hebrews than I am...and enjoys asking me such embarrassing questions as "How many soldiers did Gideon have?" or "What was the name of the king in Elijah's day?"...Miss Wood is having her pupils learn the books of the Bible, the names of the apostles, and some of the more complicated details of Hebrew history...What I was complaining about was bad writing in Sunday School lessons. Laurence's lessons are ill-phrased and spotty. One question was: In which kingdom did Isaiah live? Question two was: Why do you suppose Isaiah's vision in the Temple led him to cry, "Woe is me, for I am undone?"'

[55](#) Isaiah 6:5.

[56](#) The obituary of the Rev. Ivor Erskine St Clair Ramsay (1902–56), Dean of King’s College, Cambridge, appeared in *The Times* (23 January 1956), p. 6. Ramsay’s body was discovered near the walls of the college chapel on 22 January, and while the coroner recorded a verdict (*The Times*, 26 January, p. 5) of suicide ‘while the balance of his mind was disturbed and that he died from injuries compatible with a fall from a height’, Lewis was not convinced.

[57](#) Warnie's second book, *The Sunset of the Splendid Century: The Life and Times of Louis Auguste de Bourbon Duc du Maine, 1670–1736* (1955).

[58](#) Gibb had asked Lewis to produce a blurb describing the new novel, but it was the piece accompanying the letter to Gibb of 29 February 1956 which was finally used on the jacket of *Till We Have Faces*.

[59](#) 'English taste'.

[60](#) 'The *Bacchae* of Euripides' was produced by the Triennial Production of Greek Play Committee and performed in Greek in the Arts Theatre, Cambridge, on 21, 22, 24 and 25 February 1956. The music for the Chorus was written by Peter Tranchell of Gonville and Caius College. See the review of *Bacchae* by B. R. O'G. Anderson in *The Cambridge Review*, LXXVII, no. 1878 (25 February 1956), pp. 389–90. Tranchell's production of Sophocles' *Antigone* is mentioned in the letter to Cecil Harwood of 3 February 1959.

[61](#) Reviews of the American edition of *Surprised by Joy*.

[62](#) The passage that gives the best overview of Walsh's *Behold the Glory* appears in ch. 15, pp. 123–4: 'I see now that I was making God too small. I believe today, more profoundly than I did then, that the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed, as summaries of Christian belief, are true in the same way that the multiplication table is true...The fact that the Creeds are true is no reason for assuming that God can and will work only through those who believe them to be true. God roams; He breaks; He enters; He is not above using an alias; He chooses and stations His witnesses where He will.'

[63](#) *ibid.*, ch. 8, pp. 60–6: ‘A good politician is like a good physician. The physician is a trained and dedicated man, who fights a running battle against disease, accident, and death. He does not create the human body, nor is he the inventor of that amazing well of life within, but he coöperates with what is already there...The politician is like the physician in his perceptive cooperation with the health that already exists...As I observe the majors, governors, assemblymen, Congressmen, Cabinet members and other politicians about me, I do not admire all of them. Some seem seriously mistaken in their ideas; some are stupid; a few have the evil of demons in their hearts. All this is merely to say that they are human beings, and vary as other mortals do. But in the majority of politicians I now discern, to a varying degree, an awareness of the hovering ideal, and some recognition of the city of man as a groping toward the City of God.’

[64](#) *ibid.*, Appendix, pp. 155–6: ‘It is difficult for me to name the literary influences that have gone into the shaping of my book...But one name is of seminal importance: C. S. Lewis. His preface to the third edition of *The Pilgrim’s Regress*...was the key I needed to make sense of those moments when the door opens and as quickly closes. He treats the same matter elsewhere, in the final chapter of *The Problem of Pain*...Most recently, and in much greater detail, he has carried his exploration further with *Surprised by Joy*...Other books that come to mind are: Martin Buber, *I and Thou*...Charles Williams, *The Figure of Beatrice*...*Descent into Hell*...*All Hallows’ Eve*...All these books, in their very different fashions, illuminate “the Way of the Affirmation of Images”, and that is the subject of the present work.’ ‘The Way of the Affirmation of Images’ is one of the themes of Charles Williams’s *The Figure of Beatrice: A Study in Dante* (1943).

[65](#) Ronald Syme, *I, Mungo Park* (London: Burke, 1951).

66 'meaning'.

[67](#) Austin Tappan Wright (1883–1931), *Islandia* (New York; Toronto: Farrar & Rinehart, 1941).

[68](#) Alastair Fowler, 'C. S. Lewis: Supervisor', *The Yale Review*, 91, no. 4 (October 2003), p. 76: 'Lewis always remembered to pass on new scholarship...We also exchanged less academic books: he made me aware of David Lindsay's *Voyage to Arcturus*, and I responded, less successfully, with Austin Wright's *Islandia*.'

[69](#) Wystan Hugh Auden (1907–73), poet, was educated at Christ Church, Oxford. By 1956, when nominated for the position of Oxford's Professor of Poetry, he had published many volumes of poetry, including *The Orators* (1932), *The Dog Beneath the Skin* (1935), *The Age of Anxiety* (1947) and *The Shield of Achilles* (1955). See Humphrey Carpenter, *W. H. Auden: A Biography* (1981).

[70](#) Enid Starkie (1897–1970), Fellow of Somerville College, Oxford, persuaded Auden to become a candidate for the position of Professor of Poetry in 1956. Lewis would have supported Nevill Coghill for the position, but Starkie persuaded Coghill to support Auden. The other candidates were Harold Nicolson and the Shakespeare scholar, G. Wilson Knight. Auden won the election and served as Professor of Poetry from 1956 to 1961. See Carpenter, *W. H. Auden: A Biography*, pp. 380–2.

[71](#) 'The Rest of Time', mentioned in the letter to Fowler of 22 February 1955.

[72](#) Lewis delivered the annual toast and read an oration, 'Sir Walter Scott', to the Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club at their annual meeting on 2 March 1956. It is published in *SLE*.

[73](#) *Till We Have Faces*, Part II, ch. 4, p. 305.

[74](#) Gibb replied on 2 March 1956: 'I prefer BAREFACE to TILL WE HAVE FACES. The new suggestion does not roll off the tongue very well, or rather off the lips' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 138).

[75](#) This was the blurb eventually used on the jacket of *Till We Have Faces*.

[76](#) Sir John Garnett Banks (1889–1974) was born and brought up in Edinburgh. He became a member of Edinburgh town council in 1936 and served it as treasurer, 1950–3, and Lord Provost, 1954–7.

[77](#) Gibb wrote to Lewis on 2 March 1956: 'John Green, who has been a very close friend since we were up at Cambridge and who is now Director of Talks at the B.B.C., wants us to find a fellow of about 40...to come in as a layman on the religious talks side of the B.B.C. He must have broad views and be the sort of chap who could design programmes as well as cope with the various sects from Roman Catholicism to Wee Frees. Do you happen to know of anyone' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 148).

[78](#) He was referring to Jonathan Francis Goodridge, whose biography appears in *CL* II, p. 936n.

[79](#) Barbara Halpern, a producer at the North American Service of the BBC, wrote to Lewis on 1 March 1956: 'I am writing to invite you to record a talk forming part of the BBC contribution to an American series called "Your Living Thoughts"...This series aims at putting on the air short statements, by men and women well known in their own walk of life, on what they have learnt from life and what they would like to pass on...These statements are only 3 1/2 to four minutes long.'

[80](#) Dunbar reopened the discussion on Statius by giving Lewis references in *favour* of his position. She had discovered two places in the *Thebaid* where Statius used *conubia* to mean 'spouse' rather than 'marriage'. Lewis was, therefore, correct in reading the word poetically to mean 'spouse' (Cuneo, 'Selected Literary Letters of C. S. Lewis', p. 90).

[81](#) This did not satisfy Dunbar, who replied that Lewis—being older—was likely to meet Statius in Paradise—or Purgatory—before she could get there. By that time Lewis would have argued Statius into a corner (*ibid.*, p. 91).

82 i.e., Dunbar, on the Scottish coast to the east of Edinburgh.

[83](#) *Mere Christianity*, Bk. III, ch. 2, ‘The “Cardinal Virtues”’, p. 78: ‘In the days when the second Cardinal virtue was christened “Temperance”, it...referred not specially to drink, but to all pleasures; and it meant not abstaining, but going the right length and no further. It is a mistake to think that Christians ought all to be tee-totallers; Mohammedanism, not Christianity, is the teetotal religion. Of course it may be the duty of a particular Christian, or of any Christian, at a particular time, to abstain from strong drink, either because he is the sort of man who cannot drink at all without drinking too much, or because he is with people who are inclined to drunkenness and must not encourage them by drinking himself. But the whole point is that he is abstaining, for a good reason, from something which he does not condemn and which he likes to see other people enjoying.’

84 John 2:1–11.

[85](#) Matthew 11:19: 'The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.'

[86](#) This photo is mentioned in the letter to Mary Willis Shelburne of 8 February 1956.

[87](#) Revelation 2:26–8.

[88](#) MacDonald, *Diary of an Old Soul*, August, vii, 1.

[89](#) Sir Walter Scott. See the letter to Shelburne of 4 March 1956.

[90](#) See the letter of 4 March 1956.

[91](#) On the pages of what was to be *Till We Have Faces*.

92 i.e., between upright type on the left and italics on the right.

[93](#) Lewis included here a drawing of an open book. His intention was that 'Bareface' would serve as the running headline on the left side of the left-hand pages, while 'A Myth Retold' would appear on the right side of all right-hand pages. This plan was used in the published work.

94 Geoffrey Bles were planning a new impression of *The Great Divorce*.

⁹⁵ Canon Roger Lloyd, 'Love and Charity and Shakespeare', *The Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 74, no. 7 (16 February 1956), p. 6: 'I worked out the formula, "Christian love is the steady and settled disposition of the will to seek the good of the beloved" and expanded that ad lib. But I was never completely happy about it. It was not until I read Dr C. S. Lewis's [*English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*] that I saw a new light. In it Dr Lewis discourses on the meaning of Shakespeare's sonnets, treating them as a kind of record of Shakespeare's own progress from love to charity. At one time it seemed to be no more than lust, at another possessiveness, an insistence on exclusive rights. But he ended in a region "in which love abandons all claims and flows into charity: after that it makes little odds what the root was like." Thus the sonnets chart the course which leads from "extreme particularity to the highest universality", and in that Shakespeare is "not so much our best as our only love poet".'

96 i.e. Walsh's *Nellie and her Flying Crocodile*.

[97](#) Luke 17:20.

[98](#) Barfield had sent Lewis the manuscript of his *Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry* (London: Faber and Faber, 1957).

[99](#) 'Notes Toward a Study in Idolatry'.

[100](#) Barfield, *Saving the Appearances*, ch. 2, p. 19: 'It is...not necessary to maintain that collectivity is the only test for distinguishing between a representation and a collective representation (though, to creatures for whom insanity is round the corner, it is often likely to be the crucial one).'

[101](#) *ibid.*, p. 20. The sentence in question was changed to: ‘The familiar world—that is, the world which is apprehended, not through instruments and inference, but simply—is for the most part dependent upon the percipient.’

[102](#) *ibid.*: ‘I may say...that I “hear a thrush singing”. But in strict truth all that I ever merely “hear”—all that I ever hear simply by virtue of having ears—is sound. When I “hear a thrush singing”, I am hearing, not with my ears alone, but with all sort of other things like mental habits, memory, imagination, feeling and...will.’

[103](#) *ibid.*, ch. 3, pp. 22–3: ‘It is almost impossible to keep in mind, that there is no such thing as unfelt solidity.’ The point Lewis made is found in a footnote on p. 23.

[104](#) In Chapter 3, 'Figuration and Thinking', Barfield distinguishes between 'Figuration', 'Alpha-thinking' and 'Beta-thinking'. (1) The physical world, a world made up of particles, is independent of our sensations and perception. However, when our sense-organs are related to the particles in some way the 'percipient mind' recognizes these particles as 'things'. Barfield calls this 'figuration'. (2) When we think *about* these 'things' or 'representations', and speculate about their relations *with each other*, this is 'alpha-thinking'. (3) When we think about these 'things' and 'representations' and their relation *to our own minds*, this is 'beta-thinking'.

[105](#) 'real things'.

[106](#) Barfield, *Saving the Appearances*, ch. 6, p. 41: ‘Hitherto we have spoken of *representations* and of the *unrepresented*; but we have said nothing of any “represented”. This raises the question whether *representation* was the proper word to use at all, or whether it is merely misleading. If an appearance can properly be called a representation, it will certainly be a representation *of* something.’

[107](#) *ibid.*, p. 45: ‘They were the only sort of atoms which alpha-thinking about participated phenomena *could* present to itself for the purpose of speculation.’

[108](#) 'hypotheses'.

[109](#) Barfield, *Saving the Appearances*, ch. 7, pp. 50–1: ‘When the ordinary man hears that the Church told Galileo that he might teach Copernicanism as a hypothesis which saved all the celestial phenomena satisfactorily, but “not as being the truth”, he laughs. But this was really how Ptolemaic astronomy had been taught!’

[110](#) Barfield attached a note to the end of ch. 7 which begins: ‘The reader who wishes to verify, or investigate further, the argument of this Chapter, should consult P. Duhem’s *Le Système du Monde, Histoire des doctrines cosmologiques de Platon à Copernic*. Paris 1913–17.’

[111](#) Barfield, *Saving the Appearances*, ch. 7, pp. 55–6: ‘Not only did [Francis Bacon] maintain that knowledge was to be valued for the *power* it gives man over nature; but he practically made success in this aim a part of his definition of knowledge. The key words he uses to distinguish the knowledge he exalts from the knowledge pursued by the Schoolmen are “fruit” and “operation”. In other words, not only “science” but knowledge itself, that is, the only knowledge that is not mere trifling, is, for him—technology.’

[112](#) *ibid.*, pp. 56–7: ‘We could not limit the new and more hypothetical way of thinking to nuclear, or recent physics. The laws of gravity, for example, and of inertia, must go the same way as the electrons, as far as any ultimate validity is concerned. Secondly, you cannot really isolate one science from others in this way, nor is it the practice to do so. One has only to think of the effects of physical theory, treated as fact, on the sciences of medicine and astronomy as exemplified in radiotherapy and astrophysics. Thirdly, and most important of all for my purposes, the hypotheses do in fact, get into the collective representations; many of them are, and others soon may be, implicit in the very “nature” which surrounds us.’

[113](#) *ibid.*, ch. 10, pp. 65–6: ‘By treating the phenomena of nature as objects wholly extrinsic to man, with an origin and evolution of their own independent of man’s evolution and origin, and then by endeavouring to deal with these objects as astronomy deals with the celestial appearances or physics with the particles, nineteenth-century science, and nineteenth-century speculation, succeeded in imprinting on the minds and imaginations of men their picture of an evolution of idols.’

[114](#) *ibid.*, ch. 11, p. 74: 'Exceptional men did sometimes distinguish between the literal and the symbolical use of words and images before the scientific revolution. On the question of hell, for instance, John Scotus Erigena distinguished in the seventh century between the symbol and the symbolized.'

[115](#) *ibid.*, p. 77: 'We turn our eyes on the sea—and at once we are aware that we are looking at one of the four elements, of which all things on earth are composed...Earth, Water, Air and Fire are part of ourselves, and we of them.'

[116](#) 'which part?' *ibid.*, ch. 13, p. 85. At Lewis's prompting Barfield supplied a complete reference to St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part I, Question 34, Article 3.

[117](#) *ibid.*, p. 86: ‘One may reflect...on the frequent appearances made by Grammar and the other liberal arts, as persons, in medieval allegory, and how easily and naturally they mingle there with the strange figure of the Goddess Natura—at once so like and so unlike the Persephone of Greek mythology.’

[118](#) The Wife of Bath is one of the characters in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*.

[119](#) 'pure actuality'.

[120](#) Barfield, *Saving the Appearances*, ch. 13, p. 88: ‘The being of God is wholly actual, and is at the same time His existence; but, for creatures, it is only their *existence* which actualizes—actualizes not their own being, but the being of God, in which they participate.’

[121](#) Because Lewis dismissed 'Historicism', as explained in his essay of that name, Barfield probably was thinking of him in ch. 14, p. 92: 'We need not pay too much attention to those historians who cautiously refuse to detect any process in history, because it is difficult to divide into periods, or because the periods are difficult to date precisely...We should rather remind them that, if there is no process, there is in fact no such thing as history at all, so that they themselves must be regarded as mere chroniclers and antiquarians—a limitation which I cannot fancy they would relish.'

[122](#) In the typescript of ch. 19, Barfield probably quoted Sir Philip Sidney, who said in *The Defence of Poetry* (1595), 24: 'Poesie...is an Art of Imitation.' However, he changed his mind; the published text reads: 'For Scaliger...the poet is one who (quoting *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, Bk. III, ch. 1, p. 302) "maketh a new Nature and so maketh himself as it were a new God"' (p. 128).

[123](#) Barfield, *Saving the Appearances*, ch. 19, pp. 131–2: ‘In the case of nature there is no danger of my fancying that she exists to express my personality. I know in that case that what is meant, when I say she is my representation, is, that I stand, whether I like it or not, in (I do not love the expression, but I can find no defter one in English) a “directionally creator” relation to her.’

[124](#) Possibly a fanciful Society for the Protection of Adjectives.

[125](#) Barfield, *Saving the Appearances*, ch. 20, p. 140: 'Cancer is a process of generation, and once we admit the concept of the potentially phenomenal, we must see that generation is not a transition from not-being to being, but a transition from potential to phenomenal existence.'

[126](#) *ibid.*, ch. 25, pp. 184–5: ‘It will not be easy for the [Church] to accept the possibility that her charge has grown to need additional nourishment; or that revelation of the mystery of the kingdom was not turned off at the tap when the New Testament canon was closed, but is the work of an earth-time.’

[127](#) A play on 1 Corinthians 13:1.

[128](#) This letter follows in WHL immediately after that to Mrs Halvorson. It is possible that Julie was Mrs Halvorson's daughter.

[129](#) Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, Bk. II, ch. 7.

[130](#) *Behold the Glory.*

[131](#) See Lewis's essay 'First and Second Things' in *First and Second Things*, and reprinted in *EC*.

[132](#) i.e., the poet Kathleen Raine. See **Kathleen Raine** in the Biographical Appendix.

[133](#) See **Kathleen Raine** in the Biographical Appendix. Raine had been married since 1938 to the poet Charles Madge (1912–96), and Lewis presumably thought she preferred to be called by her married name.

[134](#) Kathleen Raine, *Collected Poems* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1956).

[135](#) 'roughness'.

[136](#) Frank Templeton Prince, *The Italian Element in Milton's Verse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954). The second chapter, 'Della Casa and the Heroic Sonnet', is devoted to the Italian poet, Giovanni Della Casa (1503–56).

[137](#) A Roman gladiator who fought with a net, trident and dagger.

[138](#) This poem is published in King, *C. S. Lewis, Poet*, pp. 295–6.

[139](#) *Till We Have Faces*, Part II, ch. 2, p. 281: ‘Then I looked at Ungit herself...The story was that, at the very beginning, she had pushed her way up out of the earth; a foretaste of, or an ambassador from, whatever things may live and work down there, one below the other, all the way down, under the dark and weight and heat.’

[140](#) Homer, *Iliad*, VI, 400.

141 i.e. from the island of Aegina.

[142](#) John Reginald Biggs (1909–88), who illustrated the cover of *Till We Have Faces*, was at this time head of the graphic design department at Brighton Polytechnic. See his biography in Alan Horne, *The Dictionary of 20th Century British Book Illustrators* (1994).

[143](#) 'limit' (Aphrodite, the statue).

[144](#) 'boundlessness' (Ungit, the stone).

145 The identity of the recipient of this letter remains unknown.

[146](#) John Milton, *Il Penseroso* (1645), 49–50: ‘And add to these retired Leisure,/That in trim gardens takes his pleasure.’

[147](#) William Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 2* (1600), III, i, 31: 'Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.'

[148](#) Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838–9).

[149](#) Dunbar had been attending Lewis's lectures on 'Some Difficult Words', and she questioned what Lewis had said about the word 'Nature'.

[150](#) Sappho, fragment 156: 'more golden than gold'. Lewis misremembered the Greek. See the letter of 23 April 1956.

[151](#) 'origin, nature, kind'.

[152](#) 'bring forth, grow'.

[153](#) *sensus obscenus*: 'indecent'.

[154](#) 'offspring'.

[155](#) Camilla was the legendary warrior maiden of early Italy. Her story is told by Virgil in *Aeneid*, Book 11. See also the letter to Nan Dunbar of 18 October 1963.

[156](#) The proverbially shrewish wife of Socrates.

[157](#) Powers of retribution and judgement.

[158](#) The personification of 'fault-finding'.

[159](#) A notably censorious Greek cynic philosopher of the fourth century BC.

[160](#) Translation by Nan Dunbar from Cuneo, 'Selected Literary Letters of C. S. Lewis', p. 92. The final line ('Per quam non licet esse negligentem') is a direct quotation of Catullus, Poem 10, 34. For the Greek phrase, see p. 1466, n. 141.

[161](#) Dunbar had invited him to a college dinner.

[162](#) *The Great Divorce: A Dream* (London: Bles, 1945), Preface, p. ix: 'His hero travelled into the past: and there, very properly, found raindrops that would pierce him like bullets...' The sentence also appears correctly in the 1997 Fount edition.

[163](#) Lewis was confused about the publication date of *The Great Divorce* and why ‘found raindrops’ changed from time to time. Gibb looked into the matter and sent this account of the book’s history in a letter of 25 April 1956: ‘Curiouser and curiouser. This is what happened. THE GREAT DIVORCE was all printed for publication in November 1945 and indeed the bibliographical note stated “First Published November 1945.” But it wasn’t. Probably the binder failed to keep to his promises and in fact publication took place on the 14th January 1946. So in reprints we have always had “First Published January 1946.”

‘So much for the apparent discrepancy in the date of publication. As to the shape of raindrops this is what we have: (1) Original edition (as in your bookshelf) “found”—as it should be. (2) Second printing (June 1946) “ound” (sic). The “f” had disappeared altogether. (3) Third printing (October 1952) exit “ound” and back comes “f” but in such a poor condition that it looks like an “r”...(4) Fourth printing (May 1956) Ounds and Rounds put to flight and at last the correct word is restored’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 166).

[164](#) See **Kathryn Stillwell** in the Biographical Appendix.

[165](#) The publishers, liking neither *Bareface* nor *Till We Have Faces* as a title, but having to choose between them, decided on the latter.

[166](#) in the street.

[167](#) In his letter of 25 April 1956 Gibb said: 'I wonder if you know of anyone who might take this one on? I gathered from a meeting of school inspectors and others in the educational world yesterday that there is a great need for a new translation of the [Old Testament] Prophets' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 165).

[168](#) In a letter from Philinda Krieg to Lewis of 21 April 1956 was a note from Laurence: ‘The part that I think shows facts of life best, is the part when the children wondered what would happen if they were killed in Narnia, but thought it would be better to die there than in a dull way in their own world. Whether they knew the Apostles’ Creed or not, I don’t know...When [our] pastor talked about the Apostles’ Creed, I only believed the part about life after death for a short time. But since I read the *Last Battle* I believe it all the time.’

[169](#) He was referring to the 'Note' about his reinterpretation of the Cupid and Psyche myth. Harcourt Brace published it at the end of their edition of *Till We Have Faces*. It did not appear in the English edition.

[170](#) Passepartout is a character in Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days*, and Nemo a character in *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* (1870).

[171](#) Pertinax is a character in Verne's short story, 'Le Mariage de Monsieur Anselme des Tilleuls' (1850s).

[172](#) In Samuel Butler's satirical novel, *Erewhon*, names are created by spelling words backwards, an example being 'Erewhon' itself which is (approximately) 'Nowhere' spelled backwards.

[173](#) This letter was first published in *Essays in Criticism*, VI (April 1956), p. 247, under the title 'De Descriptione Temporum'.

[174](#) Ralph Maud, 'C. S. Lewis's Inaugural', *Essays in Criticism*, V, no. 4 (October 1955), pp. 390–3. In his article Maud criticizes Lewis's inaugural lecture, '*De Descriptione Temporum*', as well as *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*. He maintains that in the latter work Lewis's treatment of the Latin orations of Joannes Rainoldus is typical of his 'relaxed expression of a personal and contradictory opinion: "But if we sit down to Rainoldus for a whole morning we shall be disappointed,"... "But if we sit down to Rainoldus for a whole morning"!—this urbane assurance is tantalizing, not dampening. One is not being domineered or distanced. Rather, Professor Lewis makes it seem fairly easy to contradict him' (p. 392).

[175](#) William Shakespeare, Sonnet 151, 1: 'Love is too young to know what conscience is.' The quotation appears on the title page of *Till We Have Faces*.

[176](#) *Till We Have Faces* is dedicated 'To Joy Davidman'.

177 Gebbert had decided to move to New York City.

[178](#) 'for the sake of argument'.

[179](#) Hebrews 11:1.

[180](#) St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part II, ii, Question 36, Article 1, ‘Whether Envy is a Kind of Sorrow?’, Objection 4: ‘Damascene (*De Fide Orthodoxa*, ii, 14) calls envy a species of sorrow, and says that “envy is sorrow for another’s good.”’

[181](#) Brother Lawrence, author of *The Practice of the Presence of God*.

[182](#) Matthew 6:10.

[183](#) 'naturally'.

[184](#) Matthew 23:37.

[185](#) McCallum had suggested 'Love is too Young' as a possible title for *Till We Have Faces*.

[186](#) *Of Surprised by Joy.*

[187](#) Farrer had asked Lewis to criticize her poem 'Summer's Term'. On receiving his comments, she revised the poem and attached it to his letter. The revised poem is reproduced here following the letter.

[188](#) *A Short Bible, Arranged by Austin Farrer, D. D.* (London: Collins, 1956).

[189](#) 'popular works'.

[190](#) John Crow (1904–69) was educated at Charterhouse and Worcester College, Oxford, where he took his BA in 1928. Crow distinguished himself as a lay theologian and he spent a good deal of time helping at the Wellington Mission in Walworth. He was declared unfit for service in the Second World War, and so he joined the staff of Wellington College. In 1945 he went to King's College, London, beginning his academic career at the age of forty-one as a temporary lecturer. It was seventeen years before he was promoted to Reader. He was, however, a man of wide-ranging erudition and a distinguished scholar in the field of Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. From 1968–9 Crow was Professor of English at the University of Pittsburgh.

[191](#) The American student Dabney Adams was spending a year at London University doing research on the literary theory underlying Lewis's work. Crow, her supervisor, sent a copy of her bibliography to Lewis for him to check for omissions. See Lewis's letter to Adams of 1 June 1956.

[192](#) Dabney Adams (later Hart) (1926–) was born in Nashville, Tennessee, and received her BA in English from Agnes Scott College, Decatur, Georgia, in 1948, her MA in English from Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, and her Ph.D. in English from the University of Wisconsin. She taught at Florida State University, the University of Wisconsin and at Georgia State University as associate professor of English until she retired in 1993. She is the author of *Through the Open Door: A New Look at C.S. Lewis* (1984).

[193](#) Masson, an American correspondent, said in his annotation to this letter: ‘The following letter from C. S. Lewis replies to the questions on a point of sexual ethics to which he refers in several of his books without saying anything very specific. It seemed to me that masturbation, being a very pressing concern for very many young people (if no others), should be dealt with more frankly. Probably since the time when this letter was written, masturbation, along with all other matters sexual, has been frequently dealt with from the Christian and every other point of view; but in those days, so far as I could find out, popular moralists either ignored the matter or said things that seemed silly’ (Wade Center).

[194](#) Charles Williams, *Descent into Hell* (1937).

[195](#) Nothing more is known of this unfinished story by Lewis.

196 Mrs Steed wrote from Canada.

[197](#) George MacDonald, *Unspoken Sermons*, 3 vols. (1867, 1885, 1889).

[198](#) George MacDonald, *Phantastes: A Faerie Romance* (1858); *Lilith: A Romance* (1895).

[199](#) George MacDonald, *The Lost Princess or, The Wise Woman* (1895).

[200](#) In Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Prospero is the usurped duke of Milan, and father of Miranda. On the island with Prospero and his daughter is the savage and deformed slave, Caliban.

[201](#) Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, I, ii, 350–1: ‘I had peopled else/This isle with Calibans.’

[202](#) Dunbar attended the same performance of the *Bacchae* that Lewis saw on 22 February 1956, and afterwards she lent him Euripides' *Bacchae*, ed. E. R. Dodds (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1944).

203 i.e. the Laws of England prevented him from sending her money.

[204](#) The proofs of *Till We Have Faces*.

205 Chang was teaching in Singapore at this time.

[206](#) i.e.. the quotation from Shakespeare which was to appear on the title page of *Till We Have Faces*.

[207](#) *Till We Have Faces*, Pt. II, ch. 4, p. 305: 'Till that word can be dug out of us, why should they hear the babble that we think we mean?'

[208](#) In a letter to Lewis of 11 June 1956 Gibb said: 'I have had a letter from the B.B.C. asking if you would be agreeable to a dramatized version of T.L.T.W. [*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*] to be put on Children's Hour. I had a long talk with the lady who deals with such matters...and explained that this was too general a question to which a definite answer could be given. We don't want to be in the position that they go and make a mess of it but on the other hand I expect you would be willing to consider the idea if you could first have a chance to talk with the man who would be writing the script. This is Lance Sieveking and they say they would not dream of even starting on the thing at all before or unless he had a word with you' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 179).

[209](#) John Milton, Sonnet VII, 'On Being Arrived at Twenty-Three Years of Age' (1645), 3.

[210](#) Luke 16:19–22.

[211](#) Thomas De Quincey, *Works*, vol. XI, ed. Julian North (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2003), 'Second Paper on Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts', p. 400.

[212](#) In April 1948 the House of Commons had voted to suspend capital punishment for five years, but this was overturned by the House of Lords. Lewis might have read an article, 'Total Abolition of Death Penalty', *The Times* (29 June 1956), pp. 3–4, in which it was announced that the House of Commons had again voted to suspend capital punishment for five years. A few days after this letter was written, it was announced in *The Times* (11 July 1956), p. 6, that the House of Lords had once more rejected abolition. Capital punishment was finally abolished in Britain in 1964 by the Labour government.

Notions prevalent by the middle of the twentieth century that the only legitimate motives for punishment were the desire to deter others by example and to mend the criminal had led Lewis to criticise what he called the 'humanitarian theory of punishment', first ventilated in *That Hideous Strength*: 'If it were even whispered that the NICE wanted powers to experiment on criminals, you'd have all the old women of both sexes up in arms and yapping about humanity. Call it re-education of the mal-adjusted, and you have them all slobbering with delight that the brutal era of retributive punishment has at last come to an end' (ch. 2, part I, p. 36). Lewis enlarged on his views in the essay 'The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment': 'According to the Humanitarian theory, to punish a man because he deserves it...is mere revenge...When this theory is combined, as frequently happens, with the belief that all crime is more or less pathological, the idea of mending tails off into that of healing or curing and punishment becomes therapeutic. Thus it appears at first sight that we have passed from the harsh and self-righteous notion of giving the wicked their deserts to the charitable and enlightened one of tending the psychologically sick...My contention is that this doctrine, merciful though it appears, really means that each one of us, from the moment he breaks the law, is deprived of the rights of a human being' (*EC*, pp. 698–9).

[213](#) i.e. being energetic and playful.

[214](#) David Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus*.

[215](#) Lewis attended Queen's Elizabeth II's garden party at Buckingham Palace on 12 July 1956.

[216](#) A reference to the royal garden party in Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), ch. 9, 'The Queen's Croquet Ground'.

[217](#) Absurd, as situations often are in the operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan.

[218](#) To the Harcourt Brace edition of *Till We Have Faces*.

[219](#) i.e., the 'Note' on Apuleius's version of the myth of Cupid and Psyche which is printed in the US edition.

[220](#) David Mathew (1902–75), Archbishop of Apamea in Bithynia, was the brother of Lewis's fellow Inkling, Fr Gervase Mathew (see his biography in *CG*). After serving in the First World War, David Mathew went up to Balliol College where he took his BA in 1923. Shortly afterwards he and his brother wrote *The Reformation and the Contemplative Life* (1934). Following his ordination in 1929 Mathew served in Cardiff, and he was Chaplain to Roman Catholics in the University of London, 1934–44. He was Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster, 1938–45, and while apostolic delegate to the British colonies of Africa, 1946–53, he was made Archbishop of Apamea. His numerous books include *Catholicism in England 1535–1935* (1936), as well as a number of novels and biographies.

[221](#) John Borlase Hamilton (b. 1905) was Lewis's first cousin on his mother's side. He was one of the sons of Augustus Warren Hamilton (1866–1945) and worked in his father's firm, Hamilton & McMaster, Marine Boilermakers and Engineers, Belfast.

222 A fishing harbour in Gweebarra Bay on the west coast of County Donegal.

[223](#) Cherrie Robbins, a distant cousin, was the daughter of Colonel Herbert E. Robbins and Kitty Robbins, sister of Lady Ewart. During the First World War Cherrie worked as a member of the Voluntary Aid Detachment at a military hospital in Oxford. She was now in Belfast. There are a number of references to her in *CL I*.

[224](#) Francis H. P. Knight was writing from 7 Goscote Place, Walsall, Staffordshire.

[225](#) Nicholas Camille Flammarion (1842–1925), *Uranie*, trans. Mary J. Serrano (New York: Cassell, c. 1896). The novel was translated as *Urania* by Augusta Rice Stetson (London: Chatto & Windus, 1891).

[226](#) Athanasius Kircher, *Iter Exstaticum Coelestre* (1656). See the reference to this work in *CL* II, p. 237.

[227](#) Christopher Derrick (1921–), Catholic author and journalist, was born on 12 June 1921, the son of Thomas Derrick and Katherine Helen (Sharratt) Derrick. He matriculated at Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1940 and began reading English with Lewis. He served in the Royal Air Force, 1940–5, but returned to Oxford in 1945 and took his BA in 1947. He has been literary adviser to several London publishers, and his many books include *The Moral and Social Teaching of the Church* (1964), *Church Authority and Intellectual Freedom* (1981), *C. S. Lewis and the Church of Rome* (1981) and *That Strange Divine Sea: Reflections on Being a Catholic* (1983).

[228](#) See the biography of the Rev. Frank Edward Brightman in *CL* I, p. 658n. Brightman, a distinguished ecclesiastical historian, was a Fellow of Magdalen, 1902–32.

[229](#) The National Institute of Co-ordinated Experiments in *That Hideous Strength* is a conspiracy which, disguised as a scientific, humanitarian institute, plans to take over England.

[230](#) 1 Kings 19:18: ‘Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal.’

F(rank) R(aymond) Leavis (1895–1978) was Cambridge born, bred and educated. He read English at Emmanuel College and was a probationary lecturer at Emmanuel, 1927–31. In 1932 he became Director of Studies in English and a Fellow. Appointed a college lecturer at Downing College in 1935, he established over the years an ‘English School’ that in some ways rivalled the official English Faculty, developing over time a new critical approach to literature that largely superseded the historical and narrative approach favoured by Lewis. Leavis was finally invited to join the English faculty board in 1954. He retired in 1962.

From 1932–53 Leavis was chief editor of *Scrutiny*, a periodical that expressed a belief in ‘a necessary relationship between the quality of the individual’s response to art and his general fitness for a humane existence’. Lewis attacked this ‘inordinate esteem of culture’ in his essay ‘Christianity and Culture’, published in *Theology*, XL (March 1940), p. 177, and reprinted in *Christian Reflections*. He later said in *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (1942), ch. 19: ‘It is not that [Dr Leavis] and I see different things when we look at *Paradise Lost*. He sees and hates the very same that I see and love. Hence the disagreement between us tends to escape from the realm of literary criticism. We differ not about the nature of Milton’s poetry, but about the nature of man, or even the nature of joy itself.’

[231](#) Don Camillo is a lovable Italian priest created by Giovanni Guareschi (1908–68). The stories of Don Camillo fill six volumes, and by this time Lewis had probably read *The Little World of Don Camillo* (1951) and *Don Camillo and the Prodigal Son* (1952). Three Don Camillo books had already been made into Italian films.

[232](#) The words are found in the hymn 'Through all the changing scenes of life', no. 502 in *The English Hymnal* (1906).

[233](#) Jean Racine, *Athalie* (1691), I, i, 65: 'I fear God...and I have no other fear.'

[234](#) Daniel Defoe set the adventures recorded in *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) in the Juan Fernández Islands off the west coast of South America.

[235](#) John 16:7.

[236](#) Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations* (1860–1), ch. 27.

237 p. p.

[238](#) Harcourt Brace planned to use the blurb Lewis sent to Jocelyn Gibb on 29 February 1956 on the jacket of their edition of *Till We Have Faces*, and McCallum wanted to know whether it should begin 'This interpretation of an old story' or 'This re-interpretation of an old story'.

[239](#) Presumably a contract for the Dutch translation of *Out of the Silent Planet*.

240 This was the home of Frank and Vera Henry.

[241](#) See Lewis's comments about Kuhn's *Encounter with Nothingness* in *CL* II, p. 999.

[242](#) See his comments on this book in the letter to Dom Bede Griffiths of 9 April 1950.

[243](#) Shelburne's cat, Fanda, had just died.

[244](#) See **Stephen Schofield** in the Biographical Appendix.

[245](#) *Forbidden Planet* (1956), story by Irving Block and Allen Adler, directed by Fred M. Wilcox.

[246](#) i.e., Evelyn Waugh.

[247](#) William Vaughan Wilkins, *Valley Beyond Time* (London: Cape, 1955). In this story an American senator, Purvis, finds his way into a wood that mysteriously appears on the coast of Pembrokeshire. An English boy, Midge, heir to a title and estate, and a duke's daughter, also find their way into the wood. The three live in this timeless land until the boy emerges at last, together with a lovely girl who is a princess of the country, to find that the outer world has moved on ten years. They find it impossible to adjust to the change.

[248](#) In his 'Notes on the Letters', Vanauken said of this letter: 'V had fallen into discouragement at the remoteness of God and had determined to reject Christ but found he could not do so' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 152b).

[249](#) Homer, *Odyssey*, V, 67: 'to whom, as well, activity on the seas was a concern'.

[250](#) His brother was Robert William Chapman (1881–1960), whose biography appears in *CL* II, p. 203n.

[251](#) John Alexander Chapman, *Critical Papers*, 4 vols. (1956–7).

[252](#) Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, First Part, p. 119.

[253](#) 'Atticus' was the pseudonymous author of a column in the *Sunday Times*. At this time 'Atticus' was Ian Fleming (1908–64), journalist and thriller writer best known for *Casino Royale* (1953), *Live and Let Die* (1954) and other novels featuring his hero, James Bond.

[254](#) The Swedish translation of *The Abolition of Man* was called *Människans Avskaffanden*, trans. Martin S. Allwood (Stockholm: Natur o. Kultur, 1957).

[255](#) Derrick sent Lewis a copy of his review of *Till We Have Faces* before it was published. The review appeared in *The Tablet*, 208, no. 6072 (6 October 1956), p. 278, and Derrick does not appear to have taken his former tutor's advice: 'Dr. Lewis always tells a good story and this is a splendid vehement one, full of stone and wind and spears in an old country, wet mist on the hills: in the centre, an unhappy ugly woman growing painfully above the eternal fight between the South and the North of the *Pilgrim's Regress*, between spirit and letter, heat and light, blood and judgement...The practical problem...is the arduous training and developing of flesh to "take it" and it doesn't help to talk as though "spiritual" meant frail and flimsy, or as though a lustful man lost heaven by being too uncontrollably strong and tough, or as though a human love... could ever be excessive. Delusions such as these lie behind the bitter complaint made by Psyche's sister (and by us from time to time) against the gods; and this story, which seems to sum up most of what Dr. Lewis has been telling us in one way or another for years, would be great if only because of the majesty and absoluteness of their reply.'

[256](#) The best definition of allegory, as understood by Lewis and Tolkien, is found in Lewis's *Allegory of Love*, ch. 3: 'It is of the very nature of thought and language to represent what is immaterial in picturable terms...You...start with an immaterial fact, such as the passions which you actually experience, and can then invent *visibilia* [visible things] to express them. If you are hesitating between an angry retort and a soft answer, you can express your state of mind by inventing a person called *Ira* [Anger] with a torch and letting her contend with another invented person called *Patientia* [Patience]. This is allegory.'

[257](#) Readers found so many ‘allegories’ in *The Lord of the Rings* that, on the publication of the second edition in 1966, Tolkien said in the foreword to *The Fellowship of the Ring*: ‘I cordially dislike allegory in all its manifestations, and always have done so since I grew old and wary enough to detect its presence. I much prefer history, true or feigned, with its varied applicability to the thought and experience of readers. I think that many confuse “applicability” with “allegory” but the one resides in the freedom of the reader, and the other in the purposed domination of the author’ (p. 7).

[258](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *A Book of Nonsense, by many authors* (London: Dent, 1956); *Robin Hood and His Merry Men* (London: Thames, 1956).

[259](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *The Land Beyond the North* (1958).

[260](#) When he had an occasion to be in Oxford overnight, Green nearly always stayed with a family friend, Mary Stanley-Smith, who lived at 12 Ship Street.

[261](#) The Trout Inn, one of Lewis's favourite places, is a few miles outside Oxford on Godstow Road and faces the Thames. It was built in the sixteenth century and by 1625 it was serving as an inn. The two-storey building was rebuilt in 1757. Its interior is very cosy with flagstone floors, beamed ceilings and log fires. The Inklings went there often in the summer when they could have their drinks outside by the river. The Trout has for some years been used entirely as a restaurant. A photo of Lewis with James Dundas-Grant, Colin Hardie, R. E. Havard and Peter Havard at the Trout is found in Hooper, *Through Joy and Beyond*, p. 86.

[262](#) See **John Lawlor** in the Biographical Appendix. One of Lewis's former pupils, Lawlor was Professor of English at the University of Keele, 1950–80.

[263](#) The list of the author's books contained in the Harcourt Brace edition of *Surprised by Joy* included *Broadcast Talks*, *Beyond Personality* and *Christian Behaviour* as well as *Mere Christianity*. The list was about to be repeated in *Till We Have Faces*, and Lewis felt it wrong to repeat the three books that make up *Mere Christianity*.

[264](#) This was *Surprised by Joy*.

[265](#) Bodle said of her letter to Lewis: 'I spoke of some of my own experiences in the English countryside when I spent many of my holidays wandering alone in silence with my bicycle carrying tent, sleeping-bag, food & water. I pitied the coach parties who couldn't hear or see the little, quiet things' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol. 250).

[266](#) In the same letter to Lewis, Bodle said: 'I also described problems in trying to make a deaf-almost blind girl aware that there was such a thing as communication between two people' (ibid.).

[267](#) This letter was taped into Canon Phillips's copy of *Surprised by Joy*.

[268](#) Lewis had probably asked Lawlor if he could supply him with a passage from the works of the educationalist, Thomas Arnold (1795–1842). It appears there was a copy of Thomas Arnold's *Sermons* (1930) at George Sayer's home.

[269](#) Lewis's lectures on medieval and Renaissance literature, so popular at Oxford, were largely ignored by the students at Cambridge.

[270](#) See **Derek Brewer** in the Biographical Appendix.

[271](#) An invitation to stay with Lawlor at Keele.

[272](#) Penthesilea, an Amazon queen, was one of the greatest warriors of the Trojan War. In Greek myth, fighting on the Trojan side, she was killed by Achilles. Mourning for her beauty, Achilles was mocked by Thersites, famous for his love of argument, and Achilles killed him in a rage.

[273](#) Bradamante is a maiden warrior in Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato*.

[274](#) Clorinda is the leader of the pagan forces in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*.

[275](#) Song of Songs 4:10.

[276](#) Arctinus of Miletus (c. 750 BC), *Aethiopsis*.

[277](#) Matthew 7:1.

[278](#) Martin Hooton (1901–74) took his BA from Queen’s College, Cambridge, in 1921. He taught at the Felsted Preparatory School, 1936–45, and at the senior school from 1945 until his retirement in 1961. In an explanatory note on his letters from Lewis, Hooton said: ‘I first met C. S. Lewis in 1956. I had written to thank him for the Narnia series of books, the last of which I had just read, and he invited me to come and see him in Magdalene. This meeting took place on October 13th of that year in his rooms in the first court, and he put me at my ease by saying that he could not give me tea there, as his bottle of milk had fallen out of the window: so we went out to the Old Schools’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 95).

[279](#) Gebbert had now moved with her mother and son to 715 Park Avenue, Apartment 8-C, New York 21, NY.

[280](#) This was Golden Arrow Cottage at Annagassan. See the letter to Van Deusen of 17 August 1956.

[281](#) Lorraine Nostadt.

[282](#) Michael Edwards (1936–), a chiropodist, was writing to Lewis from c/o 3 Bodley Road, New Malden, Surrey. His notes to the letters he received from Lewis are found in the Bodleian Library (Dep. c. 765, fols. 12–16). Edwards wrote about this first letter from Lewis: ‘This was in response to a 50 odd page letter from me. I was intellectually and emotionally confused as to how Christianity in general and Lewis in particular regarded various aspects of our life and world—especially aspects I had hitherto enjoyed. My puzzlement vis à vis Lewis had been sharpened after reading his scientifiction trilogy, and most of my questions had centred round this. For me the problem was intrinsically practical, not dryly academic’ (ibid., fol. 12).

[283](#) Sir Ernest Barker (1874–1960), political theorist, who held the Chair of Political Science at Cambridge University, 1927–38, and who still lived in Cambridge.

[284](#) Gibb had sent Lewis some copies of *Christentum Schlechthin*, trans. Brigitte Bernard-Salin (Kln: Helner, 1956), the German translation of *Mere Christianity*.

[285](#) Ingeborg Hough was the wife of Graham Hough. See the letter to Basil Willey of 26 October 1956.

[286](#) 'All aglow is the work!' Virgil, *Georgics*, IV, 169: 'Fervet opus, redolentque thymo fragrantia mella': 'All aglow is the work, and the fragrant honey is sweet with thyme.' Virgil also uses the phrase in *Aeneid* I, 436.

[287](#) Austin and Katharine Farrer were helping Joy to move to The Kilns.

[288](#) William Shakespeare, *King Richard II* (1597), II, iii, 65.

[289](#) i.e., budgerigars.

[290](#) i.e. their register office marriage on 23 April 1956.

[291](#) The Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

[292](#) See **Basil Willey** in the Biographical Appendix.

[293](#) Writing to Walter Hooper on 25 September 1970, Willey said that this letter from Lewis 'answers a suggestion of mine that he might consider being Chairman of the Faculty Board of English' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 200/6, fol. 11).

[294](#) Graham Hough (1908–90) was born on 14 February 1908, the son of Joseph and Clara Hough. He was educated at the University of Liverpool and Queen's College, Cambridge. Having served in the Second World War, 1939–45, Hough returned to Cambridge as Fellow of Christ's College in 1950, and Tutor, 1955–60. Hough was Praelector and Fellow of Darwin College, and Professor of English in the University of Cambridge, 1966–75.

[295](#) Herodotus, *Histories*, Bk. I, 136.

[296](#) While teaching ten-year-old children in the sixth grade at Chapel Hill Elementary School, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Hooper had his class write and perform a dramatization of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* on 24 October 1956. They wrote to Lewis about it afterwards.

[297](#) Walsh had applied for a Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, which have been awarded since 1925 to advanced professionals in all fields. He did not receive one.

[298](#) See the note on the Hungarian uprising in the letter to Mary Margaret McCaslin of 15 November 1956.

[299](#) He probably meant to write 'Sarah's'.

[300](#) The Rev. Elsie Chamberlain, of the Religious Broadcasting Department of the BBC, wrote to Lewis on 14 November 1956 inviting him to take part in the *Lift Up Your Hearts* programme: ‘Normally one speaker takes a week in the series. Occasionally we have all six different speakers on a set theme...We purpose such an occasion in February (11th–16th) on the theme “I was an atheist”. I would be very grateful if you would agree to take part.’

[301](#) Mrs McCaslin wrote this letter from Nix Drive, Lake Shore Heights, Gainesville, Georgia.

[302](#) MacDonald, *Unspoken Sermons*, First Series, 'The Consuming Fire', p. 41: 'The Son of God...suffered unto the death, not that men might not suffer, but that their suffering might be like his.'

[303](#) From 1945 Hungary had been under the control of the USSR. After the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953, the new Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev suggested that the people of Eastern Europe might be offered greater freedom. However, by late 1956 the Hungarians' problems were exacerbated by a bad harvest, fuel shortages, and a cold and wet autumn. On 23 October, 50,000 students and workers took to the streets of Budapest and issued their 'Sixteen Points', which included personal freedom, more food, and the removal of the secret police. This pushed the USSR too far; on 4 November Soviet tanks entered Budapest to restore order, acting with extreme brutality and even killing people. Tanks dragged bodies through the streets of Budapest as a warning to others who continued to protest. The suppression of the uprising was a watershed for Communists in western countries, many of the erstwhile supporters of the USSR now becoming critical of it.

[304](#) Charles Andrew Brady (1912–) was Professor of English at Canisius College, Buffalo, New York. See *CL* II, p. 629n.

[305](#) In his article, 'Finding God in Narnia', *America*, 96 (27 October 1956), pp. 103–5, Brady stated that the books were 'The greatest addition to the imperishable deposit of children's literature since the *Jungle Books*. Narnia takes its place forever now beside the jasper-lucent landscapes of Carroll, Andersen, MacDonald and Kipling...The child will not respond to these values at once, though they will awaken in his memory when the time comes for full realization. He will respond immediately, however, to the narrative sweep; to the evocation of the heroic mood; to the constant eliciting of the numinous. Very possibly this latter service is the most startling one Lewis renders contemporary childhood, contemporary Catholic childhood not least. He touches the nerve of religious awe on almost every page. He evangelizes through the imagination.'

[306](#) i.e., *Till We Have Faces*.

[307](#) Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Westminster: Dacre Press, [1945]). Dix (1901–52) was an Anglican Benedictine monk, and this book did much to popularize liturgical studies in the Church of England.

[308](#) The Suez crisis overshadowed even the events in Hungary. The strategically vital Suez Canal ran through Egyptian territory but was jointly owned by Britain and France, and very little of the huge profits made by the canal benefited the Egyptian economy. When in 1956 the Egyptian leader, Gamal Abdel Nasser, nationalized the canal, greatly angering the British and the French, the leaders of Britain, France and Israel colluded secretly to get rid of him. On 29 October 1956, Israeli troops invaded Egypt's Sinai Peninsula and raced for Suez. The next day, Britain and France offered to temporarily occupy the Canal Zone, suggesting a ten-mile buffer on either side which would separate the Egyptian forces from the Israelis. Nasser refused, and on 31 October Egypt was attacked and invaded by the military forces of Britain and France. In response, the USSR threatened to intervene on Egypt's behalf. President Eisenhower was greatly concerned and, although facing presidential elections in November, he opposed the actions of Britain, France and Israel, using every power at his command to compel them to stop their bombardment and invasion of Egypt, and to withdraw without profiting from their misadventure. As a result, Nasser's prestige soared in the Arab world as the leader who had faced down Israel and the West.

[309](#) Lewis was probably referring to his essay 'Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's to be Said', published in *The New York Times Book Review* (18 November 1956), p. 3. In that essay, reprinted in *Of This and Other Worlds*, Lewis said: 'Professor J. R. R. Tolkien in *The Lord of the Rings* has shown that the connection between fairy tales and children is not nearly as close as publishers and educationalists think. Many children don't like them and many adults do. The truth is, as he says, that they are now associated with children because they are out of fashion with adults' (pp. 59–60). What he meant to say is that 'the connection between fairy tales and children' was not made in *The Lord of the Rings*, but in Tolkien's essay 'On Fairy Stories', reprinted in *Tree and Leaf, including the poem Mythopoeia*, 2nd edn with an introduction by Christopher Tolkien (1988).

[310](#) 'Finding God in Narnia'. See the letter to Charles Brady of 16 November 1956.

[311](#) I. O. Evans, *The Story of Our World* (London: Hutchinson, 1957).

[312](#) When Gibb visited Lewis in Cambridge on 27 November he brought a good many reviews of *Till We Have Faces*, which Lewis was now returning.

[313](#) Professor Kenneth Reckford (1933–), Classical scholar, was born in New York on 26 May 1933. He took a BA from Harvard University in 1954 and a Ph.D. in 1957. He was an instructor in Classics and General Education at Harvard, 1957–60, and an assistant and then an associate professor of Classics at Harvard, 1960–8. He has been Professor of Classics at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, since 1968.

[314](#) George MacDonald, *Short Stories* ('The Light Princess', 'The Giant's Heart', 'The Golden Key') (1928).

[315](#) Lewis was wrong. Cecil Day-Lewis wrote detective stories under the pseudonym 'Nicholas Blake'.

[316](#) The words of Jesus.

[317](#) Matthew 9:12: 'They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.'

[318](#) Matthew 17:24–5: ‘And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He said, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? Of their own children, or of strangers?’

[319](#) Mark 10:29–30: ‘And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.’

[320](#) Luke 16:1-8.

[321](#) i.e., Joy Gresham.

[322](#) John 21:25: ‘And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.’

[323](#) In the foreword to the second edition of *The Lord of the Rings* (1966) Tolkien said: ‘As for any inner meaning or “messages”, it has in the intention of the author none. It is neither allegory nor topical...Its main theme was settled from the outset by the inevitable choice of the Ring as the link between it and *The Hobbit*. The crucial chapter, “The Shadow of the Past”, is one of the oldest parts of the tale. It was written long before the foreshadow of 1939 had yet become a threat of inevitable disaster, and from that point the story would have developed along essentially the same lines, if that disaster had been averted’ (pp. 6–7).

[324](#) Fr Milward devoted a chapter to 'Allegory' in *A Challenge to C. S. Lewis* (Madison, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1995).

[325](#) The Japanese stamp was possibly one of a series of *ukiyo-e* prints, in which the faces are oddly elongated.

[326](#) 'painter' (it is not known who Lewis was referring to); 'You wonderful fellow'.

[327](#) Harwood's first wife, Daphne, had died in 1950, and on 1 November 1954 he married Marguerite Lundgren, founder of the London School of Eurythmy.

[328](#) See the biography of Sir Eric Beckett in *CL I*, p. 686n. He was suffering mental problems.

[329](#) Gebbert had been sent copies of *Till We Have Faces* and *The Last Battle*.

[330](#) Psalm 78:66 (Coverdale): 'So the Lord awaked as one out of sleep: and like a giant refreshed with wine.'

[331](#) In her letter of 28 December Gebbert said: 'I [have] started yet another creative venture, this time a novel...After penning fifteen plays I thought it was time to try my hand at something else. Half of the novel is completed, but how does one get to the end?...The theme is a minor exposé of our last dwelling place, Carmel, California. I found it so bigoted a community, and with so many strange folk living there, I felt compelled to parody it. It was moving into another planet—a most undesirable one!' (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 287).

¹ Gilbert Highet (1906–78), Scottish-American classicist, had written a blurb about *Till We Have Faces*. He had earlier written a piece on Lewis's interplanetary novels, 'From World to World', in *People, Places, and Books* (1953).

[2](#) John 19:30.

³ This is Lewis's misquotation of Hugo Dyson. See the letter to Warnie of 3 March 1940 (*CL II*, pp. 360–1).

⁴ Lewis was almost certainly remembering Brady's two-part article, 'Introduction to Lewis' and 'C. S. Lewis II' in *America*, 71 (27 May and 10 June 1944). See the letter to Brady of 29 October 1944 (*CL* II, pp. 529–31).

⁵ Lewis had in mind Brady's 'Unicorns at Oxford', *Books on Trial*, 15 (October 1956), pp. 59–60, in which he wrote about Charles Williams, Dorothy L. Sayers, J. R. R. Tolkien, Lewis and the 'Oxford Circle'.

[6](#) Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*, ch. 7: ‘You might as well try to stop a Bandersnatch!’

⁷ See **David Gresham** in the Biographical Appendix.

[8](#) Because Joy was very ill Maureen Blake, Mrs Moore's daughter, volunteered to look after David and Douglas Gresham at her house in Malvern during the holidays. See **Dame Maureen Dunbar of Hempriggs** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* I, pp. 986–8.

[9](#) Susan Pevensie. See *The Last Battle*, ch. 12.

[10](#) Dennis William Babbage, OBE (1909–91) matriculated at Magdalene College, Cambridge, in 1924. After taking a First in all parts of the Mathematical Tripos, he served as chief cryptographer at Bletchley Park during the Second World War; the outstanding skill and inventiveness of Babbage and his team is acknowledged in Michael Smith, *Station X: The Codebreakers of Bletchley Park* (2000). Babbage was a Bye-Fellow of Magdalene, 1931–3, Fellow, 1933–91, Director of Studies in Mathematics, 1934–77, Tutor, 1946, Senior Tutor, 1964–73, and President, 1973–9. He was also University Lecturer, 1936–76, and Senior Proctor, 1953–4. See *Codebreakers: The Inside Story of Bletchley Park*, ed. F. H. Hinsley and Alan Stripp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 101–10.

[11](#) Ralph Francis Bennett (1911–2002) matriculated at Magdalene College, Cambridge, in 1929. After taking his BA in History in 1934 he served as Bye-Fellow, 1935–6, College Lecturer in History, 1936–82, Official Fellow, 1938, Tutor, 1932–80, and President, 1979–82. He was also University Lecturer, 1947–79, and Senior Proctor, 1963–4. During the Second World War he served at Bletchley Park as an intelligence analyst, translating and evaluating the Ultra decrypts of the German Enigma cipher. As a historian he achieved eminence in two unrelated fields: medieval ecclesiastical history and modern military history. His books include *The Early Dominicans* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937) and *Ultra in the West: The Normandy Campaign of 1944–45* (London: Hutchinson, 1979).

12 From the Greek, meaning 'of gifts to the needy'.

[13](#) i.e. the Agapony Fund.

14 Mary Cornish, a schoolgirl, was writing from Royal William Yard, Plymouth.

[15](#) Kilby attached a note to this letter saying: 'Written after I had sent CSL a two-page statement of what I thought *TWHF* was about and asked for his check.'

16 Tertullian (c. AD 160–c. 225), *Apology* 17.6: ‘soul by nature Christian’.

[17](#) Luke 2:49: 'And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?'

[18](#) Roger Ian Sharrock (1919–90), John Bunyan scholar, read English at St John's College, Oxford, and took a BA in 1943. After serving with the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, 1939–41, he was an assistant master at Rugby College, 1944–6. He taught English at the University of Southampton, 1946–62, and was Professor of English at the University of Durham, 1963–8, and Professor of English Language and Literature at King's College, University of London, 1968–81. He was general editor of *The Miscellaneous Works of John Bunyan*, 13 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976–94).

[19](#) In her letter of 7 February 1957 Gebbert said: 'The Tycoon has been removed from nursery school and we did it with regret plus necessity. First, the tariff was too steep and he was bringing home every germ in Manhattan. Now they tell me any age under five is just too tender for exposure amongst so many children and in such close quarters. If we can keep him occupied until he is five he can attend, for no cost at all, a public school here. Do you know anyone who is associated with Hunter College? They have, I am told, an elementary school (free!) and for children passing specialized tests...The building, by the way, is in the next block from us, so you can understand my eagerness to get the Tycoon in' (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 291). In the second line of the letter Lewis presumably meant to write 'under 5' rather than 'under 12'.

20 i.e., *Till We Have Faces*.

[21](#) A copy of *Till We Have Faces*.

[22](#) Lewis was writing one of the examination papers for those taking the English Tripos at Cambridge.

[23](#) A Religious of C.S.M.V. [Sister Penelope], *The Communicant's Pocket Book* (London: Faith Press, 1960).

[24](#) *Encheiridion*, the Greek and Latin ‘handbook’ as in Heinrich Joseph Dominicus Denzinger’s *Enchiridion Symbolorum et Definitionum* (1854), a handbook containing a collection of the chief decrees and definitions of councils, list of condemned propositions, etc., beginning with the oldest forms of the Apostles’ Creed.

[25](#) Tuesday Lobsang Rampa, *The Third Eye: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Lama* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1956).

[26](#) Kathryn Stillwell, 'C. S. Lewis: Modern Christian Writer', *His: Magazine of Christian Living*, 17 (January 1957), pp. 12–14.

[27](#) Lewis's essay, 'Donne and Love Poetry in the Seventeenth Century', was published in *Seventeenth Century Studies Presented to Sir Herbert Grierson*, preface by J. Dover Wilson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938), pp. 64–84. The essay is reprinted in *SLE*.

[28](#) Vanauken spent several months in Oxford at this time. Referring to this letter, he said in *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 10, p. 225: 'We did so meet, and he told me of marrying Joy in a civil ceremony, simply as an act of friendship to prevent the Government deporting her to America as a communist, despite her being a lapsed communist and, in fact, a Jewish Christian. He and she had even drawn up a paper stating that the marriage was not a real one. But in less than a fortnight from our luncheon Lewis was to marry her sacramentally with a priest at the hospital bedside. Lewis told me that he had come to love her, and he wanted to take her home to die.'

[29](#) i.e., the MS of Milward's poem published as *A Poem of The New Creation* (Tokyo: The Hokuseido Press, 1970).

[30](#) Dunbar had written to Lewis about various textual questions, at the same time expressing sympathy for Joy's illness.

[31](#) 'Dante's Staius', *Medium Aevum*, XXV, no. 3 (1957), pp. 133–9. The essay is reprinted in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*.

[32](#) Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book II, 92, 4–5 in which both the Athenians and the Peloponnesians set up trophies claiming victory in a battle.

[33](#) For an account of Lewis's visit to Bishop Carpenter see *CG*, p.80.

[34](#) See the **Reverend Peter Bide** in the Biographical Appendix.

[35](#) A full account of the marriage is found in the biography of Peter Bide in *CG*, pp. 631–5.

[36](#) *BF*, pp. 245–6.

[37](#) Mabel Drew (1918–) was born in Philadelphia, the daughter of Charles and Laura Crabb, members of the Church of the Brethren. She was educated at Ellis College, and attended classes at Temple University, Philadelphia. After the initial excitement of *Mere Christianity* she went on to read nearly all Lewis's books, including his literary criticism. She has lived for many years in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, where she does volunteer work at St Mary's of the Lake Hospital and in several libraries. She is the author of *A Way of Seeing*, introduction by Roger Bainbridge (Kingston, Ontario: Quarry Press, [1993]).

[38](#) In a letter to Walter Hooper of 26 August 1994 Drew said: ‘At the time of my first letter to [Lewis] I had read some sceptical criticism about the authenticity of the Dead Sea Scrolls. And I knew Lewis would put me right. I completely trust his honesty and integrity. Regretfully, I can’t remember the name of the book I quoted.’

[39](#) John Allegro, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (1956). Shortly after publishing his book Allegro claimed that Christianity had borrowed the story of a worshipped and crucified Messiah. But when challenged, he admitted this was based on his interpretation rather than on the actual text of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

[40](#) Matthew 5:17.

41 p.p.

[42](#) Pitter wrote on the envelope of this letter: 'Not knowing his circumstances as regards money, I had offered a small gift' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 143).

⁴³ Mrs Krieg believed the Narnian books should be read in the order in which they were published, while Lewis agreed with Laurence that they be read chronologically according to Narnian time. In the summer of 1963 Lewis had Walter Hooper write down the order in which he preferred the stories to be read: *The Magician's Nephew*; *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*; *The Horse and His Boy*; *Prince Caspian*; *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*; *The Silver Chair*; and *The Last Battle*. Regarding the order in which the stories were written, see CG, 'The Writing of the Narnias', pp. 401–5.

[44](#) Bayreuth, Germany, is the site of the music festival where the operas of Richard Wagner are performed.

[45](#) The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London.

[46](#) Richard Wagner's opera, *The Flying Dutchman*, was first performed on 2 January 1843.

47 p.p.

[48](#) The term 'noble savage' expressed a romantic concept of mankind unencumbered by civilization. The concept has particular associations with Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78), but the phrase 'noble savage' first appeared in John Dryden, *The Conquest of Granada* (1670), Part One, I, i: 'I am as free as Nature first made man,/Ere the base laws of servitude began,/When wild in woods the noble savage ran.'

[49](#) The Carnegie Medal, established by the Library Association in 1936 in memory of the great Scottish-born philanthropist Andrew Carnegie (1835–1919), is awarded annually by children’s librarians for an outstanding book for children and young people. In 1957 it was awarded to Lewis for *The Last Battle*.

[50](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *Mystery at Mycenae: An Adventure Story of Ancient Greece* (London: John Lane, 1957).

[51](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *The Land of the Lord High Tiger* (London: G. Bell, 1958).

[52](#) Bice Crichton-Miller (1909–91) was educated at Girton College, Cambridge, taking her BA in 1930. The following year she joined the staff of Sherborne School for Girls, Sherborne, Dorset. She left in 1935 to become head of the history department at Notting Hill and Ealing High School, but returned to Sherborne School in 1948. She was housemistress of Wingfield from 1949 until 1970 when she retired, remaining a part-time member of staff and librarian until July 1978.

[53](#) In a letter to Walter Hooper of 27 April 1983 Crichton-Miller said: 'I had written to ask if he would preach at a School Service which my House was arranging' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/7, fol. 8).

[54](#) Dunbar had suggested they meet to discuss the connection between the classical and Anglo-Saxon worlds.

55 A comedy by Aristophanes produced in 414 BC.

[56](#) Lewis was an Honorary Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, with dining rights.

[57](#) Owen Barfield, *Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry* (1957).

[58](#) Possibly a reference to a scholarship for some African students being paid by the Agapony Fund.

[59](#) The South African poet Roy Campbell died on 23 April 1957 (see his biography in *CL* II, p. 736n) and Newby wrote to Lewis on 20 May: 'Knowing how reluctant you are to broadcast, I hesitate to write and ask whether you would care to speak about Roy Campbell for us. I very well remember, some years ago, sharing a 'bus with Roy in Oxford; he was on his way to see you at Magdalen and spoke of you with great warmth. Anything like a formal obituary talk would, one feels, be inappropriate for Roy Campbell. Would you care to give a talk that would make him alive again for those who did not know him?'

[60](#) The American poet Robert Frost was giving a lecture in Cambridge, and Professor Willey was giving a sherry party for him afterwards. During his trip to England Frost was awarded honorary Doctorates of Letters by Oxford University on 4 June 1957 and by the University of Cambridge on 13 June.

[61](#) Mrs Johnson had come across 'Numenor' in the preface to *That Hideous Strength*. See the letter to William L. Kinter of 24 September 1951. Tolkien's name was John Ronald Reuel Tolkien.

[62](#) Hebrews 4:9.

[63](#) In the two Catechisms ('Larger' and 'Shorter') of the Presbyterian Church, Question One is: 'What is the chief and highest end of man?' The Answer: 'Man's chief and highest end is to glorify God, and fully to enjoy him forever.'

[64](#) Dante, *Paradiso*, XXVII, 3–6: ‘It intoxicated me...it seemed a universal laugh.’

[65](#) Wade Center.

[66](#) Wade Center.

[67](#) John Keats, *The Fall of Hyperion* (1856), I, 24.

[68](#) Virgil, *Aeneid*, I, 209: 'He presents the semblance of hope in his expression and holds his sorrows deep within his heart.'

[69](#) i.e. Sayers' *Further Papers on Dante*.

70 'rightly said'.

[71](#) 'Bravo': Martial, *Epigrams*, I. iii, 7.

[72](#) Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, vol. I, ch. 13.

[73](#) Sayers, *Introductory Papers on Dante*.

[74](#) Sir James Jeans (1877–1946) developed an interest in mathematics, physics and astronomy at Cambridge University, and became an authority on specific heats of gases and the mechanism of radiation. Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington (1882–1944), for many years Plumian Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge, was an early exponent of relativity. In *Further Papers on Dante*, the dialogue between Dante and Eddington is found in the chapter, ‘Dante’s Cosmos’, pp. 78–85.

[75](#) George Morrow (1869–1955), cartoonist, began contributing to *Punch* magazine in 1906. He joined the staff in 1924 and later became art editor. He regularly drew historical or legendary characters in slightly absurd situations. Lewis probably did not have a particular cartoon in mind.

[76](#) *ibid.*, 'Dante and Milton', pp. 148–82.

[77](#) *ibid.*, 'The Cornice of Sloth', pp. 119–47.

78 The Greek God of death.

[79](#) Lewis's address, entitled 'Kipling's World' and given to the English Association on 24 November 1944, is reprinted in *SLE*.

[80](#) For more on astrology in the Middle Ages see *The Discarded Image*, ch. 5, 'The Heavens', pp. 103–4.

[81](#) Rosamund Tuve, *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery* (1947).

82 'light and sweetness'.

[83](#) The expression 'sweetness and light' appears in St Hugo of Victor (d. 1142), *Didascalion*, Bk. III, ch. 1. Jonathan Swift later used it in *The Battle of the Books* (1704), 14: 'Whatever we have got, has been by infinite Labor, and search, and ranging thro' every Corner of Nature: The Difference is, that instead of *Dirt* and *Poison*, we have rather chose to till our Hives with *Honey* and *Wax*, thus furnishing Mankind with the two Noblest of Things, which are *Sweetness* and *Light*.'

[84](#) Lewis employed a number of nurses, and it is not known what their names were. His gardener, Fred Paxford, and his housekeeper, Molly Miller, were still his 'servants'.

85 Sayers wanted to give them a kitten.

[86](#) Psalm 85:6.

[87](#) St Albertus Magnus (d. 1280), theologian, philosopher and scientist, was a Dominican monk of enormous influence. St Thomas Aquinas was his pupil when he was teaching in Paris, 1245–8. In Germany he lectured on the new translation of Aristotle’s works, and he made the complete Aristotelian corpus intelligible to the Latins.

[88](#) Ptolemy (c. AD 85–c. 165), *Centiloquium*, proposition 5: ‘The wise man will master the stars.’

[89](#) St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part I, Question 115, Article 4: ‘The majority of men follow their passions, which are movements of the sensitive appetite, in which movements of heavenly bodies can co-operate: but few are wise enough to resist these passions. Consequently astrologers are able to foretell the truth in the majority of cases, especially in a general way. But not in particular cases; for nothing prevents man resisting his passions by his free-will. Wherefore the astrologers themselves are wont to say that *the wise man is stronger than the stars*, forasmuch as, to wit, he conquers his passions.’

[90](#) Pietro Pomponazzi (1462–1525), philosopher and founder of the Aristotelian-Averroistic School. See his *De Naturalium Effectuum Causis* (1556).

[91](#) Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–94) discussed magic in his *Conclusiones Magicae* (1486).

[92](#) Paracelsus (1493–1541), *The Archidoxies of Magic* (1589).

[93](#) Richard Henry Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (1926). The only other reference to Tawney in Lewis's writings is *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, Bibliography, p. 618: 'Among other works not easily classified are those of R. H. Tawney.'

[94](#) John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536).

[95](#) Lord (Howard) Florey (1898–1968), pathologist, was born in Adelaide on 24 September 1898. He read medicine at Adelaide University, and in 1921 won a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford. He took a First in physiology at Magdalen College in 1923, and was Professor of Pathology at Sheffield University, 1932–4, and at Oxford University, 1935–62. In 1945 he, Alexander Fleming and Ernst Boris Chain shared the Nobel Prize for the discovery of penicillin and its curative effects in various infectious diseases. He was Provost of the Queen’s College, Oxford, 1962–6.

96 H. A. Schulze was writing from c/o The Muellers, Hemelinger Werder 9, Bremen, Germany.

[97](#) In *Out of the Silent Planet*. See the reference to the *eldila* in the letter to Douglas Harding of 25 March 1951.

[98](#) The Old Solar name for God, or the Lord. See the letter to Victor Hamm of 11 August 1945 (*CL II*, pp. 666–7).

[99](#) Kilmer had asked a question about something which has puzzled many readers. The reference is to *Out of the Silent Planet* (London: Bodley Head, 1938; HarperCollins, 2000), ch. 12. Ransom explains to the *hross* that 'If a thing is a pleasure, a [man] wants it again. He might want the pleasure more often than the number of young that could be fed.' The *hross* replies that they enjoy sexual intercourse 'only in one or two years' of their lives. 'It takes his whole life,' he explains. 'When he is young he has to look for his mate; and then he has to court her; then he begets young; then he rears them; then he remembers all this, and boils it inside him and makes it into poems and wisdom...A pleasure is full grown only when it is remembered' (pp. 73–4).

[100](#) Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 218.

[101](#) Gibb had sent Lewis some copies of *De Wonderreis van het Drakeschip*, trans. Pieter Nierop (West-Friesland: Hoorn, 1957), the Dutch edition of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*.

[102](#) John Milton, *Apology for Smectymnuus* (1642), *Colasterion* (1645). Lewis was having a joke with Gibb, pretending that the 'Milton' who was to do a pen portrait of him was the Puritan poet who wrote these morally austere works, rather than Milton Waldman.

[103](#) 'out of respect'.

[104](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, 'A Neglected Novelist: "F. Anstey"', *English*, XI, no. 65 (Summer 1957), pp. 178–81.

[105](#) Gibb wrote on 11 October 1957: 'Would you stand fire from Waldman instead of the blind poet, whom it was churlish of me to stir in his grave?' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 220).

[106](#) Lewis was now working to turn his lectures on ‘Some Difficult Words’ into the book Cambridge University Press had agreed to publish as *Studies in Words*.

[107](#) See the letter to Lewis's father of 25 January 1926 (*CL* I, p. 660).

[108](#) Torquato Tasso (1544–95), the author of *Gerusalemme Liberata* (1581).

[109](#) Gibb asked if Lewis would review Anthony Armstrong's *Saying Your Prayers: An Approach to Christian Prayer* (London: Bles, 1958) in the *Sunday Times* (23 September 1957).

[110](#) The Kilmers were Roman Catholics.

[111](#) Albertus Magnus writes about angels in his *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter the Lombard*. Aquinas stated in *Summa Theologica*, Part I, Question 50, Article 2: ‘Although there is no composition of matter and form in an angel, yet there is act and potentiality. And this can be made evident if we consider the nature of material things, which contain a twofold composition. The first is that of form and matter, whereby the nature is constituted. Such a composite nature is not its own existence; but existence is its act. Hence the nature itself is related to its own existence as potentiality to act. Therefore if there be no matter, and supposing that the form itself subsists without matter, there nevertheless still remains the relation of the form to its very existence, as of potentiality to act. And such a kind of composition is understood to be in the angels.’

[112](#) Marsilio Ficino (1433–99), Italian philosopher, was an ardent admirer of Plato and a propagator of neo-Platonism. He discussed angels in his *Theologia Platonica* (Florence, 1482).

[113](#) Plutarch (c. AD 50–c. 125), Greek biographer and moralist. See the reference to his *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* in CL II, p. 243.

[114](#) *In Till We Have Faces.*

[115](#) Michael Paffard (1928–2000) read English at Bristol University, and was senior lecturer in the Department of Education at Keele University, 1953–83. He is the author of *Inglorious Wordsworths: A Study of the Transcendental Experiences of Childhood and Adolescence* (1973) and *The Unattended Moment: Excerpts from Autobiographies with Hints and Guesses* (1976).

[116](#) Michael Paffard, 'Some Indications of Literary Interest Among Sixth-Formers and Undergraduates', *Researches and Studies*, No. 20 (October 1959), pp. 30–9.

[117](#) A. L. Rowse in *A Cornish Childhood* (1942) and Forrest Reid in *Apostate* (1926) described experiences similar to those named as 'Joy' by Lewis in *Surprised by Joy*.

[118](#) Kenneth Clark, Baron Clark (1903–83), patron of the arts eventually published two volumes of autobiography, *Another Part of the Wood* (1974) and *The Other Half* (1977). It is possible Paffard had in mind the descriptions of various works of art, and their effect on the author, that appear in such of Clark's works as *The Nude: A Study of Ideal Art* (1956).

[119](#) June Lancelyn Green had been knocked unconscious when she fell down the stairs. Other than bruising and a slight concussion she was unharmed.

[120](#) The reader at John Lane The Bodley Head had forced Green to make unnecessary changes in his *Mystery at Mycenae*.

[121](#) Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*.

[122](#) The general scheme of *The Faerie Queene* is proposed in Spenser's introductory letter to Sir Walter Raleigh: 'In that Faery Queene I meane glory in my generall intention, but in my particular I conceiue the most excellent and glorious person of our soueraine the Queene, and her kingdome in Faery land. And yet in some places els I do otherwise shadow her. For considering she beareth two persons, the one of a most royall Queene or Empresse, the other of a most vertuous and beautifull Lady, this latter part in some places I doe expresse in Belpheobe, fashioning her name according to your owne excellent concept of Cynthia (Phoebe and Cynthia being both names of Diana).'

[123](#) Sir Scudamour in *The Faerie Queene*, Book IV is the lover of Amoret, who is reft from him on his wedding day by the enchanter Busirane.

[124](#) Lewis's point appears to be that, as all the names in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* are allegorical, it would be out of place to find the name of a real man, e.g. Judge Jeffreys, rather than an abstract title such as Despair. To understand why he is called Giant Despair see Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, First Part, pp. 114–15.

[125](#) Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, V, xi, 49, 1: 'My name is *Burbon* hight.' The real Burbon was Henry IV of France (1553–1610), first of the Bourbon kings of France.

[126](#) Warnie was hospitalized at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda, Eire. See the reference to the hospital and Mother Mary Martin in *CL II*, pp. 786–7.

127 Greeves's housekeeper.

[128](#) Greeves's dog.

[129](#) Jane Gaskell (1941–), journalist and novelist, was born in Grange-over-Sands, Lancashire on 7 July 1941, the daughter of Andrew Gaskell (a watercolour painter) and Edith (Hackett) Gaskell. She was educated at home by her parents. She was a columnist on the staff of the *Daily Express*, 1961–5, the *Daily Sketch*, 1965–71, and the *Daily Mail*, 1971–84. Her books include *Strange Evil* (1957), *King's Daughter* (1958), *Attic Summer* (1963), *The Shiny Narrow Grin* (1964), *Atlan* (1965), *The Fabulous Heroine* (1965), *All Neat in Black Stockings* (1966), *A Sweet, Sweet Summer* (1969), *Summer Coming* (1972), *The Serpent* (1975), *The Dragon* (1975), *The City* (1976), *Some Summer Lands* (1977), *The Atlan Saga* (1985) and *Sun Bubble: A Novel* (1990). The letter from Lewis is stained in places for, as Gaskell explained in a letter to Walter Hooper of 10 July 1968: 'Herewith my C. S. Lewis letter, tearstains & all (I was so excited when I received it, out of the blue, when I was 15)' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 26).

[130](#) Jane Gaskell, *Strange Evil* (London: Hutchinson, 1957). The publishers point out in a preface that the novel was written in 1955 when Gaskell was only fourteen, and that ‘She expresses her ideas less by means of her own experience...than by the use of a creative imagination of exceptional range, stimulated by her varied reading. Carlyle, C. S. Lewis, James Branch Cabell and Joan Grant are among the authors who have particularly impressed her.’ The reviewer in *The Times Literary Supplement* (6 September 1957), p. 529, said: ‘Sustained imaginative effort is the most remarkable quality of *Strange Evil*, a fantasy of macabre and gorgeous nonsense written by fourteen-year-old Miss Jane Gaskell. Judith, who poses nude for a living, is carried off to a C. S. Lewis-ish land where a monster called Baby conducts his reign of terror and where one extravagantly gory battle follows another. Miss Gaskell is eloquently fascinated by words, the longer and more lush the better, and her book reveals an undoubted talent for fanciful description.’

[131](#) Gaskell, *Strange Evil*, ch. 21, pp. 242–3: ‘They led [Judith] up to the Baby who was surrounded by its devoted priests. They ran hither and thither, obviously trying to seek for ways to placate it, and it crouched in the middle of them and yelled and cried and raged, and spread the foetid smell. It was laughably unterrific, unlike a god or even a demon, to Judith...About ten feet high, but smaller when it sat as it did now, it was one colossal shape of a Baby, with fat shaking upon its obscene form as it yelled. Gobbets of fat hung upon it everywhere, and made of it a gigantic quivering mass. The most obese caricature of Gargantua as a child she had ever seen, its huge puffed cheeks pendulated as it sobbed and roared and hiccupped...The nastiest, fattest, most repellent brat, and of course the hugest, she had ever seen. So this was their ideal of the Life Force—ridiculing laughter struggled in her. She had no fear of this grotesque, spoilt, unbelievable deity.’

[132](#) *ibid.*, pp. 81–2: ‘They picked up their cases, and began to walk down the [moving] bar, to where it really seemed more like an aircraft without any roof. It was furnished on either side with comfortable upholstered seats, leaving a wide aisle down the middle...Here the bar was equipped with every convenience, even bath-houses...There was a sort of stall where food could be purchased.’

[133](#) *ibid.*, ch. 9, p. 93: ‘They began to climb, Judith thankful for the loss of her case in that at least it left her freer for this dreadful slippery climbing where the rain seemed determined to force them down again into the tree-grown gully. [The half-fairy] Dorinda, on the other hand, seemed to manage with remarkable ease, although hampered by a quite heavy case. It contained so many of the beautiful things, the hats and lingerie, that she had set eyes on since coming to London.’

[134](#) *ibid.*, ch. 18, p. 191: ‘Now she met caverns of unutterable splendour: caverns ablaze with the emotional glitter and sparkle of many jewels.’

[135](#) *ibid.*, ch. 15, pp. 168–9: ‘Now she put on her tangerine skirt and white blouse quickly, and slipped into her shoes...She wore low sandals which held her ankles with thongs and gaily coloured ribbons.’

[136](#) Numbers 22:21–41.

[137](#) Roger and June Lancelyn Green were taking their elder son, Scirard, to Dane Court School near Woking, Surrey, for the first time on 24 September, and they were coming by The Kilns to pick up Douglas Gresham who was also a pupil there.

[138](#) Walter Ogilvie 'Wof' Field, a close friend of Harwood and Owen Barfield, had just died. See his biography in *CL* II, p. 572n.

[139](#) *The Song of Roland*, trans. Dorothy L. Sayers (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1957).

[140](#) The phrase does not appear in Sayers' translation of *The Song of Roland*, but is given as an example of the kind of modern colloquialism Lewis and Sayers would have thought inappropriate for such a translation.

[141](#) Raymond Mortimer (1895–1980), critic and author of *Duncan Grant* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1944).

[142](#) I. O. Evans, *The Story of Our World* (1957).

[143](#) Paulus Orosius (early 5th century) undertook, at the request of St Augustine of Hippo, *Historia Adversus Paganos* ('History of the Pagans').

[144](#) Sir Walter Raleigh (1554–1618), *The History of the World* (1614).

[145](#) H. G. Wells, *The Outline of History* (1920); *A Short History of the World* (1922).

[146](#) i.e., by writing a blurb.

[147](#) Evans had already published *Geology by the Wayside* (1940). If he was now thinking of writing a book about astronomy and geology, in the end he did not write it.

[148](#) Eric Frank Russell, *Sinister Barrier* (1939).

[149](#) Alan Hindle (1932–), teacher, was born in Rochdale, Lancashire, on 12 May 1932. He was educated at the local high school and New College, Oxford, where in 1956 he received a First in English Language and Literature. He was Second English Master at Todmorden Grammar School, Yorkshire, 1956–8, and at Rochdale Grammar School, 1959–61, and Lecturer in English at Mander College, Bedford, 1961–4. As a boy in Lancashire roaming the moors he had developed a love for the Pennine landscape and he settled in the Pennines. He was principal lecturer in English at Bingley College, 1964–78, and Ilkley College, 1978–95, a post he combined with teaching part-time at Bradford College. Since his retirement in 1995, Hindle has run a literary class in Ilkley and given lectures at Bradford University. He is the author of *Literary Visitors to Yorkshire* (Ormskirk: Hesketh, 1981).

[150](#) Hindle wrote to Walter Hooper on 29 April 1969: 'I knew Professor Lewis when I was an undergraduate at Oxford (1953–56) & before he moved to Cambridge I attended his lectures, met him informally & conversed with him on several occasions. [His] letters were both simply answers to queries. The first was when I was doing some work on the "Song of Songs" & trying to reconcile this with Professor Lewis's ideas concerning the origins of romantic love as developed in "The Allegory of Love"' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fols. 202–3).

[151](#) Song of Songs 6:4.

[152](#) Gibb wrote on 11 October 1957: 'I...send on to you a copy of the German edition of THE LION THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE. What do you think of the illustrations? I'll bet you like them better than Pauline Baynes's' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 226). The German edition of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* was called *Die Abenteuer im Wandschrank Oder: Der Löwe und die Hexe*, trans. Lisa Tetzner, illus. Richard Seewald (Freiburg: Herder, 1957).

[153](#) Matthew 6:34: 'sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'

[154](#) See the biography of Richard Thornton Hewitt in *CL* II, p. 277n.

[155](#) Stillwell's MA thesis, 'A Lion of Judah in Never-Never Land: The Theology and Philosophy of C. S. Lewis Expressed in His Fantasies for Children' was submitted to California State University, Long Beach. It was published a few years later under her married name, Kathryn Lindskoog, as *The Lion of Judah in Never-Never Land: The Theology of C. S. Lewis Expressed in His Fantasies for Children* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973).

[156](#) Lewis was referring to Stillwell's bibliography. The editor of *HIS* magazine had, without Lewis's knowledge, taken his essay 'Christian Hope—Its Meaning for Today' from *Religion in Life*, XXI (Winter 1951–2) and reprinted it as 'The World's Last Night' in *HIS*, XV (May 1955), pp. 1–4, 22–4. Lindskoog was apparently unaware that they were the same, for she listed the two titles as separate items in the bibliography of *The Lion of Judah in Never-Never Land*, pp. 135, 138.

[157](#) 'The Condemned', 5–8: 'Do not blame us too much if we are hedgerow folk/Cannot swell the rejoicings at this new world you make–We, hedge-hoggèd as Johnson or Borrow, strange to the yoke/As Landor, surly as Cobbett (that badger), birdlike as Blake.' Those mentioned in the poem are Dr Samuel Johnson (1709–84), George Henry Borrow (1803–81), Walter Savage Landor (1775–1864), William Cobbett (1763–1835) and William Blake (1757–1827). The poem is reprinted in *CP*.

[158](#) He was referring to Raine's essay 'The Little Girl Lost and Found and the Lapsed Soul' in *The Divine Vision: Studies in the Poetry and Art of William Blake*, ed. Vivian de Sola Pinto (London: Gollancz, 1957). On pp. 24–8, Raine explained that 'The story of Lyca, in the two poems *The Little Girl Lost* and *Found*, is...Blake's version of the myth celebrated in the Mysteries of Eleusis, the story of the descent of Persephone into Hades, and the search of the Mother for her lost child...Lyca is in some sense the individual soul descending into generation, and also, at the same time, the soul of the world. Her story is of a wandering and a return, a sleep and an awakening; for such, Plotinus taught, and Blake believed, is the story of man's incarnation.'

[159](#) Bernardus Silvestris, *De Mundi Universitate, Libri Duo sive Megacosmus et Microcosmus*, p. 37. See *The 'Cosmographia' of Bernardus Silvestris*, trans. Winthrop Wetherbee (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), 'Microcosmos', ch. 3, pp. 95–6: 'Following the Milky Way like a highway, [Nature] encountered that radiance which its mass of stars produces through sheer multiplicity at the point where the Zodiac meets with the two tropics in its circular journey. Here she saw a numberless throng of souls clustered about the abode of Cancer. All these, it appeared, wore expressions fit for a funeral, and were shaken by weeping. Yes, they who were destined to descend, pure as they were, and simple, from splendour into shadow, from heaven to the kingdom of Pluto, from eternal life to that of the body, grew terrified at the clumsy and blind fleshly habitation which they saw prepared for them.'

[160](#) Edwin Muir, *One Foot in Eden* (1956). This was Muir's final collection of poems.

[161](#) *De Zilveren Stoel*, trans. Peter Nierop (West-Friesland: Hoorn, 1957).

[162](#) Proverbs 13:12.

[163](#) Queen Elizabeth II visited the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 21 October 1957.

[164](#) On 4 October 1957 the Russians launched the first man-made satellite, *Sputnik I*. The United States was preparing to launch its first satellite, *Explorer I*, from Cape Canaveral, Florida on 31 January 1958.

[165](#) W. H. Lewis, *Assault on Olympus: The Rise of the House of Gramont between 1604 and 1678* (London: Deutsch, 1958).

[166](#) This is a reference to Milton Waldman's 'pen portrait' of Lewis, published as 'C. S. Lewis: A Profile' in *Fifty-Two: A Journal of Books and Authors from Geoffrey Bles*, no. 2 (Spring 1958), pp. 7–8. On p. 8 Waldman said: 'No doubt a principal reason that [Lewis] so much enjoys talk is that he is so good at it: not only providing the qualities that elevate it into an art himself, but promoting them in others. And what is given and taken in that company is of a very remarkable order, mental and spiritual nourishment as fortifying and necessary as that provided by the contents of libraries...learning, profundity, originality (even eccentricity), ranging over ideas old and new, familiar and recondite, subject only to the condition that the ideas shall be serious and their expression not too much so. The part he played in this characteristic and not least important aspect of Oxford's life is indicated by a friend's mournful remark on his translation from Magdalen on the Isis to Magdalene on the Cam, "If they had taken the Martyrs' Memorial it would not have left a bigger gap than 'Jack' Lewis will.'"

[167](#) Palmer had sent Lewis proofs of his forthcoming volume of poems, *The Ride from Hell: A Poem-Sequence of the Times for Three Voices*. See the letter to Palmer of 20 June 1955.

[168](#) Palmer, *The Ride from Hell*, p. 17, 'Counsel to a Young Poet', 67: 'Let there be light till all the stars seem snowing.'

[169](#) *ibid.*, p. 21, 'Soliloquy on Evil, and Advice to Satan', 31–5: 'If troubled Earth.../Marries the moon, and rolls a withered eye/In God's starred garment of blue-curving Space.'

[170](#) *ibid.*, p. 20, 5–7: ‘He has no wrist for altering, breaks no bar,/But leaves a cloud of darkness
where he treads–/Hypocrisy his most familiar form.’

[171](#) *ibid.*, pp. 27–34, ‘The Ride from Hell’.

[172](#) Over the period 10, 17, 24 November and 1 December, the *Sunday Times* listed 'The 99 Best Books for Children'. In the *Sunday Times* (17 November 1957), p. 9, the category of the best 'Traditional Fairy Tales and Hero Stories' included *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and Green's *King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table* (1957). Tolkien's *The Hobbit* was mentioned on 24 November (p. 9) as one of the best books of 'Fantasy and Humour'. The work voted the 100th best book is named on 8 December (p. 8) as Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden* (1911).

[173](#) *Mystery at Mycenae* was reviewed in *The Times Literary Supplement*, Children's Books Section (15 November 1957), p. xiv.

[174](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *Into Other Worlds: Space-Flight in Fiction, from Lucian to Lewis* (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1958).

[175](#) A play on William Congreve, *The Way of the World* (1700), IV, v, 63–4: [Mrs Millimant to her friend Mirabell] ‘These articles subscribed, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees dwindle into a wife.’

[176](#) Green devoted a chapter of *Into Other Worlds* to ‘The Great Lunar Hoax’: ‘[In 1835] the readers of *The New York Sun* were filled with an excitement that speedily became world-wide at the news of Sir John Herschel’s astronomical discoveries recently made by means of his giant telescope at the Cape of Good Hope. The reports...claimed to be reprinted from the Supplement to the *Edinburgh Journal of Science*: “In this unusual addition to our journal, we have the happiness of making known to the British public, and thence to the whole civilized world, recent discoveries in astronomy which will build an imperishable monument to the age in which we live, and confer upon the present generation of the human race a proud distinction through all future time” (p. 83). *The New York Sun* went on to report that by means of his telescope, Herschel had discovered planets in other solar systems, corrected many problems in astronomy, and—finally—discovered life on the Moon. While Sir John Herschel (1792–1871) was a real astronomer who was observing the sky from the Cape of Good Hope, he was not part of the hoax. Its author, said Green, ‘was the popular and successful journalist Richard Adams (1800–71), who had already achieved one successful “scoop” for the new paper whose fortune was made by the Great Lunar Hoax’ (pp. 91–2).

[177](#) Green, *Into Other Worlds*, ch. 11, p. 138: ‘One turns from [Jules Verne’s] *The Conquest of the Moon* to [H. G. Wells’s] *The First Men in the Moon* almost with reluctance. The extraordinary facility of Wells, suggestive even of insincerity, causes an unconquerable antipathy in some readers, just as does the insectile obsession which produced both his Martians and his Selenites...It is in...descriptions of the lunar landscape, the vivid realization of all that is strange and different upon another world, the compelling re-creation in the reader’s mind of Mr. Bedford’s experiences, that Wells excels all earlier writers and conquers the Moon once and for all. We may forget the story and the actors in it; the Selenites and their unpleasant civilization may leave no more than a slightly repellent after-taste: but scene after scene remains in the memory like moments in those dreams which come occasionally and leave a picture as clear as any born of actual experience...And so Mr. Bedford reaches the sphere, manages to return to Earth meaning to bring help to the captive Cavor—and leaves the sphere on the beach at Littlestone.’

[178](#) *ibid.*, ch. 13, p. 170.

[179](#) *Into Other Worlds* is dedicated to Lewis.

[180](#) Horace, *Carmina*, I, i, 36: '*Sublimi feriam sidera vertice*': 'I shall strike the stars with my sublime head.'

[181](#) Alexander Pope, *The First Epistle of the Second Book of Horace Imitated* (1737), 26:
'Above all Greek, above all Roman fame.'

[182](#) In his 'Notes on the Letters', Vauauken said: 'The "Second Bereavement" or "Second Death", as V called it is the passing of the poignant grief, which one perhaps longs to retain. The reference to "Hellas" was to an expression of enthusiasm by V who was getting into Greek studies' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 152b).

[183](#) Luke 2:22.

[184](#) John 16:7.

[185](#) Shelburne had moved to The Cotton, Apt. 505, 49 Eye Street NW, Washington 1, DC.

[186](#) 'private life'.

[187](#) After Lewis became a professor at Cambridge, the Tuesday meetings of the Inklings were moved to Mondays. This way Lewis could attend before getting a train to Cambridge.

188 i.e., *Land of the Lord High Tiger*.

[189](#) After completing his course at the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester, Harwood qualified as a chartered land agent and surveyor. At this time he was assistant factor with the British Aluminium Company at Fort William in Scotland.

[190](#) Mrs Gebbert had moved with her son, Charles, to 906 Hampstead Avenue, Richmond, Virginia.

[191](#) 'ask'.

[192](#) This portrait, which hangs in the National Portrait Gallery, London, is reproduced as the frontispiece of Sayers' *Letters*, vol. IV.

[193](#) Sayers, *Letters*, vol. IV, p. 426.

194 Gibb had sent Lewis a pot of honey.

[195](#) *Reflections on the Psalms*, ch. 4, p. 30: ‘The price of salvation is one that only the Son of God could pay; as the hymn says, there was no other “good enough to pay the price”.’ In a letter of 23 December 1957 Gibb said: ‘I have made some notes [on *Reflections on the Psalms*], for instance page 37: “To pay the price”, the hymn goes on with the words, which you do not give, “of sin”. You apply “of salvation”’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 239). They both had in mind the hymn by Cecil Frances Humphreys Alexander (1818–1895), ‘There is a green hill far away’ (1848), which appears in many hymnals including *The English Hymnal*.

196 'you lie in wait to catch me out'.

[197](#) 'a surgeon from a cobbler'. This is the title given Fable 14 in Book I of Phaedrus' collection of Aesopic fables.

[198](#) 'cobblers who go beyond their province'.

[199](#) 'Tully' is the name once used by English scholars of Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BC).

[200](#) The Sosii were a family of booksellers in Rome in Horace's time, and hence very likely in Cicero's time.

[201](#) 'It was the wine talking'. Sir Walter Scott, *Waverley* (1814), ch. 12: 'If a man be EBRIUS, or intoxicated—an incident which, on solemn and festive occasions, may and will take place in the life of a man of honour; and if the same gentleman, being fresh and sober, recants the contumelies which he hath spoken in his liquor, it must be held VINUM LOCUTUM EST; the words cease to be his own.'

¹ In *Reflections on the Psalms*, ch. 3, p. 22, Lewis said: ‘Take from a man his freedom or his goods and you may have taken his innocence, almost his humanity, as well. Not all the victims go and hang themselves like Mr Pilgrim; they may live and hate.’ In a letter of New Year’s Day 1958 Gibb wrote: “‘Hang themselves like Mr Pilgrim’? Who is Mr Pilgrim? We know today, or most of us do, but will others tomorrow or the next day? I doubt it. It is “not stepping o’er the bounds of modesty” to suggest that your book will outlast memory of Mr. Pilgrim’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 241).

‘Mr. Pilgrim’ was Edward Alexander Pilgrim (1904–54), the famous suicide of 1954. Pilgrim, of Romford, hanged himself when the local government insisted on purchasing his land under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, which allowed the compulsory buying of land (at its value in current use) for development. Pilgrim appealed unsuccessfully to housing minister Harold Macmillan, Churchill and the Queen; his suicide on 26 September 1954 subsequently became a national scandal for the government. Churchill accused Macmillan of killing Pilgrim. Eventually, the Town and Country Planning Act of 1954 included a ‘Pilgrim clause’ allowing landowners to be compensated more justly. Shortly before this Lewis had said in ‘Delinquents in the Snow’, *Time and Tide*, XXXVIII (7 December 1957), p. 1521: ‘I have not been driven to suicide like Mr. Pilgrim.’ The essay is reprinted in *EC*. See the biography of Edward Alexander Pilgrim in the *Oxford DNB*.

² Horace, *Odes*, III, xxx, 1: 'Exegi monumentum aere perennius': 'I have built a monument more lasting than bronze.'

3 Lewis jumped from (1.) to (3.).

⁴ They decided to use Arabic numbers of the same size throughout, e.g. Psalm 72:2.

⁵ Gibb said in his letter of 1 January 1959, ‘Next time I croak to my favourite hymn in Church I will sing: “There was no other good enough/To pay the price of redemption”’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 241).

[6](#) Luke 1:49. Significantly, Lewis alters Mary's words in the *Magnificat* ('quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est') to the present tense ('facit enim mihi magna qui potens est').

7 Luke 1:43.

⁸ George Orwell, *Animal Farm* (1945). In his essay, 'George Orwell', published in *Time and Tide*, XXXVI (8 January 1955), pp. 43–4, and reprinted in *Of This and Other Worlds*, Lewis said: 'What puzzles me is the marked preference of the public for *1984*. For it seems to me...to be merely a flawed, interesting book; but the *Farm* is a work of genius which may well outlive the particular and (let us hope) temporary conditions that provoked it' (*Of This and Other Worlds*, p. 114).

[9](#) For information on Anthony Fleming (1924–84) see the biography of Dorothy L. Sayers in *CL* II, pp. 1065–72.

[10](#) Published as 'A Panegyric to Dorothy L. Sayers' in *Of This and Other Worlds*.

[11](#) In the end he listed seventy-eight psalms in Appendix II.

[12](#) The blurb Gibb had written for *Reflections on the Psalms*, and sent with his letter of 22 January 1958, contained the sentence: ‘In his simple approach he often illustrates his study by skilfully relating the meaning of the Psalms to different periods: the time of Christ, of Coverdale’s translation found in the Book of Common Prayer and of the world today’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 245).

¹³ In *Reflections on the Psalms* Lewis used the translation of the Psalms found in the *Book of Common Prayer*. It was by Miles Coverdale (1487/8–1569), who translated the Bible. For more on Coverdale see *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, Bk. II, ch. 1, pp. 207–10.

14 Gibb and his family had been in Switzerland.

[15](#) The Greens' son, Richard, had been involved in an accident involving scissors. Although he made a full recovery in terms of appearance, he lost the sight of one eye.

[16](#) Lewis agreed to an abridgement of *Miracles* by the Association Press of New York. As he says here, he made some modifications in the abridgement, and after he had provided the note contained in the letter to Gibb of 22 February 1958, the abridgement was published in 1958 under the title *Miracles: A Preliminary Study* as a 'Reflection Book' by the Association Press, 291 Broadway, New York 7, NY. There are copies in the Library of Congress, Washington, DC and the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

[17](#) Following the launch of *Sputnik I*, on 3 November 1957 the USSR stunned the world by launching *Sputnik II* with a live dog named Laika on board. It has recently been revealed that Laika survived in orbit for four days, but died when the cabin overheated.

[18](#) See **Mervyn Laurence Peake** in the Biographical Appendix.

[19](#) Mervyn Peake, *Titus Groan* (1946); *Gormenghast* (1951).

[20](#) Peake, *Gormenghast*, ch. 21.

[21](#) In the Hall of Bright Carvings in *Titus Groan*, ch. 1.

22 The 'problem' would appear to be sexual abstinence and masturbation.

[23](#) 1 Corinthians 7: 5–6: ‘Do not refuse one another except perhaps by agreement for a season, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, lest Satan tempt you through lack of self-control. I say this by way of concession, not of command’ (RSV).

[24](#) Lewis was referring to Chapter 11 of *The Great Divorce* in which he and George MacDonald listen to a conversation between a Spirit and a Ghost whose life has been ruined by lust. That lust, in the form of a Lizard, sits on his shoulder 'whispering things in his ear'. When the Ghost permits the Spirit to kill the Lizard the Ghost is transformed into 'an immense man, naked, not much smaller than the Angel', and the Lizard is transformed into a great stallion.

[25](#) St François de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, Part III, ch. 9: ‘Of Gentleness towards Ourselves.’

[26](#) 'Will We Lose God in Outer Space?', *Christian Herald*, LXXXI (April 1958), pp. 19, 74–6.
Reprinted as 'Religion and Rocketry' in *The World's Last Night* and *Fern-seed and Elephants*.

[27](#) On 17 February 1958 Gibb wrote to Lewis about what would be the first paperback of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*: 'The Penguin people want to bring out THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE in a Puffin edition...I think Miss Baynes's illustrations would come out all right and indeed I don't think it would matter very much if they lacked perfection. They would probably want to use the frontispiece on the cover' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 254).

[28](#) Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*, ch. 6.

[29](#) Dickens, *Bleak House*, ch. 3.

[30](#) Mrs Shelburne was possibly referring to a group of abstract artists whose works were collected in an art repository.

32 This note appears exactly as here in the abridgement by the Association Press.

[33](#) In the end the title chosen for the abridged version of *Miracles* was the same as that of the hardback: *Miracles: A Preliminary Study*.

[34](#) Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *In Memoriam A.H.H.* (1850), 'Noble Rage', XXVII, 1–3.

[35](#) Flora Finching's aunt—known simply as 'Miss F.'s Aunt'—is one of the funniest characters in Charles Dickens's *Little Dorrit* (1855–7). She is described in ch. 13 as 'an amazing little old woman, with a face like a staring wooden doll too cheap for expression, and a stiff yellow wig perched unevenly on the top of her head, as if the child who owned the doll had driven a tack through it anywhere, so that it only got fastened on'.

36 The dedication was 'To Austin and Katharine Farrer'.

[37](#) The book contains 'Appendix I: Selected Psalms' (texts) and 'Appendix II: Psalms discussed or mentioned' (indexed). There is no other index.

[38](#) i.e., W. H. Smith, the bookseller and stationer.

[39](#) In the end they chose simple lettering, superimposed on a green background featuring a Jewish harp.

[40](#) In a note about this letter written in 1969 Wylie said: 'Like C.S.L. in his boyhood...Mr. Wylie was strongly influenced by a band of very charming Theosophists. Being a little older than C.S.L., he took it more seriously. After a year or two he completely repudiated it and became an Anglican priest. But in the late fifties he came across some more occult-minded people. In particular he was most impressed by two books; *Time out of Mind*, by Joan Grant [1956], and *Fool of Love*, by Kathleen Trevelyan [Katherine Trevelyan, *Fool in Love* (1962)]. Feeling that a good many of the experiences described therein must be true, however misinterpreted, he sought guidance as to how to reconcile this sort of thing with the Catholic Faith' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 15).

[41](#) These footnotes direct readers to the Psalm texts in Appendix I.

⁴² This quote, popularized by Lewis, is not easy to locate in the works of St Augustine and may be a paraphrase. Perhaps Lewis had in mind the following passage from the *Homilies on the Psalms*: 'It is good for the rich man to acknowledge his poverty. If he thinks himself full this is mere puffing, not abundance. Let him recognize that his hands are empty so that God can fill them' (*Augustine of Hippo: Selected Writings*, trans. Mary T. Clark, Classics of Western Spirituality series (Paulist Press: Mahwah, NJ, 1988), p. 244).

[43](#) Emma's father, who was always afraid of colds and draughts, in Jane Austen's *Emma*.

44 It did prove possible, as Lewis hoped, to include the whole of Psalm 68 in Appendix I.

[45](#) See 'Late corrections' attached to the letter of 27 March 1958.

[46](#) Mr Mudstone is David Copperfield's very stern stepfather in Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield*. Wackford Squeers is the bullying headmaster of Dotheboys Hall in Dickens's *Nicholas Nickleby*.

47 'the healing power of nature'.

[48](#) Dr Firor's essay, 'Divine Intercession', appeared in *Theology Today*, XV (January 1959).

[49](#) *Reflections on the Psalms*, ch. 8, p. 35: ‘God has given to His works His own character of *emeth*; they are watertight, faithful, reliable, not at all vague or phantasmal.’ *Emeth* is the Hebrew word for ‘truth’, and in *The Last Battle* *Emeth* is the young Calormene to whom Aslan says (ch. 15), ‘All the service thou hast done to Tash, I account as service done to me.’

[50](#) Lewis's poem 'The Sailing of the Ark' was originally published in *Punch*, CCXV (11 August 1948), p. 124. Revised and renamed 'The Late Passenger', it is included in *CP*.

[51](#) On Thursday, 17 April, Lewis gave one of his twice-weekly Cambridge lectures on ‘Some Difficult Words’. Much of what he mentions in this letter is found in the introduction to *Studies in Words*.

[52](#) Dr Bradbrook had probably drawn Lewis's attention to John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* (1623), V, iv, 30: 'ANTONIO. Some men have wish'd to die At the hearing of sad tidings; I am glad That I shall do 't in sadness.'

[53](#) Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, 9 April 1778, vol. III, pp. 252–3:

JOHNSON. *‘Goldsmith had no settled notions upon any subject; so he talked always at random...Chamier once asked him, what he meant by slow, the last word in the first line of “The Traveller.”*

““Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow.””

‘Did he mean tardiness of locomotion? Goldsmith, who would say something without consideration, answered, “Yes.” I was sitting by, and said, “No, Sir; you do not mean tardiness of locomotion; you mean, that sluggishness of mind which comes upon a man in solitude.”’

[54](#) That is, why make it Friday, when Lewis always fasted and ate fish.

55 May Day is the feast day of St Philip and St James.

[56](#) In his 'Notes on the Letters', Vanauken said: 'The "drastic act" was V's plan to resign post, get a schooner yacht (he had done a good deal of sailing), and take off for the South Seas' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 152c).

[57](#) Bishop Henry Irving Louttit (1903–84) was Suffragan Bishop of Southeast Florida, 1945–8, Coadjutor Bishop of Southeast Florida, 1948–50, and Bishop of Central Florida, 1950–70. He is the author of *Fear Not* (Greenwich, Connecticut: Seabury Press, 1954).

[58](#) Bishop Louttit, who was on the board of the Episcopal Radio-TV Foundation of Atlanta, Georgia, had asked Lewis if he would consider taping a series of talks that could be played during *The Episcopal Radio Hour* in the United States.

[59](#) In the United Kingdom the *Book of Common Prayer* can only be published by one of the 'privileged presses' as it is under perpetual Crown copyright. Eyre & Spottiswoode, one of several such presses, for many years published mainly Catholic books. Gibb replied to Lewis on 8 May 1958: 'The Prayer Book is passing out of Papal Hands in October. His Eminence, the managing director, is retiring from business, ripe in his years, and a mere Protestant is taking over. This will no doubt cause stirrings in Rome but none in Canterbury' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 302). Gibb was wrong. The author and publisher Douglas Francis Jerrold (1893–1964), a director of Eyre & Spottiswoode from 1929 to 1945, and chairman from 1945 to 1964, was a staunch Catholic. The copyright to the *Book of Common Prayer* remained in the hands of Eyre & Spottiswoode until 1990 when the company was purchased by Cambridge University Press, the present patentee of the *Book of Common Prayer*.

[60](#) This letter is in the archives of Toronto Public Library.

Jean Thomson (1902–75) was a librarian at Toronto Public Library, 1926–66. She studied children’s theatre at the University of London on a Carnegie Fellowship in 1934 and taught at the University of Toronto’s Faculty of Library Science in the 1950s and 1960s. She was head of Boys’ and Girls’ Services, Toronto Public Library, 1952–64, and of Public Services, 1964–6. Active in the American Library Association, the Canadian Library Association and the International Foundation of Library Associations, she helped develop the Osborne Collection of Early Children’s Books and the Friends of the Osborne and Lillian H. Smith Collections. In 1977, with the purchase of four drawings by John D. Batten and Arthur Hughes, the Friends established the Jean Thomson Collection of Original Art as part of the Osborne Collection. Thomson was the editor of the third edition of Toronto Public Library’s *Books for Boys and Girls* (1954), and its supplement published in 1958. In May 1958 she sent Lewis some children’s comments about his Narnian stories, and the following letter was his response.

[61](#) Kathleen Raine, 'Some Sources of *Tiriel*', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, no. 1 (November 1957), pp. 1–36.

[62](#) William Blake, *Tiriel* (1874). This long poem was the first of what are called Blake's 'Prophetic Books', which express his lifelong concern with the struggle of the soul to free its natural energies from reason and organized religion. *Tiriel* was written in 1789 and published in 1874. Geoffrey Keyes produced a more reliable text in 1925.

[63](#) Raine argued in ‘Some Sources of *Tiriel*’ that Blake’s work was largely influenced by a number of sources available up to 1789, the most notable of which were Cornelius Agrippa’s *Three Books of Occult Philosophy* (1651), Emanuel Swedenborg’s *Divine Love and Wisdom* (1763), Shakespeare’s *King Lear*, and Sophocles’s *Oedipus at Colonus* (401 BC). She concluded (p. 36) that ‘*Tiriel* stands as the symbol of all bodies of tradition, kingdoms, and institutions that seek perpetuity in Mnetha’s kingdom [memory], where records of the past are preserved like papyrus and mummies in the dry sands of the spiritual Egypt. But the long continuance of the temporal never leads to eternity; is, indeed, only an obstacle to the realization of that world of imagination that man can enter only by becoming “as a little child.”’

[64](#) Raine, 'Some Sources of *Tiriel*', pp. 1–2: 'Blake's interest in politics and history was of a peculiar kind, and in this he can be most justly compared to the Hebrew prophets; for he saw all human events, private or public, as the expression of supernatural forces, in time and place—forces that operate in and through man himself, but are none the less daimonic, since man may not be conscious of these or in control of them. Therefore the correspondence of history with myth is to be expected, and in writing of history in symbolic terms—or in placing in the margin of universal myth personal or historical events—Blake is never allegorizing, but, rather, entering imaginatively into the daimonic causes, and revealing the part that these are playing in events.'

[65](#) *ibid.*, p. 5: 'We should be careful not to assume, from a point of view prevalent only since Freud, that all rebellion against kings is a projection of the nursery rebellion against the father; in the case of Blake, it seems, strangely enough, to have been the other way about.'

[66](#) *ibid.*, p. 12: ‘So far is Blake unlike the “classics” as conceived by the eighteenth century that this living re-creation of the very spirit of Greek antiquity...has gone undetected.’

[67](#) *ibid.*, p. 19: ‘Blake doubtless found the name Manethon in [William] Stukeley’s work on Avebury and Stonehenge, as “a valuable piece of antiquity, call’d Manethon, the Egyptian’s Dynasties.” Now Blake neither valued nor venerated such pieces of antiquity as Manethon’s chronology. “Public Records! As if Public Records were True!” Blake wrote indignantly in the margin of [Richard] Watson’s *Apology for the Bible*. “Nothing can be more contemptible than to suppose Public RECORDS to be True.”’

[68](#) The *Prose Edda* is a thirteenth-century Norse work written by Snorri Sturluson. It is important for the stories it contains, the verses it preserves, and Sturluson's gift as a storyteller. It was compiled in about 1270, and the poems it contains are heroic lays about legendary Germanic heroes and mythological lays about the Norse gods from creation to the apocalypse. Lewis was referring to Chapter 18.

[69](#) Raine, 'Some Sources of *Tiriel*', p. 10: 'So Oedipus tells that Phoebus himself has led him at last to Colona.' Colonus, which is the usual spelling, is situated a mile and a half north of the Acropolis. It is described in Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*.

[70](#) Bartholomaeus Sibylla de Monopoli, OP (fl. 1490s) studied at Bologna and Ferrara. He became prior of the Dominican convent in Monopoli near Bari. His major work is the *Speculum Peregrinarum*.

[71](#) In the lectures at Oxford and Cambridge later published as *The Discarded Image*, Lewis pointed out in Chapter 6 that some medieval writers described ‘neutral’ spirits as well as angels and demons, and he used this idea in *That Hideous Strength* he suggests that there are also ‘neutrals’. See ch. 13, part IV, p. 314: ‘While it may be true at the end of the world to describe every eldil either as an angel or a devil, and may even be true now, it was much less true in Merlin’s time. There used to be things on this Earth pursuing their own business, so to speak. They weren’t ministering spirits sent to help fallen humanity; but neither were they enemies preying upon us.’

[72](#) John Wither, a character in *That Hideous Strength*, is the deputy director of the totalitarian organization that hopes to take over Britain. He is often observed walking alone, humming a tune, e.g. ch. 16, part IV, pp. 393–4: '[Wither] had passed from Hegel into Hume, thence through Pragmatism, and thence through Logical Positivism, and out at last into the complete void. The indicative mood now corresponded to no thought that his mind could entertain. He had willed with his whole heart that there should be no reality and no truth, and now even the imminence of his own ruin could not wake him...Straik and Filostrato were also still alive...As they rounded a corner they both saw what they had often seen before but had expected never to see again—the Deputy Director [Wither], stooped, creaking, pacing, humming his tune.'

[73](#) Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 388: 'Nonumque prematur in annum': 'Let it (what you have written) be kept back until the ninth year.'

[74](#) It is not known when Kuhn and Lewis first met, but it is likely to have been shortly after Lewis took up his Chair in Cambridge.

75 Butch Banton was a schoolboy writing from 512 Glassell Court, Alexandria, Virginia.

[76](#) Banton had asked why, in Chapters 9 and 10 of *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*, the weapons of the invisible Dufflepuds could not be seen, but the plates of food they passed back and forth were clearly visible.

[77](#) *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*, ch. 9: "I don't see all your weapons," said Reepicheep. "Are they invisible too?" The words were scarcely out of his mouth before they heard a whizzing sound and next moment a spear had stuck, quivering, in one of the trees behind them.'

⁷⁹ Peter Charles Bayley (1921–), Lewis’s former pupil, was born in Gloucester on 25 January 1921, the son of William Charles Abell Bayley and Irene Evelyn Beatrice (Heath) Bayley. He was educated at the Crypt School, Gloucester, and University College, Oxford, where Lewis tutored him in English. During the Second World War he served in the RAF and the Intelligence Corps (India), 1941–6. After taking a First in English in 1947, Bayley was a Junior Fellow of University College, Oxford, 1947–9, and Fellow and Praelector in English, 1949–72. He served as Master of Collingwood College and Lecturer in English, University of Durham, 1971–8, and Berry Professor of English at the University of St Andrews, 1978–85. See his essay, ‘From Master to Colleague’, *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, pp. 164–76.

[80](#) W. H. Lewis, *Assault on Olympus: The Rise of the House of Gramont between 1604 and 1678* (1958).

[81](#) The member of the family of Gramont who wrote to Warnie was Antoine (XII) Agénor Armand de Gramont (1879–1962), Duc de Guiche and Duc de Gramont, 1925–62. Warnie had probably infuriated the Duc de Guiche by some error of fact in his book.

[82](#) In her letter of 25 May 1958 Gebbert said: 'A tin of tobacco was sent off to you and the Major two weeks ago, but I grieve that there will be a duty charge once it arrives in Oxford. Next time, I shall send a parcel with one of my delicious, but intoxicating sherry fruit cakes, with a tin of tobacco tucked in the box and undeclared!' (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 299).

[83](#) Gebbert sent Lewis St Thomas Aquinas's 'Prayer Before Study' and asked for a translation. The original is: 'Creator ineffabilis, qui de thesauris sapientiae tuae tres Angelorum hierarchias designasti et eas super caelum empyreum miro ordine collocasti atque universi partes elegantissime distribuisti: Tu, inquam, qui verus fons luminis et sapientiae diceris ac supereminens principium, infundere digneris super intellectus mei tenebras tuae radium claritatis, duplices, in quibus natus sum, a me removens tenebras, peccatum scilicet et ignorantiam. Tu, qui linguas infantium facis disertas, linguam meam erudias atque in labiis meis gratiam tuae benedictionis infundas. Da mihi intelligendi acumen, retinendi capacitatem, addiscendi modum et facilitatem, interpretandi subtilitatem, loquendi gratiam copiosam. Ingressum instruas, progressum dirigas, egressum compleas. Tu, qui es verus Deus et homo, qui vivis et regnas in saecula saeculorum. Amen.' Lewis's translation does not include part of the first sentence, about the hierarchies of angels.

84 Wade Center.

[85](#) This letter was first published in the *Church Times*, CXLI (6 June 1958), p. 12.

[86](#) See the biography of Monsignor Ronald Knox (1888–1957) in *CL II*, p. 769 n.

[87](#) The Rt. Rev. Eric Hamilton (1890–1962) was Suffragan Bishop of Shrewsbury, 1940–4. He was Domestic Chaplain to King George VI, 1944–52, and to Queen Elizabeth II, 1952–62, and Dean of Windsor, 1944–62.

[88](#) Sir Gilbert Laithwaite (1894–1986), civil servant and diplomat, served in the India Office, 1919–49, in Pakistan, 1949–54, as under-secretary of state for Commonwealth relations, 1955–9, and was vice-chairman of the Commonwealth Institute, 1963–6. He came from a Lancastrian Roman Catholic family and adhered devoutly to that faith.

[89](#) Harold Macmillan, 1st Earl of Stockton (1894–1986), British Prime Minister, 1959–63, knew Ronald Knox from an early age. He was educated at Balliol College, Oxford, and after serving in the First World War, in 1924 he became Conservative MP for Stockton-on-Tees. He was defeated in the 1929 election but returned to the House of Commons in 1931. When Anthony Eden resigned in 1957 Macmillan became Prime Minister. He was returned to office in 1959, retiring in 1963.

[90](#) Sir John Cecil Masterman (1891–1977), academic and intelligence officer, was educated at Worcester College, Oxford, taking a First in Modern History in 1913. He was a tutor at Christ Church, Oxford, 1919–40. After serving with Intelligence during the Second World War, 1941–5, he was elected Provost of Worcester College in 1946. He retired in 1961.

[91](#) Bernard Marmaduke Fitzalan-Howard, 16th Duke of Norfolk (1908–75), Earl Marshal and Hereditary Marshal of England, was the only son of the 15th Duke of Norfolk, and succeeded to the title in 1917. The spokesman for the Catholic laity of England, he took part in the canonization of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales which included his ancestor, St Philip Howard (1557–95). See his biography in the *Oxford DNB*.

[92](#) Julian Asquith, 2nd Earl of Oxford and Asquith (1916–), inherited the earldom in 1928. He was raised a Roman Catholic and educated at Ampleforth Abbey and Balliol College, Oxford. He served as a lieutenant in the Royal Engineers, 1942–8. He was enormously active on behalf of his country, and served abroad in numerous diplomatic positions.

[93](#) Sir Sydney Castle Roberts (1887–1966), historian, was educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge, taking his BA in 1910. After serving in the First World War with the Suffolk Regiment, 1915–19, he returned to Cambridge where he was Fellow of Pembroke College, 1929–48, and Master, 1948–54. He is the author of *The Charm of Cambridge* (1933) and *Doctor Johnson* (1934).

[94](#) Francis McDougall Charlewood Turner (1897–1982) was born on 17 March 1897, the son of Charles Henry Turner, Bishop of Islington, and Edith Emma (McDougall) Turner. After Marlborough College he read English at Magdalene College, Cambridge, taking his degree in 1920. His work at Magdalene was interrupted while he served in the Royal Flying Corps, 1916–19, during which he sustained serious facial injuries. He was elected a Bye-Fellow of Magdalene in 1923 and Fellow in 1926, and he was President, 1957–62. He died on 18 January 1982. He is the author of *The Element of Irony in English Literature* (1926) and *The Pepys Library* (1950).

[95](#) Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, V, ii, 367: 'The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit.'

[96](#) Abridged *Miracles*, ch. 2, p. 26.

[97](#) Virgil, *Aeneid*, IV, 390–1: ‘Though much he fain would say’.

[98](#) Frank Churchill, a character in Jane Austen's *Emma* wrote 'a very handsome letter' to Mrs Weston (see the letter to Gibb of 22 December 1954).

99 Amadis is the flower of chivalry in Garcia de Montalvo's *Amadis of Gaul*.

[100](#) The correspondence about this matter has not survived, but Lewis was probably referring to the fact that before he became a client of Curtis Brown, his American publishers had been sending his royalties to Geoffrey Bles, who took a cut before what was left was passed to Lewis. One of the main differences in the new arrangement was that Curtis Brown made separate contracts with English and American publishers.

[101](#) Idrisyn Oliver Evans, *Peace and the Space Race and Other Verses* (Tadworth, Surrey: The Author, 1976), 'Family Favourites', 43–4: 'When from age and weakness we set him free,/And never again shall he sit on my knee.'

[102](#) *ibid.*, 1–4: ‘Some [cats] like ponies with waving mane,/Pace responsive to voice or rain,/Walk majestic or amble mild,/Trot exciting or gallop wild.’

[103](#) *ibid.*, p. 28: ‘(“Moggy”—a colloquial form of Grimalkin, meaning an aged or brindled cat).’
‘Grimalkin’ is a traditional name especially for an old female cat.

[104](#) Lew Wallace, *Ben Hur: A Tale of the Christ* (1880).

[105](#) Edwards said in his notes to this letter that he had written to Lewis with questions about the Malacandrians—the three species of rational beings found on Malacandra (or Mars) in *Out of the Silent Planet*. His questions concerned books and clothes (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 765, fols. 13–14). In fact, according to *Out of the Silent Planet*, ch. 16, both the *Sorns* and the *Hrossa* have some books, although ‘It is better to remember.’

[106](#) *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, ch. 3, 'Primary Epic', p. 17: 'By oral poetry I meant poetry that reaches its audience through the medium of recitation; a manuscript in the background would not alter its oral character so long as this manuscript was prompt-copy for a reciter and not a book to be sold to the public or given to the patron. The real question is whether the Homeric poems were composed for recitation. Both of them are admittedly too long to be recited as wholes. But we see from the *Odyssey* how that could be got over; a poet, asked for the story of the Trojan Horse, begins "at the point when the Greeks sailed away"...in other words, he seems to be familiar with the practice of serial or selective recitation from a poem...too long to recite in its entirety.'

[107](#) *Miracles* was to be reprinted as a Fontana paperback.

[108](#) Part of the introductory chapter of *Reflections on the Psalms* was published as 'The Psalms as Poetry' in *Fifty-Two*, no. 3 (August 1958), pp. 9–12.

[109](#) 1 Corinthians 7:8–10: ‘I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn. And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband.’

[110](#) A theophany is an appearance of God in visible form—temporary, and not necessarily material. One of the best-known examples is Exodus 33:20–3 when the Lord says to Moses: ‘Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shalt not be seen.’ Another occurs in Daniel 3:22–5 where, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were cast into the fiery furnace. Upon looking into the furnace ‘Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.’

[111](#) John 3:20.

[112](#) This is a common sentiment throughout the works of Thomas à Kempis, but Lewis, no doubt quoting from memory, rounded it off to suit his own letter. One place it may be found in the *Imitation* is Book III, ch. 46, 'Having Confidence in God When Words Fly'. The chapter begins with the Lord speaking to the soul as though it were a child: 'My Child, stand firm and trust in Me. For what are words but words? They fly through the air but hurt not a stone. If you are guilty, consider how you would gladly amend. If you are not conscious of any fault, think that you wish to bear this for the sake of God. It is little enough for you occasionally to endure words, since you are not yet strong enough to bear hard blows.'

[113](#) Matthew 27:46.

[114](#) Lewis wrote this reply at the foot of Gibb's letter of 25 July 1958.

[115](#) Lewis's article 'Willing Slaves of the Welfare State' appeared with a photograph of Lewis and Joy in *The Observer* (20 July 1958), p. 6. The photograph was taken by Michael Peto, the nose of whose dog is just visible between Lewis and Joy.

[116](#) *Der Ritt Nach Narnia oder Das Pferd und sein Junge* [*The Horse and His Boy*], trans. Lena Lademann-Waldhagen, illus. Richard Seewald (Freiburg: Herder, 1958).

[117](#) i.e., Canon Roger Lloyd, mentioned in the letter to Harry Blamires of 15 June 1953.

[118](#) Miss Bessie McKim was affiliated with a school run by the American Episcopal Mission in Zushi, Japan. In her teaching of children she used coloured pictures with stories beneath to produce 'a paper picture show'. She asked Lewis if she could use an abbreviated version of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* in this project. See her letter to Lewis of 17 July 1958 (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 319).

[119](#) See **Dr Caroline Rakestraw** in the Biographical Appendix. She had invited Lewis to record some talks for broadcast during the 'Episcopal Radio Hour', and he had agreed to talk on the 'four loves'.

[120](#) i.e. Dr Robert 'Humphrey' Havard.

[121](#) In 1970 the Episcopal Foundation issued Lewis's *Four Talks on Love* on audio cassettes, and they are now available on two CDs from the Episcopal Media Center, 644 West Peachtree Street, Suite 300, Atlanta, Georgia 30308-1925.

[122](#) Studley Priory at Horton-cum-Studley, a beautiful old hotel set in thirteen acres of wooded grounds a few miles from Oxford, where Lewis liked dining very much. It is now a private home.

[123](#) Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *Tithonus* (1860), 32–3: ‘A soft air fans the cloud apart; there comes/A glimpse of that dark world where I was born.’

[124](#) The photograph of Lewis and Joy in *The Observer* of 20 July 1958. See the letter to Jocelyn Gibb of 28 July 1958.

[125](#) One of the three species of rational beings in *Out of the Silent Planet*.

[126](#) *Old Greek Fairy Tales*, retold by Roger Lancelyn Green (London: Bell & Hyman, 1958).

[127](#) *ibid.*, pp. 73–90, ‘The Terrible Head’.

[128](#) *ibid.*, pp. 60–72, ‘The Prince and the Flying Horse’.

[129](#) *ibid.*, pp. 13–38, ‘The Invisible Prince’.

[130](#) The book is dedicated 'For June who complained that there were too many names in Greek mythology'.

[131](#) Launcelot, Pelleas and Pellinore are three knights in Arthurian legend.

[132](#) King of Gondor in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*.

[133](#) Eddison, *The Worm Ouroboros*, ch. 20: 'Corinius...came with his army north again to Owlswick as daylight began to fade...In great pomp rode he and his into Owlswick Castle.'

[134](#) *Arbol*, the Spanish word for 'tree', becomes in Lewis's interplanetary stories the Old Solar word for the Sun. Thus, 'the field of Arbol'.

[135](#) The planet in David Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus*.

[136](#) On 7 August 1958 Lewis addressed the Classical Association at Cambridge on the subject 'Translations of the Classics'. He lost the script of his lecture, and while it is impossible to know how accurately it was reproduced, it was reported in *The Times* (8 August 1958), p. 5: 'In spite of the unlikely hour (immediately after breakfast), the hilarity of Professor C. S. Lewis, in his most mischievous mood, proved irresistible this morning when he delivered to the conference of classical teachers here a withering attack on modern translations of the classics...They apparently spring, he declared, from "a very real hatred" of what most poetry, other than that of relatively recent times, has been.' According to the Special Correspondent, Lewis expressed little sympathy with the idea that a translation should try to be 'what the author would have written if he had lived in our own day...What reason had we to suppose that Virgil, for instance, would have written anything at all, or got it published if he had?' It was said that Lewis thought the answer lay 'in the fact that the cardinal sins today are archaism and poetic diction'. He denied that 'poetical language' was only fit for 'toffs and cissies', pointing out how we still kept archaism and ritual elsewhere in life 'because there could not be a more obvious way of heightening the effect'. Lewis thought 'the only safe way was to seek as closely as possible the effect a translation would give a reader if he was really a tiptop, modern classical scholar.' Emile Victor Rieu was the translator of Virgil and Homer; see his biography in *CL* II, p. 564n.

[137](#) See **Derek Brewer** in the Biographical Appendix.

[138](#) A play on Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, 'The Manciple's Tale', 316: 'But, as I said, I am not textual, and *Troilus and Criseyde*, V, 887.'

[139](#) Brewer had asked Lewis to criticize the draft of his introduction to Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Parlement of Foulys*, ed. D. S. Brewer (London: Nelson's Medieval and Renaissance Library, 1960). See Brewer's essay, 'The Tutor: A Portrait', *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, pp. 142–4.

[140](#) Alanus ab Insulis (1128–c. 1202), *De Planctu Naturae*.

[141](#) i.e. J. A. W. Bennett, Fellow of English at Magdalen College, Oxford.

[142](#) Venus.

[143](#) The 'Uncle Remus' stories of Joel Chandler Harris (1848–1908), one of which is *Uncle Remus and Brer Rabbit* (1906).

144 Or possibly 'edifice'.

[145](#) In Richard Wagner's *Ring of the Nibelung*.

[146](#) He was referring specifically to *The Lord of the Rings*.

[147](#) Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Bk. I, ch. 2: 'There was sorrow then too, and gathering dark, but great valour, and great deeds that were not wholly vain.'

[148](#) In his letter of 5 September 1958 Gibb said 11,000 copies of *Reflections on the Psalms* had been sold before it was published.

[149](#) *Reflections on the Psalms* was reviewed in *The Times Literary Supplement* (12 September 1958), p. 517.

[150](#) William Norman Birkett, first Baron Birkett (1883–1962) was a barrister and judge. In his review of *Reflections on the Psalms*, entitled ‘Comment Wise and Unwise’, in the *Sunday Times*, no. 7060 (7 September 1958), p. 6, Birkett was furious with Lewis for comparing those who oppress the poor (ch. 2) with a demand from modern income tax collectors: ‘It is very greatly to be regretted that so distinguished a man as Professor Lewis whose work has brought to him a great and admiring public, should allow himself in a commentary on the Psalms to write in this fashion. He would have been wiser to write to the Board of Internal Revenue.’

[151](#) Greeves had trained as an artist at the Slade School of Fine Art, London, 1921–3. See *CL I*, p. 564n. It is not known which picture is referred to here.

[152](#) Wordsworth, 'Ode: Intimations of Immortality', 28.

[153](#) A copy of *Reflections on the Psalms*.

[154](#) 'evil enchantment'.

[155](#) Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, V, ii, 348–9: ‘As she would catch another Antony/In her strong toil of grace.’

[156](#) Kipling, *Just So Stories*, 'How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin'.

[157](#) Writing about his tutorials with W. T. Kirkpatrick in *SBJ*, ch. 9, Lewis said: 'Kirk did not, of course, make me read nothing but Homer. The Two Great Bores (Demosthenes and Cicero) could not be avoided.'

[158](#) Ben Jonson (1572/3–1637), English dramatist and poet, whose plays include *Every Man in his Humour* (1601).

[159](#) Lancelot Andrewes (1555–1626), English divine who was one of the principal influences on the formation of a distinctive Anglican theology.

[160](#) Mrs Humphry Ward (Mary Augusta Ward, 1851–1920), novelist, whose *Lady Connie* (1916) is mentioned in Lewis's letter to his father of 6 October 1916 (*CL* I, p. 230).

[161](#) This was a review of *Reflections on the Psalms* in *Time*, LXXII, no. 12 (22 September 1958). The book was published by Harcourt Brace of New York on 5 November 1958.

[162](#) Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 334.

[163](#) *The Pilgrim's Regress* was published by Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, in December 1958. All of Lewis's preface was retained with the exception of the penultimate paragraph, which began 'The fact that...', and ended '...personality of an individual'.

[164](#) Lewis's reply is written at the bottom of Gibb's letter of 1 October 1958.

[165](#) Miss Gardener was Jocelyn Gibb's secretary.

[166](#) These were corrections for the 1959 reprint of *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*.

[167](#) The *Theologia Germanica* is an anonymous fourteenth-century German spiritual treatise counselling radical poverty of spirit and renunciation of zeal as a way of union with God. The edition Lewis used was *Theologia Germanica: Which setteth forth many fair Lineaments of divine Truth, and saith very lofty and lovely things touching a perfect Life, Edited by Dr. Peiffer from the only Complete Manuscript Yet Known*, trans. Susanna Winkworth (London: Macmillan, Golden Treasury Series, 1874; new edn, 1924).

[168](#) Paul Tillich (1886–1965), Protestant theologian, was born in Germany and studied at Berlin, Tübingen and Halle (1904–8). He was Professor of Theology at Marburg, 1924, and at the Technical Hochschule at Dresden, 1925, and Professor of Philosophy at Frankfurt, 1929–33. In 1933 he settled in the United States and was successively Professor of Theology at the Union Theological Seminary, New York, Harvard Divinity School, and the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. Tillich attempted to bridge the gap between Christian faith and modern culture. He employed the ‘method of correlation’, according to which the content of divine revelation is stated as answering the questions arising out of the cultural situation. This situation was interpreted by Tillich in terms of existentialism, ontology and Jungian psychology. His best-known works are *The Shaking of the Foundations* (1948), *Systematic Theology* (1951–64) and *The Courage to Be* (1952).

[169](#) Emil Brunner (1889–1966), Swiss theologian, was a pastor at Obstalden, 1916–22. He taught at Zurich, 1922–53, and from 1956 at the International Christian University in Tokyo. He supported Karl Barth in opposing theological liberalism, but ran foul of Barth in his strong support of Martin Buber and by his acceptance of natural theology, which maintains that a limited knowledge of God may be gained from creation. His writings include *The Philosophy of Religion from the Standpoint of Protestant Theology* (1937), *The Divine Imperative* (1937), *Man in Revolt* (1939) and *Christianity and Civilization* (1948–49).

[170](#) Jacques Maritain (1882–1973) sought to relate the philosophy of St Thomas Aquinas to modern culture. See his biography in *CL II*, p. 134n

[171](#) Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813–55), Danish philosopher. Raised in the atmosphere of Hegelian dialectics—the only philosophy taught in Denmark—he eventually attacked it with his own ‘existential’ dialectics. He wrote of sin and redemption with profound psychological insight in *The Concept of Dread* (1844) and *Sickness unto Death* (1849). He insisted that ‘truth is subjective’ and, while he laid great emphasis on the relation of the individual soul to God, he did not believe in the possibility of a system of objective doctrinal truth.

[172](#) Lewis wrote to his brother on 14 January 1940 (*CL II*, p. 324), ‘my “Sunday book” is Niebuhr’s *Interpretation of Christian Ethics* a very disagreeable but not unprofitable book.’ Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971), American theologian, received a BA in Theology from Yale University in 1914 and was ordained in 1915. He was Pastor of Bethel Evangelical Church, Detroit, Michigan, 1915–28, and Professor of Applied Christianity at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, 1928–60. He was critical of liberal theology and, besides reinstating the doctrine of original sin, he aimed at expounding a ‘vital prophetic Christianity’. His principal works include *Does Civilization need Religion?* (1928), *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (1939) and *Christian Realism and Political Problems* (1954).

[173](#) Nicholas Berdyaev (1874–1948), Russian existentialist religious philosopher. His works show an evolution from Marxism to Idealism and from thence to Orthodox mysticism. They are imbued with the transcendent meaning of history. His seminal work, written before the Russian revolution, is *The Meaning of the Christian Act* (1955). His main post-revolutionary work is *Freedom of the Spirit* (1935), mentioned to Lewis in 1941 by Oliver Quick (see *CL II*, p. 466). Berdyaev was very sensitive to the moods of his time, and he believed that the ‘contradictions of modern history’ portend a new era of ‘divine–human creation’.

[174](#) Martin Buber (1878–1965), Jewish religious thinker, was a native of Vienna. He took part in the Zionist movement, which he joined in 1898. From 1906 he spent nearly all his time on religious studies. He was editor of *Der Jude*, a leading monthly of German-speaking Jewry, 1916–24. In 1923 he accepted a call to Frankfurt University, where he lectured on Jewish theology and ethics until in 1933 he was deprived of his Chair by the government. He stayed in Germany until 1938, when he went to Palestine to become Professor of Sociology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and there he spent the rest of his life. His most important writings include *The Legend of the Baal-Shem* (1956) and *Kingship of God* (1967). However, the work that meant much to Lewis was Buber’s *Ich und Du* (1923), translated as *I and Thou* by Ronald Gregor Smith. Writing in beautiful poetic language, Buber contrasts the ‘I-Thou’ relationship in which the other is granted its full reality, with the ‘I-It’ relationship in which the other is subjected to my needs and purposes. Lewis mentions Buber in *Letters to Malcolm*, ch. 4: ‘He speaks as “I” when we truly call Him “Thou”. (How good Buber is!).’

[175](#) See the letter to Dom Bede Griffiths of 5 July 1949 (*CL* II, p. 954).

[176](#) See the biography of Karl Barth in *CL* II, p. 351n.

[177](#) Rudolf Otto, *Das Heilige* (1917; Eng. trans. *The Idea of the Holy*, 1923). See the mention of this book in the introductory chapter of *The Problem of Pain*

[178](#) See the references to Nygren's *Agape and Eros* in *CL II*, pp. 147, 153–4, 158, 165.

[179](#) Gustaf Aulén, *Christus Victor* (1931).

[180](#) Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*.

[181](#) Thomas Howard (1935–) was born in Philadelphia into a family of six children. His father was the editor of a Protestant weekly journal and the love of words was a major element in the household. Howard gained his BA at Wheaton College, Illinois, his MA at the University of Illinois, and his Ph.D. at New York University, his thesis being on the novels of Charles Williams. He has taught at schools in England and New York. For fifteen years he taught at Gordon College, Massachusetts, and, after being received into the Catholic Church in 1985, at St John's (archdiocesan) Seminary, Boston. He has written twelve books, including one on Lewis's fictional works and one on Williams's novels. He is married to Lovelace Oden, and they have two grown-up children.

[182](#) Captain Frank Henry (1901–2004) was born on 7 January 1901 at Dunleer, Drogheda, Co. Louth. He was the sister of Vera Henry, Mrs Moore's goddaughter. He served in the army, reaching the position of captain. Following his retirement he and Vera ran a guest-house near Drogheda, where Jack and Warnie often went on holiday. Frank would motor them around their favourite places in Ireland and, following Jack's death, Warnie spent many of his Irish holidays with Frank. Frank Henry later retired to Brooklands Nursing Home, Kilkeel, where he died on 13 December 2004.

[183](#) Tobermoney House, Dunleer.

[184](#) Lewis had been invited to the London book launch of J. B. Phillips's *The New Testament in Modern English* (London: Bles; Collins, 1958).

[185](#) D. R. Davies, *Down, Peacock's Feathers: Studies in the Contemporary Significance of the General Confession* (London: Centenary Press, 1942; rev. edn, 1961).

[186](#) In his *Méditations Philosophiques* (1641), René Descartes attempted to reconstruct the whole of philosophy on the basis of a few self-evident intuitions. One of the best known is the argument for the existence of the self in consciousness, as found in his Second Meditation—‘cogito ergo sum’. Davies does not mention Descartes in *Down, Peacock’s Feathers*.

[187](#) Tolkien had held the Merton Chair of English Language and Literature since 1945, and he planned to retire in 1959. As Tolkien had been one of the electors of the Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English—then held by Lewis—so Lewis was one of the electors of the Merton Chair. The electors chose Norman Davis (1913–89) to succeed Tolkien, and he held the Chair from 1959 to 1980.

[188](#) Christopher Tolkien (1924–), Professor Tolkien’s son, was a lecturer in English at the University of Oxford. Since Lewis became a professor at Cambridge the Inklings had held their meetings at the ‘Bird and Baby’ on Monday mornings. See the biography of Christopher Tolkien in *CG*, pp. 728–30.

[189](#) In Dickens, *Great Expectations*, ch. 37, Wemmick takes Pip to meet 'the aged P' or 'the aged Parent'.

[190](#) Matthew 6:34.

[191](#) Matthew 6:28.

[192](#) The Rev. Norman Pittenger (1905–97) was born in Boston and educated at Princeton University. He trained for the Anglican priesthood at General Theological Seminary, New York, and was ordained in 1937. He taught at General Theological Seminary, 1935–51, the last seventeen years as Professor of Apologetics. In 1966 he moved permanently to England, where he became a senior member of King’s College, Cambridge. He wrote more than fifty books, in many of which he maintained that traditional Christian doctrines are incompatible with modern knowledge. Following the publication of *Time for Consent? A Christian’s Approach to Homosexuality* (1967) he became open about his homosexuality. Pittenger attacked Lewis in an article entitled ‘Apologist Versus Apologist: A Critique of C. S. Lewis as “defender of the faith”’ in *The Christian Century*, LXXV (1 October 1958), pp. 1104–7. Lewis’s ‘Rejoinder to Dr Pittenger’ was published in *The Christian Century*, LXXV (26 November 1958), pp. 1359–61, and is reprinted in *Timeless at Heart: Essays on Theology*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Fount, 1987).

[193](#) Kilby's criticism of Pittenger's article, 'C. S. Lewis and His Critics', was published in *Christianity Today*, III (8 December 1958), pp. 13–15.

[195](#) i.e., Green's *The Land Beyond the North*. The author gave this summary of his story (p. iv): 'Melas is the hereditary Guardian of the Grove in which the ever-watchful serpent guards the Golden Fleece. He is swept away with the Argonauts on a voyage to cleanse themselves from the curse that is upon them following the killing of her brother by the sorceress Medea. They wander over land and sea to the kingdom of the North Wind and farther still, to the Land beyond the North. The climax comes on the altar stone at Stonehenge as at mid-summer the rough people of Borvon prepare to make a human sacrifice to their god.'

[196](#) *ibid.*, pp. 141–53, ‘Golden Apples’.

[197](#) Lewis meant the stories of the Argonauts, the Golden Fleece, Jason and Medea, told by Apollonius Rhodius (c. 295–215 BC) in *Argonautica* and retold in William Morris, *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867).

[198](#) *ibid.*, pp. 87–99, ‘The Flight from Asgard’.

[199](#) *ibid.*, pp. 9–21, ‘The Guardians of the Grove’.

[200](#) Mary Renault, *The King Must Die* (1958), a retelling of the story of Theseus, boy-king of Eleusis. Ritually preordained to die following his marriage to the sacred Queen, he defies the gods' decree and after battling to the death the half-man, half-bull Minotaur, claims his inheritance, the throne of Athens.

[201](#) i.e., Cambridge. 'Tabland', and 'Tab', meaning a student of Cambridge, come from the Latin 'Cantab.' and 'Cantabrigiensis'.

[202](#) E. R. Eddison, *The Mezentian Gate* (London: Elek, 1958).

[203](#) Frederick Bateson, who was on the English faculty at Oxford. See his biography in *CL* II, p. 415n.

[204](#) Charles Perrault, *Contes des Fées* (1781).

[205](#) The final honour course in Modern Languages at Cambridge University.

[206](#) See **Richard Ladborough** in the Biographical Appendix.

[207](#) 'On Fairy-Stories' in *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*, and reprinted in Tolkien's *Tree and Leaf*.

[208](#) Virgil, *Georgics*, IV, 176: 'to compare small things with great ones'.

[209](#) Geoffrey Francis Fisher (1887–1972), Archbishop of Canterbury, 1945–61. Fisher was educated at Marlborough College and Exeter College, Oxford. Following his ordination he held a number of appointments including that of Bishop of London, 1939–45. He showed great interest in reunion of the churches, and in 1960 he visited the Oecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and Pope John XXIII. He was the first Archbishop of Canterbury to visit the Vatican since 1397. From 1946 he devoted much time to the revision of canon law, and in 1958 he set up the Commission to Revise the Psalter. He retired in 1961.

[210](#) G. A. Chase, *A Companion to The Revised Psalter* (1963), pp. 1–2.

[211](#) This letter is in the archives of Lambeth Palace.

212 *Reflections on the Psalms.*

[213](#) A. C. Harwood, *The Recovery of Man in Childhood: A Study in the Educational Work of Rudolf Steiner* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1958).

[214](#) *ibid.*, p. 36: 'At about the age of fourteen...the adolescent no longer accepts authority, and wishes to form his own opinions. He is extremely clever and ruthless in argument, and the wise adult will avoid controversy with him.'

[215](#) 'under the form of a human being'.

[216](#) Harwood, *The Recovery of Man in Childhood*, pp. 171–2: ‘Up to adolescence the thought life of children has been naturally objective, it has been *given to them* in the same way as their vitality, their likings and dislikings, their impulses to do this or that. After puberty...they begin to find the source of their thoughts in their own inner life. The stage of the individual child at this time may be compared to the change in social history from a traditional patriarchal monarchy to a city-state making its first blundering endeavours to formulate its own laws. It is a tremendous moment when a child first realizes that he has an inner world of thought, feeling and sensation which is his own peculiar treasure, for which he is alone responsible, and to which no one else on earth can say *Open Sesame*.’

[217](#) *ibid.*, p. 181: ‘Adolescents are living especially strongly in the two opposite systems of the head and nerves on the one hand and the metabolism and limbs on the other: to put it more exactly, the process of growth has reached the limbs and the process of awakening has penetrated to the head. Hence arise the two poles of adolescence—the cold cutting criticism on the one hand and the flaming indignation (and other passions) on the other. For the time being the rhythmical life is overwhelmed by these two extremes and the adolescent finds it hard to preserve his balance.’

[218](#) This letter was originally published in *The Times Literary Supplement* (28 November 1958), p. 689, under the title 'Books for Children'.

[219](#) The reviewer of Roger Lancelyn Green's *The Land of the Lord High Tiger* said in *The Times Literary Supplement* (21 November 1958), Children's Book Section, p. x: 'One is made uneasy by the title and the jacket, which together recall, purposely no doubt, the land of Narnia (surely a holy land with but one reporter?), and this feeling is not dispelled by anything in the book. It is not pleasant to wander in the land of the tamed and shabby tiger; Mr Green does not know of the truth in Narnia, though he has been taken there.'

[220](#) Clyde S. Kilby's 'C. S. Lewis and His Critics', mentioned in Lewis's letter to Kilby of 2 November 1958.

[221](#) Lewis was referring to his 'Rejoinder to Dr Pittenger'. See the letter to Kilby of 2 November 1958.

[222](#) See the letter to *The Times Literary Supplement* (28 November 1958) above.

[223](#) 'Incubuses, oppressive demons'.

[224](#) Kathleen Raine, 'The Sea of Space and Time', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 20, no. ¾ (July–December 1957), pp. 318–37, an essay about William Blake's painting, *The Sea of Space and Time*.

[225](#) Porphyry (AD 233–304?) was one of the chief exponents of Neo-Platonism. Lewis went on to learn about Porphyry, and wrote in *The Discarded Image*, ch. 4, p. 48: ‘On its highest level the Pagan resistance [to Christianity] can almost be identified with the neo-Platonic school. In it the great names are those of Plotinus...Porphyry...Iamblichus...and Proclus...The first was a genius of the highest order, but Porphyry—and even he often indirectly—was the principal influence in the West. The whole school, while partly a spontaneous development of the Greek genius, seems to me to be also a deliberate response to the challenge of Christianity and, in that respect, indebted to it.’

[226](#) Kathleen Raine, *Blake and Tradition*, A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, 2 vols. (Volume I: Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968; Volume II: London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969).

[227](#) *An Experiment in Criticism* (1961), ch. 11, p. 121: 'Can I say with certainty that any evaluative criticism has ever actually helped me to understand and appreciate any great work of literature or any part of one? When I inquire what helps I have had in this matter I seem to discover a somewhat unexpected result. The evaluative critics come at the bottom of the list. At the top comes Dryasdust. Obviously I have owed, and must continue to owe, far more to editors, textual critics, commentators, and lexicographers than to anyone else. Find out what the author actually wrote and what the hard words meant and what the allusions were to, and you have done far more for me than a hundred new interpretations or assessments could ever do. I must put second that despised class, the literary historians.'

[228](#) See the biography of Paul Elmer More (1864–1937) in *CL* II, p. 145n.

[229](#) On the evenings they spent together in 1933 see *CG*, pp. 25–6.

[230](#) *The Great Divorce*, ch. 11, p. 86: ‘That Nature or Arch-Nature of that land rejoiced to have been once more ridden, and therefore consummated, in the person of the horse.’

[231](#) 'quite another matter'.

[232](#) *SBJ*, ch. 15, p. 184: 'I was driven to Whipsnade one sunny morning. When we set out I did not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and when we reached the zoo I did.' The date, we discover, was 28 September 1931, for Warnie records the event in his diary (*BF*, pp. 86–8).

[233](#) The most publicized early experiments in extra-sensory perception were those published by Dr Joseph Banks Rhine (1895–1980) in a monograph entitled *Extra-sensory Perception* (Boston: Boston Society for Psychic Research, 1934). Rhine’s work on extra-sensory perception was undertaken at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, and Rhine Research Center in Durham still continues to be a thriving centre for parapsychological research. The definitive work on the subject is *Extra-Sensory Perception After Sixty Years: A Critical Appraisal of the Research in Extra-Sensory Perception*, by Joseph Gaither Pratt, Joseph Banks Rhine, Burke M. Smith, Charles Edward Stuart and Joseph A. Greenwood (Holt: New York, 1940; Humphries: Boston, 1966).

[234](#) Necromancy, conjuring up the dead for divination, is mentioned in several places in the Old Testament. In 1 Samuel 28:11–20 a witch calls up the form of Samuel. The practice is forbidden in Isaiah 8:19–20: ‘And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.’ See also Deuteronomy 18:9–14.

[235](#) Colossians 2:18: 'Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.'

[236](#) Arthur Ford (1869–1971), American spiritualist medium, was the founder of the International General Assembly of Spiritualists. He realized his psychic abilities during the First World War. While serving in the army he would ‘hear’ the names of people he served with: several days later those names appeared on the casualty list. After leaving the army he joined the Spiritualists, later emerging as a trance medium. In 1927 he travelled to Great Britain; one of his sessions was attended by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who told people afterwards that it was the most amazing thing he had seen in forty-one years of psychic experience. Ford’s autobiography, *Nothing So Strange* (New York: Harper), was published in 1958. He came to public prominence in 1967 when, during a television discussion on life after death, he went into a trance and delivered several messages to Episcopal Bishop James Pike (1913–69). One claimed to be from Pike’s son who had committed suicide, and another from the theologian Paul Tillich. Bishop Pike was so impressed that he affirmed his belief in the reality of psychic phenomena in his book, *The Other Side* (1968). However, after Ford’s death, Allen Spraggett and William Rauscher, the authors of his biography, *Arthur Ford: The Man Who Talked with the Dead* (1973), discovered his notes for the session among his papers, revealing that he had faked the séance with Pike’s son.

[237](#) Wade Center.

[238](#) W. H. Lewis, *Louis XIV: An Informal Portrait* (London: Deutsch, 1959).

[239](#) Vanauken's extortion was not necessary because, as Lewis said in his letter to Clyde S. Kilby of 2 November 1958, 'The editor sent me Pittenger's article and offered to print my reply.'

[240](#) A character in Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, First Part, p. 99.

[241](#) The Ampleforth Arms public house is located at 53 Collingwood Road, about a quarter of a mile from The Kilns.

242 'a suicide', lit. 'one who commits self-felony'.

[243](#) Vanauken had been referring to the 'drastic act' of sailing off to the South Seas. See the letter of 26 April 1958.

244 Vanauken sometimes went sailing off the coast of Massachusetts.

[245](#) In his 'Notes on the Letters', Vauauken remarked that the 'lies' referred to here were: '(1) Whether one might pretend to a medical degree to comfort an irrational sick person; (2) Whether one might pretend to some negro blood to remove the black-white barrier with a negro family' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 152c).

[246](#) Phoebe Hesketh, *The Buttercup Children: Poems* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1958).

[247](#) *ibid.*, p. 62, 'The Dream', 16.

[248](#) *ibid.*, p. 64, 'Becalmed', 18–19: 'A trail/Of safety-slime insures me to the ground.'

[249](#) *ibid.*, p. 73, 'Where the Ivy throws a Dark Cloak over the Wall', 19–20: 'I know/Him through your absence.'

[250](#) Mrs Krieg had written to Lewis from the American Embassy in Santiago, Chile.

[251](#) Lewis had misunderstood. Philinda is Mrs Krieg.

[252](#) *Of Reflections on the Psalms.*

[253](#) William Jovanovich (1920–2001), chief executive of Harcourt, Brace & Company—later Harcourt Brace Jovanovich—from 1954 until 1990. This immensely talented publisher was the author of several novels.

[254](#) i.e., *Studies in Words*.

[255](#) Lewis had arranged for Owen Barfield to send Shelburne regular payments from the Agapony fund.

[256](#) Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, First Part, p. 113.

[257](#) This is the Old Solar word used in *Out of the Silent Planet*, ch. 11, p. 68, meaning 'rational creatures', such as humans and the three rational animal species on Malachandra.

[258](#) He was spending a year in Palestine.

[259](#) This letter was originally published in *The Christian Century*, LXXV (31 December 1958), p. 1515, under the title 'Version Vernacular'. Cf. W. Norman Pittenger, 'Pittenger-Lewis', *ibid.* (24 December 1958), pp. 1585–6.

[260](#) Henry B. Chapin (1930–) received his BA from Columbia University, and his MA and Ph.D. from the University of New Mexico. He was Instructor of English at the University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky, 1962–5, Assistant Professor of English, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio, 1965–7, Professor of English, Wilmington College, Ohio, 1967–78, and Professor of English at the University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu, 1978–95.

[261](#) 'Carols' was a typewritten book that has never been published.

¹ Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, 1730, vol. I, p. 75: ‘Being himself a poet, Johnson was peculiarly happy in mentioning how many of the sons of Pembroke were poets; adding, with a smile of sportive triumph, “Sir, we are a nest of singing birds.”’

2 'Wyvern' is the name given to Malvern College in *Surprised by Joy*.

[3](#) Sarah Neylan was engaged to marry Lieutenant Christopher Patrick Tisdall of the Royal Navy. See *CL II*, p. 1055.

⁴ Blaise Pascal, *Pensées* (1670), VII.

⁵ George MacDonald, *Alec Forbes of Howglen* (1865), vol. I, ch. 33: ‘The sole wisdom for man or boy who is haunted with the hovering of unseen wings, with the scent of unseen roses, and the subtle enticements of “melodies unheard”, is *work*.’

[6](#) Edwyn Bevan, *Symbolism and Belief* (1938).

[Z](#) Ottorino Foffano, *Don Giovanni Calabria: Servo di Dio* (Verona, 1959). This work contains a preface by Pedrollo.

[8](#) Kilby wrote to Lewis on 15 January 1959: ‘I wish I might have a word or two from you on one comment written by Professor Cornelius Van Til of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. He says not all your writings are orthodox and asks, “Is it orthodox to hold that man must seek to ascend in the scale of being from animal life to participation in the life of the triune God?” The book in which he thinks you teach this is BEYOND PERSONALITY. While I do not plan to enter any public controversy with Professor Van Til, I am wondering if you would consider this a proper description of your book’ (Wade Center). Cornelius Van Til (1895–1987), an American Calvinist scholar, was Professor of Apologetics at Westminster Theological College, 1929–72.

[9](#) John 1:12.

[10](#) St Athanasius, *The Incarnation of the Word of God*, LIV, 3.

[11](#) See Clyde S. Kilby (ed.), *A Mind Awake: An Anthology of C. S. Lewis* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1969).

[12](#) The Rt. Rev. Frederick Donald Coggan (1909–2000) was educated at St John’s College, Cambridge, taking his degree in 1931. He trained for the ministry at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, and was ordained in 1934. He was Professor of Theology at Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, 1937–44, after which he returned to England to become Principal of the London College of Divinity, 1944–56. He was Bishop of Bradford, 1956–61, Archbishop of York, 1961–74, and Archbishop of Canterbury, 1974–80. He was Chairman of the Commission to Revise the Psalter, 1960–4, and during this period Lewis came to know and like him very much.

[13](#) The Rt. Rev. George Armitage Chase (1886–1971) was educated at Rugby School and Queen’s College, Cambridge, receiving a BA in 1911. Following his ordination in 1911 he was Fellow and Dean of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, 1913–34, Master of Selwyn College, Cambridge, 1934–46, and Bishop of Ripon, 1946–59. He is the author of *A Companion to the Revised Psalter* (1963).

[14](#) Sir John Dykes Bower (1905–1981) was educated at Cheltenham College and Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, taking a BA in 1924. He was successively organist of Truro Cathedral, 1926–9, of New College, Oxford, 1929–33, of Durham Cathedral, 1933–6, and of St Paul’s Cathedral, 1936–67. He was Associate Director of the Royal School of Church Music, 1945–52.

[15](#) Gerald Hocken Knight (1908–78) was educated at Truro Cathedral School and Peterhouse, Cambridge, where he took a BA in 1928. He was organist of St Augustine's, Queen's Gate, South Kensington, 1931–7, and of Canterbury Cathedral, 1937–52. He was Director of the Royal School of Church Music, 1952–72, and Overseas Director of the Royal School of Church Music, 1973–8.

[16](#) David Winton Thomas (1901–70), Hebrew scholar, was educated at Merchant Taylor's School and St John's College, Oxford, where he took his BA in 1923. He was Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Languages in the University of Durham, 1930–8, and Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Cambridge, 1938–68.

¹⁷ Mrs Shelburne had read Lewis's article, 'The Efficacy of Prayer', in *The Atlantic Monthly*, CCIII (January 1959), pp. 59–61. In the article, reprinted in *Fern-seed and Elephants*, Lewis said: 'I have stood by the bedside of a woman whose thigh-bone was eaten through with cancer and who had thriving colonies of the disease in many other bones as well. It took three people to move her in bed. The doctors predicted a few months of life; the nurses (who often know better), a few weeks. A good man laid his hands on her and prayed. A year later the patient was walking (uphill, too, through rough woodland) and the man who took the last X-ray photos was saying, "These bones are as solid as rock. It's miraculous"' (pp. 78–9). The 'good man' was the Rev. Peter Bide, who married Lewis and Joy in the Wingfield-Morris Hospital.

[18](#) The birthday of Samuel Pepys (1633–1703), whose library and diary are among the greatest treasures of Magdalene College, was on 23 February.

[19](#) Sophocles (496–406 BC), *Antigone*.

[20](#) Peter Tranchell (1922–93), former undergraduate of Cambridge University, taught music as a Fellow of Gonville and Caius College. His serious compositions included the opera *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1951), as well as the music for Euripides' *Bacchae* in 1956, and the music for Sophocles' *Antigone* in 1959. He was also a composer of light music, which included his musical comedy *Zuleika* (after Max Beerbohm) produced in Cambridge in 1954 and revived in 1957. The *Antigone* was performed in the Arts Theatre, Cambridge, on 26 and 28 February 1959.

[21](#) Euripides (480–406 BC), *Bacchae*.

22 'in their control'.

[23](#) See Richard Ladborough's essay, 'In Cambridge', *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, p. 193: '[Lewis] read the whole of Pepys Diary with insight and, of course, with intelligence, and made one of the best speeches on Pepys I have ever heard. This was in hall at the annual dinner held to celebrate Pepys' birthday. Pepys was in fact a late acquaintance of his, and he took it for granted with his usual modesty, that his hearers knew the text as well as *he* did.'

24 Gibb had just undergone surgery.

²⁵ Gibb was reprinting Lewis's 'On Three Ways of Writing for Children' in two issues of *Fifty-Two* and he sent proofs of the article to Lewis on 2 February 1959, saying: 'This is how we thought we might deal with your article on children's books... You will see our proposal is to put it into two numbers of FIFTY-TWO because we found it difficult to curtail the article sensibly, into the required length for one' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 364). The first part of the article appeared in *Fifty-Two*, no. 4 (Autumn 1959), pp. 3–7, under the title 'Three Ways of Writing for Children: I: The Proper Meeting Between Man and Child', the second in no. 5 (Spring 1960), pp. 5–11, under the title 'Three Ways on Writing for Children: II: Children and the Fantastic'. The sentence 'I think it possible that by confining your child to blameless stories of child life in which nothing at all alarming ever happens, you would fail to banish the terrors, and would succeed in banishing all that can ennoble them or make them endurable' occurs on the last page of the second part.

[26](#) Watts, drawing master at King William's College, Castleton, Isle of Man, was working on a translation of the works of the Roman poet, Sextus Propertius.

[27](#) Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI, 409: 'seen after so long'.

[28](#) Propertius, *Elegies*, Bk. II, Poem 1, 16: 'the greatest tale is born from nothing'.

29 'naughtiness'.

[30](#) Propertius, *Elegies*, Bk. II, Poem 28, 49: 'Amongst the dead are so many thousands of the beautiful'.

[31](#) James Cook (1728–79). Lewis probably read *Captain Cook's Voyages Round the World*, with an introductory life by M. B. Synge (London: Nelson, 1897).

32 The verse is by Lewis himself.

33 Don Holmes was writing from 1121 N. Foote Avenue, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

[34](#) This was probably a mistake for 20 February 1959 because it is a reply to Gibb's letter of 19 February.

[35](#) ‘Literals’ are typesetting errors such as misspellings and incorrect letters or fonts. Gibb had written to Lewis on 19 February 1959 about the proofs of a paperback edition of *Surprised by Joy*: ‘This comes out in May and the proofs have just arrived in the form of galleys. Now I know you hate parcels and I don’t suppose you like correcting galley proofs very much more. Would you like us to check for literals and then we needn’t burden you at all?’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 372).

36 p.p.

[37](#) The book published as a result of this proposal was George MacDonald, *Phantastes and Lilith*, introduction by C. S. Lewis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964). The introduction was taken from Lewis's preface to *George MacDonald: An Anthology*.

38 p.p.

[39](#) Hooton said of this letter: ‘The only letter of any length that I have preserved was posted on March 4, 1959, and the reason for it was this. During a conversation, I learned to my surprise that he had never read Masefield’s book “The Box of Delights” and, as I knew that he liked Masefield’s work very much, I sent him a copy for Christmas, 1958...and received no acknowledgement. Some weeks later, I had this delightful apology’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 95).

[40](#) John Masefield, *The Box of Delights, or, When the Wolves were Running* (1935).

⁴¹ John Dixon Walsh (1927–), historian, was born in Hornchurch, Essex, on 4 September 1927, the son of the Rev. John Shaw Walsh and Margaret (Dixon) Walsh. Both were Methodist missionaries. John was educated at Kingswood School, Bath, and in 1945 he was elected a Scholar of Magdalene College, Cambridge. After serving in the army, 1946–8, he took a BA in 1951 and a Ph.D. in 1956, after which he remained at Magdalene College as a Bye-Fellow and Research Fellow. He became Fellow in Modern History at Jesus College, Oxford, in 1958 and he is now an Emeritus Fellow. On his move to Oxford, Walsh became a member of the Inklings, who met on Monday mornings in term. See his ‘Reminiscences: Magdalene, 1948–58’, *Magdalene College Magazine and Record*, New Series, no. 34 (1989–90), pp. 45–9.

[42](#) George Cavendish, *The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey* (1641; 1810).

[43](#) *Of Reflections on the Psalms.*

[44](#) M. Madeleva, *My First Seventy Years* (New York: Macmillan, 1959). This was Sister Madeleva's autobiography.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 75–6: ‘Oxford that Trinity term [1934] meant and continues to mean for me Mr. C. S. Lewis. After attending his second lecture on the Prolegomena to the Study of Medieval Poetry I said to some of the students at Cherwell Edge, “Mr Lewis is the one person at Oxford with whom I should like to tutor.” “But,” they exclaimed in amazement at my temerity, “Mr. Lewis refuses to tutor a woman.” “That,” I replied stoutly, “does not change my statement in the least”...At the beginning of the course he announced by titles nineteen lectures. Later in the term he missed three of these because of illness...I had been anticipating impatiently the single lecture on Boethius. I wrote as much to Mr. Lewis. He gave in response three lectures on the author of *The Consolation of Philosophy*. This was the graciousness of the teacher. Later, I wrote to thank him and to ask if there was available a bibliography on his course. He replied by writing out for me a history of the development of his study, a list of the books I should read relating to it, a list I might read, and a list to which I need pay no attention at all. This was the gentleman. Mr. Lewis had tutored me.’

[46](#) In 1897 Lewis's mother's brother, Augustus Hamilton, married a Canadian girl, Annie Sargent Harley (1866–1930), and they spent their lives in Belfast. Annie Hamilton became Mrs Lewis's best friend, and she helped look after the Lewis brothers when Flora Lewis died. See Lewis's tribute to her in *SBJ*, ch. 3.

[47](#) Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, I, iii, 147.

⁴⁸ In 'Memories of C. S. Lewis in Cambridge', *The Chesterton Review*, XVII, nos. 3 and 4 (August/November 1991), p. 383, Reynolds said: '[While] at work on the continuation of Dorothy Sayers' translation of *Paradiso*, I [wrote] to C. S. Lewis to ask to what extent he thought Charles Williams had influenced her in her views on Dante.' This letter is his reply.

[49](#) i.e. Charles Williams's *The Figure of Beatrice*. On Dorothy L. Sayers' debt to Williams, see Barbara Reynolds, *The Passionate Intellect: Dorothy L. Sayers' Encounter with Dante* (1989).

[50](#) Williams was elected a member of the Oxford Dante Society on 15 February 1944. For a list of the Members of the Oxford Dante Society up to 1965 see *Centenary Essays on Dante*, ed. Colin Hardie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), pp. 144–7.

[51](#) See the biography of Richard MacGillivray Dawkins (1871–1955) in *CL* II, p. 227n. He was Professor of Byzantine and Modern Greek Language and Literature at Oxford, 1922–39, and a member of the Oxford Dante Society from 1930.

[52](#) Benedict Humphrey Sumner (1893–1951), historian, was Tutor in Modern History at Balliol College, Oxford, 1922–44, and Warden of All Souls, Oxford, 1945–51. He was elected a member of the Oxford Dante Society in 1929.

[53](#) George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (1871–2), Bk. 1, ch. 10: ‘Among all forms of mistake, prophecy is the most gratuitous.’

[54](#) Their old friend Jane ‘Tchanie’ McNeill died at home in her sleep on 24 March 1959. See her biography in *CL* I, p. 117n, and the longer one in *CG*.

[55](#) Jane McNeill's mother, Margaret McNeill, who died in 1946. Jane's father, James Adams McNeill (1853–1907) was the headmaster of Campbell College, Belfast, 1890–1907, and after he died Jane remained at home looking after her mother. See the letter to Arthur Greeves of 5 January 1947 (*CL* II, p. 755).

[56](#) Virgilian hexameter is the six-foot dactylic line of Latin poetry such as Virgil's *Aeneid*.

[57](#) Virgil, *Aeneid*, I,32–3.

[58](#) St Michael's Cathedral, Toronto.

[59](#) 1 Peter 3:19.

[60](#) Horace, *Odes*, II, i, 6: 'periculosae plenum opus aleae'.

[61](#) John Kenneth Cameron Armour (1895–1975), a master at Campbell College, had asked Lewis to write a piece about Jane McNeill for their school magazine. Lewis's tribute to Jane, entitled '*Molliter Ossa Cubent*' ('Soft may her bones lie'—from Ovid, *Tristia*, III, iii, 76), was published in *The Campbellian*, 14, no. 9 (July 1959), pp. 692–3, and is reprinted with her biography in *CG*.

[62](#) 'The Efficacy of Prayer', *The Atlantic Monthly*, CCIII (January 1959), pp. 59–61.

[63](#) 'On Obstinacy in Belief', *The Sewanee Review*, LXIII (Autumn 1955), pp. 525–38.

[64](#) i.e., 'Will We Lose God in Outer Space?'

[65](#) i.e., 'Christian Hope—Its Meaning for Today'.

[66](#) McCallum was collecting the volume of Lewis's essays to be published as *The World's Last Night and Other Essays* by Harcourt, Brace & World of New York on 10 February 1960.

[67](#) 'Lilies that Fester', *The Twentieth Century*, CLVII (April 1955), pp. 330–41.

[68](#) i.e., 'Prudery and Philology'.

[69](#) This essay, 'Good Work and Good Works', was published in *Good Work* [formerly *Catholic Art Quarterly*], XXIII (Christmas 1959), pp. 3–10.

[70](#) i.e. 'On Three Ways of Writing for Children'.

⁷¹ Starr was present at a meeting of the Inklings at the Bird and Baby in 1948. Writing about it in *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, pp. 222–3, he said: ‘As I recall, there were about eight or ten gathered there. The only ones I remember surely, besides Lewis, were J. R. R. Tolkien and Lord David Cecil. I believe that Father Gervase Mathew was also present...The conversation at The Bird and Baby was rather casual and general; I do not recall any sustained serious discussion. It was almost entirely informal, friendly talk among men of like vocations and interests. More than anything else, I received the impression of Lewis as the catalyst, the animating element in the group.’ In 1959 those most likely to be at a meeting of the Inklings were Lewis and his brother, J. A. W. Bennett, Lord David Cecil, James Dundas-Grant (see his biography in *CG*), Hugo Dyson (see his biography in *CL* I, pp. 988–90), Colin Hardie, Robert ‘Humphrey’ Havard, Ronald Buchanan McCallum (see his biography in *CG*), Father Gervase Mathew OP (see his biography in *CG*), Christopher Tolkien, John Wain (see his biography in *CL* II, p. 888n) and John Walsh.

[72](#) To visit Professor and Mrs Eugène Vinaver. See the letter to Elizabeth Vinaver of 19 May 1959.

[73](#) Luke 1:43: 'Et unde hoc mihi ut veniat mater Domini mei ad me?' (Vulgate): 'And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?'

[74](#) Griffiths was writing a work to be published in the UK as *Christian Ashram: Essays Towards a Christian–Hindu Dialogue* (London: Dartman, Longman & Todd, 1966), and reprinted in the USA as *Christ in India* (New York: Scribner, 1967).

75 'fear of the gods'.

[76](#) Luke 16:1–13.

[77](#) *ibid.*, v. 8: 'the lord'.

[78](#) Kilby attached the following note to this letter: ‘Written after I had sent him a copy of the Wheaton College Statement Concerning Inspiration of the Bible and asked for his opinion.’

[79](#) i.e., the book of Ruth in the Old Testament.

[80](#) Romans 15:4.

[81](#) Genesis 19.

[82](#) 1 Corinthians 7:10: 'yet not I, but the Lord' *ibid.*, v. 12: 'I say, not the Lord'.

[83](#) Matthew 27:5: 'And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.'

[84](#) Acts 1:18–19: ‘Now that man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.’

[85](#) Luke 1:1–4: ‘For as much as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.’

[86](#) James 1:17.

[87](#) John 11:49–52: ‘And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.’

[88](#) In her letter of 1 May 1959 Gebbert said: 'I always think crosses *are* sad and should be abolished as symbols' (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 306).

[89](#) *ibid.*: 'I begin work next week on a new play. It's a morality play, but contemporary.'

[90](#) i.e., W. T. Kirkpatrick.

[91](#) Wade Center.

[92](#) The script of Lance Sieveking's radio dramatization of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, which was to be broadcast in September and October 1959.

[93](#) The Fount paperback of *Surprised by Joy* was published on 4 May 1959.

[94](#) Moorman was doing research for his book, *The Precincts of Felicity: The Augustinian City of the Oxford Christians* (Tallahassee, Florida: University of Florida Press, 1966).

[95](#) Alice Elizabeth Malet (Vaudrey) Vinaver (1919–), generally known as Elizabeth, was the daughter of Hugh John Kenelm Vaudrey. On 23 September 1939 she married Eugène Vinaver (see his biography in *CL* II, p. 166 n). Vinaver was Professor of French language and literature at Manchester University, 1933–66. He and Elizabeth had one son. Following her husband's retirement in 1966 they divided their time between Canterbury and Paris.

[96](#) 'Mrs Gordon' was Ida L. Gordon, author of *The Double Sorrow of Troilus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970). She was the wife of E. V. Gordon (1896–1938) who edited, with J. R. R. Tolkien, *Gawain and the Green Knight* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925).

[97](#) In Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte D'Arthur*, Joyous Gard, which lies somewhere in Northumberland, is the home of Sir Lancelot.

98 'host's gift'.

[99](#) The offprint was Vinaver's article, 'la recherche d'une poétique médiévale', published in *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale*, II (1959).

[100](#) *Le Roman de Tristan et Iseut, renouvelé par Joseph Bédier* (Paris, [1900]). See the letter to Arthur Greeves of 22 May 1916 (*CL* I, p. 183).

[101](#) 'that suddenly springs from the genius of the people'.

[102](#) Wace (c. 1100–after 1171) is the author of the Arthurian poem, *Roman de Brut* (1155) which was based on Geoffrey of Monmouth (d. 1154), *Historia Regum Britanniae* (1138).

[103](#) Layamon (fl. late 12th century), whose *Brut* (first quarter of 13th century), one of the first major texts written in a Middle English dialect, was based on the works of Wace and Geoffrey of Monmouth. See the discussion of *Arthurian Chronicles, Represented by Wace and Layamon*, trans. Eugene Mason (London: Everyman's Library, [1912]), in *CL* I, pp. 162 n, 439–40.

[104](#) Geoffrey Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (written 1381–6) was based on Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–75), *Il Filostrato* (1348). See Lewis's 'What Chaucer really did to "Il Filostrato"', *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, XVII (1932), pp. 56–75, and reprinted in *SLE*.

[105](#) This was cogently expressed in ‘The Genesis of a Medieval Book’, a Cambridge lecture delivered at this time and published in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*: ‘We must not say that the Grail “is” a Celtic cauldron of plenty, or that Malory’s Gawain “is” a solar deity, or that the land of Gome in Chrestien’s *Lancelot* “is” the world of the dead. Within a given story any object, person, or place is neither more nor less nor other than what that story effectively shows it to be. The ingredients of one story cannot “be” anything in another story, for they are not in it at all’ (pp. 39–40).

[106](#) Pierre Corneille (1606–84), French dramatist.

[107](#) Molière (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin) (1622–73), French playwright, author of comedies of manners.

[108](#) In his Preface to Malory's *Morte D'Arthur*, the publisher William Caxton (c. 1422–91) revealed that Malory took his story 'out of certain books of French, and reduced it into English'. On what those French sources were, see Eugène Vinaver, 'Sir Thomas Malory' in *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages: A Collaborative History*, ed. Roger Sherman Loomis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), pp. 543–52.

[109](#) 'the beautiful = the primitive'.

[110](#) 'courtly lyricism'.

[111](#) *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, Bk. III, ch. 3, pp. 490–1: ‘The sonneteers wrote not to tell their own love stories, not to express whatever in their own loves was local and peculiar, but to give us others, the inarticulate lovers, a voice. The reader was to seek in a sonnet not what the poet felt but what he himself felt, what all men felt. A good sonnet...was like a good public prayer: the test is whether the congregation can “join” and make it their own, not whether it provides interesting materials for the spiritual biography of the compiler...The whole body of sonnet sequences is much more like an erotic liturgy than a series of erotic confidences.’

[112](#) i.e., *Major British Writers*, vol. I.

[113](#) The dispute with E. M. Forster began after the publication in *The Twentieth Century* of Forster's 'Letter' (see note 102 to the letter to Ruth Pitter of 5 March 1955), which states: 'Humanism covers my main belief...My belief in the individual, and in his duty to create and to understand and to contact other individuals'. Lewis included in a footnote to his essay 'Lilies that Fester' three interpretations of what Forster meant by this statement: '(a) That we ought all to have as many children as we possibly can...(b) That we ought all to become novelists or playwrights and create imaginary characters...(c) That we must educate people in such a way that they become more individual' (p. 333). Forster's reply appears in his 'Letter to the Editor', *The Twentieth Century*, CLVII, no. 939 (May 1955), p. 453.

[114](#) The essays finally chosen for *The World's Last Night And Other Essays* were 'The Efficacy of Prayer', 'On Obstinacy in Belief', 'Lilies that Fester', 'Screwtape Proposes a Toast', 'Good Work and Good Works', 'Religion and Rocketry' and 'The World's Last Night'.

115 Miss Joan Bockelmann was writing from 40 Sussex Road, Tenafly, New Jersey.

[116](#) See **Richard Ladborough** in the Biographical Appendix.

[117](#) Derek Pepys Whiteley served in Magdalene College Library for five years, 1958–63, and completely recatalogued the printed books in the college library. Afterwards he was Deputy Keeper of the Pepys Library, Magdalene College, 1963–75. He was also the author of *George du Maurier: His Life and Work* (1948).

[118](#) Philippians 1:21: 'To live is Christ, and to die is gain.'

[119](#) *Miracles*, Appendix B, p. 191: ‘All prayers are heard, though not all prayers are granted.’

[120](#) Congo the Chimp (1954–64) produced some 400 paintings between the ages of two and four. There was a display of his art in 1957, to which art experts reacted with a mixture of scorn and scepticism. Congo's paintings were included in an exhibition of chimpanzee art at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London. The chimpanzee was also a popular guest on *Zoo Time*, a children's TV programme of the 1950s and 1960s. Some of Congo's paintings were sold on 20 June 2005 at Bonham's auction house in London for very large sums.

[121](#) 'on the other hand'.

[122](#) In her letter of 12 June 1959 Gebbert said: ‘About the morality play: I ask an absurdly impertinent favor of you and your brother—the reading and criticizing of each scene as it comes off the Gebbert typewriter...It is as “editors” of my work I look to you both, for I need so badly the quick and sharp eye and the erudite mind, as well as the ever-necessary red pencil’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fol. 308).

[123](#) Fr Gervase Mathew (1905–76), a member of the Inklings, was educated at Balliol College, where he read history. On taking his BA in 1928 he joined the Dominican Order, and lived in Blackfriars, Oxford, for the rest of his life. He was one of the creators of Byzantine studies in Oxford, and was University Lecturer in Byzantine Studies, 1947–71. See his biography in *CG*.

[124](#) Kathleen Raine was a Research Fellow of Girton College, Cambridge, 1954–9. Although her Fellowship was coming to an end, Muriel Bradbrook, Mistress of Girton, made it possible for her to remain there. Raine had obviously told Lewis of her longing to return to her home in Paultons Square, London. Writing about it years later in *The Lion's Mouth: Concluding Chapters of Autobiography* (1977), she said: 'In Girton I could not...take root. Some homing instinct had taken me back to Paultons Square as the only place left where I might still pick up the threads of the broken pattern of my life' (p. 99).

[125](#) Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Adonais*, (1821), XXXII, 4.

[126](#) Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, illus. Mervyn Peake (London: Chatto & Windus, 1943).

[127](#) Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey* (1818), ch. 10: 'Oh, horrid!'

[128](#) Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798), V, 78–9.

[129](#) When the third volume of Peake's trilogy, *Titus Alone*, was published in 1959 by Eyre & Spottiswoode, his blurb by Lewis was published on the book jacket: 'In his earlier romances Mr Peake created a new category, the Gormenghastly, and we wonder already how we did without it and why no one defined it before. He now expends the same disquieting power on the experiences of one who has escaped from Gormenghast. But "escaped" now turns out to be the wrong word. The world presented is, with a frightful and fruitful distortion, our own—a world at once triumphant and miserable and having lost its roots, doubtful whether it ever had them save in fantasy, unable to strike new ones, insulted by more than Betjemanian parodies of the old, both dreading and desiring an impossible return to home; meanwhile, vast, squalid, convulsed with the energies of nightmare. All this, rendered by a prose which sometimes hits you like a mace and sometimes brushes you like a butterfly's wing, adds up to a work which some will wish to forget as soon as they have read it. They will not succeed.'

[130](#) For a history of the Old Inn at Crawfordsburn see David Bleakley, *C. S. Lewis—At Home in Ireland* (Bangor: Strandtown Press, 1998), pp. 185–6.

[131](#) Miss Rosamond Cruikshank was writing from 263 Rockland Street, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

[132](#) Lewis almost certainly meant ‘I liked nearly all my books more than *Screwtape*’—or ‘*Screwtape* less than nearly all my other books’—a view of his work he mentioned often.

[133](#) Lewis was to repeat this analogy about Purgatory in *Letters to Malcolm*, ch. 20.

[134](#) A ball-point pen. Lewis nearly always wrote with a nib pen.

[135](#) Numbers 22:24–31. See *CL* II, p. 485.

[136](#) See **Francis Warner** in the Biographical Appendix. Warner, a postgraduate student at St Catharine's College, Cambridge, hoped Lewis would supervise his doctoral thesis on the Latin text of H. Cornelius Agrippa (1486–1535), *De Occulta Philosophia*.

[137](#) Thomas Rice Henn (1901–74) was Fellow of English at St Catharine’s College, Cambridge, 1926–69. See his biography in *CL* II, p. 112n.

[138](#) See note 120 to the letter to Stella Aldwinckle of 12 June 1950. For a more detailed account of the changes he made, see the biography of Elizabeth Anscombe in *CG*.

[139](#) See the letter to Arthur Greeves of 10 June 1917: ‘Did I tell you that there was a queer little volume in Latin by Cornelius Agrippa the great magician...? Unfortunately the print is so execrable and the worms have done their work so well that I cannot make much of it: but I love to have it in my hands, and think of all the wizards who have centred their hopes on it—perhaps on this very copy, for it is some 300 years old’ (*CL* I, p. 320).

[140](#) 'God, sun, and parents'.

[141](#) Denis Saurat (1890–1958), author of *Milton: Man and Thinker* (1944) and other works.

[142](#) *Johnson on Shakespeare*, ed. Arthur Sherbo (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968), *The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson*, vol. VII, Preface, p. 73: 'In narration he affects a disproportionate pomp of diction and a wearisome train of circumlocution, and tells the incident imperfectly in many words, which might have been more plainly delivered in few.'

[143](#) William Cobbett (1763–1835), the self-educated son of a farmer, was the author of *Rural Rides* (1830), mentioned in *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, Bk. III, ch. 2, p. 398. His prose was described as ‘plain, broad, downright English’.

[144](#) David Hume (1711–76), Scottish philosopher, whose main work is his *Treatise on Human Nature*, 3 vols. (1739–40).

[145](#) The Commission to Revise the Psalter was meeting at Selwyn College, Cambridge, on 20–22 July, and Lewis and Eliot planned to meet there.

[146](#) Mrs Gertrude E. Diggle was writing from 25 South Road, Herne Bay, Kent.

[147](#) Mrs Diggle had offered Lewis a first edition of George MacDonald's *Phantastes*. On the importance of this book to Lewis see the letter to Arthur Greeves of 7 March 1916 (*CL I*, pp. 169–70).

[148](#) King's College, Aberdeen.

[149](#) Greville MacDonald, *George MacDonald and His Wife*, introduction by G. K. Chesterton (London: Allen & Unwin, 1924).

[150](#) *Mere Christianity*, Bk. 3, ch. 1, p. 72: ‘Morality...seems to be concerned with three things. Firstly, with fair play and harmony between individuals. Second, with what might be called tidying up or harmonizing the things inside each individual. Thirdly, with the general purpose of human life as a whole...Modern people are nearly always thinking about the first thing and forgetting the other two...When a man says about something he wants to do, “It can’t be wrong because it doesn’t do anyone else any harm,” he is thinking only of the first thing...Unless we go on to the second thing—the tidying up inside each human being—we are only deceiving ourselves...What is the good of drawing up, on paper, rules for social behaviour, if we know that, in fact, our greed, cowardice, ill temper, and self-conceit are going to prevent us from keeping them?...You cannot make men good by law: and without good men you cannot have a good society...[Thirdly] If individuals live only seventy years, then a state, or a nation, or a civilization, which may last for a thousand years, is more important than an individual. But if Christianity is true, then the individual is not only more important but incomparably more important, for he is everlasting and the life of a state or a civilization, compared with his, is only a moment.’

[151](#) A play on the words of the hymn, 'The foe behind, the deep before' by John Mason Neal (1818–1866).

[152](#) Thomas à Kempis, *Imitation of Christ*, Bk. II, ch. 12.

[153](#) He meant Chapter 3.

[154](#) Naomi Mitchison, *The Conquered* (1923).

[155](#) Torques were collars or bracelets made of a twisted narrow band, usually of gold or silver. They are characteristic of the archaeological remains of the ancient Gauls and Britons.

[156](#) Julius Caesar's *Gallic War* is concerned with his campaigns from 58 to 52 BC.

[157](#) Alanus ab Insulis, French poet and theologian, whose *De Planctu Naturae* Lewis discusses in *The Discarded Image*.

[158](#) The wizard Merlin makes his first appearance in French romantic poetry in a poem of which only a fragment has been preserved, believed to be by Robert de Boron, and dating from the end of the twelfth century. Upon this poem was based the French prose romance of *Merlin*, part of which is assigned to Robert de Boron. It exists in two forms, the first known as the 'ordinary' *Merlin* and the other as the *Suite de Merlin*. An English translation was made about the middle of the fifteenth century.

[159](#) *Merlin: A Middle-English Metrical Version of a French Romance*, ed. Ernst A. Kock (London: Early English Text Society, 1904–32). It is available in a recent edition, *Prose Merlin*, ed. John Conlee (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute, 1998).

[160](#) Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Histories of the Kings of Britain*.

[161](#) Frederick Madden, *Layamon's Brut, or, Chronicle of Britain*, 3 vols. (London: Society of Antiquaries, 1847).

[162](#) Sir Thomas Malory, *Works*, ed. Eugène Vinaver (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947). See *CL* II, p. 780.

[163](#) Matthew 18:3.

[164](#) By this time Edwards had visited Lewis at The Kilns, and in his note to the letter of 20 August 1959 he said: 'I had experienced the usual frustration of such one-off meetings; when one has had time to digest the conversation, one would like to follow up with another question! This led me, shortly after the meeting, to write to Lewis again with the following proposal. I should camp in the grounds of his house making myself useful about the grounds...and in other ways. And from time to time I would have the opportunity to chat to Lewis' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 765, fols 14–15).

165 *The Four Loves* is dedicated 'To Chad Walsh'.

[166](#) This was the manuscript of a book Vinaver was writing on the development of medieval narrative, since published as *The Rise of Romance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).

[167](#) E. V. Gordon and Eugène Vinaver. 'New Light on the Text of the Alliterative *Morte Arthure*', *Medium Aevum*, VI (1937), pp. 81–98.

[168](#) 'Medieval French, 'sense, meaning'.

[169](#) This is a letter some believe Dante sent to Can Grande della Scala (1291–1329), to whom Dante sent a fair copy of his *Paradiso*. See the letter to Cecil and Daphne Harwood of 11 September 1945 (*CL* II, p. 669).

[170](#) Psalm 114:1.

[171](#) i.e., Homer's.

[172](#) Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (1953).

[173](#) The tale of Alexandre and Soredamors is related in *Cligés*, one of the numerous Arthurian romances by Chrétien de Troyes (fl. 1170–90).

[174](#) *Erec* is another of Chrétien de Troyes's romances; its hero Erec fights a knight named Mabonagrain.

[175](#) An old French term used by Chrétien, meaning a conjunction, a link, a joining together; in this passage, a link between two different genres.

[176](#) Marc Connelly, *The Green Pastures: a Fable suggested by Roark Bradford's southern sketches 'Ol' Man Adam an' his chillun'* (1930).

[177](#) 'making courtly', Lewis uses Latin *curialis* in its medieval sense 'courtly' or 'polite' in a letter on p. 1220.

[178](#) *Essays on Malory*, ed. J. A. W. Bennett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).

[179](#) *ibid.*, pp. 7–28, ‘The English Prose *Morte*’.

[180](#) 'The Morte Darthur', *The Times Literary Supplement* (7 June 1947), pp. 273–4, reprinted in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*.

[181](#) Robert M. Metcalf, Jr, was President of Guaranty Mortgage & Trust Company, Memphis, Tennessee, when he wrote to Harcourt, Brace & World on 13 December 1966 asking them to send a copy of this letter to W. H. Lewis: 'The letter was in response to one sent him seeking his ideas on the best in literature that the trustees of a college could make certain that all of the students absorbed. I fear that the inquiry was not worded properly as we meant to refer to literary masterpieces with which *all* well educated persons should have a familiarity.'

[182](#) 'mental fictions'.

[183](#) An old word for 'marvels'.

[184](#) In this context Lewis means by ‘Celticists’ those Arthurian scholars who study the Celtic origins of the Grail legend, and who maintain that objects such as cauldrons, knives and horns found in ancient Celtic romances are early instances of the same sacred objects that appear in the Grail legends. One such scholar was Roger Sherman Loomis (1887–1966), Professor Emeritus at Columbia University, who wrote several books on the Arthurian tradition. In ‘The Origin of the Grail Legends’, in *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages*, ed. R. S. Loomis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), he maintained that these objects ‘form a small part of the evidence which demonstrates that the legends of the Grail are a conglomerate of materials paralleled in the literature and lore of Ireland, Wales, and Brittany’ (p. 280). Lewis later developed his ideas about what he called ‘The Anthropological Approach’ in *English and Medieval Studies Presented to J. R. R. Tolkien on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Norman Davis and C. L. Wrenn (London: Allen and Unwin, 1962), pp. 219–30, and reprinted in *SLE*: ‘Until our age, readers accepted this world as the romancers’ “noble and joyous” invention. It was not, to be sure, wholly unrelated to the real world. It was invented by and for men who felt the real world, in its rather different way, to be also cryptic, significant, full of voices and “the mystery of life”. There has now arisen a type of reader who cannot thus accept it. The tale in itself does not seem to him to provide adequate grounds for the feelings to which he is dimly aware that he is being prompted. He therefore invents new grounds for them in his own life as a reader. And he does this by building up round himself a second romance which he mistakes for reality’ (*SLE*, p. 310).

[185](#) 'Divinity is here'. Lewis is imitating Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*, book 3, line 548.

[186](#) Evelyn Underhill, *Worship* (1936). See Lewis's letters to Mrs Stuart Moore (Evelyn Underhill) of 20 October 1938 and 16 January 1941 (*CL* II, pp. 234–5, 459–60).

[187](#) Edwards said that, in response to Lewis's letter of 20 August 1959, 'I wrote to Lewis indicating that I had taken his point which he illustrated with the suitcase analogy, and to reinforce this I had drawn a sketch of myself sitting on a bulging suitcase, wearing an expression of pained surprise and holding aloft in one hand a single boot and in the other hand a pair of trousers. I had also indicated in a general way that my services were at his disposal anytime—without strings. The humorous reading Lewis decided to put on this offer is given in his note' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 765, fol. 15).

[188](#) See *Miracles*, ch. 10.

[189](#) W. B. Yeats, 'Down by the Salley Gardens' (1889), 5–6: 'She bid me take love easy,/As the leaves grow on the trees.'

[190](#) Discretionary Awards Panel, part of the Army Service Pension Scheme. It assesses whether pensions should be paid to retired armed services personnel where none would be allowed under standard regulations.

[191](#) George Bernard Shaw, *Man and Superman* (1903), Act III.

[192](#) On Shaw and the 'Life Force', see the letter to Owen Barfield of 19 August 1948 (*CL* II, p. 871, n. 57).

[193](#) *Till We Have Faces.*

[194](#) The Rev. Kenneth Charles Thompson (1904–91) was born in Swansea on 25 June 1904. He was educated at Jesus College, Oxford, where he read Classics and theology. On taking his BA in 1926 he spent a year at St Stephen's House, Oxford. Following his ordination in 1928 he served at All Saints, Notting Hill, 1927–9, St German, Roath, 1929–31, and St Cuthbert's, Philbeach Gardens, 1931–6. He was assistant chaplain at Lancing College, 1936–8, and Librarian and Tutor at Chichester Theological College, 1938–40. After serving as a chaplain in the Royal Naval Reserve, 1941–6, he was Vice-Principal at Ely Theological College, 1946–51, assistant master at Stoneyhurst College, 1951–3, and curate at Christ Church, Swansea, 1955–6. In 1957 he took up the post of curate at Holy Trinity, Headington Quarry, where he remained until 1962. Thompson was rector of Great Hasley, 1965–75. He retired to Oxford, and died there on 10 July 1991.

[195](#) 'Paulinus', *I, Paul* (London: St Paul Publications, 1959). In a note to this letter Thompson explained that the book had been commissioned by the Roman Catholic Order of St Paul: 'It was a life of the Apostle told in the words of the New Testament, presented in the form of a Reporter's interview with him and St Luke. The Reporter is named Paulinus, the writer's nom de plume' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/6, fol. 79).

[196](#) In Exodus 11:2 it is recounted how the Israelites 'borrowed' jewellery from their Egyptian neighbours before their delivery from Egypt.

[197](#) Ephesians 6:12: 'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of the world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.'

[198](#) 'spiritual wickedness'.

[199](#) After Gibb asked for a description to put on the jacket of *The Four Loves* Lewis sent this piece.

[200](#) 1 John 4:8.

[201](#) John Donne, *Songs and Sonnets* (1635), 'A Litany', XXVII, 8.

[202](#) De Rougemont, *Passion and Society*, Bk. VII, ch. 5, p. 321.

[203](#) Shelburne had moved to Apartment 204, 1803 Baltimore Street, NW, Washington, DC.

[204](#) Eugène Vinaver, 'On Art and Nature: A letter to C. S. Lewis', *Essays on Malory*, pp. 29–40.

[205](#) See *The Allegory of Love*, Appendix I, 'Genius and Genius': 'The significance of the being called Genius in ancient, medieval, and renaissance literature escapes a modern reader. The best way of understanding him is to begin with St. Augustine's statement: ['What is genius? "The god", says Varro, "who is set over, and who has power over, everything that is begotten."...In another place, Varro says that a "genius" is the rational soul of each man, that each individual therefore has one.' *City of God*, Book VII, ch. 13.] We have here a pretty clear distinction between what may be called Genius A (the universal god of generation) and Genius B (...the tutelary spirit, or "external soul", of an individual man.)'

[206](#) Vinaver, 'On Art and Nature', pp. 30–1: 'Your own assessment of Malory's probable misdeeds is as fair a hypothesis as any that can reasonably be advanced in the present state of our knowledge. But even if he were as "immoral" a character as some of his other biographers want him to be, what difference would this make to our understanding of his work? What except the romantic myth of the work being an expression of the "whole man" makes you think that there would be anything abnormal about a cleavage between the man and the book?...Proust in his *Méthode de Sainte-Beuve* contrasts them as two distinct entities, totally unlike one another... His contention is that the more we concentrate on their *moi extérieur* [public life] the less likely we are to understand their creative self, their *moi profond*. On this showing it seems singularly fortunate that our knowledge of Malory the man is not only limited but apparently inconsistent with the nature of his work.'

[207](#) C. S. Lewis and E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Personal Heresy: A Controversy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939). See *CL* II, p. 156, n. 14.

[208](#) A 'dispute' or a 'debate'. Lewis meant that it was appropriate that *Essays on Malory* contained both his essay and Vinaver's, which gave it balance.

[209](#) 'The English Prose *Morte*', *Essays on Malory*, p.10.

[210](#) Gibb had asked Milton Waldman of Collins to read the typescript of *The Four Loves*, after which Waldman expressed his thoughts about the book in two letters dated 13 October 1959 (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fols. 415–18). Gibb then wrote to Lewis on 15 October 1959: ‘Milton Waldman has now also read the book and thinks very well of it indeed, particularly the first three chapters and the last one on “Charity”. He has certain misgivings, however, on “Friendship” and “Eros”. These I have discussed with him at great length and in sending them to you as a kind of joint effort, we do want you to understand that we are not pressing you to alter anything. It is *your* book and if you want to retain what you have written then we shall not weep nor mourn but probably admire you the more for sticking to your guns. On the other hand we do feel it our clear duty to lay our problems before you...’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 422). Then follow points 1–14, given in the notes that follow and which Lewis replies to in his letter.

[211](#) An allusion to Martial, *Epigrams*, Book I, Epigram 16: ‘Sunt bona, sunt quaedam mediocria, sunt mala plura/quae legis hic: aliter non fit, Avite, liber’: ‘Some things are good, some mediocre, more are bad in what you read here: not otherwise are books made, Avitus.’ Lewis has used *etiam* rather than *quaedam*, but the meaning is essentially the same.

[212](#) Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man*, trans. Bernard Wall (London: Collins, 1959).

[213](#) ‘Talking about “Friendship”...We are worried about the amount of emphasis given to the community of interest basis culminating in the suggestion, on page 83, that ally and friend are synonymous.’

[214](#) *The Four Loves*, ch. 4, p. 65.

[215](#) 'Could we not have a fair community of interest with no affection?'

[216](#) 'One might well have "appreciative love" for someone with whom there is no community of interest.'

[217](#) *The Four Loves*, ch. 4, p. 63.

[218](#) Having said, 'One might well have "appreciative love" for someone with whom there is no community of interest,' Gibb went on to ask: 'How otherwise could friendship grow into love?'

[219](#) 'Then comes the matter of "a circle" of friends, where, in the sense that you apply it, individuals are drawn to each other by special interests which are alien to the rest of the circle... Don't you think this may apply less to the large, complex world in general than to a smaller and more homogenous community?'

[220](#) 'You suggest that even where the main interest is not "a nice one" it may draw people together as friends. Would it? Isn't that more an alliance than a friendship and to an end which excludes love?'

[221](#) 'It is implied...that a common dislike of two people for a third is a means to a friendship. Yet it could well be that the community of dislike breaks down or never starts because of a suspicion that such a propensity is not shared with you alone but with another person as well, against yourself as the victim.'

[222](#) '[You stress] the strong possibility of friendship between men and women developing into Eros. But it could also be, and surely often is, the other way round: Eros growing into friendship.'

[223](#) *The Four Loves*, ch. 4, p. 63.

[224](#) 'You say that Eros transforms need-pleasure into the most appreciative of all pleasures. But by your previous argument, if we follow it, the need comes *after* the appreciation i.e. there is the delighted recognition only after which the element of need, including sexuality, appears.'

[225](#) *The Four Loves*, ch. 5, p. 91: 'The reader will notice that Eros thus wonderfully transforms what is *par excellence* a Need-pleasure into the most Appreciative of all pleasures.'

[226](#) 'Sexuality, you say, is humorous. Agreed. But the space you give to this may raise doubts.'

[227](#) Still concerned with the chapter on Eros, Gibb said: 'The husband's headship of the family, compared to Christ's headship of the church seems to us dangerous. By Hypothesis there is no equality between Christ and the church, and this you explicitly say. But one cannot argue any such disparity between men and women nor seriously hold that it is a man's task in the relationship to make a horrible earthly female into something heavenly. Of course you do not mean it that way, but the argument can bear that interpretation to an only moderately hostile reader.'

[228](#) *The Four Loves*, ch. 5, p. 101.

[229](#) 'Is there any example, to be found all through the chapter, of what you really mean by Eros? You begin the chapter with a straightforward definition: Eros is a state that Lovers are "in". Yet, as the argument develops, it gradually turns into something else: becoming personified as a being outside people whom they set up as a God. A sort of detachedness' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 423).

[230](#) 'One final point...On p. 115...Charles Williams: "Love you, I *am* you." In WUTHERING HEIGHTS Catherine explains "I am Heathcliff and he is I."

[231](#) 'Do you really favour a comma before an "and" which seems to run all through? If so, why not: THE LION, THE WITCH, AND THE WARDROBE?'

[232](#) Milton Waldman had been upset by Lewis's comment of 'tut-tut' over what he considered a serious point (no. 12) in Lewis's letter to Gibb of 22 October 1959. Writing to Gibb about this on 30 October 1959, Waldman said: 'What can be done when a man won't consider a criticism of his own book: for clearly "tut-tut" is not a consideration. I have a feeling he is not passionately interested, which is insurmountable' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 435).

[233](#) Lewis had shown Gibb a copy of an after-dinner talk given by Screwtape, written for *The Saturday Evening Post*. It was published as 'Screwtape Proposes a Toast' in *The Saturday Evening Post*, CCXXXII (19 December 1959), pp. 36, 88–9.

[234](#) Joan and Stanley Bennett were old friends of Lewis. Stanley Bennett was one of the Electors of the Chair Lewis now occupied. See his biography in *CL II*, p. 435n, and that of his wife, Joan Bennett of Girton College, in *CL II*, p. 209n.

[235](#) George Watson (1927–) was born in Brisbane on 13 October 1927. He first met Lewis in the Socratic Club in Oxford in 1948 and attended his public lectures. He graduated in English in 1950 from Trinity College, Oxford, and became a lecturer in Cambridge in 1959 and a Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge. He was general editor of the *New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* (1940–57) and author of *The Literary Critics* (1962), *The English Ideology* (1973), *The Lost Literature of Socialism* (1998) and *Never Ones for Theory? England and the War of Ideas* (2000), which contains a chapter on Lewis. Watson counts Lewis among his best teachers and, after 1959, as a well-loved Cambridge colleague. See also Watson's 'The Art of Disagreement: C. S. Lewis (1898–1963)' in *The Hudson Review*, XLVIII (Summer 1995), pp. 229–39.

[236](#) Lewis was giving a luncheon party for Joy at Magdalene College on 28 November 1959.

[237](#) Canon George Tibbatts OGS (1902–87) read history at King's College, Cambridge, and took his BA in 1924. From there he went to Ely Theological College and was ordained in 1927. After serving his title at St Luke's, Gillingham, 1926–31, he was headmaster of the Teacher Training College in the Masai Diocese, Tanganyika, 1932–8. He was chaplain of Magdalene College, Cambridge, 1939–46, and of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, 1946–52. He was Vicar of St Luke's, Chesterton, 1952–63, and from then until his retirement he was international secretary to the Universities Mission to Central Africa. Canon Tibbatts was Superior of the Oratory of the Good Shepherd, 1950–66.

[238](#) A. D. Godley (ed.), *Q. Horati Flacci Carminum Librum Quintum* [*The Fifth Book of Odes by Quintus Horatius Flaccus*], trans. Rudyard Kipling and C. Graves, 3rd edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1920). The preface (pp. iii–vi), which is in Latin, mentions (p. iii) that the principal manuscript, designated P, is in Baden in the ‘Grossspaniandrumpinacotheca’ (the Great Panjandrum Museum). On p. vi, allusion is made to the ‘venerable’ scholar Tomirocius (‘Tommyrot’), described as ‘another Tullius by the Patagonians on account of his elegant Latinity’.

[239](#) Willink's wife, Cynthia Frances, had just died.

[240](#) John Gibson Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.*, 10 vols. (Edinburgh: Robert Cadell, 2nd edn 1839), vol. VIII, ch. 70, p. 338: 'I wonder how I shall do with the large portion of thoughts that were hers for thirty years.'

[241](#) Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.

[242](#) The 'Hippo' was Lynda Grier (1880–1967), educational administrator. Born on 3 May 1880 at Rugeley, Staffordshire, she was educated at home. As a child she was deaf, short-sighted and ungainly, but despite self-doubt she registered as a student at Newnham College, Cambridge, and took a First in the Economics tripos in 1908. Newnham appointed her an assistant lecturer in 1913 and Lecturer in 1915. The same year she became acting Professor of Economics at Leeds University, where she remained until 1919. She was Principal of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, from 1921 until her retirement in 1945. See her biography in the *Oxford DNB*.

[243](#) A kitchen porter at Magdalene.

[244](#) Samuel Johnson, 'On the Death of Dr. Robert Levet', VII, 4.

[245](#) Lewis and Gibb had decided to combine the original *Screwtape Letters* with ‘Screwtape Proposes a Toast’, and that Lewis would write a new preface.

[246](#) Dan Tucker (1919–) was chief editorial writer of the *Chicago American* newspaper. He wrote to Walter Hooper on 4 November 1967 about this letter: ‘The background was this: Late in 1959, the University of Chicago held a Darwin centennial celebration at which a good many leading scientists were present, including Sir Julian Huxley. Some of the learned speeches made, particularly his, were such precise and detailed illustrations of what Lewis wrote about in “The Abolition of Man” that they really were a bit frightening. I wrote an editorial more or less to that effect, drawing heavily on Lewis for inspiration...and sent him a clipping of it, commenting that he was proving to be a good prophet as well as an engrossing writer.’ Tucker’s letter from Lewis, his two letters to Walter Hooper, and a copy of his editorial from the *Chicago American* of 28 November 1958 can be found in the Bodleian Library (MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/1, fols. 193–9).

[247](#) Alastair Fowler, 'Six Knights at Castle Joyous', *Studies in Philology*, LVI, no. 4 (October 1959), pp. 583–99.

[248](#) During the Lent terms of 1960 and 1961 Lewis gave a series of eight lectures on Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*.

[249](#) Fowler, 'Six Knights at Castle Joyous', p. 584.

250 In Oxford jargon 'pernoctate' means 'spend the night in Oxford'.

[251](#) 'To deceive the promised night.' These three words do not occur together in any poem of either Ovid or Propertius. Ovid uses the phrase *fallere noctem*, though not in the sense that Lewis wanted, but he does use the phrase *promissae noctis* in the sense. This suggests that Lewis's memory conflated certain phrases, and the letter shows that he was well aware of this. The passages from Ovid are (1) *Heroides*, Bk. I, 9–10, a letter from Penelope to her husband: 'nec mihi quaerenti spatiosam fallere noctem lassaret viduas pendula tela manus': 'Nor would the hanging warp tire out these widowed hands of mine as I seek to beguile the spacious night' (2) *Remedia Amoris*, 399–402: 'ergo, ubi concubitus et opus iuvenale petitur et prope promissae tempora noctis erunt, gaudia ne dominae, pleno si corpore sumes, te capiant, in eas quamlibet velim': 'Therefore, when there's the chance for lying together, and a youthful workout is desired, and the moments of the promised night approach, in order that the joy in your mistress shouldn't overwhelm you, when you take her with a body that just about brims over, I would recommend you first take up with whomever.' As for Propertius, *Elegies*, Bk. II, Poem 17, 1–2 is the closest we get to the same sense of missing the chances of a promised night: 'Mentiri noctem, promissis ducere amantem, hoc erit infectas sanguine habere manus!': 'To lie about the night, to lead a lover on with promises, this is to have hands stained with blood!'

[252](#) Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, III, i, 62.

[253](#) *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century* had become one of the critical works, along with those of Edward Dowden (1843–1913) and John Churton Collins (1848–1908), from which some of Dr Fowler’s pupils were plagiarizing.

[254](#) Oliver Elton (1861–1945), scholar and critic, best known for *A Survey of English Literature*, published in three parts: *1780–1830*, 2 vols. (1912), *1830–1880*, 2 vols. (1920) and *1730–1780*, 2 vols. (1928).

[255](#) Hudibras is the lover of Elissa in *The Faerie Queene*, II, ii, 17.

[256](#) In WHL Warnie said of this letter: ‘The letter which follows is a striking example of the impudence, not of the charming school child, but of her schoolmistress. The girl writes: “In seventh grade, when my English teacher asked us to write to some prominent author asking his advice on writing, I naturally wrote to my favourite author...”’

[257](#) Matthew 5:4.

[258](#) 'cast down parts'.

[259](#) Bles sent Lewis the publisher's 'setting copy' of the new edition of *Miracles*, with a copy of the proofs. Lewis returned the proofs, but forgot to return the setting copy—the '*dejecta membra*'.

[260](#) In a letter of 11 December 1959 Gibb said: 'We had an order last week for the following: 1 copy "Screwed-up Letters" by C. S. Lewis' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 455).

[261](#) i.e., *Dymer*, reprinted by Dent in 1950.

[262](#) As it turned out, the first televised dramatization of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* utilized people in animal costumes. This live-action drama in black and white was an ABC Television Network production and it was shown on ITV in the UK. Produced by Pamela Lonsdale and adapted by Trevor Preston, it consisted of nine twenty-minute episodes broadcast between 9 July and 3 September 1967. After seeing the first episode of this production Warnie Lewis wrote in his diary of 9 July 1967: 'On Television last night I saw the opening instalment of J's *Lion, Witch and Wardrobe* by which I was agreeably surprised...It's very promising and I think J would have been pleased with it—no hint so far of what he feared, a touch of Disneyland' (BF).

[263](#) The only cartoon version of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* so far was made by Steve and Bill Melendez. It consisted of two one-hour parts, and was made jointly by the Episcopal Radio-TV Foundation of Atlanta, Georgia, and the Children's Television Workshop of New York. It was broadcast over CBS-TV on 1 and 2 April 1976. The same film, with a different soundtrack, was broadcast in the UK by ITV on Easter Sunday, 6 April 1980.

[264](#) See the reference to St Francis of Assisi and 'Brother Ass' in the letter to Don Giovanni Calabria of 13 September 1951.

265 Sophia Storr was a schoolgirl.

[266](#) *The Horse and His Boy*, ch. 11: “‘Who *are* you?’” asked Shasta. “‘Myself,’” said the Voice, very deep and low so that the earth shook: and again “‘Myself,’” loud and clear and gay: and then the third time “‘Myself,’” whispered so softly you could hardly hear it.’

267 p.p.

[268](#) In considering the title of the new Screwtape book, Gibb was afraid that placing 'Screwtape Proposes a Toast' before 'The Screwtape Letters' would deceive the public into believing that most of the book was new. He wrote to Lewis on 23 December 1959: 'I put the whole problem to our sales people from all over the country, and indeed the world, last week and they were confident that we would be best advised to stick to THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS with the rest as a subtitle...Yes, I like THE WHOLE SCREWTAPE containing The Screwtape Letters 1942 and Screwtape Proposes a Toast. That's more like it and what's more it's decent!' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 461).

[269](#) 'It makes the whole point'. Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 343: 'omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci': 'He has gained every point who has mixed the useful and the agreeable.'

[270](#) William Shakespeare's *King Henry VI, Part 2* was published anonymously in 1594 under the title *The First Part of the Contention betwixt the two famous Houses of Yorke and Lancaster*.

[271](#) 2 Kings 20:8–11.

[272](#) John 11:43–4.

[273](#) Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI, 134: 'bis Stygios innare lacus': 'twice to sail across in the ferry-boat'. The line is spoken by the Sybil to Aeneas, when she is instructing him about what to do when he enters and leaves the underworld.

[274](#) Lewis was reading the third part of Skinner's *The Return of Arthur: A Poem of the Future*. 'Pt II' (i.e. *The Return of Arthur: Part II*) refers to what in the final version was Part III.

[275](#) A style of painting that depicts an object so exactly as to make it appear real, a heightened form of illusionism. *Trompe l'oeil* is essentially a game artists play with spectators to raise questions about the nature of art and perception.

[276](#) i.e., Part II, Canto vii.

[277](#) After George Gordon, Lord Byron, *Don Juan* (1819–20).

[278](#) i.e. Arthur.

[279](#) i.e. Part II, Canto v, stanzas 50–3.

¹ This letter was published in *The Times Educational Supplement* (1 January 1960), p. 13, under the title 'Spelling Reform'.

² Richard William David (1912–93), publisher, was educated at Winchester College and Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, taking a BA in 1934. He joined the editorial staff of Cambridge University Press in 1936, and during 1940–6 served in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. He was sent to London in 1946 to work with the London branch of Cambridge University Press. He served as London manager, 1948–63, and secretary to the Syndics of the Press, 1963–70.

³ David wrote to Lewis on 1 January 1960: 'Duke University Press, of North Carolina, for which C.U.P. acts as distributor in Great Britain, has in hand a book called *The Indian Summer of English Chivalry: Studies in the Decline and Transformation of Chivalric Idealism* [1960], by one Arthur B. Ferguson. It covers the history of the idea under, roughly, the Tudors and appears to be a scholarly work...I have now to make an estimate of how many copies we should import to sell...to libraries and scholars, and would be very grateful indeed for any advice you can give me.'

4 On the margin of this letter, which clearly disappointed him, David wrote 'Blast him!'

⁵ In a note to this postcard Skinner said: ‘The final postcard is a reply to my reply to his long letter of Dec 59, in which I refused to “make anything” of Arthur—I said it was outside my range & beyond my powers—which I still think is correct. (Milton would have made a better poem if he’d contrived to dodge the responsibility of both the Father, & Heaven as a locality)’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 213).

[6](#) Dante, *Inferno*, III, 60: 'through cowardice the Grand Refusal'.

⁷ Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811–96), author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

⁸ Dr John Warwick Montgomery (1931–), Christian apologist, barrister and historian, was born in Warsaw, New York, on 18 October 1931. He was educated at Cornell University, gaining a BA in philosophy (1952), and he later received, *inter alia*, his Ph.D. (University of Chicago), Doctorate in Protestant Theology (University of Strasbourg, France) and LL.D. (Cardiff University, Wales). He served as a member of the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago, Professor and Chairman of the Department of Church History at the Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Illinois, and Professor (now Emeritus) of Law and Humanities, University of Luton, England. His many works include *Human Rights and Human Dignity* (1986, 1995) and *Tractatus Logico-Theologicus* (2002).

⁹ John Warwick Montgomery, 'The Chronicles of Narnia and the Adolescent Reader', *Journal of Religious Education*, 54 (September–October, 1959), pp. 418–28. This essay, together with the above letter from Lewis, was included in *Myth, Allegory and Gospel: An Interpretation of J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, G. K. Chesterton, Charles Williams*, ed. John Warwick Montgomery (1974, 2000).

[10](#) Charles Williams, *Shadows of Ecstasy* (1933).

11 Mr Gordon was writing from 2004 West Yakima Avenue, Yakima, Washington.

¹² *Screwtape Proposes a Toast and Other Pieces* (London: Fontana, 1965; Fount, 1998), 'Screwtape Proposes a Toast', p. 18: 'You know how this wine is blended? [asks Screwtape] Different types of Pharisee have been harvested, trodden, and fermented together to produce its subtle flavour. Types that were most antagonistic to one another on earth. Some were all rules and relics and rosaries; others were all drab clothes, long faces, and petty traditional abstinences from wine or cards or the theatre. Both had in common their self-righteousness and the almost infinite distance between their actual outlook and anything the Enemy really is or commands.'

[13](#) 'will-worship': an allusion to Colossians 2:23.

[14](#) Matthew 23:23.

[15](#) Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, II, ii, 1: 'He jests at scars, that never felt a wound.'

[16](#) Lewis was again referring to 'Non Nobis' by Henry Cust, and whether the poet was referring to the Blessed Virgin in such lines as 'Not unto us, O Lord;/Nay, Lord, but unto her be all things given.'

[17](#) See the letter to Hindle of 7 October 1957. In his letter to Walter Hooper of 29 April 1969, Hindle said: 'I was puzzled by references to David Lindsay's book "A Voyage to Arcturus", which was at that time out of print & inaccessible. I knew of Professor Lewis's admiration for the book, & when I was doing a project on Science Fiction in School I wrote to him' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 203).

[18](#) Lewis had in mind David Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus*, with a note by E. H. Visiak (Gollancz, 1946). The original edition was published by Methuen of London in 1920.

[19](#) Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), German philosopher, was the classic exponent of pessimism. Lewis met his works when being tutored by W. T. Kirkpatrick. See the letter to Arthur Greeves of 15 November 1915 (*CL* I, p. 151).

[20](#) There is no date on this item, so one cannot be sure that Sister Mary Celestine asked for Lewis's help in 1960.

²¹ Maud Gonne (1865–1953) was born near Aldershot, England. On a visit to France she met Lucien Millevoye and they worked together for Irish independence. After their affair ended, she and W. B. Yeats founded an ‘Association Irlandaise’ in Paris, but she rejected his proposal of marriage. She later joined the secret Irish Republican Brotherhood, attracting police attention when she protested against the celebration of Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee. In 1903, while in Paris, she married John MacBride, who had formed an Irish brigade to fight on the Boers’ side. The marriage failed, and when she returned to Dublin in 1918 she was interned, spending some months in Holloway prison in London. She organized relief during the war of independence, and assisted republican prisoners and their dependants during the Civil War. Imprisoned in 1923, she was released after going on hunger strike. In 1938 she published an account of her early life, *A Servant of the Queen*.

[22](#) David Richard Davies (1889–1958) was a popular Anglican theologian best known for *Down, Peacock's Feathers: Studies in the Contemporary Significance of the General Confession* (1942) and *The Art of Dodging Repentance* (1952).

[23](#) Gibb had asked for a list of those to whom complimentary copies of *The Four Loves* should be sent.

[24](#) Edwards said of this letter: ‘This was in response to a request for a personal meeting to help me sort out two different problem areas, (1) which Christian denomination I should settle on. As an infant I had been baptized as an Anglican. After college contact with the Evangelical-dominated Christian Union I had been confirmed as an Anglican at the ripe old age of 20. I never felt happy as an Evangelical. I was seriously considering becoming a Roman Catholic...I remember Lewis remarking that he thought I was “one of Nature’s Anglicans”...I was vexed about the problem of papal infallibility and Lewis recommended I should read “The Infallibility of the Church” [1888] by [George] Salmon. This in fact did help me settle the question’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 765, fol. 12).

[25](#) *Mere Christianity*, Preface, p. viii: ‘The reader should be warned that I offer no help to anyone who is hesitating between two Christian “denominations”. You will not learn from me whether you ought to become an Anglican, a Methodist, a Presbyterian, or a Roman Catholic... In the first place, the questions which divide Christians from one another often involve points of high Theology or even of ecclesiastical history, which ought never to be treated except by real experts...And secondly, I think we must admit that the discussion of these disputed points has no tendency at all to bring an outsider into the Christian fold.’

[26](#) Romans 7:21–3: ‘I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.’

[27](#) Gibb said in a letter of 17 February 1960 that a reader had objected to Lewis's use of 'will be used' instead of 'may be used' in the original 1947 edition of *Miracles*, ch. 7, p. 61: 'If...our planet is really unique in harbouring organic life, then this is thought to prove that life is only an accidental bye-product in the universe and so again to disprove our religion. We treat God as the police treat a man when he is arrested; whatever He does will be used in evidence against Him.'

[28](#) The alteration, ‘whatever He does “will be used in evidence against Him”’, was made in the paperback edition of *Miracles* (London: Fontana, 1960; Fount, 1998), ch. 7, p. 53.

29 Pauline Bannister was writing from 48 Alma Vale Road, Clifton, Bristol 8.

[30](#) Bannister was one of the many readers who were upset that when, in *The Last Battle*, ch. 12, King Tirian and the others go through the Door into Aslan's Country, they find that Susan Pevensie is not with her brothers and sister. "My sister Susan," answered Peter shortly and gravely, "is no longer a friend of Narnia."

[31](#) Boris Pasternak (1890–1960), *Doctor Zhivago*, trans. Max Hayward and Manya Harari (1958). The novel concerns a poet hounded to death by politicians. As the USSR was at this time one of the most oppressive regimes in the world, it was not surprising that, besides forcing Pasternak to renounce the Nobel Prize, the Soviet Communists banned the book for thirty years.

[32](#) Fr Milward was to be ordained a priest on 18 March 1960.

[33](#) The Rev. Hugh A. Harker was a teacher at St Andrew's College, Grahamstown, South Africa.

[34](#) Harker had questioned a passage in *Mere Christianity*, Bk. IV, ch. 9, p. 204: ‘Long ago, before we were born, when we were inside our mothers’ bodies, we passed through various stages. We were once rather like vegetables, and once rather like fish: it was only at a later stage that we became like human babies.’

[35](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, *C. S. Lewis*, Bodley Head Monographs (London: Bodley Head, 1963).

[36](#) *Of The Four Loves.*

[37](#) The diary Green kept during the trip to Greece is found in Green and Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: A Biography*, ch. 13.

39 p.p.

[40](#) Sheridan Warner Baker (1918–2000) received his BA and advanced degrees at the University of California, Berkeley. He began his career in English literature at the University of Michigan in 1950, becoming Emeritus Professor on his retirement in 1984. His books of rhetoric include *The Practical Stylist* (1966).

41 p.p.

[42](#) Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 128.

⁴³ Basil Davenport (1905–66), scholar, author and editor, was born in Louisville, Kentucky on 7 March 1905, the son of William and Emily Davenport. He took a BA from Yale University in 1926, and his MA from Oxford University in 1928. He was an instructor in Greek at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1928–9, and afterwards an editorial assistant at the Book-of-the-Month Club, 1936–56. His many books include (ed.) *Selected Works of Stephen Vincent Benét* (1942), *Ghostly Tales to be Told* (1950), *Portable Roman Reader* (1951), (ed.) *Tales to be Told in the Dark* (1953), *Inquiry into Science Fiction* (1955) and *Deals with the Devil* (1958).

[44](#) Chapter 8 of *Studies in Words* is devoted to 'Conscience and Conscious'. In that chapter Lewis cites examples from Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (p. 186) and Alexander Pope's *Windsor Forest* (1713) (p. 212).

⁴⁵ Richard Crashaw, *Poems, English, Latin, and Greek*, ed. L. C. Martin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957). See p. 382 for the epigram quoted in Davenport's letter.

⁴⁶ Vanauken remarked in *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 10, pp. 228–9, that ‘Upon receiving the above letter, I immediately sent them the sculptured reproduction of a 12th-century Norman Christ that hung above my bed, telling him not to write...In July or August Lewis wrote about his grief, a letter I did not retain, except for an excerpt on the Norman Christ, which he hadn’t at first liked though Joy did: “but it has grown on me gradually...I believe it will come to mean a great deal to me.”’ This reproduction of the body of Christ once attached to a twelfth-century crucifix is seven inches high and mounted on a piece of walnut. Lewis had it in his bedroom, and after his death his brother gave it to Walter Hooper.

47 *Reflections on the Psalms.*

[48](#) 2 Kings 2:11.

[49](#) 1 Corinthians 15:20; James 1:18.

[50](#) 1 Peter 3:18–19: ‘For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison.’

[51](#) The Apostles' Creed.

[52](#) Lewis had in mind in particular the miracle play, *The Harrowing of Hell*, a semi-dramatic poem of 250 lines from about 1250.

[53](#) Matthew 5:11.

[54](#) 'street urchin'.

55 Mr Searles was a student at Cambridge.

[56](#) In *Mere Christianity*, Bk. II, ch. 1, p. 37n, Lewis had written: ‘One listener complained of the word *damned* as frivolous swearing. But I meant exactly what I say—nonsense that is *damned* is under God’s curse, and will (apart from God’s grace) lead those who believe it to eternal death.’

[57](#) John 14:8–9.

[58](#) The revised Chapter 3 appeared in the Macmillan, New York, edition of *Miracles* in 1978, and has appeared in all American editions since then.

[59](#) Gibb wrote to Lewis on 9 May 1960: ‘A man called Mr. Frank Cole who runs The Bible Library Publishing Company in Japan, which he tells me is “related” to the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society in that country, writes to ask if you would agree to his publishing a translation of MIRACLES...At first he said he wanted to abridge the book but then he wrote and said he would like to publish its translation in full with certain omissions or in some cases alterations. These he says would be desirable because to retain those particular things might upset some Baptist members of their constituency’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 495). Gibb included a list of omissions to be made.

[60](#) Kathleen Nott, 'Four-letter Word', *The Observer* (27 March 1960), p. 22.

[61](#) In her review Nott commented: ‘Perhaps the most exasperating sections are on Friendship (which Dr. Lewis always spells with a capital F, as the vicar’s wife did Life) and on Eros, both, in different ways, strongly conditioned by Dr. Lewis’s masculine protest...His “Friends”, drawn together by whatever lofty purposes, are mainly stags at bay. And whatever provisions Dr. Lewis may make about clever and sensible women there is little doubt that he has a hankering after a return to purdah: or, anyway, is a natural freemason.’

62 'highest'.

[63](#) Harwood had asked Lewis about some aspect of Charity as defined in *The Four Loves*. In Chapter 6, Lewis said: ‘This brings me to the foot of the last steep ascent this book must try to make. We must try to relate the human activities called “loves” to that Love which is God a little more precisely than we have yet done...Take it as one man’s reverie, almost one man’s myth’ (p. 120).

64 The city of Rhodes.

65 A Modern Greek version of the word 'Anglophiles'.

[66](#) i.e. the former Kathryn Stillwell. See **Kathryn Stillwell** in the Biographical Appendix.

[67](#) i.e. 'Will We Lose God in Outer Space?'

[68](#) 'now lettest thou depart'. These are the opening words of the Song of Simeon in Luke 2:29–32 from the Latin Vulgate, 'Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine' etc.: 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace: according to thy word.' The Nunc Dimittis has formed part of daily prayers since the fourth century, and is found in the Catholic Breviary for use in Compline and the *Book of Common Prayer* for use in Evensong.

69 'under the appearance of Apollo'.

70 *The Four Loves.*

[71](#) e.g. in the chapter on friendship.

[72](#) Banner's wife, the sculptor Josephina de Vasconcellos, had created a sculpture of the Holy Family, which is now in the Anglican cathedral in Manchester.

[73](#) T. S. Gregory of the BBC wrote to Lewis on 24 May 1960: 'We have just received the syllabus of the symposium on Metaphor and Symbol, held last March in Bristol, and would be very grateful if you would broadcast the paper you read to it on Imaginative Language as Information.'

[74](#) Two pages of this paper were missing when it came to light after Lewis's death, but the rest was published as 'The Language of Religion' in *Christian Reflections*.

75 p.p.

[76](#) i.e. the photo by Hans Wild accompanying the article about his inaugural lecture in *Time* magazine. See the letter to Mary Willis Shelburne of 14 May 1955.

[77](#) i.e. the photograph by John S. Murray accompanying the review of *Surprised by Joy in Time*. See the letter to Mary Willis Shelburne of 8 February 1956.

[78](#) The photograph by Walter Stoneman published on the American cover of *Surprised by Joy*. See the letter to John H. McCallum of 22 September 1955.

[79](#) Edwin Hanton Robertson (1912–), author of *Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (1966) and other books, gave a talk on the BBC about *The Four Loves*.

[80](#) Patricia Mary Mackey (later Baker) (1946–) was born in Manchester on 12 August 1946, the daughter of Aidan Mackey and his wife Dorene (Tranter) Mackey. She was educated at Coloma Convent, Croydon, and King's College, London. In 1970 she married Anthony Baker and they have three children. In a letter to Walter Hooper of 2 January 2005 she said: 'When I was twelve, I received *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* as a Christmas present. I was immediately gripped by the power of the narrative, and also by the illustrations by Pauline Baynes. Much later in life, outside the northern Spanish city of Palencia, I was thrilled to discover an actual landscape that matched the ones of Narnia, Archenland etc. More importantly, reading through the entire series built my understanding of allegory as a literary technique. It might seem obvious to anyone else, but discovering these other layers of meaning was a totally independent exploration of inner layers of literature, lying beneath the narrative surface. This discovery, which I in my naivety believed to be unique, was immensely exciting, and was the first moment of analytic literary perception, as opposed to literary response. I suppose it was a major contribution, albeit unrecognized at the time, to my decision to become an English teacher, which is the profession I have followed all my life.'

[81](#) John 21:12.

[82](#) *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*, ch. 16: 'This was the very reason why you were brought to Narnia, that by knowing me here for a little, you may know me better there.'

83 Gebbert had moved with her son and mother to 11 Glendale Road, South Portland, Maine.

[84](#) Probably a reference to a holiday in Washford, Somerset, with Mrs Moore and her daughter Maureen. During the summer of 1921 unparalleled numbers of insects died in England due to the effects of the drought.

85 Mrs Herman was writing from 837 Continental Boulevard, Toledo, Ohio.

86 Bide's wife, Margaret, had cancer.

[87](#) The main subject of the Old Testament Book of Job is the perennial problem of the suffering of the innocent. Job rejects the traditional view that suffering is the result of sin, and he has no doubt of his innocence.

[88](#) Elihu first appears in Job 32:2: ‘Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu...against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God.’ Elihu’s speeches continue through Job 32–7.

[89](#) Patripassianism is the belief that the Father and the Son are simply different aspects of God. If this were true, it could be said that God the Father suffered on the cross.

[90](#) Lewis was paraphrasing Milton, *Paradise Lost*, III, 32–6: ‘nor sometimes forget/Those other two equalled with me in fate, So were I equalled with them in renown,/Blind Thamyras and blind Maeonides.’ Hippolyta was the sister of the Amazon queen Penthesilea.

[91](#) In his annotations to his letter Masson said: ‘The following letter from C. S. Lewis is in reply to some questions about his statement that “The questions left unanswered and the difficulties raised by Tyndale’s gospel will be visible to all...”(*English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, p. 190). I asked 1) whether these questions and difficulties were not equally raised by the doctrines of other protestant leaders, or even by those of the Apostle Paul; and 2) whether Lewis thought that if Tyndale had fairly faced these questions he would have been forced to modify or abandon his gospel. Of course what I wanted to know was whether *Lewis* thought it had to be modified. (His reply is dated two days after the death of his wife: had I known anything of this or of his own illness I would never have written.)’ (Wade Center)

[92](#) In his annotations Masson suggested that the ‘difficulties Lewis refers to are probably suggested in such sentences as the following’ (ibid.) from the introduction to *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*: (1) ‘Propositions originally framed with the sole purpose of praising the Divine compassion as boundless, hardly credible, and utterly gratuitous, build up, when extrapolated and systematized, into something that sounds not unlike devil-worship’ (p. 33); (2) ‘The doctrine of predestination, says the XVIIth Article, is “full of sweet, pleasant and unspeakable comfort to godly persons”. But what of ungodly persons? Inside the original experience [of conversion] no such question arises...When we begin [to build a system] very troublesome problems and very dark solutions will appear’ (p. 34); (3) ‘[In the *Institutio*] Calvin goes on from the original Protestant experience to build a system, to extrapolate, to raise all the dark questions and give without flinching the dark answers’ (p. 43).

[93](#) Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection* (1825).

94 i.e. Francis Turner, the president of Magdalene College.

[95](#) One of the treasures of Magdalene College is the diary of Samuel Pepys (1633–1703), the English public official and celebrated diarist. Pepys left his library, as well as his diary in cipher, to his nephew John Jackson and in turn to Magdalene College. The diary was discovered in 1728 and after being partially deciphered, much of it was published in 1825. Over the years other versions were published, but none could lay claim to being complete. Pepys's diary, one of the most famous of all time, extends from 1660 to 1669 and provides an intimate record of the daily life and reflections of an extraordinary young man, including eyewitness accounts of the Great Plague of 1665 and the Fire of London in 1666. In 1960 Magdalene College decided to publish 'the whole, unexpurgated', Pepys and the result was Robert Latham and William Matthews (eds), *The Diary of Samuel Pepys: A New and Complete Transcription*, 10 vols. (London: G. Bell, 1970–83). Latham was Pepys Librarian at Magdalene College, and Matthews was Professor of English at the University of California, Los Angeles.

[96](#) Not only was Willink a lawyer, but Reginald Walter Michael ‘Mickey’ Dias (1921–), Fellow of Law in Magdalene College since 1955, was a university lecturer in jurisprudence, Roman law, and the law of tort.

[97](#) Gibb wanted Lewis to delete paragraph 18 of the Preface to *The Screwtape Letters and Screwtape Proposes a Toast with a new Preface* (1961), pp. 10–11. In a letter of 14 June 1960 he said: ‘I am worried about the paragraph which starts “On earth this desire is often called ‘love.’”...My concern, which I cannot help feeling will be shared by many readers, is that this particular paragraph is out of keeping with the rest and indeed you pretty well say so in the following one by observing that your opinion about devils is of very minor importance. Would you do me the kindness of reading through that particular paragraph again and making quite sure you want to retain it’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 511).

[98](#) i.e. Charles Williams.

99 This was a small lending library in Kiln Lane.

[100](#) BF, p. 248.

[101](#) *ibid.*, p. 249.

[102](#) Douglas Gresham, *Lenten Lands* (New York: Macmillan, 1988), ch. 13, p. 121.

[103](#) *BF*, p. 249.

[104](#) *ibid.*, p. 250.

[105](#) In a letter of 12 June 1960 Gibb had made a number of suggestions regarding what became *The Screwtape Letters with Screwtape Proposes a Toast* (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 516).

[107](#) See Clifford Morris's account in 'A Christian Gentlemen', *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, pp. 327–8.

[108](#) *BF*, p. 250.

[109](#) Thompson had written a letter of sympathy over the loss of Lewis's wife.

[110](#) p.p.

[111](#) The poem is reprinted as 'Epitaph for Helen Joy Davidman' in *CP*.

[112](#) Miss Gracia Fay Bouwman was writing from Fairbanks, Alaska.

[113](#) *The Problem of Pain.*

[114](#) Affection, as described by Lewis in *The Four Loves*.

[115](#) 1 John 3:17.

[116](#) Isaiah 51:17.

[117](#) This letter was originally published in *The Listener*, LXIV, no. 1634 (21 July 1960), p. 109, under the title 'Milton's Satan'.

[118](#) William Empson, 'Satan Argues His Case', *The Listener*, LXIV, no. 1632 (7 July 1960), p. 11.

[119](#) George Meredith, *The Egoist* (1879). Lewis associated this book with Milton's Satan because he saw in the rich and powerful Sir Willoughby Patterne (the Egoist of the title) an absurdity very like Satan. Sir Willoughby is blind to his own arrogance and to the needs of the woman he loves.

[120](#) *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, ch. 13, p. 93.

[121](#) Dr Alan Meredith Richards (1904–88) read medicine at University College, London, taking his MD in 1930. He served as senior assistant medical officer at Dulwich Hospital and then at the Obstetrics Hospital at University College Hospital. On leaving London he joined a medical practice at 59 Banbury Road, Oxford, where he was to serve for 40 years, retiring in 1974. After Joy was diagnosed with cancer Richards was her doctor, and Lewis was immensely grateful to him for looking after her. After Lewis's death, Richards looked after Warnie for the latter years of his life.

[122](#) Mrs McGhie was writing from 7721 Hauinde Drive, El Paso, Texas.

[123](#) Virgil, *Georgics*, IV, 176: 'if one may compare small things with great'.

[124](#) Father Richard Ginder was writing on behalf of *Our Sunday Visitor*, a Catholic national weekly newspaper located at 124 North Beaver Street, Newcastle, Pennsylvania.

[125](#) The reviews of the American edition of *The Four Loves*, published on 27 July 1960.

[127](#) *Daily Telegraph* (16 July 1960), p. 14: 'LEWIS—On July 13, in Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, HELEN JOY, beloved wife of C. S. LEWIS. Funeral 11.30 a.m., July 18, Oxford Crematorium. No flowers, no letters.'

[128](#) Morton Cohen, *Rider Haggard: His Life and Works* (1960).

[129](#) 'Haggard Rides Again', *Time and Tide*, XLI (3 September 1960), pp. 1044–5. The article was reprinted as 'The Mythopoeic Gift of Rider Haggard' in *Of This and Other Worlds*.

[130](#) The German publisher Jacob Hegner had been interested for years in having Kuhn translate the Chronicles of Narnia into German. On Hegner's idea of an 'omnibus' volume of the Narnian stories, see the letter to Jocelyn Gibb of 10 December 1955. Nothing finally came of the idea.

[131](#) Isabella Beeton, *Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management* (1861).

[132](#) Letter to Arthur Greeves of 30 May 1916, *CL* I, p. 187.

[133](#) See the letter to Sister Madeleva of 3 October 1963.

[134](#) This was probably the manuscript of Green's new story, *The Luck of Troy* (London: Bodley Head, 1961).

[135](#) A memory of Virgil, *Aeneid*, I, 79, in which Aeolus, king of the Winds, speaks to Juno:
'epulis accumbere divum': 'to recline at the feasts of the gods'.

[136](#) Logan Pearsall Smith, *Four Words: Romantic, Originality, Creative, Genius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940).

[137](#) Owen Barfield, *Poetic Diction: A Study in Meaning* (London: Faber & Gwyer, 1928).

[138](#) William Empson, *The Structure of Complex Words* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1951).

[139](#) See especially *SBJ*, ch. 11, pp. 130–1: ‘I smuggled in the assumption that what I wanted was a “thrill”, a state of my own mind...if by any perverse askesis or the use of any drug it could be produced from within, it would at once be seen to be of no value...to “get it again” became my constant endeavour...often I frightened it away by my greedy impatience to snare it...’

[140](#) Alan Garner, *The Weirdstone of Brisingamen: A Tale of Alderley* (London: Fontana, 1960).

[141](#) Father Quinlan had written to thank him for *The Four Loves*.

[142](#) Margaret 'Margy' Bide had died on 17 September 1960.

[143](#) Fr Frederick Joseph Adelman SJ (1915–96), Jesuit philosopher, was born in Norwood, Massachusetts on 18 February 1915. He graduated from Boston College in 1937 and entered the Society of Jesus. He received a Ph.D. from St Louis University in 1955. Fr Adelman chaired the philosophy department at Boston College and was an authority on Marxism and Soviet philosophy. He died on 1 April 1996.

[144](#) In his 'Notes on the Letters' Vanauken said: 'His earlier "comment" that CSL refers to concerned an experience Jean had when she was near to death' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 152c).

[145](#) Cf. Matthew 7:7: ‘Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.’

[146](#) *Of Reflections on the Psalms.*

[147](#) While reciting the words of Jesus from the Last Supper—‘Take this, all of you, and eat it: this is my body which will be given up for you’—the celebrant of the Mass shows the consecrated bread and wine to the congregation. His lifting up of the consecrated Bread is called the elevation. He does the same with the Chalice, showing the Body and Blood of Christ with each elevation before genuflecting in adoration.

[148](#) Wolfram von Eschenbach (fl. 1200–20), whose principal contribution to the Grail Legend is *Parzival*, composed in the thirteenth century. See *CL* II, p. 913n.

[149](#) The Holy Grail, or Cup of the Last Supper, first appears as simply 'a grail' in the works of Chrétien de Troyes. The word is probably derived from the Old French word *graal* meaning a broad and capacious dish or salver. Though usually thought of as being a cup or chalice, the Grail has indeed been variously described in Arthurian stories as a platter, a dish, a cornucopia, a horn of plenty, and even a dish called a Cauldron of Plenty and which appears in the Welsh Arthurian stories, the *Mabinogion* (see *CL II*, p. 902n).

The Cathari or Cathars were a heretical sect who flourished in the south of France about the year 1200, where they were also known as Albigenses; by 1218 they were destroyed in a Crusade. Some commentators have linked them to the legends of the Holy Grail.

[150](#) Geoffrey Chaucer, 'Good Counsel of Chaucer', 1.

[151](#) The British Museum in Bloomsbury, London, was acquired in 1753 to house the national library and various curiosities and was therefore part museum and part library. In 1998 the British Library, as it is now called, moved to St Pancras, London.

[152](#) The original text of *The Screwtape Letters* (1942), Letter 1, pp. 12–13, read: ‘I once had a patient, a sound atheist, who used to read in the British Museum. One day, as he sat reading, I saw a train of thought in his mind beginning to go the wrong way...Once he was in the street the battle was won. I showed him a newsboy shouting the midday paper, and a No. 73 bus going past, and before he reached the bottom of the steps I had got into him an unalterable conviction that, whatever odd ideas might come into a man’s head when he was shut up alone with his books, a healthy dose of “real life” (by which he meant the bus and the newsboy) was enough to show him that all “that sort of thing” just couldn’t be true.’

[153](#) A Japanese periodical.

[154](#) Dorothy Whitelock (1901–82), historian, was educated at Leeds Girls' High School and in 1921 went to Newnham College, Cambridge, where she took a First in English in 1923. Her work on the corpus of Anglo-Saxon wills, led to the publication of *Anglo-Saxon Wills* (1930). In 1930 she moved from Cambridge to Oxford, on her appointment as lecturer in English at St Hilda's College. She became a tutor in 1936, a Fellow in 1937, and served as Vice-Principal, 1950–7. In October 1957 she returned to Cambridge upon her appointment as Elrington and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon, and resumed her association with Newnham College as a professorial Fellow (1957–69).

155 St Teresa of Lisieux (1873–97) was known as ‘The Little Flower’.

[156](#) Gibb wrote on 6 October 1960: 'I do not know if any of your numerous correspondents on the subject point this out but you cannot see a numbered bus at all from the British Museum... Could you not omit the number of the bus altogether and say "a bus going by"?...Or, better still, why not a "green coach"? By restricting your man...to the foot of the British Museum steps you nullify this making of "street" plural...If however you were to say..."Once he was in the street s the battle was won. I showed him a newsboy shouting the midday paper and a No 73 bus going past, and before he had gone very far I had got him into an..."In other words, keep the bus with its two digits and remove the steps. How about that?' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 545).

[157](#) Gibb suggested they change the passage in Letter 1 of *The Screwtape Letters* to ‘Once he was in the streets the battle was won. I showed him...’ It was changed in this and subsequent editions of *The Screwtape Letters*, solving a problem that had nagged Lewis for almost twenty years.

[158](#) In a long letter of 6 October 1960 Gebbert said: ‘Your question: “Are (the dead) in the same time that we live in?” must be answered in the affirmative or, to be more technical, “Yes, but–” for there is no time in immortality, which is what Einstein proved...Your next question: “If not, is there any sense in asking what they are now?” They are now as they were then, for it is like asking what are we now? They carry over all that they have garnered on earth, losing only the things of earth. Consciousness remains to an even greater degree than on the earth plane, for it is consciousness unhampered by the physical. If I were to tell you that the dead can be seen and heard and have been seen and heard by many of us (and in my case not at seances or at the hands of mediums) and with the sole purpose of proving to me (a genuine sceptic) that the continuation of life (on the next plane) is a reality and one not to be dismissed or looked upon as improbable, would you be prone to believe me?’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Facs. c. 47, fols. 320–1).

[159](#) Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, V, i, 59.

[160](#) Militza Zernov took three black and white photos of Jack and Joy when she and her husband visited them on 14 May 1960. The photos are published in Hooper, *Through Joy and Beyond*.

[161](#) i.e. the *Journal of the Warburg Institute*. The Warburg Institute of the University of London is dedicated primarily to the interdisciplinary study of the classical tradition.

[162](#) Robert Ellrodt, *Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spenser* (Geneva: Droz, 1960).

[163](#) Harding, *The Hierarchy of Heaven and Earth*.

[164](#) Emily Dickinson (1830–86), American poet, who from her mid-twenties gradually withdrew into an inner world, refusing to leave home. At one stage she sought publication, but only seven out of nearly 2,000 poems were published during her lifetime. They were discovered after her death and *Poems of Emily Dickinson*, ed. Mabel Loomis Todd and T. W. Higginson, was published in 1890. It was probably an edition of this volume that Lewis read.

[165](#) A. E. Housman (1859–1936).

[166](#) Walter de la Mare (1873–1956).

[167](#) William Empson was the anonymous reviewer of *Studies in Words* in *The Times Literary Supplement* (30 September 1960), p. 627.

[168](#) Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 852, fol. 62.

[169](#) *Transposition and Other Addresses* (London: Bles, 1949).

[170](#) An American missionary in Argentina, J. R. Taylor, had asked for a copy of Lewis's 'The Weight of Glory', which was contained in *Transposition and Other Addresses*.

[171](#) Elizabeth Brewer, producer of the Talks Department of the BBC, wrote to Lewis on 24 October 1960: ‘We are inviting certain speakers to broadcast on Tuesday evenings at 9.45 p.m. on the Home Service—to talk for 15 minutes on a subject of particular interest to themselves. It seems to be an opportunity for what has been called “the old-fashioned straight talk”. Or it could be philosophical,—a form of Radio Essay. We wondered whether you would be at all interested.’

[172](#) Jill Black was an editor with the publishers The Bodley Head. She had already commissioned Roger Lancelyn Green to write several Bodley Head Monographs, one of which was on Lewis. She wrote to Lewis on 20 October 1960: 'I was simply delighted to hear from Roger Lancelyn Green when he called in yesterday that there might be a possibility of your doing a study of George Macdonald in our Monograph series.'

[173](#) Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Christabel and Other Poems* (1816), 'Christabel', I, 412–13.

[174](#) Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:4.

[175](#) Jeremiah 17:9.

[176](#) Nina Howell Starr (1903–2000), photographer of American folk art, was the wife of Nathan Comfort Starr. She was born in Newark, New Jersey, and lived in Gainesville from the mid-1950s until 1965, during which time her husband was Professor of English at the University of Florida. Following his retirement they moved to Hamden, Connecticut. In recognition of her photography, Starr was made Master of Fine Arts by the University of Florida in 1963.

[177](#) Lewis had drinks with Nina and Nathan Starr in the Eastgate Hotel on 21 July 1960. Mrs Starr took a photograph of Lewis and her husband, and on the table in front of them are three beer mugs. The photograph is reproduced in Humphrey Carpenter, *The Inklings* (1978).

[178](#) The Rev. Christopher Robin Paul Anstey (1925–97) read Classics at Trinity College, Oxford, and took a BA in 1949. After reading theology at St Stephen's House, Oxford, he was ordained in 1952. After serving as curate of St Nicholas, Chiswick, 1951–7, he was Vice-Principal of Chichester Theological College, 1957–63, and vicar of St Andrew's, Headington, 1964–71. He was attached to the Diocese of Chester, 1972–5, and the Diocese of Worcester, 1976–9, after which he served as chaplain of Westwood House School, Peterborough, 1979–83. Anstey was vicar of Getton with Rockingham and Caldecot, 1983–90, and honorary assistant curate of St Oswald's, Warton, with Yealand Conyers from 1991 until his death on 16 June 1997.

[179](#) The words quoted on the back of the paperback of Arthur C. Clarke's *Childhood's End* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1954) were from Lewis's letter to Joy Gresham of 22 December 1953: 'There has been nothing like it for years...an author who understands there may be things that have a higher claim on humanity than its own survival.' Joy was living in London at the time, and she showed Clarke Lewis's letter about *Childhood's End*.

[180](#) Milton, *Paradise Lost*, II, 148: 'Those thoughts that wander through eternity.'

[181](#) Alastair Fowler, 'Emblems of Temperance in the Faerie Queene, Bk. II', *Review of English Studies*, New Series, XI, no. 42 (1960), pp. 143–9.

[182](#) Harry Berger, *The Allegorical Temper* (1957).

[183](#) Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, II, vii.

[184](#) Kent Hiatt, *Short Time's Monument: The Symbolism of the Numbers in Edmund Spenser's Epithalamion* (New York: Columbia, 1960).

[185](#) See the discussion of this passage in the letter to Fowler of 22 November 1960.

[186](#) Chang was now University Lecturer in Chinese at Cambridge, and Lewis had tea with him and his family at 120 Milton Road. In his 'Memories' in *The Canadian C. S. Lewis Journal*, no. 24 (December 1980), p. 3, Chang wrote of this occasion: 'He came to tea at our house on Milton Road and met my wife and my daughter (an admirer of his children's books from the age of nine)...My wife had just recovered from post-natal depression and spoke about her unaccountable weeping during her illness. Lewis then told her how once, after taking an examination, he had suddenly burst into tears.'

[187](#) Brigadore is Sir Guyon's horse. See Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, II, ii, 11; II, ii, Arg.; II, iii, 3ff; II, iv, 2; V, iii, 29–35.

[188](#) Robert Lee Wolff, *The Golden Key: A Study of the Major Fiction of George MacDonald* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961). In 'An Enduring Friendship', *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, p. 217, Douglass said: 'This lengthy Freudian study of MacDonald...is another of those works seeking to destroy the reputation of an author long dead...Professor Wolff's underlying purpose is to attack Christianity, and his references to C. S. Lewis are extremely disagreeable.' See the reference to Wolff in Lewis's letter to Arthur Greeves of 8 May 1961.

[189](#) p.p.

[190](#) Lewis drew a pen and ink portrait of Screwtape that was reproduced on the back cover of the first American edition of *The Screwtape Letters* (New York: Macmillan, 1943). In a letter of 5 November 1960 Gibb asked if he might use the same portrait on the cover of *The Screwtape Letters and Screwtape Proposes a Toast*.

[191](#) That is, Screwtape's title which would go under the portrait.

[192](#) The title at the end of Letter 22—‘His Abysmal Sublimity Under Secretary Screwtape’—was eventually used under the portrait.

[193](#) Sarah was marrying Lieutenant Christopher Tisdall on 31 December 1960.

[194](#) i.e. *Short Time's Monument*.

[195](#) Lewis was referring to Fowler's 'Oxford and London Marginalia to "The Faerie Queene"', *Notes and Queries*, new series 8, no. 11 (November 1961), pp. 416–19. In note 10, p. 418, Fowler traces the proverb 'Set a beggar on horseback' etc. to M. P. Tilley's *A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Ann Arbor, 1950), B238 and B239. 'Tilley notes,' writes Fowler, 'that the form "Set a beggar on horseback and he will ride a gallop" is given in John Clarke, *Paroemiologia Anglo-Latina* (1639)...and the form "Set a beggar on horseback and he will ride to the devil" in Giovanni Torriano, *The Proverbial Phrases* (1666).'

[196](#) Edmund Spenser, *Colin Clouts Come Home Again* (1595), 801: 'For Venus selfe doth soly couples seeme.'

[197](#) Edmund Spenser, 'An Hymne of Heavenly Love' (1596), 29–30: 'It lou'd it self, because it selfe was faire;(For faire is lou'd;) and of it self begot.'

[198](#) Nicolas Cusanus, *Of Learned Ignorance*, trans. Fr Germain Heron (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1954).

[199](#) The reference is to Valerius Soranus (not Romanus), an older contemporary of Cicero. Valerius Soranus is referred to in Augustine, *City of God*, Bk. VII, Chapters 9 and 13. In these passages, Augustine points out that Valerius refers to Jupiter as ‘progenitor genetrixque deum’: ‘begetter and mother of the gods’. Augustine learnt this from the Roman antiquarian Varro, who wrote *De Cultu Deorum* (On the worship of the gods).

[200](#) Origen, *Homilia in Genesim*, I, 15: 'Videamus autem etiam per allegoriam quomodo ad imaginem Dei homo factus masculus et femina est': 'But we may also see through allegory how man became both male and female in the image of God.'

[201](#) Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, XI, 2: 'You, heavenly Venus, who after the creation of Love, brought together the separate sexes at the very beginnings of the world.'

[202](#) Lewis's review appeared in *Etudes Anglaises*, XIV (April–June 1961), pp. 107–16, and is reprinted in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*.

[203](#) Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, February 1783, vol. IV, p. 181: ‘There is a wicked inclination in most people to suppose an old man decayed in his intellects. If a young or middle-aged man, when leaving a company, does not remember where he laid his hat, it is nothing; but if the same inattention is discovered in an old man, people will shrug up their shoulders, and say, “His memory is going.”’

[204](#) John Dryden, *Defence of the Epilogue, or An Essay on the Dramatic Poetry of the Last Age* (1672), 50–1: ‘The preposition in the end of the sentence; a common fault...which I have but lately observed in my own writings.’

[205](#) *Surprised by Joy* (London: Bles, 1955; HarperCollins, 2002), ch. 1, p. 11: ‘What drove me to write was the extreme manual clumsiness from which I have always suffered. I attribute it to a physical defect which my brother and I both inherit from our father; we have only one joint in the thumb. The upper joint...is visible, but it is a mere sham; we cannot bend it. But whatever the cause, nature laid on me from birth an utter incapacity to make anything.’

[206](#) Gibb assumed Lewis had written the anonymous 'Devil's Advocate' in *The Times Literary Supplement* (24 June 1960), p. 401; in fact it was William Empson. 'There are signs of better times ahead,' said the author, 'The Spring number of the *Hudson Review* carries a piece by Professor Empson on Milton's Satan...In morals and religion Professor Empson conducts a running fight with Satan's denigrators. He will not have it that Satan "is a thing which peers through bathroom windows" (Professor C. S. Lewis's description) because God has just deprived him of that pleasure which corresponds to human sex...Nor is Satan ridiculous or contemptible for disbelieving his creation by God—a much more important point, with Professor Lewis again the opposing champion.' The reference is to *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, ch. 13: 'From hero to general, from general to politician, from politician to secret service agent, and thence to a thing that peers in at bedroom or bathroom windows, and thence to a toad, and finally to a snake—such is the progress of Satan.'

[207](#) Lewis had apparently thought of writing a story based on 'Mr Skill' from Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. In his letter of 7 December 1960, Gibb said: 'You remember Mr. Skill, the memorable doctor in "The Progress"?...Could I induce you to turn your mind to the idea of producing a case-book of Mr. Skill (or maybe Dr. Skill)? The idea is not original. It came to you some years ago but at that time you said you thought there might be something in the proposal but were too busy to do anything about it' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 771, fol. 568).

[208](#) A. A. Milne, *Winnie ille Pu: liber celeberrimus omnibus fere pueris puellisque notus nunc primum de Anglico sermone in Latinum conversus*, auctore Alexandro Lenardo (Londini: Neo-Eborici: Sumptibus Methueni; Sumptibus Duttonis [London: Methuen; New York: Dutton], 1960). Alexander Lenard was in fact Polish.

[209](#) Warnie was referring to his grandparents, Richard Lewis (1832–1908) and his wife Martha (1831–1903), who lived at Ty-isa, Parkgate Avenue, Sydenham, near Conns-brook Avenue, Belfast. Ty-isa was sold in 1903, when Richard moved into Albert Lewis's house. Despite the fact that it has changed hands a number of times, the house still exists. See the photograph of Ty-isa in Bleakley, *C. S. Lewis At Home in Ireland*, p. 103.

[210](#) In a letter to Walter Hooper of 26 August 1994, Drew said: ‘I referred to an experience I had first had in childhood, and a few times since. I didn’t know whether to call it spiritual or supernatural. My naïve young mind thought that this was something unique...Then in *Surprised by Joy* I discovered that Lewis knew precisely what I knew. To describe the experience I can only quote him. “An experience of intense desire—something quite different from ordinary life and even from ordinary pleasure.”...At that point in my reading I stood up and began pacing the floor in great excitement. Lewis knew!’

[211](#) See the letter to Joan Lancaster of 11 August 1959.

¹ Father Domenico Mondrone SJ (1897–1985) joined the Society of Jesus in 1914 and was ordained in 1927. In 1931 he became the editor of the Jesuit periodical, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, and he edited this for the rest of his life. He was one of the first in Italy to notice the translation of *The Screwtape Letters–Le Lettere di Berlicche*, trans. Alberto Castelli (1947) and he devoted an article to it, ‘Berlicche e l’arte di damnare gli uomini’, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, III (1947), pp. 239–49. His writings on St Giovanni Calabria include ‘Una Gemma del Clero Italiano, Don Giovanni Calabria’, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, I (1955), pp. 37–52, and ‘Don Giovanni Calabria e I fratelli separati’, *La Civiltà Cattolica*, IV (1964), pp. 344–53.

² Archbishop Geoffrey Fisher (1887–1972) became the first Archbishop of Canterbury to visit the Vatican since 1397 when he met Pope John XXIII on 2 December 1960.

³ Angelo Penna, *St Paul: The Apostle*, trans. K. C. Thompson (London: St Paul Publications, 1960). In a note to this letter Thompson said: '*St Paul, the Apostle* was a translation from the Italian and a considerable abbreviation of a weighty, and scholarly, work by Dr Angelo Penna, C.R.L. Secretary of the Biblical Association of Italy. I was commissioned to do the work by the Roman Catholic Society of St Paul. It involved not only abbreviation, but considerable recasting, with a new beginning and end, as well as a rewriting of many passages, to be acceptable in English: Italian is an extremely verbose and flowery language' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/6, fol. 84).

⁴ 'Revision of a text.' Lewis evidently meant not a modern revised edition, but the reworking of an existing text by one or more later writers, in the process which 'higher critics' attribute to some books of the Bible and which many critics used to attribute, for instance, to Homer.

⁵ In *SBJ*, ch. 1, p. 3, Lewis wrote of his nurse: ‘I began life with two...blessings. One was our nurse, Lizzie Endicott, in whom even the exacting memory of childhood can discover no faults—nothing but kindness, gaiety, and good sense.’ For the Matron at Cherbourg House (‘Chartres’) see Miss G. E. Cowie in *CL I*, p. 19n. Chapter 9 of *SBJ* is devoted to William T. Kirkpatrick; see also the Biographical Appendix to *CL I*. Laurence Bertrand Johnson, mentioned in *SBJ*, ch. 12, was the friend Lewis lost in the First World War; see his biography in *CL I*, p. 341n. Alfred Kenneth Hamilton Jenkin is mentioned in *SBJ*, ch. 13; see also the Biographical Appendix to *CL I*, pp. 1000–2.

⁶ James Kinsley (1922–84), who was educated at Edinburgh University and Oriel College, Oxford, was Professor of English Language and Literature in the University of South Wales, Swansea, 1954–61, and Professor of English Studies at the University of Nottingham, 1961–84. Kinsley was Fowler’s professor when the latter taught at University College, Swansea, 1959–61.

7 'classic illustrations'.

8 'fortunes'.

9 'heat'.

10 François Mauriac (1885–1970) received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1952.

[11](#) The Nobel Prize for Literature was won in 1961 by the Yugoslav writer Ivo Andric (1892–1975).

[12](#) Harvie M. Conn, 'Literature and Criticism', *Westminster Theological Journal*, 23, no. 1 (November 1960), pp. 16–32.

[13](#) In *The Abolition of Man* Lewis used the word 'Tao', meaning 'The Way', from Chinese philosophy to mean natural or moral law.

[14](#) 'This I will, this I command.' Juvenal, *Satires*, VI, 223: 'Hoc volo, sic iubeo; sit pro ratione voluntas': 'This I will, thus I command: let [my] will take Reason's place.'

15 'begotten, not made'—from the Nicene Creed.

[16](#) Richard Hooker (c. 1554–1600), *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* [1593–1662], 2 vols. (London: Dent, Everyman’s Library, 1907), Bk. I, ch. 8.

¹⁷ Lewis is stating what is known in philosophy as ‘The Euthyphro Dilemma’. It was posed in Plato’s *Euthyphro*, in which the distinction is made that the good is not good because the gods approve it, but the gods approve it because it is good. Hooker said in *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Bk. I, ch. 1, v: ‘They err who think that of the will of God to do this or that there is no reason besides His will.’ On this distinction see *The Problem of Pain*, ch. 6, p. 80, and ‘The Euthyphro Dilemma’ in *CG*, p. 593.

[18](#) Thompson knew Lewis was on the Commission to Revise the Psalter, and he said of this letter: 'I had ventured to write and regret [the removal of] what I thought and felt to be the inspired "obscurities" and perhaps inaccuracies of Coverdale, endeared to Anglicans by long use...Inspiration in some sense, I argued, can be present even in translations of a Post-Biblical Age...I had written to defend the hierarchic attitude which he had attacked in his letter of 5 January 1961' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/6, fol. 86).

[19](#) Miss Helen Adolf was writing c/o Pennsylvanian University Press, University Park, Pennsylvania, USA.

[20](#) 'Vision of Peace.' Helen Adolf, *Visio Pacis: Holy City and Grail: An Attempt at an Inner History of the Grail Legend* (State College, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press [1960]).

[21](#) John Gawsworth (Terence Ian Fytton Armstrong) (1912–70), English poet and editor, had great influence on the English horror tale. His anthologies include *Thrills, Crimes and Mysteries* (1935) and *Thrills: Twenty Specially Selected New Stories of Crime, Mystery and Horror* (1936). His numerous writings include his *Collected Poems* (1948).

[22](#) Gawsworth was petitioning for money to support the widow of the writer Philip Lindsay (1906–58).

23 A legal term meaning 'suggestion of something untrue'.

24 Greeves was reading the proofs of Lewis's *An Experiment in Criticism*.

[25](#) The Editors, 'Professor C. S. Lewis and the English Faculty', *Delta: The Cambridge Literary Magazine*, no. 22 (October 1960), pp. 6–17.

[26](#) This letter was originally published in *Delta: The Cambridge Literary Magazine*, no. 23 (February 1961), pp. 4–7.

[27](#) 'Professor C. S. Lewis and the English Faculty,' p. 6. Despite the fact that Lewis wrote 'radical reinterpretations' in *Broadsheet*, the Editors of *Delta* commented: 'Is it that the interpretations themselves are "radical", or that mere undergraduates dare to offer such interpretations, that upset the Professor? That a "radical" interpretation (is there any other kind of interpretation worth having, by the way?) might simply be the result of an undergraduate innocently striving to reach a personal conclusion about a work of literature, is a possibility for which Professor Lewis does not appear to have much time.'

[28](#) *ibid.*, pp. 6–7: ‘To what degree would the “background” cited above (presumably the Professor means an *extensive* and *disciplined* education in the Bible and the Classics, for most of us have some acquaintance with both) help an undergraduate to work out the real significance of the Graveyard scene in *Hamlet*, for example?’

[29](#) *ibid.*, p. 7.

[30](#) *ibid.*, p. 8.

[31](#) *ibid.*, pp. 8–9.

[32](#) Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1897), IV, iv, 54: 'The honour to serve as target to the enemy'.

[33](#) Dickens, *Bleak House*, ch. 23.

[34](#) A reference to the personal companions of Alexander the Great (356–323 BC) who dined with him, advised him, and attended him in battle. See Plutarch, *Life of Alexander*, trans. John Dryden, ed. Arthur Hugh Clough (New York: Modern Library, 2004), p. 5: ‘The statues that gave the best representation of Alexander’s person were those of Lysippus (by whom alone he would suffer his image to be made), those peculiarities which many of his successors afterwards and his friends used to affect to imitate, the inclination of his head a little on one side towards his left shoulder, and his melting eye, having been expressed by this artist with great exactness.’

[35](#) 'Professor C. S. Lewis and the English Faculty', p. 9: 'What emerges from the little document published in *Broadsheet* is something that clearly raises questions in the minds of students of English, something that raises questions...about the English Faculty's sense of its obligation to those it teaches. The tone of Professor Lewis's small piece might well seem to many distasteful—distasteful in its arrogance, distasteful in its authoritarian self-righteousness, distasteful finally in the contempt for the undergraduate that it suggests.'

[36](#) Oliver Cromwell, letter to the general assembly of the Church of Scotland (3 August 1650):
'I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken.'

[37](#) The reference is to Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (1863–1944), whose pseudonym was ‘Q’. He was educated at Clifton and Trinity College, Oxford, when he began using ‘Q’ as a pseudonym. A prolific writer of novels, criticism, verse and literary journalism, he became the first Professor of English Literature at Cambridge in 1912. In a move that would later endear him to the editors of *Delta*, in 1917 he and his supporters separated the medieval and modern languages tripos. Anglo-Saxon, philology and medieval literature became optional; literary criticism and comparative literature could be offered instead.

[38](#) Although not mentioned in ‘Professor C. S. Lewis and the English Faculty’, ‘research’ was added by Lewis because he hated it, as he indicates in the letter to Sir Henry Willink of 19 May 1954. Most of what Lewis said about the subject occurs in ‘Interim Report’, published in *The Cambridge Review* (21 April 1956), pp. 468–71, and reprinted in *Present Concerns* and *EC*. In this article he wrote of ‘the incubus of “Research”...The system was, I believe, first devised to attract the Americans and to emulate the scientists. But the wisest Americans are themselves already sick of it...In science, I gather, a young student fresh from his First in the Tripos can really share in the work of one of his seniors in a way that is useful to himself and even to the subject. But this is not true of the man who has just got his First in English or Modern Languages. Such a man, far from being able or anxious...to add to the sum of human knowledge, wants to acquire a good deal more of the knowledge we already have. He has lately begun to discover how many more things he needs to know in order to follow up his budding interests; that he needs economics, or theology, or philosophy, or archaeology...To head him off from these studies, to pinfold him in some small inquiry whose chief claim often is that no one has ever made it before, is cruel and frustrating’ (*EC*, pp. 641–2).

[39](#) Roger and June Lancelyn Green knew Lewis hoped to take David and Douglas on a holiday, and they proposed that they accompany the two of them to the Lake District.

[40](#) He meant Gibb should not send a review copy of *The Screwtape Letters and Screwtape Proposes a Toast* to *The Cambridge Review*.

[41](#) The followers and admirers of F. R. Leavis.

[42](#) Lord De L'Isle, 1st Viscount, William Philip Sidney (1909–94) was the eldest son of the 5th Baron De L'Isle and Dudley. He was educated at Magdalene College, Cambridge, and was the Governor-General of Australia, 1961–5.

⁴³ Thomas McAlindon (1932–) was born in Belfast on 14 September 1932. He took his BA and MA at University College, Cork, and his Ph.D. at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, under Lewis's supervision, 1957–60. McAlindon returned to Cork for a year as an assistant lecturer in 1960, and was subsequently lecturer, senior lecturer and professor at the University of Hull (of which he is now emeritus professor), with intervening stints as visiting professor in Canadian and American universities. He has published articles on topics ranging from Greek and medieval romance to the poetry of Yeats and the fiction of Conrad and William Trevor. His main interest has been Renaissance drama, on which his publications include *English Renaissance Tragedy* (1986), *Shakespeare's Tragic Cosmos* (1991), *Shakespeare's Tudor History* (2001), and *Shakespeare Minus 'Theory'* (2004).

Writing about his Cambridge thesis, entitled 'The Treatment of the Supernatural in Medieval Legend and Romance', Dr McAlindon said in a letter to Walter Hooper of 10 October 2005: 'It is a subject I chose myself but which [Lewis] said was "near to [his] heart". I was the only student at Cambridge to complete the PhD under his supervision...I found Lewis an ideal supervisor. He never imposed his ideas on me or told me how to proceed if I was in difficulties; he let me work out my problems myself and when I submitted a piece of writing to him he would read it carefully overnight and give it back to me with detailed corrections and observations (all in his steel-pen handwriting). I knew that if I got past him I was safe! I was completing the thesis during that summer of 1960 when his wife was dying; but he told me to send the final chapters to him at Oxford, and he returned them to me duly and meticulously checked. A generosity I have never forgotten.'

[44](#) Torquato Tasso, *Discourse on the Art of Poetry* (1594).

[45](#) See the letter to Dom Bede Griffiths of 5 July 1949 (*CL II*, p. 954).

[46](#) Kilmer had probably asked about the resurrected body of Christ as described in Lewis's *Miracles*, ch. 16.

47 'all at once'.

48 'age'.

49 'time and eternity'.

[50](#) Lewis had forgotten that it was Kilmer's family who had suggested that Shelburne get in touch with him. See Lewis's letter to Kilmer of 13 March 1961.

[51](#) See the biography of Eric Routley, Congregational minister, in *CL II*, p. 719n.

[52](#) See the treatment of 'World' in *Studies in Words*.

[53](#) On the influence of William Tyndale (1494?–1536), the Vulgate, Cardinal Francisco Ximenes de Cisneros (1436?–1517), Erasmus, and Rheims on the Authorized Version see *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, Bk. II, ch. 1, ‘Religious Controversy and Translation’.

[54](#) The Septuagint, commonly designated LXX, is the oldest Greek version of the Old Testament of the Bible.

[55](#) 1 Corinthians 11:14: 'Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him.' What Lewis thought 'frightful' was the difficulty of understanding the use of the word 'nature' (*phusis*) in this context.

56 The Common Greek in which the New Testament was written.

[57](#) See the treatment of 'Nature' in *Studies in Words*.

[58](#) *Diaspora*—‘wide scattering’—is a term used to describe the widespread settlement of the Jews outside Israel and Judah. Scholars believe it began in 586 BC, with the exile to Babylon, and included the later periods of Persian, Greek and Roman control.

59 p.p.

[60](#) The Rev. Alfred R. Paashaas was writing from the Bible Presbyterian Church, Firth, Nebraska. He was at that time manager of the 20th Century Reformation Center. In his letter of 15 February 1961 Paashaas said he had read a review of Lewis's 'The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment' in which Lewis said 'We know one school of psychology which regards religion as a neurosis.' Which 'school' was that? asked Paashaas.

[61](#) Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion* (1928).

[62](#) B. G. Saunders, *Christianity after Freud: An Interpretation of the Christian Experience in the Light of Psycho-analytic Theory* (1949).

[63](#) Law, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, ch. 16: 'For you can have no greater sign of a more confirmed pride, than when you think that you are humble enough.'

[64](#) Anne Jenkins (1950–) was born Anne Waller in Halesworth, East Suffolk, on 11 April 1950. She is the daughter of Jack Waller, a farmer, and his wife Lorna Pamela (White) Waller. The family moved to Lavenham, Suffolk, when she was three years old. She attended Bury St Edmunds County Grammar School. Anne studied applied biology at the North East London Polytechnical College, and she met her husband, Steve Jenkins, while they were working in the Microbiology Research Department at Allbright Wilson Ltd, of Blackhorse Lane, Walthamstow, a firm dealing with flavours and fragrances. They were married in 1979 and have three children. In a letter to Walter Hooper of 27 December 2004 she explained why she wrote to Lewis: ‘I had been reading *The Silver Chair* and at the end when the dead Prince Caspian has come alive, Eustace says “Hasn’t he–er–died?” “Yes,” said the Lion...“He has died. Most people have, you know. Even I have. There are very few who haven’t.” What I wanted to know was what Aslan meant by saying that most people had died. I already knew about Aslan’s death. I asked my parents first, and they suggested that I write and ask the author. I can only think that he meant that most people who have lived since the time of Adam have died. I thought that he was referring to the ones who are still alive now. Even so, I was thrilled to receive a letter from C. S. Lewis and although he hadn’t answered my question, he had answered many others!’

[65](#) Revelation 5:5.

[66](#) Since he last wrote to Lewis in 1950 Dell had been ordained in the Episcopal Church, and from 1961 to 1973 he was editor of *The Episcopalian*. He wrote to Lewis on 25 February 1961: 'The topic I would like to suggest is Christian Death. If there is any area where Christians have lost more of their heritage, I do not know of it. Easter and funerals are alien in the minds of churchmen. Death is either: 1. unmentionable and faced stoically or 2. a hideous enemy against whom we frantically pray and wage unreasonable medical battles...I should be more than pleased to see an article or book on this subject from your pen' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fols. 95–6).

67 i.e. Green's *The Luck of Troy*.

[68](#) On the cover of the book.

[69](#) Jean Wakeman had proposed taking Lewis and the boys to Scotland for a holiday in September.

[70](#) i.e. June Lancelyn Green.

71 Of the essays Lewis had lent Gibb.

72 Gibb had just returned from business in Africa.

[73](#) Evelyn Tackett (1934–) was born in Jackson, Mississippi on 25 August 1934. She took a BA in English Literature from Belhaven College, Jackson, Mississippi, and a MLS in Library Science from Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia. She has worked most of her adult life as a librarian. She was Field Representative for the Mississippi Library Commission, Jackson, Mississippi, 1959–64, and Associate Librarian, Library Director, Acquisitions and Cataloguing Librarian, Belhaven College, 1965–98. She retired as Professor Emeritus in 1998.

[74](#) p.p.

[75](#) Shelburne had now moved into the house of her daughter and son-in-law, Lorraine and Don Nostadt, at 9307 Saybrook Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland.

[76](#) Lorraine.

[77](#) 1 Corinthians 13:7.

[78](#) Thomas Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, Bk. III, ch. 45.

[79](#) Romans 8:9–10.

[80](#) John 3:30.

[81](#) Matthew 10:39.

[82](#) Jonathan Muehl, who was eight years old, wrote to Lewis from Connecticut that he had enjoyed all seven of the Narnian books, but said: 'I hope...you are going to write another one soon. If you don't, what am I going to read when I am nine, ten, eleven and twelve?' (A copy of Muehl's letter to Lewis is in the Wade Center.)

83 p.p.

[84](#) John Betjeman was Eliot's pupil when he taught at Highgate Junior School, London, in 1916. Lewis had Betjeman as his pupil at Magdalen College, 1925–8.

[85](#) The publication of D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* by Penguin Books in 1960 was the subject of the case Regina v. Penguin Books Limited at the Old Bailey, 20 October–2 November 1960. Various literary persons were invited to give evidence, but Lewis and Eliot were not among them. Lewis mentions the trial in 'Sex in Literature', published in *The Sunday Telegraph*, no. 87 (30 September 1962), p. 8, and reprinted in *Present Concerns* and *EC*.

[86](#) Edwards said in his note to this letter: 'I had gone camping in the Oxford area with the intention of visiting Lewis...I phoned Lewis for final confirmation before descending upon him and a voice I took to be Lewis' said that he was glad I'd phoned as his brother was ill and so could I please put off the visit. So I posted the box of 50 or 100 Gold Flake cigarettes I had brought as a gift for Lewis and returned to camp.'

[87](#) 'Vale of tears' comes from one of the oldest prayers to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the *Salve Regina*, which contains the words 'In hac lacrimarum valle': 'In this vale of tears'.

[88](#) David Richard Davies, *In Search of Myself: The Autobiography of D. R. Davies* (London: Bles, 1961).

[89](#) The Narnian stories.

90 'explanatory remarks'.

91 i.e. 'Kipling's World'.

[92](#) Lewis had constructed a 'fable' to illustrate what he meant by transposition, but this new part was not attached to the end of the essay as suggested in this letter. After the first nineteen paragraphs, which end 'the quickest road to presumption or despair', he inserts a new section comprising seven paragraphs and beginning, 'I believe that this doctrine of Transposition provides for most of us a background very much needed for the theological virtue of Hope.' This addition is followed by the rest of the original essay.

[93](#) The 'sermon on Hebrews' had been published as 'Religion: Reality or Substitute?' in *World Dominion*, XIX (September–October 1941), pp. 277–81, and is reprinted in *Christian Reflections*.

[94](#) Lewis decided against using 'A Reply to Mr. R.', a paper he had originally read to the Socratic Club. While the copy he sent Gibb still carried the title 'A Reply to Mr. R.' he had rewritten the paper and published it as 'Myth Became Fact' in *World Dominion*, II (September–October 1944), pp. 267–70. It is reprinted in *Undeceptions* (1971) and *EC*.

[95](#) 'Is Theology Poetry?', *The Socratic Digest*, no. 3 (1945), pp. 25–35.

[96](#) 'The Funeral of a Great Myth.' This essay had not been published at the time.

[97](#) 'The Literary Impact of the Authorized Version', The Ethel M. Wood Lecture delivered before the University of London on 20 March 1950 (London: Athlone Press, 1950). It is reprinted in *SLE*.

[98](#) i.e. the toast to the Edinburgh Sir Walter Scott Club made by Lewis on 2 March 1956 and published as 'The Memory of Sir Walter Scott'. See the letter to Mary Willis Shelburne of 4 March 1956.

[99](#) 'Psycho-analysis and Literary Criticism', *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, XXVII (1942), pp. 7–21. See the letter to his brother of 3 February 1940 (*CL* II, p. 342).

[100](#) 'Hamlet: The Prince or the Poem?', Annual Shakespeare Lecture, 1942, *The Proceedings of the British Academy*, XXVIII (London: Oxford University Press, 1942). See the letter to Sister Penelope of 11 May 1942 (*CL* II, p. 520).

101 i.e. *De Descriptione Temporum*.

[102](#) i.e. 'Good Work and Good Works'.

[103](#) Previously published in *Transposition and Other Addresses*.

[104](#) i.e. 'On Obstinacy in Belief'.

[105](#) Previously published in *Transposition and Other Addresses*.

[106](#) Fowler's review of Kent Heatt's *Short Time's Monument* appeared in *Review of English Studies*, XII, No. 48 (November 1961), pp. 417–19.

[107](#) On 12 April 1961 Yuri Gagarin, a Russian cosmonaut, made history by being the first human being to orbit the earth.

[108](#) See the discussion of Bergson's *L'Évolution créatrice* in the letter to Owen Barfield of 19 August 1948 (*CL* II, pp. 870–2).

[109](#) Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, II, ii, 53.

[110](#) 'Ministering Angels', *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, XIII (January 1958), pp. 5–14, reprinted in *The Dark Tower and Other Stories*.

[111](#) The two articles were ‘The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment’, and ‘On Punishment: A Reply’, *Res Judicatae*, VI (June 1953), pp. 231–7, reprinted in *First and Second Things* and *EC*.

[112](#) i.e. 'Dante's Statius' .

[113](#) 'Imagery in the Last Eleven Cantos of Dante's *Comedy*' was published in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*.

[114](#) 'On Ethics' was published in *Christian Reflections* and *EC*.

[115](#) Mrs Shelburne's granddaughter.

[116](#) Gibb had several requests from Francisco Osorio de Calheiros of Lisbon, Portugal, requesting a signed copy of *Surprised by Joy*. Don Whiskerandos is the Spanish prisoner in the burlesque drama in Richard Brinsley Sheridan's play *The Critic* (1779).

[117](#) The forty-two sacred books of wisdom allegedly written by Hermes Trismegistus or ‘thrice great Hermes’. The books combine the mythological wisdom and attributes attributed to the Egyptian god Thoth and the Greek god Hermes.

[118](#) On 27 April 1961 Gibb wrote to Lewis: 'There are a number of papers, and presumably manuscripts which [Rudyard Kipling] left his daughter and she is now wondering where to bequeath them when she dies. She does not want to have them pushed away on the British Museum but my suspicions are that she is casting her eye at Magdalene, with which I gather Kipling had associations. I believe he was an honorary fellow or something like that. Now, I am wondering what the reaction of your library would be to such a proposal' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 772, fol. 56).

[119](#) Mrs Elsie Bambridge (1896–1976) was the surviving daughter of Rudyard Kipling. In 1924 she married Captain George Bambridge, an ex-Irish Guard, and they made their home at Wimpole Hall in Royston, Cambridgeshire. Over the years, Kipling, his wife Caroline, and Elsie amassed a huge archive of ‘Kipling Papers’—those mentioned by Jocelyn Gibb in his letter of 27 April 1961. After her mother’s death in 1939, Elsie Bambridge took the ‘Kipling Papers’ to Wimpole Hall, where they were sorted and additional material added. At her death on 23 May 1976, Mrs Bambridge, a widow and childless, bequeathed Wimpole Hall and the ‘Kipling Papers’ to the National Trust. The papers were deposited at Sussex University by the Trust in 1978.

[120](#) This and the letters of 12, 17 and 31 May are the only letters from Greeves to Lewis that survive. The originals are in the Wade Center.

[121](#) Lismachan, in Strandtown, was built by Arthur's uncle, John Greeves (1831–1917), and had been the home of that branch of the family until it was sold.

[122](#) The correspondent had spotted two errors in *Screwtape Letters and Screwtape Proposes a Toast*, pp. 72, 84. These were corrected in subsequent editions; see e.g. *The Screwtape Letters* (London: Fount, 1998), pp. 59, 70.

[123](#) In the end, Lewis was not asked to review Robert Lee Wolff's *The Golden Key*. See the letter to Jane Douglass of 14 November 1960.

[124](#) Charles Gore, *The Sermon on the Mount* (1896); *The Philosophy of the Good Life* (1930).

[125](#) The novels of François Mauriac include *The Kiss to the Leper* (1923), *Thérèse* (1927), *Viper's Tangle* (1933) and *The Desert of Love* (1949).

[126](#) Evans had undertaken to edit the works of Jules Verne in the Fitzroy Edition, consisting of sixty-three volumes, and which began publication in 1958. Evans had possibly offered to send Lewis copies of those volumes published up to 1961.

[127](#) Shelburne wrote on the envelope of this letter: 'I suppose I never told Dr. Lewis the full story of the tragedy of my daughter's marriage and her life since. Upon receipt of this letter from him, I immediately wrote him the full account, because, sorrowful and difficult as she makes my life, I feel it is not really her fault. I just make a good "whipping boy" for her tension, grief and troubles, and she dare not "take it out" on others. Probably pride kept me from telling Jack Lewis years back.'

128 highest common factor.

[129](#) 'form'.

[130](#) Great Western Railway.

[131](#) Esther Smith, Greeves's housekeeper, had decided to retire.

[132](#) In his train journeys to Cambridge Lewis passed through Bletchley, Buckinghamshire, which was about halfway between Oxford and Cambridge.

[133](#) Lewis had received a letter of 21 April 1961 from Toshio Hirunuma of Osaka, Japan. As translator of *The Four Loves* into Japanese, he needed Lewis's help with unfamiliar expressions, one of which—'wash behind her ears'—occurred in ch. 5, p. 122: 'He is a King Cophetua who after twenty years still hopes that the beggar-girl will one day learn to speak the truth and wash behind her ears.' Hirunuma had translated this 'wash behind the years'. Toshio Hirunuma's letters are in the Bodleian Library (Dep. c. 772, vol. 48).

[134](#) Van Deusen's home in Hendersonville, North Carolina, was in the Smoky Mountains.

[135](#) Jill Black, of Bodley Head, wrote to Lewis on 2 June 1961: 'Just now we are building up a library of hero re-tellings, of which GRETIR THE STRONG by Allen French is the second title to appear...I am hoping very much to include a retelling of Malory's MORTE D'ARTHUR in the library, and wondering whether there would be any possibility of persuading you to do this for us, or indeed, any other heroic legend or body of literature that you may happen to be particularly interested in?'

[136](#) Allen French, *Grettir the Strong* (London: Bodley Head, 1961).

[137](#) i.e. Green's *King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table*. See the letter to Green of 10 July 1953.

[138](#) Jamshid and Rostum appear as characters in Firdausi's *Shah-nameh*.

[139](#) Gibb had suggested in a letter of 9 June 1961 that whatever main title they gave the book, as a subtitle, ‘Perhaps we had better have it “Literary Criticism *through* Ethics and Culture to Theology”’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 772, fol. 75).

140 The Kilns lay at the foot of Shotover Hill.

[141](#) Philippians 4:13.

[142](#) This was the title Lewis and Gibb settled on for the collection of essays.

[143](#) Mrs Sarre was writing from 6 Tayly Terrace, Rosslyn Park, South Australia.

[144](#) Thompson said of this letter: ‘Dr Lewis always sent a Whitsun Offering as a personal gift (so that the parson didn’t have to declare it as earnings for Income Tax!) to the assistant Priest of his Parish Church, poorly paid of course, even for those non-inflationary times’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/6, fol. 80).

[145](#) Wade Center. Shelburne had now moved to Apartment 313, Clifton Terrace Apartments, 1308 Clifton Street, NW, East Washington, DC.

[146](#) Bodleian Library. Gibb realized that, with Lewis in hospital, he needed Warnie's help in getting the material that was to go into *They Asked for a Paper*. He wrote to Warnie on 21 July 1961: 'I'm here awaiting those...Three pieces which he had merged into one. But, after discussion in May, he decided to tackle them though still to be merged, in a different way. One of the articles is called THEOLOGY POETRY? and it appeared originally in the Socratic Digest...Now that the second process of merging is impossible I think it best not to revert to the first but to publish THEOLOGY POETRY? in its original form. If you can find that piece, do you think you could send it to me?' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 772, fol. 92).

[147](#) Wade Center.

[149](#) Wade Center.

[150](#) See **Father Walter Frederick Adams, SSJE** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1015–16.

[151](#) Bradbrook had sent him a volume of translations of Modern Greek poetry.

[152](#) William Empson, *Milton's God* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1961).

[153](#) In other words, rather than an attack on Milton's poetry, Empson's book was a sustained assault on Christianity and the Puritan ethos.

[154](#) 'all due reverence being paid'.

[155](#) Roger Poole (1939–2003), literary theorist, was born in Cambridge on 22 February 1939. Educated at the Perse School, he won an exhibition to Trinity College, Cambridge, taking a First in English Literature in 1958. He attended many of Lewis’s lectures and came to know him during his undergraduate years. From Cambridge Poole went to Paris where he was a lecturer in English at the Sorbonne, 1959–68. On returning to England he spent the rest of his working life at Nottingham University where he was Lecturer, then Senior Lecturer in English Literature, 1969–89, and Reader in Literary Theory 1989–96. He died on 21 November 2003. His books include *Towards Deep Subjectivity* (1972) and *The Unknown Virginia Woolf* (1978). See his article, ‘Lewis Lecturing’, in *The Canadian C. S. Lewis Journal*, no. 75 (Summer 1991), pp. 1–6.

[156](#) This reply is written at the foot of a letter from Andrew Rutherford (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 772, fol. 149), asking permission to include 'Kipling's World' in a volume of essays, *Kipling's Mind and Art: Selected Critical Essays* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964).

[157](#) Chad Walsh, *The Rough Years* (New York: Morehouse-Barlow Co., 1960).

[158](#) Mr Bowman is a character in *The Rough Years*.

[159](#) Gebbert and her son Charles were living temporarily at 12 Harrow Lodge, St. John's Wood Road, London NW8.

[160](#) Warnie did indeed take a holiday in Ireland, leaving Fred Paxford, the gardener, on hand if Lewis should need help.

[161](#) Francis Warner, *Perennia* (Cambridge: Golden Head Press, 1962), I, 8. Lewis read this poem in typescript, and many of his suggestions were adopted in the published version.

[162](#) See the letter to Warner of 1 November 1961.

[163](#) *Perennia*, IV, 8: 'Of things remote from Piccadilly sights.'

[164](#) *ibid.*, V, 5: 'The clover buzzing with the busy bees.'

[165](#) *ibid.*, 8: 'Soothing my mind like some old mystic charm'.

[166](#) *ibid.*, 9: 'Begged me unpack my flute to join their harmless balm.'

[167](#) *ibid.*, VII, 5: 'Were hurled to where the savage water curls'.

[168](#) *ibid.*, X, 2–3: ‘But from an acorn hedge a cricket hopped/And, waiting for a while crouched on all fours’.

[169](#) *ibid.*, XII, 3: 'For Hespera, the jealous Goddess Queen.'

[170](#) *ibid.*, XIII, 9: 'Her feet while shoals of fishes swam by in a school.'

[171](#) *ibid.*, XV, 5: 'Fluttering to and fro, while high birds' cries.'

[172](#) *ibid.*, XVII, 5–6: ‘Was mortal or a goddess, to belong/In such tranquil surroundings; if some freak...’

[173](#) *ibid.*, XIX, 6: 'Unable to look safely on a god.'

[174](#) *ibid.*, XLIII, 7–8: ‘And she collapsed in sorrow for her stark/Betrayal of his love...’

[175](#) *ibid.*, XLV, 4-5: ‘...she saw that while away/Her son had saved her victim...’

[176](#) *ibid.*, LXVI, 4: 'Upon her cheeks, for sleep had brought release.'

[177](#) *In An Experiment in Criticism.*

[178](#) On being 'baptised for the dead' see the letter to Mary Van Deusen of 28 December 1961.

[179](#) See **Sir Laurence Whistler**, poet and glass engraver, in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, p. 1081.

[180](#) Laurence Whistler, *Audible Silence* (London: Hart-Davis, 1961).

[181](#) *ibid.*, p. 18, 'Something Was Wrong', I, 9–10.

[182](#) *ibid.*, p. 23, 'A Triptych of Pure Moments, I. The Café on the Bridge', II, 3.

[183](#) *ibid.*, p. 25, 'A Triptych of Pure Moments, II. The Green Beard', IV, 4.

[184](#) *ibid.*, p. 33, 'The Nine-Day City', XX, 1.

[185](#) Matthew Arnold, 'Rugby Chapel' (1867).

[186](#) While Walsh and his wife were staying at the Eastgate Hotel in November 1961 they visited Lewis for the last time.

[187](#) John Norman Bryson (1896–1976) was a Fellow of English at Balliol College. See his biography in *CL* I, p. 644.

[188](#) See **Nevill Coghill** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL I*, pp. 984–6.

[189](#) These corrections were made in subsequent Fontana editions of *Miracles*, as well as the Fount paperback of 1974.

[190](#) Venus.

[191](#) Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*, IV, xxviii, 1: 'Erant in quadam civitate rex et regina': 'Once upon a time in a certain state there lived a king and queen.'

[192](#) i.e. the edition of *Theologia Germanica* mentioned in the letter to Corbin Scott Carnell of 13 October 1958.

[193](#) Spencer Curtis Brown.

[194](#) Jeannette Hopkins was an editor with Harcourt, Brace & World, who later worked for Harper & Row publishers, New York. She wanted to edit a selection of Lewis's writings for Harper & Row, but Curtis Brown advised against it.

[195](#) Sir Herbert Read's generous review of *An Experiment in Criticism* is found in *The Listener*, LXVI (16 November 1961), pp. 828, 831.

[196](#) The former Mrs Mary Margaret McCaslin was now Mrs Mary Margaret Ward.

[197](#) This letter was originally published in the *Church Times*, CXLIV (1 December 1961), p. 7, under the title 'Capital Punishment'.

[198](#) Lewis Carroll, *The Hunting of the Snark* (1876), IV, 248: 'That English is what you speak!'

[199](#) *The World's Last Night.*

[200](#) 'Choate' is defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as 'An erroneous word, framed to mean "finished", "complete", as if the *in-* of *inchoate* were the L. negative.' Winston Churchill, who delighted in being incorrect, was quoted in *The Times* (13 February 1916), p. 1, as saying: 'How could the peoples know?...What choate and integral conviction could they form?'

[201](#) Because of his ill-health Lewis was unable to get to Cambridge for Michaelmas Term 1961, and he had to give up supervising Warner's work on Agrippa. Dr T. R. Henn supervised Warner for three months from 1 October 1961 until Dr Frederick James Edward Raby (1888–1966), Fellow and Lecturer, Jesus College, Cambridge, 1948–55, took over on 5 January 1962.

[202](#) This letter was originally published in the *Church Times*, CXLIV (15 December 1961), p. 12, under the title 'Death Penalty'.

[203](#) Claude Davis, 'Death Penalty', *Church Times*, CXLIV (8 December 1961), p. 14.

[204](#) Demosthenes Speech 47, 'Against Evergus', sections 71–73.

[205](#) Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Second Part, Section VIII, p. 265: 'I have observed that old men have blessed themselves with this mistake; Namely, taking the decays of Nature for a gracious Conquest over Corruptions.'

[206](#) 'age'.

[207](#) Luke 13:16.

[208](#) Luke 9:54–5: ‘And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.’

[209](#) Matthew 7:6.

[210](#) Luke 16:10–12: ‘He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?’

[211](#) 'Lord'. See Luke 9:54.

[212](#) See the letter to Griffiths of 30 April 1959.

[213](#) Thomas Merton, *No Man is an Island* (1955).

[214](#) Dr Viswanathan was a teacher at Queensland University of Technology, Australia.

[215](#) Warner had applied for a fellowship at Gonville and Caius College.

[216](#) The passage Lewis seems to have had in mind is 1 Corinthians 15:28–9 (RSV): ‘When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things under him, that God may be everything to every one. Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf?’

[217](#) 1 Peter 3:19–20 (RSV): ‘He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly did not obey, when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water.’

[218](#) In his letter to Mrs Van Deusen of 28 October 1961 Lewis mentioned trying to find ‘one of the epistles about people being “baptised for the dead”’. He returned to that question in this letter.

[219](#) Austin Farrer, *Love Almighty and Ills Unlimited* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1961).

[220](#) *ibid.*, ch. 5, 'Animal Pain', p. 76.

¹ *The Poems of Sextus Propertius*, trans. A. E. Watts (Chichester: Centaur Press, 1961).

2 In the end Watts did not use a quotation from George Herbert in the book.

[3](#) George Gordon, Lord Byron, *Don Juan* (1819–20), III, lxxv, 8.

⁴ Miss Andrews, whose first letter from Lewis appears in *CL* II, p. 934, was writing from Box 79, Bloemfontein, OFS, South Africa.

⁵ George MacDonald, *The Marquis of Lossie*, 3 vols. (1877); *Donal Grant*, 3 vols. (1883); *Malcolm*, 3 vols. (1875).

6 Martha Allen was writing from 1108 West Maple, Birmingham, Michigan.

⁷ Hooton said of this letter: 'The type-written note of 26 January 1962 must refer to my having retired from Felsted School in 1961' (Bodleian Library, MS. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 95).

8 p.p.

9 Mrs Loris E. Wiles was writing from 5824 NW 25th Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

10 p.p.

[11](#) i.e. *They Asked for a Paper*. The blurb on the inside cover read: 'In this present collection of essays and papers, which is arranged to show how C. S. Lewis's particular gift can transcend the categories which usually separate "Literary Criticism" from "Theology", few readers will find that they agree with everything he says in every paper. But who would wish them to do so? Certainly not C. S. Lewis, who, unlike so many equally penetrating and original thinkers, never brooks at provoking points of disagreement.'

[12](#) See the biography of Joan Bennett, lecturer in English at Cambridge University, in *CL II*, p. 209n.

[13](#) See the biography of John Wain in *CL* II, p. 888n.

14 'teetotal'.

15 Oxo cubes for gravy, and Wincarnis tonic wine both contained meat extract.

[16](#) James Forsyth, *Screwtape, A Play* (Chicago: Dramatic Publishing Co., 1972).

[17](#) K. C. Thompson, *Once For All: A Study of the Christian Doctrine of Atonement and Salvation* (London: Faith Press, 1962).

[18](#) 'You fall upon the rock Scylla desiring to avoid the whirlpool Charybdis.' The Latin is from Philippe Gaultier, *Alexandreis*, V, 301.

19 p.p.

[20](#) Chad Walsh, *From Utopia to Nightmare* (London: Bles, 1962).

21 p.p.

[22](#) The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, was built in 1932, and Shakespeare's plays are regularly performed there.

23 Mrs Louise Raynor was writing from 260 Spear Street, South Burlington, Vermont.

²⁴ In *A Grief Observed*, a copy of which he had sent Whistler.

[25](#) This was the debate Lewis and Dorothy L. Sayers were to have with Kathleen Nott on 24 October 1954, but which Nott was unable to attend. See the letter to Sayers of 12 June 1954.

[26](#) Alastair Cooke, 'Mr. Anthony at Oxford', *New Republic*, 110 (24 April 1944), pp. 578–80, was an unfavourable review of the American editions of *Christian Behaviour* (1944) and *Perelandra* (1944).

[27](#) Gibb wrote to Lewis on 12 March 1962: ‘A friend of Chad’s, another American, wants to write what he calls a “modified biography” of yourself. He is called Ed Dell...Has he your approval of this idea?’ (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 772, fol. 199).

[28](#) *Of They Asked for a Paper.*

29 The Rev. Meredith Stevens was writing from 112 South Dellner, Visalia, California.

30 p.p.

[31](#) Muhammad Kamel Hussein, *City of Wrong: A Friday in Jerusalem*, trans. from Arabic by Kenneth Cragg (London: Bles, 1960). This was the first book written in the Islamic world to make a study of Christ's crucifixion and to show its significance for a devout Muslim. The story is set in Jerusalem on Good Friday and explores the actions and states of mind of the Apostles, Jews and Romans, shepherds and shopkeepers, participants and bystanders.

[32](#) Cecil Roth (1899–1970), Jewish historian and educator, was born in London on 5 March 1899 and educated at Oxford. Taking his Ph.D. in 1924, he was Reader in Jewish Studies, 1939–64. Thereafter he was visiting professor at Bar-Ilan University, Israel, 1964–5, and at the City University of New York, 1966–9. He was editor of *Encyclopedia Judaica* from 1965 until his death in Jerusalem on 21 June 1970. He wrote a great many books, including *A History of the Marranos* (3rd edn, 1966), *The Jews in the Renaissance* (1959), *Jewish Art* (1961) and *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (1965).

³³ David Gresham had loved Judaism since he was eleven, and with his mother's death his interest had grown. He disliked learning Latin so much at Magdalen College School that Lewis arranged for him to take private tuition in Hebrew during 1961–2. David had also started attending the Oxford Synagogue, where he had come to know Cecil Roth. Irene Roth, in *Cecil Roth: Historian Without Tears: A Memoir* (1982) tells how her husband held 'At Homes' for undergraduates and other Jewish visitors on Saturday afternoons. After talking with David at one of these gatherings, 'Cecil advised C. S. Lewis to remove David from Magdalen College School...[and] suggested that David be sent to an Orthodox Talmudical Academy' (pp. 152–3). As a result, Lewis allowed David to visit Carmel College, a Jewish yeshiva or Talmudic college, near Wallingford, on 10 April 1962.

[34](#) This is the Seven Arches Hotel, Mount of Olives Plaza, Mount of Olives, Jerusalem.

[35](#) Francine Smithline, a schoolgirl, was writing from 114 Joseph Street, New Hyde Park, New York.

[36](#) This refers to Green's unpublished novel, 'The Wood that Time Forgot'. Lewis read it first in 1945, made various suggestions, and read a revised version in 1947. For his criticism see *CL II*, pp. 670–2, 949–50. In March 1962 Green proposed that he and Lewis collaborate on a revision of 'The Wood', and this letter is Lewis's reply to that suggestion. The plot of the story is given in Green and Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: A Biography*, ch. 11, p. 305.

[37](#) Andrew Lang, *Prince Prigio and Prince Ricardo* (London: Dent; New York: Dutton, 1961).

38 Thackeray, *The Rose and the Ring*.

[39](#) Owen Barfield, *Worlds Apart (A Dialogue of the 1960's)* (London: Faber & Faber, 1963; Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1971). The book is written in the form of a semi-Socratic dialogue among scientists (Ranger, Brodie and Upwater), a philosopher (Dunn), a psychiatrist (Burrows), a theologian (Hunter), and a lawyer (Burgeon). The dialogue touches on the duality between mind and matter, the new knowledge of genetics, physics and astronomy, and the difference between perception and reality.

⁴⁰ Charles Adolph Huttar (1932–) was born in Austin, Texas, on 8 July 1932. He received a BA in English from Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois in 1952. From there he went to Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, where he was awarded a MA in 1953 and a Ph.D. in 1956. He was assistant professor and then associate professor of English at Gordon College, Wenham, Massachusetts, 1955–66, and was Chairman of the Department of English, 1971–6. He has been Professor of English at Hope College, Holland, Michigan, since 1966. He has written extensively on the Inklings, and his works include *Imagination and the Spirit: Essays in Literature and the Christian Faith presented to Clyde S. Kilby*, ed. Charles A Huttar (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), *Word and Story in C.S. Lewis*, ed. Peter J. Schakel and Charles A. Huttar (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991), and *The Rhetoric of Vision: Essays on Charles Williams*, ed. Charles A. Huttar and Peter J. Schakel (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1996).

[41](#) Middle English.

[42](#) Pusey House is an Anglican establishment in St Giles, Oxford. Fr Gervase Mathew OP was a member of the Dominican Order located in Blackfriars, next door to Pusey House.

[43](#) Francis Warner, 'A Legend's Carol', IV, 9–12: 'While hard across the frozen ground/Jolted old Joseph's form,/Both riding and sliding/Along the hardened track.' This poem was included in Warner's *Early Poems* (London: Fortune Press, 1964).

[44](#) The 'charming reminder' was a copy of the *Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* announcing the purchase of Rembrandt's painting *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer*. Douglass said in a note on this letter: 'I had sent this thinking it might remind Joy of happy days in New York.'

45 Mrs Shelburne had now moved to an apartment at 103 6th Street, NE, Washington, DC.

⁴⁶ Victor Gollancz (1893–1967), publisher, was born in London and educated at New College, Oxford, where he took a First in Honour Moderations in 1914. He went into publishing in 1920 and by 1928 he had formed the firm of Victor Gollancz Ltd. In 1936 he founded the Left Book Club, his aim being to spread socialist ideas. The club's most important book was George Orwell's *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937). Another speciality of his firm was the crime novel, and his crime writers included Dorothy L. Sayers. In 1989 his firm was sold to Houghton Mifflin of Boston, and in 1999 it was bought by the publisher, Cassell plc.

[47](#) In March 1962 Gollancz received Lewis's permission to include a shortened version of his preface to *George MacDonald: An Anthology* in George MacDonald, *Phantastes and Lilith* (London: Gollancz, 1962). On 3 April Gollancz wrote to Robert Knittel of Collins asking formal permission to use Lewis's work. However, this letter, beginning 'My dear Bob', was sent to Lewis by mistake (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 772, fol. 191).

⁴⁸ John Beversluis (1934–), who was born in Hawthorne, New York, on 11 October 1934, received his BA from Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1956 and a Ph.D. from Indiana University in 1972. He has taught philosophy at a number of institutions, including Grand Valley State College, Allendale, Michigan, 1965–7, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, 1967–71, the University of Athens, Athens, Georgia, 1971–2, the University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee, 1972–3, and Butler University, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1973–94, where he was Professor of Philosophy and head of the philosophy department. He currently teaches at Cabrillo College, Aptos, California. He is the author of *C. S. Lewis and the Search for Rational Religion* (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1985) and *Cross-Examining Socrates: A Defense of the Interlocutors in Plato's Early Dialogues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[49](#) Dr Beversluis had asked whether the rise of distortion in modern and contemporary art was traceable to the loss of belief in God and the decline of Christianity.

50 'the art of being a grandfather'. From Victor Hugo, *L'art d'être grand-père* (Poems, 1877).

51 p.p.

[52](#) Richard N. Ringler (1934–) was born in Milwaukee on 21 January 1934. He took his BA and Ph.D. from Harvard in 1955 and 1961. Since 1961 he has been teaching at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, first as Professor of English, 1961–5, and then as Professor of Scandinavian Studies. He is the author of *Bard of Iceland: Jónas Hallgrímsson, Poet and Scientist* (2002).

[53](#) The 'Mutabilitie Cantos' is the name given to the fragmentary Book VII of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. They consist of only two cantos, published with the folio edition of *The Faerie Queene* in 1609.

[54](#) Lewis was the general editor of a series of texts published by Thomas Nelson as Nelson's Medieval and Renaissance Library.

[55](#) Philippians 4:4.

[56](#) Matthew 6:34.

[57](#) Stuart Robertson was writing from 209 North Biaman Avenue, Villa Park, Illinois.

[58](#) 1 Corinthians 9:27: 'But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.'

[59](#) Matthew 25:31–3.

[60](#) Philippians 2:12.

[61](#) *ibid.*, 2:13.

[62](#) Dr Kenneth Ronald Walter Brewer (1931–), statistical survey consultant, was born in Hackney, London on 4 March 1931. He received a BSc in Physics from Imperial College, London, 1951, and an MSc in Astronomy from the University of London Observatory in 1952. In July 1952 he went to Australia where he was a student at the Australian National University's Department of Astronomy, 1952–4. In 1954 he became a statistician, joining the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, now the Australian Bureau of Census and Statistics. He took a BA from the University of Melbourne in 1960, and an M.Ec. and Ph.D. from the Australian National University in 1973 and 1997. From 1998 he has been a Visiting Fellow at the Australian National University. His publications include, with Muhammad Hanif, *Sampling with Unequal Probabilities* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1983); and *Combined Survey Sampling Inference: Weighing Basu's Elephants* (London: Arnold, 2002). He is an active layman in the Liberal Catholic Church (Province of Australia). In a letter to Walter Hooper of 13 April 2005 he stated that he 'has never lost his deep respect for and delight in the writings of C. S. Lewis. Nevertheless...he would now count himself as being more in the school of Ken Wilber, the author of *The Marriage of Sense and Soul* [1998] and of many other books on matters of ultimate concern.'

[63](#) 'delirium tremens'. Lewis forgot that he did not mention this in the 1960 edition of *Miracles*.

[64](#) *Miracles* (1940; Fontana, 1960), ch. 1, pp. 4, 5–6: ‘Some people believe that nothing exists except Nature; I call these people *Naturalists*. Others think that, besides Nature, there exists something else: I call them *Supernaturalists*...What the Naturalist believes is that the ultimate Fact, the thing you can’t go behind, is a vast process in space and time which is *going on of its own accord*. Inside that total system every particular event...happens because some other event has happened; in the long run, because the Total Event is happening. Each particular thing...is what it is because other things are what they are; and so, eventually, because the whole system is what it is. All the things and events are so completely interlocked that no one of them can claim the slightest independence from “the whole show”.’

[65](#) Matthew 12:31–2: ‘All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him.’

See John Bunyan, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, ed. Roger Sharrock (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 33: ‘In these days, when I have heard others talk of what was the sin against the Holy Ghost, then would the tempter so provoke me to desire to sin that sin, that I was as if I could not, must not, neither should be quiet until I had committed that; now, no sin would serve but that; if it were to be committed by speaking of such a word, then I have been as if my mouth would have spoken that word, whether I would or no; and in so strong a measure was this temptation upon me, that often I have been ready to clap my hand under my chin, to hold my mouth from opening; and to that end also I have had thoughts at other times, to leap with my head downward, into some muck-hill hole or other, to keep my mouth from speaking...’ Bunyan went on for many pages describing the misery he endured as a result of believing he had committed the unforgivable sin.

[66](#) For the biography of George Watson, see note 233 to the letter to Joy Lewis of 18 Nov 1959.

[67](#) George Watson, *The Literary Critics: A Study in English Descriptive Criticism* (1962).

[68](#) *ibid.*, ch. 1, p. 12.

[69](#) William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads, With a Few Other Poems* (1798), Preface [by Wordsworth], paragraphs 24–5.

[70](#) Watson, *The Literary Critics*, p. 202: ‘If we peer closer, two strands seem visible in the complex pattern of largely academic historiography as it has been practised on both sides of the Atlantic. The one is largely Christian, the other largely Marxist and ex-Marxist. The Christian tradition is essentially British–Anglican, indeed—and has powerful medieval affinities, emerging from the ruck of late Victorian editing of medieval texts into an astonishingly clear light with such good academic critics as W. P. Ker (1855–1923) in his *Epic and Romance* (1896) and *The Dark Ages* (1904).’ For Lewis’s encounter with Ker see *CL* I, p. 554.

[71](#) i.e. *The Allegory of Love*.

[72](#) William Wordsworth, *Poems* (1815), 'Laodamia'. See the Preface to William Wordsworth, *Poems*, ed. Matthew Arnold (London: Macmillan, 1879), p. xxiv: 'I have a warm admiration for *Laodamia* and for the great *Ode*; but if I am to tell the very truth, I find *Laodamia* not wholly free from something artificial, and the great *Ode* not wholly free from something declamatory.'

[73](#) Mrs Rolston had written from Baton Rouge, Louisiana to 'N. W. Clerk', author of *A Grief Observed*, not knowing 'Clerk' was Lewis. Lewis continued the disguise by writing as from Faber & Faber, publishers of the book.

[74](#) Lewis had written 'C. S.' and then struck it out to be replaced by 'N. W.'

75 A mistake for Tuesday.

[76](#) In a letter to Walter Hooper of 1 March 1968, Watson said that Lewis's letter of 15 May 1962 'is a reply to one of mine in which, perhaps rashly, I suggested that litotes is often a mark of intellectual snobbery ("I.S").'

[77](#) *SBJ*, chs. 14–15, pp. 178–9: ‘In the Trinity Term of 1929 I gave in, and admitted that God was God...It must be understood that the conversion recorded in the last chapter was only to Theism, pure and simple, not to Christianity.’

[78](#) See *CL I*, p. 96.

[79](#) Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, trans. W. F. Trotter (1996–7), Section VII, Morality and Doctrine, no. 553: ‘Console thyself, thou would not seek Me, if thou hadst not found Me.’

80 i.e. *They Asked for a Paper.*

[81](#) There was a meeting of the Commission to Revise the Psalter at the home of the Archbishop of York, Bishopthorpe Palace, Bishopthorpe, Yorkshire, on 29 May 1962.

[82](#) In Samuel Butler, *Erewhon* (1872), ch. 10, criminals go to 'straighteners' to be cured, whereas sick and poor people are sent to prison until they get better.

[83](#) The *New English Bible*. The New Testament was published in 1961, and the whole Bible in 1970.

84 i.e. David Winton Thomas.

[85](#) Possibly a reference to two Cambridge dons, Richard Leighton Greene, author of *The Early English Carols* (1935) and *A Selection of English Carols* (1962), and James Winny, author of *Elizabethan Prose Translation* (1960).

[86](#) Margaret E. Rose of the School Broadcasting Department of the BBC wrote to Lewis on 28 May 1962: 'We are doing a series for Sixth Forms in the Autumn of 1962 called "Knowledge, Imagination and Truth" in which we hope to demonstrate the separate functions and the interplay of "reason" and "imagination" as means of knowledge. I...wonder whether you would be interested in doing the two talks on J. R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings".'

87 p.p.

[88](#) Antonio de Oliveira Salazar (1889–1970), dictator of Portugal, 1932–68, who in 1933 introduced a constitution that contained similarities to the fascist governments of Germany and Italy. His policies made the ruling oligarchy rich, and Portugal the poorest country in Europe.

[89](#) Psalm 74:21 (Coverdale).

[90](#) Lewis sent this note of congratulation to Sharrock on learning he had been elected Professor of English at the University of Durham.

[91](#) Virgil, *Aeneid*, III, 495: 'Your rest is won.'

92 'congratulations'.

[93](#) Lewis is here, in effect, repeating what he said in *Miracles*, ch. 3, pp. 14–15.

94 Greeves had suffered from heart trouble all his life.

95 i.e. Bunyan's *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*.

96 In the letter to Green of 18 June 1962.

[97](#) As Lewis did in *The Four Loves*.

[98](#) *The Four Loves*, ch. 3, 'Affection', p. 33: 'As gin is not only a drink in itself but also a base for many mixed drinks, so Affection, besides being a love itself, can enter into the other loves and colour them all through and become the very medium in which from day to day they operate. They would not perhaps wear very well without it.'

[99](#) *ibid.*, ch. 2, 'Likings and Love for the Sub-Human', p. 16: 'When [Appreciative love] is offered to a woman we call it admiration; when to a man, hero-worship; when to God, worship simply.'

[100](#) William Wordsworth, *Complete Poetical Works* (1888), 'The Tables Turned', 26–8: 'Our meddling intellect/Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things—/We murder to dissect.'

[101](#) Hooper had agreed to write a book on Lewis for Twayne's English Authors Series. In the end Lewis persuaded him to abandon it.

[102](#) This letter was originally published in the *Church Times*, CXLV (20 July 1962), p. 12, under the title 'And Less Greek'.

[103](#) Walter Van Der Kamp (1913–98) was born in the Netherlands, but emigrated to Canada in 1955. He founded the Tychonian Society, the purpose of which was to disseminate information about the central place occupied by the earth in the universe. In 1971 Van Der Kamp began to publish the *Bulletin of the Tychonian Society*. In 1991 the society changed its name to the Association for Biblical Astronomy, and the publication to *The Biblical Astronomer*. See the obituary by his son Conrad Van Der Kamp in *The Biblical Astronomer*, 8, no. 84 (Spring 1998), pp. 7–9.

[104](#) Arthur Darby Nock (1902–63), the author of *Conversion* (1933), *Saint Paul* (1938), and many articles on ancient religion. It is not known which article Lewis was referring to.

[105](#) 1 Corinthians 14:8: 'If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?'

[106](#) 'Free Kirk' is another name for members of the Free Church of Scotland, formed at the Disruption in 1843 by the separation of nearly a third of the ministers and members of the established Church of Scotland. In 1900 it joined with the United Presbyterian Church to form the United Free Church.

[107](#) In 1959 Charles Percy Snow (1905–80), a scientific administrator and novelist, gave the Rede lectures in Cambridge on *The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution* (1959). His theme was that ignorance by humanists of modern science was as barbaric as ignorance of the arts by scientists. F. R. Leavis attacked the thesis with passion in his *Two Cultures? The Significance of C. P. Snow* (1962), in which he asserted that his own interpretation of culture, as a knowledge of what great artists said of life, was in direct conflict with Snow's. It is *Two Cultures?* which Lewis regarded as the 'pillory' constructed by Leavis for Snow.

[108](#) Howard Pyle (1853–1911), American illustrator, wrote and illustrated many books, including *The Story of King Arthur and his Knights* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1903).

[109](#) Warwick Deeping (1877–1950), English novelist, was the author of *Uther and Igraine* (1903) and many other novels, including *Sorrell and Son* (1925).

[110](#) During Jane Studdock's first visit to St Anne's, as recounted in *That Hideous Strength*, ch. 3, part IV, p. 59, she reads in a book lying on the table: 'The beauty of the female is the root of joy to the female as well as to the male, and it is no accident that the goddess of Love is older and stronger than the god. To desire the desiring of her own beauty is the vanity of Lilith, but to desire the enjoying of her own beauty is the obedience of Eve, and to both it is in the lover that the beloved tastes her own delightfulness. As obedience is the stairway of pleasure, so humility is the—'

[111](#) Margaret Clark, colleague of Jill Black at Bodley Head, wrote to Lewis on 1 August 1962: 'About eighteen months ago my colleague Mrs Black wrote to you about George MacDonald. She hoped to persuade you then to write a study of him and his work for the Bodley Head Monograph Series, but, unfortunately for us, you were very busy with other things. Now I am writing to ask if you would be willing to write a short note about MacDonald for a quite different purpose.'

[112](#) On the envelope of Lewis's letter, Pitter wrote: 'I went to see him on Aug. 15, 1962: this was the last time I saw him.—Owen Barfield had brought him to see me on the 12th July previous' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/3, fol. 145).

[113](#) E. H. Gombrich, *The Story of Art* (1950).

[114](#) Jean Seznec, *La Survivance des Dieux Antiques* (1940); trans. B. F. Sessions, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods* (1953).

[115](#) Edgar Wind, *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (1958).

[116](#) Coventry Patmore, *The Angel in the House* (1863), Bk. I, Canto VIII, 'The Praise of Love',
v, 3–4.

[117](#) Coventry Patmore, *The Unknown Eros and Other Odes* (1877), Bk. II, xii, 'Eros and Psyche', 55–6.

[118](#) Lewis had been asked by Arthur Langford of the BBC's Further Education Unit if he would write and record a talk on *The Pilgrim's Progress*. After he agreed, Betty Provan, the Talks Booking Manager of the BBC, wrote on 20 August 1962: 'We understand...that you have been asked to write a 30 minute illustrative programme on THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS to be broadcast in the series UNREAD CLASSICS in Network Three. We should like to offer you a fee of 45 guineas to cover this work.'

[119](#) Lewis recorded his talk on *The Pilgrim's Progress* at The Kilns on 11 September 1962 and it was broadcast on 16 October. The essay, entitled 'The Vision of John Bunyan', was published in *The Listener*, LXVIII (13 December 1962), pp. 1006–8, and is reprinted in *SLE*.

[120](#) John Lawlor, *Piers Plowman: An Essay in Criticism* (London: Arnold, 1962).

[121](#) Denise Howes was a schoolgirl writing from 6523 Unity Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[122](#) There were no maps in the original American editions of the Narnian stories. However, the English editions of *Prince Caspian*, *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*, *The Silver Chair* and *The Horse and His Boy* bore maps on their endpapers.

[123](#) *The Last Battle*, ch. 8, pp. 99–100: “‘Oh, this *is* nice!’ said Jill. “Just walking along like this. I wish there could be more of *this* sort of adventure. It’s a pity there’s always so much happening in Narnia.” But the Unicorn explained to her that she was quite mistaken. He said that the Sons and Daughters of Adam and Eve were brought out of their own strange world into Narnia only at times when Narnia was stirred and upset, but she mustn’t think it was always like that. In between their visits there were hundreds and thousands of years when peaceful King followed peaceful King till you could hardly remember their names or count their numbers... And he went on to talk of old Queens and heroes whom she had never heard of...’

[124](#) See **J. B. Priestley** in the Biographical Appendix.

[125](#) J. B. Priestley, *Margin Released: A Writer's Reminiscences and Reflections* (London: Heinemann, 1962).

[126](#) See the biography of George Stuart Gordon, President of Magdalen College, 1928–42, in *CL* I, p. 643n.

[127](#) Philippians 4:4.

[128](#) Roger Lancelyn Green, 'Shakespeare and the Fairies', *Folklore*, 73, no. 2 (Summer 1962), pp. 89–103. In this essay Green surveys literary representations of 'les fées', including their Miltonic wings or lack thereof.

[129](#) In 'Shakespeare and the Fairies', p. 100, Green quoted *Cinderella* as retold by Charles Perrault in 1697: 'The magic begins after the quite casual mention of her qualification: "Sa Maraine qui estort Fée. [This godmother, who was a fairy.]"' The original, however, is 'qui était Fée'. Referring to Cinderella's godmother, Green said: 'Notice that she is not even "a Fairy", she is just "Fairy"—there is no exact equivalent in English, since "Fay" has taken on a different meaning.'

[130](#) *ibid.*, pp. 101–2: ‘The real enemy of the Shakespearean Fairy was the Fairy of Märchenland who entered England in 1823 when the first selection of Grimm’s *Kinder-und Hausmärchen* were translated and began slowly to find their way into the literary background via the Nursery.’

[131](#) *ibid.*, p. 99: ‘Surprisingly, Milton gave his angels, good or bad, wings; “Fluttering his pinions, plumb down he dropped”, as he says of Satan in Book II of *Paradise Lost*: and “So numberless were those bad Angels seen/Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell.”’

[132](#) Nicholas Despreaux-Boileau (1636–1711), French critic and poet, was the model for French neo-classicism at its apogee. His epistles and satires and his *Art Poétique* (1674) established canons of taste and principles of criticism that achieved international currency.

[133](#) Taken from the *Eclogue* of Theodulus, most probably a pseudonym for a ninth-century monk of the monastery of St Gall in modern-day Switzerland. The poem recounts, in Virgilian Latin, a debate between the pagan Pseustis and the Christian Alithia. ‘The Ecloga was recommended, prescribed, and used as a primary textbook of reading in medieval schools... sometimes as a book of instruction, sometimes as a religious or moral tract’ (G. Hamilton, ‘Theodulus: A Medieval Textbook’, *Modern Philology*, 7, no. 2 [Oct. 1909], pp. 169–185). The line Lewis quotes begins and ends a stanza in which Pseustis invokes the pagan pantheon: ‘Defend, O thousand names of gods, your prophet!/You who inhabit the underworld and the heavens above,/the corners of the earth and the resounding deep,/Defend, O thousand names of gods, your prophet!’

The most recent edition of the poem, with an Italian translation, is *Ecloga: Il Canto della Verità e della Menzogna*, ed. Francesco Mosetti-Casaretto (Florence: Edizione del Galluzzo, 1997). The text is also included in *Seven Versions of Carolingian Pastoral*, ed. and annotated by R. P. H. Green (Reading: University of Reading, 1980).

[134](#) In 1960 Harwood had joined the National Trust as assistant agent for East Anglia, and at this time he was living in Aylsham, Norfolk.

[135](#) Orval Hobart Mowrer, *The Crisis in Psychiatry and Religion* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1961).

[136](#) p.p.

[137](#) Matthew 25:31–46.

[138](#) Genesis 10:9.

[139](#) Watson had invited Lewis to contribute to *The English Mind: Studies in the English Moralists Presented to Basil Willey*, ed. Hugh Sykes Davies and George Watson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964).

[140](#) Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, I, 292: 'The sea too lacked its shores.'

[141](#) There is no work entitled the 'Catholic University Encyclopedia'. However, the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, is responsible for the *New Catholic Encyclopedia, Prepared by an editorial staff at the Catholic University of America* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967).

[142](#) See the chapter on 'Animal Pain' in *The Problem of Pain*.

143 The Rev. W. L. Stafford was a minister in Ohio.

[144](#) Stafford had complained about a passage in *The Problem of Pain* (London: Bles, 1940; Fount, 1998), ch. 1, p. 13: ‘There was a man born among these Jews who claimed to be, or to be the son of, or to be “one with”, the Something which is at once the awful haunter of nature and the giver of the moral law. The claim is so shocking—a paradox, and even a horror, which we may easily be lulled into taking too lightly—that only two views of this man are possible. Either he was a raving lunatic of an unusually abominable type, or else He was, and is, precisely what He said. There is no middle way.’

Stafford was unaware that Lewis had stated in ‘What Are We to Make of Jesus Christ?’ that Christ is the *only* religious leader who claimed to be God. See *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Fontana, 1971; Fount, 1998), p. 74: ‘On the one side [Christ’s] clear, definite moral teaching. On the other, claims which, if not true, are those of a megalomaniac, compared with whom Hitler was the most sane and humble of men. There is no half-way house and there is no parallel in other religions. If you had gone to Buddha and asked him: “Are you the son of Bramah?” he would have said, “My son, you are still in the vale of illusion.” If you had gone to Socrates and asked, “Are you Zeus?” he would have laughed at you. If you had gone to Mohammed and asked, “Are you Allah?” he would first have rent his clothes and then cut your head off. If you had asked Confucius, “Are you Heaven?”, I think he would have probably replied, “Remarks which are not in accordance with nature are in bad taste.” The idea of a great moral teacher saying what Christ said is out of the question.’

[145](#) *The Problem of Pain*, ch. 1, p. 15: 'If any message from the core of reality ever were to reach us, we should expect to find in it just that unexpectedness, that wilful dramatic anfractuosity which we find in the Christian faith.' Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, Vol. IV, 1780, p. 4: 'Sir, among the anfractuositities of the human mind, I know not if it may not be one, that there is a superstitious reluctance to sit for a picture.'

[146](#) Lawlor had informed Lewis that he and others were preparing a volume of essays—a *Festschrift*—to honour him in the year of his retirement. In the Preface to *Patterns of Love and Courtesy: Essays in Memory of C. S. Lewis*, ed. John Lawlor (London: Edward Arnold, 1966), Lawlor wrote (p. iii): ‘Our hope had been to present this book to Lewis in the year of his retirement. As it is, we can only repeat words he himself used on a comparably sad occasion, “Death forestalled us; we now offer as a memorial what had been devised as a greeting”.’

147 i.e. Lawlor's *Piers Plowman*.

[148](#) The talk Greeves heard broadcast on 16 October 1962 was on Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. It was afterwards published, with alterations, as 'The Vision of John Bunyan' in *The Listener*, LXVIII (13 December 1962), and it is reprinted in *SLE*.

[149](#) In December 1962 there was a dinner at Merton College to celebrate the publication of *English and Medieval Studies Presented to J. R. R. Tolkien on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Norman Davis and C. L. Wrenn (London: Allen & Unwin, 1962). Lewis contributed to the volume an essay, 'The Anthropological Approach', which is reprinted in *SLE*.

[150](#) Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, II, vii, 157–9: ‘The sixth age shifts/Into the lean and slippered pantaloons/With spectacles on nose and pouch on side...’

[151](#) Lewis's friends Owen Barfield and Cecil Harwood became Anthroposophists in 1923 and 1924. See their biographies in *CL* I, pp. 979–82, 998–1000.

[152](#) Orual's tutor in *Till We Have Faces*.

[153](#) Hebrews 13:14.

[154](#) *The Problem of Pain*, ch. 9, p. 115: ‘If a good sheepdog seems “almost human” that is because a good shepherd has made it so...there may be a sense...in which those beasts that attain a real self are *in* their masters. That is to say, you must not think of a beast by itself, and call that a personality and then inquire whether God will raise and bless *that*. You must take the whole context in which the beast acquires its selfhood...That whole context may be regarded as a “body” in the Pauline sense...In this way it seems to be possible that certain animals may have an immortality, not in themselves, but in the immortality of their masters.’

[155](#) Revelation 21:1.

[156](#) Professor Erich Heller (1911–90) was born in Komotau, Bohemia, on 27 March 1911. In 1935 he earned a doctorate in law at Charles University in Prague, after which he fled to England to escape the Nazis. He became a student in the German Department at Cambridge University in 1939, and while working on his D.Phil. he was Assistant Lecturer in German at the London School of Economics, 1943–5. In 1945 he was appointed a lecturer in German and Director of Studies in Modern Languages at Peterhouse, Cambridge. On taking his D.Phil. in 1948 he moved to University College of Swansea, Wales, as Professor of German. In 1960 Heller joined the faculty of Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, as Professor of German, and in 1967 he became the first Avalon Professor in the Humanities, a position he held until his retirement in 1979. He died on 5 November 1990. His works include *The Ironic German*, *A Study of Thomas Mann* (1958) and *The Importance of Nietzsche* (1988).

[157](#) Erich Heller, *The Disinherited Mind* (New York: Meridian Books; London: Bowes & Bowes, 1959). Page references in the following notes are to the British edition.

[158](#) *ibid.*, p. 19: ‘There is a sense in which Darwin’s theory, though it be perfectly correct, may yet be blatantly *untrue*. There is a very simple mystery behind the assertion, shocking to common sense only because common sense in each epoch consists in an astonishingly complex agglomeration of highly sophisticated half-truths. One such half-truth in which our common sense indulges...is the doctrine that any kind of knowledge, so long as it supplies us with correctly ascertained facts, is worth teaching and learning, and that the more such correct facts we accumulate, the nearer we come to Truth.’

[159](#) *ibid.*, p. 26: ‘One knows of course, how many scientific theories, for very long periods of time, stood the test of experience until they had to be discarded owing to man’s decision, not merely to make other experiments, but *to have different experiences.*’

[160](#) *ibid.*, pp. 202–3: ‘It was with incredulous amazement that I noticed extracts from reviews which appear as advertisements of the English translation of Kafka’s *The Castle*: “One reads it as if one were reading a fairy tale...” “What a lovely, moving, memorable book!”, “A book of curious and original beauty.” All this, attributed by the publishers to critics of some repute, is, of course, perverse. A nightmare is not a lovely fairy-tale, and a torture-chamber of the spirit not full of original beauty.’

[161](#) Fr George A. Restrepo SJ (1933–) wrote to ask if Lewis would give a talk to the theologians of Woodstock College in Maryland. Restrepo was born in New York City on 19 December 1933, the son of George and Julia Mallarino Restrepo. He was educated in New York at St Elizabeth of Hungary Grammar School, 1940–8 and Regis High School, 1948–52. He joined the Jesuit Order on 14 August 1952 and attended Bellarmine College, Plattsburg, New York, 1955–6, and Loyola Seminary, Shrub Oak, New York, 1956–9. He studied theology at Woodstock College, Woodstock, Maryland, 1962–6, being ordained a priest on 10 June 1965. After a year at the Shrine of the North American Martyrs in Auriesville, New York, Restrepo went to the Colegio San Ignacio in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico, where he taught English and religion, 1967–71. He returned to the United States in 1971 and studied the Art of Film at New York University, taking a MA in the Art of Cinema in 1973. He served at the Shrine of the Little Flower Parish and School, Baltimore, Maryland, 1973–94, and since 1994 he has been attached to St Thomas Aquinas Parish and School, Baltimore, Maryland. Some of his most moving experiences have been visits to the shrines at Lourdes, Fatima, Rome, and Molokai in the Hawaiian Islands where Father Damien (1840–89) helped the victims of leprosy.

[162](#) See the story of Balaam's ass in Number 22:24–31, and the letter to Sister Penelope of 15 May 1941 (*CL* II, pp. 484–5).

[163](#) 'Without fail, let us pray for one another.'

[164](#) Plautus (c. 254–184 BC) was one of the two great Roman playwrights whose comedies survive. His best-known comedy, *Menaechmi*, was translated into English at an earlier date than others of his works, and it is from this play that Shakespeare took the plot for his *Comedy of Errors* (1623).

[165](#) Arnold V. Miller has translated many of Hegel's writings and written extensively about them.

[166](#) Francis Herbert Bradley (1846–1924), Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, who was much concerned to draw attention to Hegel, was the author of *Appearance and Reality* (1893). Bernard Bosanquet (1848–1923), Fellow of Philosophy at University College, Oxford, was the author of *Knowledge and Reality* (1885) and *A History of Aesthetic* (1892).

[167](#) Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) was the German Idealist philosopher whose work Lewis referred to in various of his writings. In *Miracles* (ch. 11, pp. 85–6), following a definition of pantheism, Lewis said, ‘With Hegel it became almost the agreed philosophy of highly educated people.’ In *The Screwtape Letters and Screwtape Proposes a Toast*, pp. 147–8, Lewis has Screwtape say that ‘Hidden in the heart of this striving for Liberty there was also a deep hatred of personal freedom...From that starting point, *via* Hegel...we easily contrived both the Nazi and the Communist state.’ In a letter to Walter Hooper of 8 December 1965 Miller said that, in December 1962, ‘I was moved to write to Lewis...on account of his references to Hegel in *Miracles* and *Screwtape Proposes a Toast*...I was concerned to rebut the charge of pantheism which he levelled at Hegel in those two books. Hegel did *not* substitute for the living God of Christianity some bloodless impersonal abstraction called the Idea. On the contrary, he incessantly attacked such abstractions, called them empty thought-things.’

[168](#) Lewis thought the sermon was by St Augustine because it was attributed to him in the *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne (1844–64), Vol. 39, cols. 2001–2. However, it is now known to be the work of St Caesarius of Arles (c. 470–542). The author was talking about New Year, not Christmas. See Saint Caesarius of Arles, *Sermons*, trans. Sister Mary Magdeleine Mueller, OSF (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1956–73), Vol. III, ‘On the Calends of January’, p. 28: ‘There are some who observe omens on the Calends of January in such a way that they do not give fire or any kind of favour from their household to one who asks it, but they both accept diabolical gifts from others and themselves give them to others.’

[169](#) Shelburne had been elected a member of the National Society of Magna Charta Dames and Barons, which gives its 'Statement of Purpose' as follows: 'The Corporation is incorporated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes, including, without limitation, to establish and sponsor a library, publications, conferences, symposia and speeches pertaining to the Magna Charta and its heritage as follows: To establish and maintain a society for the encouragement of patriotic and literary fellowship...To perpetuate the memory of the Barons of England who in or before the year 1215 rendered actual service toward securing, and who, after many defeats, finally did secure the articles of constitutional liberty, properly called Magna Charta, from their sovereign, John, King of England, which he ratified and delivered to them "in the meadow which is called Runnemede between Windsor and Staines," on the Thames, above London, on the 15th day of June, A.D. 1215...To observe the anniversary of the date of this the most famous charter of rights and liberties.'

[170](#) Dean Acheson (1893–1971), American statesman, was Secretary of State, 1949–53. On 5 December 1962 he spoke at the fourteenth annual Student Conference on United States Affairs at the United States Military Academy, West Point. In his talk, published in *The Times* (11 December 1962), p. 8 and entitled ‘Western Alliance Weakened by Lack of Agreement on Policy’, Acheson said: ‘Great Britain has lost an empire and has not yet found a role. The attempt to play a separate power role—that is, a role apart from Europe, a role based on a “special relationship” with the United States, a role based on being the head of a “Commonwealth” which has no political structure, or unity, or strength and enjoys a fragile and precarious economic relationship by means of the sterling area and preferences on the British market—this role is about played out.’ Many people in the UK were furious, and that fury played itself out in numerous letters to *The Times* and other papers.

[171](#) See '185 Rotherham Poll Applications', *The Times* (8 December 1962), p. 6.

[172](#) On the evening of 15 October 1962 the CIA produced photos identifying Soviet nuclear missile installations under construction on the island of Cuba. The next day President John F. Kennedy called together a group of his advisers to consider how the United States should respond. The President, finally, chose to initiate a naval blockade against Soviet ships carrying missile equipment. This proved successful; the Soviets withdrew the missiles, and nuclear war was averted.

[173](#) 'Is English Doomed?' was published in *The Spectator*, CLXXII (11 February 1944), p. 121, and is reprinted in *Present Concerns* and *EC*.

[174](#) 'Is Theism Important?' was published in *The Socratic [Digest]*, no. 5 (1952), pp. 48–51, and is reprinted in *EC*.

[175](#) The poem 'Spartam Nactus' was published in *Punch*, CCXXVII (1 December 1954), p. 685. Revised and renamed 'A Confession', it is published in *CP*.

[176](#) The poem 'Abecedarium Philosophicum' by Lewis and Owen Barfield was published in *The Oxford Magazine*, LII (30 November 1933), p. 298.

[177](#) This was *Essays on Malory*, ed. J. A. W. Bennett (1963).

[178](#) The Ship Inn was in the coastal village of Ballyhalbert, County Down.

[179](#) *Lenten Lands*, ch. 16, p. 141.

[180](#) i.e. a tutor.

[181](#) Warner's wife had given birth to a daughter, Georgina, on 4 December 1962.

[182](#) Warner had completed his thesis, 'A Bibliographical Edition of the Latin Text of *De Occulta Philosophia* by H. Cornelius Agrippa, edited together with a revision of the translation of the text published by J.F. in 1651.' It may be consulted in the Cambridge University Library.

[183](#) Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Bk. I, ch. 2: 'There was sorrow then too, and gathering dark, but great valour, and great deeds that were not wholly vain.'

[184](#) Baynes married Fritz Otto Gasch, a garden contractor in Dockenfield, on 25 March 1961. See **Pauline Baynes** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1018–22.

[185](#) Baynes was the illustrator of J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* (1962).

[186](#) Eccleshare had asked Lewis for information to be used in promoting *The Discarded Image*.

[187](#) E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (London: Chatton & Windus, 1943). See **E. M. W. Tillyard** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1073–4.

[188](#) Rosemond Tuve (1903–64), distinguished American academic, took a BA in English from the University of Minnesota in 1919, and a Ph.D. from Bryn Mawr in 1931. She spent her entire career teaching at Connecticut College, New London, Connecticut, 1933–63. Her works include *Elizabethan and Metaphysical Imagery* (1947).

[189](#) See the biography of Douglas Bush in *CL* II, p. 221n.

[190](#) See the letter to Erich Heller of 27 November 1963.

[191](#) On 28 June 1946. See *CL* II, pp. 716–17.

[192](#) On 22 September 1952. See the letter to Monsignor Ferdinand Vandry of June 1952.

[193](#) On 13 May 1959. See the letter to Elizabeth Vinaver of 19 May 1959.

[194](#) In 1962. See CG, p. 126.

[195](#) p.p.

¹ This letter was originally published in *Encounter*, XX, no. 1 (January 1963), p. 81, under the title 'Wain's Oxford'.

² John Wain, *Sprightly Running: Part of an Autobiography* (London: Macmillan, 1962).

3 i.e. the Inklings.

⁴ See the biography of Roy Campbell in *CL* II, p. 736n.

⁵ In Homer, *Odyssey*, VII, 167ff, Alcinous, king of the Phaeacians, receives Odysseus hospitably in his kingdom of Phaeacia. After hearing the tale of his wanderings he provides him with safe passage back to Ithaca.

⁶ Lewis's poem, 'To Mr. Roy Campbell', had appeared in *The Cherwell*, LVI (6 May 1939), p. 35. It was revised and renamed 'To the Author of *Flowering Rifle*' and is published, along with a poem entitled 'To Roy Campbell', in *CP*, pp. 79–80.

⁷ Wain, *Sprightly Running*, ch. 5, p. 183.

[8](#) Wain's reply to Lewis appeared in *Encounter*, XX, no. 1 (January 1963), pp. 81–2.

9 Mrs Emmert was writing from Lupu in the Congo.

[10](#) Matthew 7:3: 'Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?'

[11](#) William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night, Or What You Will* (1623), II, iv, 29–30.

12 'Those fathers of families are capable of everything.'

[13](#) General Certificate of Education.

[14](#) T. S. Gregory of the BBC wrote to Lewis on 10 January 1963: 'The Third Programme will be broadcasting a large part of Paradise Lost during April and May. They would very much like to have a lecture from you on some aspect of Milton's poetry...I hope that your health will not deny us.'

[15](#) Merrill Rogers wrote to Lewis from 1301 Delaware Avenue, SW, Washington, DC, about his theory of the Holy Grail.

[16](#) Robert Graves and Joshua Podro, *The Nazarene Gospel Restored* (1955).

[17](#) Lady Flavia Giffard Anderson, *The Ancient Secret: In Search of the Holy Grail* (London: Gollancz, 1953).

18 James L. More was writing from 11 Horton Place, Brattleboro, Vermont.

19 p.p.

[20](#) The catheter that Lewis had been wearing for a year came loose, and he had to go into hospital to be fitted with another one.

[21](#) Douglas had been accepted at a small private school, Applegarth, in Godalming, Surrey. He wrote of his period at Applegarth in *Lenten Lands* (1988), ch. 16.

²² ‘Monday chats’, so called after Charles-Augustin Saint-Beuve (1804–69), who between 1849 and 1869 wrote numerous articles in Parisian newspapers called ‘Causeries du Lundi’. A collection was published as *Causeries du lundi*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1851).

[23](#) When the Inklings began Tuesday morning meetings at the Eagle and Child, or 'Bird and Baby', they were offered by the publicans, the Blagroves, the use of its little parlour, the so-called 'Rabbit Room'. However, when Mrs Blagrove retired, not all of her successors allowed the Inklings the use of this room. By the end of 1962 they could not count on finding the 'Rabbit Room' free, and as Lewis notes, they were also finding the 'Bird and Baby' far from comfortable. Near the end of 1962 the Inklings moved directly across the road to the Lamb and Flag. This pub, located at 12 St Giles, had been bought by St John's College from Godstow Abbey many years before, and a tavern was opened here in 1695. The college named the pub after the two symbols of St John the Baptist: a lamb and a flag (although only the lamb is shown on the inn's sign). The Lamb and Flag was not crowded at that time, and the Inklings met in the front room, which looked out into St Giles.

[24](#) i.e. Lewis's letter, 'Wain's Oxford', which appears above.

[25](#) George MacDonald, *Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood*, 3 vols. (1867).

26 p.p.

[27](#) Douglass wrote at the bottom of this letter: 'I had not known of Joy's death until I read it in Edmund Fuller's book "Of Books and Men" [*Books with Men Behind Them* (New York: Random House, 1962)]. This letter 6th Feb 1963 is C. S. Lewis's reply to my letter telling him this and expressing my grief for him.'

[28](#) The winter of 1962–3 was the coldest over England and Wales since 1740. As in 1947, anticyclones to the north and east of the British Isles brought bitterly cold winds from the east day after day. From Boxing Day 1962 to early March 1963, much of England was continuously under snow.

[29](#) Algernon Charles Swinburne, *Poems and Ballads* (1866), 'The Garden of Persephone', XI, 7–8. It is more exactly quoted on p. 1439.

30 p.p.

[31](#) Son Suez was Shelburne's cat.

[32](#) This was ‘Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What’s to Be Said’.

[33](#) Elliott was helping with a Japanese translation of *Miracles* by Naoyuki Yagyū, Professor of English at Kanto Gakuin University, Yokohama. See the essay ‘Surprise Encounter’ by Naoyuki Yagyū in *In Search of C. S. Lewis*, pp. 107–10.

[34](#) On 6 March 1963 Gibb wrote to Lewis about the possibility of issuing some of George MacDonald's *Unspoken Sermons*, as well as a collection of Lewis's poems and short works of prose: 'I am beginning to think that the plums from those "Unspoken Sermons" of George Macdonald may have gone into [your] Anthology...Meantime I shall hope to be presenting you with a formidable array of short poetry and prose...I think we want to avoid a bed-side book although at the same time not discouraging anyone who wants it by their bed' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 772, fol. 318).

[35](#) 'All the world's wiseacres' is from 'Impenitent', *Punch*, CCXXV (15 July 1953), p. 91. 'The Country of the Blind' was published in *Punch*, CCXXI (12 September 1951), p. 303. Both are reprinted in *Poems* and *CP*.

[36](#) Portballintrae, a village situated at the mouth of the River Bush, in County Antrim.

[37](#) Sherwood Eliot Wirt (1911–) was born in Oakland, California on 12 March 1911. He has served as a minister in a number of Presbyterian churches and he was the founding editor of *Decision* magazine for the Billy Graham Association, 1959–76. He wrote to Lewis on 15 March 1963: ‘I am a Presbyterian minister who studied at Edinburgh University and am now editing DECISION magazine for Billy Graham. In this magazine we are reprinting a portion of your late wife’s book “Smoke on the Mountain” and we will be pleased to send you a copy when it appears...My reason for writing to you is to inquire as to whether you would be willing to grant me an interview, either in person or through a series of written questions. I feel that it would be a real blessing to our two million readers if we could carry some answers from you to questions particularly involving encouragement of young people to write literature’ (Wade Center).

[38](#) 'step'.

[39](#) The Rt. Rev. John Arthur Thomas Robinson, *Honest to God* (London: SCM, 1963).

[40](#) Adrian Hastings, *A History of English Christianity 1920–1990* (London: Collins, 1986; 3rd edn, London: SCM; Trinity Press International, 1991), pp. 536–7.

[41](#) Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol. 98.

42 p.p.

[43](#) Arthur had found rooms for them at a hotel in Portstewart, Co. Londonderry.

⁴⁴ Kilmer had written to Lewis about *An Experiment in Criticism*, ch. 6, 'The Meaning of Fantasy', pp. 50–1: 'As a psychological term *fantasy* has three meanings. 1. An imaginative construction which in some way or other pleases the patient and is mistaken by him for reality... 2. A pleasing imaginative construction entertained incessantly, and to his injury, by the patient, but without the delusion that it is a reality...3. The same activity indulged in moderately and briefly as a temporary holiday or recreation, duly subordinated to more effective and outgoing activities. Whether a man would be wiser to live with none of this at all in his life, we need not perhaps discuss, for no one does. Nor does such reverie always end in itself. What we actually do is often what we dreamed of doing. The books we write were once books which, in a day-dream, we pictured ourselves writing—though of course never quite so perfect. I call this Normal Castle-building.'

⁴⁵ *An Experiment in Criticism*, ch, 3, 'How the Few and the Many Use Pictures and Music', p. 17: 'A particular toy or a particular ikon may be itself a work of art, but that is logically accidental; its artistic merits will not make it a better toy or a better ikon. They may make it a worse one. For its purpose is, not to fix attention upon itself, but to stimulate and liberate certain activities in the child or the worshipper...A crucifix exists in order to direct the worshipper's thought and affections to the Passion. It had better not have any excellencies, subtleties, or originalities which will fix attention upon itself.'

[46](#) Mrs Dunn had probably asked Lewis's opinion of Christ's miracle of 'destruction' in Matthew 21:19: 'And when [Jesus] saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.'

[47](#) Matthew 10:29.

[48](#) John 12:24.

[49](#) Edwards said of his visit to The Kilns on 8 June 1963: 'He had obviously forgotten I had found my way to his house before and sent the excellent little map. Not surprising he had forgotten because he had been very ill in the interim and had also lost his wife—neither of which I knew till I got there. I remember he said that as a result of his illness he was on a no-or low protein diet but that he was still able to drink the whiskey I had brought, whereupon he poured us a glass each and one for a stepson pottering about nearby. When we were briefly discussing smoking he indicated that in his own case the doctor had said that he had got to the stage where there was “so much wrong with the car” that it wasn't worth bothering over (what was now to him) fastidious little points!' (Bodleian Library, Dep. c. 765, fol. 16).

[50](#) Wirt interviewed Lewis at Magdalene College on 7 May 1963, and the interview was published in two parts: 'I Was Decided Upon', *Decision*, II (September 1963), p. 3; 'Heaven, Earth and Outer Space', *Decision* (October 1963), p. 4. They were published together as 'Cross-Examination' in *Undeceptions* and *EC*.

[51](#) Marc Connelly's play, *The Green Pastures* (1930), was made into a film in 1936. See *CL II*, p. 580n.

52 Ten-year-old Daniel Stone wrote to Lewis from 440 East 4th Street, Weiser, Idaho.

[53](#) Replying to Lewis's letter of 22 April, Dell wrote on 25 April 1963 encouraging him to reconsider reviewing Robinson's *Honest to God*: 'Totally aside from any reasons for doing or not doing the review, I was remiss in not mentioning an honorarium in my earlier letter. The amount is \$200.00' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol. 101).

⁵⁴ *Letters to Malcolm*, ch. 14, p. 71: ‘Among Deists—or perhaps in Woolwich, if the laity there really think God is to be sought in the sky—one must emphasize the divine presence in my neighbour, my dog, my cabbage-patch’ *ibid.*, ch. 4, pp. 18–19: ‘This talk of “meeting” [God] is, no doubt, anthropomorphic; as if God and I could be face to face, like two fellow-creatures, when in reality He is above me and within me and below me and all about me. That is why it must be balanced by all manner of metaphysical and theological abstractions. But never, here or anywhere else, let us think that while anthropomorphic images are a concession to our weakness, the abstractions are the literal truth. Both are equally concessions; each singly misleading, and the two together mutually corrective...The *naïf* image is mischievous chiefly in so far as it holds unbelievers back from conversion. It does believers, even at its crudest, no harm. What soul ever perished for believing that God the Father really has a beard?’

[55](#) John 17:21.

[56](#) 'beliefs'.

[57](#) Henry VIII (1491–1547), king of England.

[58](#) In some annotations on this letter, Chang said: ‘They were in fact two copies of a Chinese translation of *The Magician’s Nephew*! I called on him upon receiving this, and had nearly an hour’s pleasant chat in the company of an American lady from his publishers in the U.S. He looked cheerful and said that he could drink all he liked, but not eat. It was our last meeting’ (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/2, fol. 202).

[59](#) Proofs of *The Discarded Image*.

60 The last one.

[61](#) Evelyn Tackett, who spent 1963 at Kensington Public Library as part of the American Library Association programme for young librarians, had asked if she could attend some of Lewis's lectures.

[62](#) Antaeus, son of Poseidon and Gaia, was a giant with whom Hercules wrestled. Whenever he was thrown, he arose stronger than before from contact with his mother Earth.

[63](#) Anchises, the father of Aeneas, with whom Aphrodite fell in love. After boasting of the goddess's favour he was struck blind. He was carried out of Troy on his son's shoulders, and accompanied him in his wanderings.

[64](#) Teiresias (or Tiresias), a Theban seer to whom Zeus and Hera referred the question whether man or woman derives more pleasure from love. When Teiresias supported the opinion of Zeus, Hera struck him blind. Zeus rewarded him with long life and the gift of prophecy.

[65](#) Pope John XXIII (1881–1963), who reigned 1958–63, died on 3 June 1963.

[66](#) Pope John XXIII had convened the Second Vatican Council, which met 1962–5.

[67](#) Shelburne was a patient in the Casualty Hospital, Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, DC.

[68](#) See the biography of Harry Blamires in *CL* II, p. 1024.

[69](#) Harry Blamires, *The Christian Mind* (New York: Seabury Press, 1963).

[70](#) 'times favourable for speaking'. Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, 15 June 1784, vol. IV, pp. 308–9: 'BOSWELL. "I do not think the people of Otaheité can be reckoned Savages." JOHNSON. "Don't cant in defence of Savages." BOSWELL. "They have the art of navigation." JOHNSON. "A dog or a cat can swim." BOSWELL. "They carve very ingeniously." JOHNSON. "A cat can scratch, and a child with a nail can scratch." I perceived this was none of the *mollia tempora fandi*; so desisted.' The phrase originated in Virgil, *Aeneid*, IV, 293–4: *Mollissima Fandi/Tempora*, where Aeneas is wondering about the 'kindest times for speaking' to tell Dido that he is leaving her.

[71](#) On the importance of Lindsay's *A Voyage to Arcturus* to Lewis, see the letters to Charles A. Brady of 29 October 1944 and to Ruth Pitter of 4 January 1947 (*CL* II, pp. 630, 753).

[72](#) *Perelandra*, ch. 15, p. 191: 'Ransom...detected his most serious injury. It was a wound in his heel...He had no recollection of this particular bite in any of his innumerable tussles with the Un-man.' Genesis 3:14–15: 'The Lord God said unto the serpent...I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.'

[73](#) The German theologian, Romano Guardini (1885–1968).

[74](#) See the reference to Christopher Dawson's *Beyond Politics* (1939) in *CL II*, p. 398.

[75](#) See the reference to Hilaire Belloc's *The Four Men* (1912) in *CL* I, pp. 394–5.

76 *Herrenvolk*: 'master race'.

[77](#) For *Letters to Malcolm*.

[78](#) The Rt. Rev. Hugh Montefiore (1920–2005) was born in Bayswater on 12 May 1920. His father, Charles Sebag-Montefiore, was a great-great-nephew of Sir Moses Montefiore, patriarch of the English Jewish community, and the family attended the Lauderdale Road Synagogue in Paddington. He was educated at Rugby School, where he underwent a sudden conversion to Christianity at the age of sixteen. He matriculated at St John's College, Oxford, in 1939 but spent only a year reading Classics before joining the Army. Returning to Oxford in 1946, he took a First in Theology, then went to Westcott House, Cambridge, to prepare for holy orders. Ordained in 1950, he had a varied ministry in Newcastle and Ely before being elected Fellow and Dean at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, in 1953. During his nine years there he exercised an influential pastoral ministry among students of all religious traditions. He was appointed to Great St Mary's, Cambridge, in 1963, a post he held until consecrated Suffragan Bishop of Kingston in 1970. Montefiore was Bishop of Birmingham, 1978–87. He died 13 May 2005.

[79](#) Dr Montefiore had been appointed Vicar of Great St Mary's—the 'University Church'—in Cambridge, and he asked Lewis if he would preach there.

[80](#) In *C. S. Lewis and the Search for Rational Religion*, Beversluis sought to show that Lewis's answer to the problem of evil was logically unacceptable. After discussing Lewis's beliefs in relation to Plato's 'Euthyphro Dilemma'—see the letter to Clyde S. Kilby of 11 January 1961—Beversluis applied an argument of William of Ockham (c. 1285–1347), Franciscan philosopher. According to the 'Ockhamist view', said Beversluis, 'When we talk about God's goodness, we must be prepared to give up our ordinary moral standards. The term *good* when applied to God *does* mean something radically different from what it means when applied to human beings. To suppose God must conform to some standard other than his own sovereign will is to deny his ultimacy. God is bound by nothing and answerable to no one...He does not, for example, forbid murder because it is wrong; it is wrong because he forbids it' (p. 102). In Chapter 9, 'Grief', Beversluis said: 'That Lewis could not make the Ockhamist view his own and continued to vacillate between it and the Platonic alternative is evident in a letter I received from him...I had asked whether he was still prepared to apply the Platonic view to God's behaviour and to actions carried out in obedience to his commands as found in the Old and New Testaments. I had mentioned, among other examples, Joshua's slaughtering of the Canaanites and Simon Peter's striking Ananias and Sapphira dead as a punishment for lying. In his reply, Lewis confirmed my suspicions' (p. 156). Lewis's letter of 3 July 1963 was an answer to these charges.

[81](#) Joshua 21.

[82](#) Luke 12:57.

[83](#) Jeremiah 2:5.

[84](#) William Paley, *The Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* (1785), Bk. II, ch. 4: 'To inquire what is our duty, or what we are obliged to do in any instance, is, in effect, to inquire what is the will of God in that instance.'

[85](#) John 21:22.

[86](#) The phrase is an echo of the famous Quaker dictum which has come to be used for evaluating the relevance of any spoken or written text, i.e. whether or not it ‘speaks to our condition’. The source is George Fox (1624–91), founder of the Society of Friends. In his *Journal* (1694), writing of a time in 1647, he said: ‘I heard a voice which said, “There is one, even Christ Jesus, that can speak to thy condition”’: and when I heard it, my heart did leap for joy.’

[87](#) Shelburne was out of hospital and back in her apartment at 103 6th Street, Washington, DC.

[88](#) He was referring to the Rev. Robert Capron (1851–1911), headmaster of Wynyard School in Watford, Hertfordshire. This was the school referred to as ‘Belsen’ in *SBJ*, ch. 2. See the biography of Capron in *CL* I, pp. 982–4.

[89](#) Luke 18:1–5: ‘He spake a parable unto them to this end...There was in a city a judge which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterwards he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she may weary me.’

[90](#) Matthew 6:14–15: ‘If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.’

[91](#) See Chapter 14, n. 29.

[92](#) James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake* (1939), I, viii, 202: ‘She was just a young thin pale soft shy slim slip of a thing then, sauntering, by silvymoonlake and he was a heavy trudging lurching lieabroad of a Curraghan, making his hay for whose sun to shine on, as tough as the oaktrees (peats be with them!) used to rustle that time down by the dykes of killing Kildare, for forstfellfoss with a plash across her.’

[93](#) Miss Karen V. Housel was writing from 317 W. 89th Street, Apt. 7W, New York 24, New York.

[94](#) Green and Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: A Biography*, ch. 14, p. 428.

[95](#) Sayer, *Jack*, ch. 22, p. 248.

[96](#) *ibid.*, pp. 248–9.

[97](#) Wade Center.

[98](#) This letter is in the handwriting of Walter Hooper, who has explained that the two voices are owing to an interruption during the dictation of the letter and his posting it before the error was noticed.

[99](#) Wade Center.

[101](#) *ibid.*

[102](#) This letter was written by Walter Hooper, but signed by Lewis.

[103](#) 1 John 2:23: 'Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.'

[104](#) 1 John 5:12.

[105](#) Matthew 25:31–46.

[106](#) Wade Center.

107 This letter is in Walter Hooper's hand, but signed by Lewis.

[108](#) A reference to Hieronimo (or 'Geronimo'), the marshal of Spain, in Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy: or, Hieronimo is Mad Again* (1592).

[109](#) John Forbes 'Jock' Burnet (1910–89), Bursar of Magdalene College, Cambridge, 1949–77, was born on 16 April 1910. He was educated at St Paul's School, London, and Christ's College, Cambridge. He was assistant master at St George's Choir School, Windsor, 1937–40, after which he served with the Air Ministry, 1940–5. He was elected a Fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge, in 1949 and was Bursar, 1949–77, Steward, 1952–77, Wine Steward, 1966–80, and Emeritus Fellow 1977 until his death on 6 August 1989. See 'In Memoriam: Jock Burnet', *Magdalene College Magazine and Record*, new series, no. 34 (1989–90), pp. 2–6.

[110](#) i.e. Richard Ladborough.

[111](#) This was an oil painting by Alfred Rawlings Baker of Lewis's grandfather, the Rev. Thomas Robert Hamilton (1826–1905), which now hangs in the parish hall, St Mark's Church, Dundela, Belfast.

[112](#) Jeannette Hopkins had succeeded John H. McCallum at Harcourt, Brace & World. See the letter to Jocelyn Gibb of 18 October 1963.

[113](#) *Beyond the Bright Blur* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1963). It said on the flyleaf of this short volume: '*Beyond the Bright Blur* is taken from *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer* (chapters 15, 16, 17) by C. S. Lewis, which will be published in the year 1964. This limited edition is published as a New Year's greeting to friends of the author and his publisher.'

[114](#) Paul Piehler, *The Visionary Landscape: A Study in Medieval Allegory* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971).

[115](#) Robert Browning, *Men and Women* (1855), 'A Grammarian's Funeral', III, 11–12: 'He said, "What's time? Leave Now for dogs and apes!/Man has Forever."'

[116](#) These lectures were delivered in January 1963, in debate with Professor Avrum Stroll, at the University of British Columbia, Canada, and were subsequently published as journal articles in *His* (Dec. 1964–Mar. 1965), and in book form as *History and Christianity* (1964), rev. edn *History, Law and Christianity* (2002). The lectures also constitute Chapters 2 and 3 of Professor Montgomery’s book, *Where Is History Going? Essays in Support of the Historical Truth of the Christian Revelation*, with a commendatory letter by C. S. Lewis (1969).

[117](#) Big Brother, i.e. Warnie.

[118](#) 'Odysseus Sails Again', a review of Robert Fitzgerald's translation of *The Odyssey*, was published in the *Sunday Telegraph*, no. 84 (9 September 1962), p. 6.

[119](#) Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, I, vii, 33.

[120](#) Mrs Molly Miller, the housekeeper.

[121](#) When they were together Lewis had expressed a desire to write something on the Arthurian legend—if only he owned a copy of the *Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances*, 7 vols., ed. H. Oskar Sommer (Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1908–16). Hooper sent him his copy.

[122](#) Francis Anderson, who lived in the United States, wrote to Lewis on 12 September 1963. A copy of his letter is in the Wade Center.

[123](#) In his letter Anderson said: ‘Many of my friends shared our sense of desolation at discovering (it is made quite clear in *The Last Battle*) that the series would not be endless. For some of us *The Lord of the Rings* provided an inferior (its allegory, if it has one, lacks the theological depth of the others) substitute. (From the point of view of biblical study, it is the open-endedness of its historicalness, its lack of a definite eschatology, that prevents it from being Christian; nor is there redemption in it in any sense that I can see. Its moral seriousness, however, is more impressive.) But the nagging question is—What is the connection between the two series? And, more disturbing, who borrowed from who? With all the books on my shelves telling me how the Old Testament was written, I am ready to exculpate you both from plagiarism with some theory about common source. Is Tolkien also a lover of George Macdonald? Did Lewis make use of parts of the Red Book left over when Tolkien had finished with it?’

[124](#) *ibid.*: 'I find the whole question fascinating and baffling, and, in a way, a test case. I was almost minded to put them all through some critical machine to see what "assured results" it would yield. But I must admit that I am rather sceptical of all that, and have more important things to do. Yet the question remains. The undergirding philosophies are so different; innumerable details are manifestly due to the independent imaginations of the individual authors; yet similarity is there also, if only in the conception of such a world...with such a diversity of creatures (is a marshwiggles in some way a counterpart of a hobbit?), engaged in such adventures with the same heroic seriousness.'

[125](#) Anderson made this complaint about the Chronicles of Narnia: 'From time to time the smooth flow of narrative is interrupted by a parenthesis consisting of a complete sentence inserted in an (if I may say so) awkward place in the syntax. For example, "And then (it made her hot all over when she remembered it afterwards) she would put her hand on one side..."(*The Silver Chair* [ch. 9]...) This occasions no difficulty for the trained reader; but for the listener, unaided by the marks of parenthesis, the result can be highly disruptive.'

[126](#) Dante, *Paradiso*, III, 85: 'In his will is our peace.'

[127](#) When asked what the subject of this note might be, Derek Brewer said he forgot what he had written to Lewis about.

[128](#) The 'study', one of the rooms built on to The Kilns for Warnie in 1932, contained a stove that could burn wood and coal, and it made that room much easier to heat than the common room with its open fire. Lewis had hoped he and Hooper could use the study to work on correspondence, but with Warnie home the study was his to use as he liked.

[129](#) The room Lewis had used as a bedroom, and which Hooper had been occupying.

[130](#) Hopkins had possibly said that people were already wondering if ‘Malcolm’—to whom the *Letters to Malcolm* were purportedly written—was a real man. Hooper remembers that when he asked if he was a real man, Lewis responded, ‘Not *you* too!’

[131](#) Lorna Wigney (later Logan) (1952–) was born in Oxford and educated at Oxford High School and St. Hugh's College, Oxford. In 1982 she married Robert Logan, Deputy Law Librarian at the Bodleian Library. They have two sons. In a letter to Walter Hooper of 19 October 2004 she said: 'The circumstances of the card are these. When I was 8 or 9 I was a keen reader and borrowed books from the Summertown Library every week. I was going through a "horsey" phase and picked out *The Horse and his Boy*, because of the title, and was soon hooked on Narnia. I always liked "magic" books anyway. When I was offered a book token to be spent on a suitable book as a prize for a competition at Wolvercote School in 1962 I asked for *Prince Caspian*. This was the only Narnia book I owned myself. I probably wrote to Lewis because my late mother remarked that he lived in Oxford and why didn't I write to him?...I can remember writing and saying how much I liked his books. Then I thought I should say something more interesting. Looking at *Prince Caspian* I thought I would point out the difference in speech between Peter *et al* and my own friends. I said something like "The children in the Narnia books speak in an old fashioned way. In Prince Caspian Peter says 'By Jove!' My friends and I never say 'By Jove'. We say 'Crumbs, or Crikey'.'"'

[132](#) *The Horn Book Magazine*, founded in 1924, was the ultimate resource for selecting children's and young adult books. Douglass had persuaded its editor to include in the issue of October 1963 Lewis's 'On Three Ways of Writing for Children', along with Lillian H. Smith's 'News from Narnia' and excerpts from Lewis's essay, 'On Stories'.

[133](#) Shelburne wrote on the envelope of this letter: ‘The last letter from Jack–His going has saddened me beyond measure, but how I thank God for giving me such a friend! And he is *still* my friend.’

[134](#) Thomas Congdon (1931–), publisher, was born in New London, Connecticut on 17 March 1931, and grew up in Greenwich, Connecticut. He took a BA from Yale University in 1953, and was a student at the School of Journalism, Columbia University, New York, 1955–6. He was an editor on the *Saturday Evening Post*, 1956–69, and thereafter senior editor at Harper & Row, 1969–71, Doubleday, 1971–4, where he edited Peter Benchley's *Jaws* (1974), and E. P. Dutton, 1974–8. In 1979 he founded the publishing firm of Congdon & Weed, where he worked until 1985. He was senior editor with William Morrow, 1985–8, and thereafter a freelance editor. He retired in 2005.

[135](#) Congdon had invited Lewis to write an essay for the *Saturday Evening Post* debunking the modern notion that we have a 'right to happiness'. Lewis's article, the last piece he wrote for publication, was entitled 'We Have No "Right to Happiness"' and published in the *Saturday Evening Post*, 236 (21–28 December 1963), pp. 10, 12. It is reprinted in *God in the Dock* and *EC*.

[136](#) Lewis was quoting *The Declaration of Independence* (1776) which states: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.'

[137](#) David Gresham was a student at Mesivta Rabbi Chaim Berlin, a talmudical college in New York. He remained there until 1966 when he returned to England. In 1967 he studied at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and in 1969 he went to Magdalene College, Cambridge, taking his BA in 1972.

[138](#) A mistake for '*Letters to M.*'

[139](#) Harcourt Brace, who were publishing *Letters to Malcolm* in the United States.

[140](#) 'More formidable than fierce Camilla'. See the letter to Dunbar of 20 April 1956.

[141](#) Aristophanes, *Wasps*, 455: 'one who looks sharp and stinging'.

[142](#) A reference to the preface to *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*, in which Lewis explained why he used 'Scotch' as an adjective: 'As I write "French" and not *Français*, I have also written "Scotch" not *Scottish*; aware that these great nations do not so call themselves, but claiming the freedom of "my ain vulgaire".'

[143](#) For the Chair of Medieval and Renaissance English at Cambridge.

[144](#) Horace, *Epistles*, I, i, 8–9: ‘Solve senescentem mature sanus equum, ne/Peccet ad extremum ridendus’: ‘It is sensible to dismiss the old horse in good time, lest, failing at the last, he makes the spectators laugh.’

[145](#) Colin Bailey was writing from The Cottage, Barton Mills, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.

[146](#) A reference to Professor A. W. Gomme, Professor of Greek at the University of Glasgow, best known for his *Historical Commentary on Thucydides* (left incomplete at the time of his death). Dunbar knew Gomme well when she was a student at Glasgow, 1947–51.

[147](#) *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, ed. A. L. Rowse (1964).

[148](#) i.e. J. A. T. Robinson's *Honest to God*. Robinson was Bishop of Woolwich, 1959–69.

[149](#) Henry More, *Psychozoia or The First Part of the Song of the Soul* (1647), II, ii, 6–7: ‘To horses hoof that beats his grassie dore/He answers not.’

[150](#) The influence of F. R. Leavis was focused on Downing College, Cambridge.

[151](#) In 1927 Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch introduced 'The English Moralists' as an optional subject in Part II of the English Tripos. The practice was continued by his successors including Basil Willey, who in the preface to his book *The English Moralists* (1965) said: 'The moralists are writers who tried to make explicit the moral values and attitudes of their time, or who have criticized the current valuations; and in studying them we are doing something quite relevant to the study of literature. The subject-matter of literature, after all, happens to be Life, and conduct makes up, if not three fourths of life as Matthew Arnold said...at any rare a very considerable part of it' (p. 11). The 'Moralists' Willey lectured on over the years included Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), John Locke (1632–1704), Joseph Addison (1672–1719), Edmund Burke (1729–97), Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), John Henry Newman (1801–90) and others.

[152](#) E. Nesbit, *The Railway Children* (1906), ch. 3. “All right,” said Peter, “honour is satisfied.” Hooper had urged Lewis not to worry about money—that he would be content with whatever Lewis could afford to pay.

[153](#) Kathleen Elizabeth McCullough (1923–) was Lewis's pupil for one term in 1943. She was born on 26 March 1923 and educated at Queen Anne's School, Caversham. She read English at Somerville College, Oxford, 1942–4, taking a BA in 1944. She was assistant mistress at Gardenhurst School, Burnham-on-Sea, 1944–5, and taught at Nottingham High School, 1945–8. She was secretary to Kegan Textiles, Elland, Yorkshire, 1949–55, and secretary to the Headmaster of Winchester College from 1956 until her retirement.

[154](#) p.p.

[155](#) Alexander Pope, *Epistles to Several Persons: Moral Essays*, ed. F. E. Bateson (1951), Epistle II, 'To a Lady on the Characters of Women', 242.

[156](#) Lewis had been made an Honorary Fellow of Magdalene College.

[157](#) The Rt. Rev. Simon Barrington-Ward (1930–), Chaplain of Magdalene College, Cambridge, 1956–60, and Fellow and Dean of Chapel, Magdalene College, 1963–8. He was born on 27 May 1930 and read history at Magdalene College, Cambridge, taking his BA in 1953. He read theology at Westcott House, Cambridge, 1954–6. After serving as chaplain of Magdalene College, he was assistant lecturer in Religious Studies at the University of Ibadan, 1960–3. After serving in several parishes Barrington-Ward was Bishop of Coventry, 1985–97.

[158](#) Milton, *Paradise Lost*, III, 34.

[159](#) Nancy Le Plastrier Warner (1902–92), Francis Warner's mother, was born Nancy Le Plastrier Owen on 24 November 1902. She read Greats at Lady Margaret Hall, 1922–6, being the first state scholar to attend the college, and took a BA in 1927. On 19 September 1929 she married Hugh Warner, by whom she had six children. Francis was the third of four sons, who were followed by two daughters. She published a biography of her husband, *Hugh Compton Warner* (London: SPCK, 1958).

[160](#) Martin Michael Warner (1940–), younger brother of Francis, was born on 27 September 1940, and read Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Oriel College, Oxford, 1959–62. He received a BA in 1962 and a B.Phil. in 1965. He has been Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Warwick since 1990, and he is the author of *Philosophical Finesse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

[161](#) The ontological proof or ontological argument comes originally from the *Proslogion* of St Anselm of Canterbury (1033–1109) and can be formulated as follows: (1) ‘God’ is the greatest being which can be thought. (2) It is greater to exist in reality *and* in thought than in thought alone. (3) Therefore, ‘God’ exists in reality *and* in thought.

Lewis has Puddleglum use the ontological proof in *The Silver Chair*, ch. 12. The Queen of Underland argues that ‘You can put nothing into your make-believe without copying it from the real world, which...is the only world.’ ‘Suppose,’ answers Puddleglum, ‘we have only dreamed or made up, all those things—trees and grass and sun and moon and stars and Aslan himself. Suppose we have. Then all I can say is that, in that case, the made-up things seem a good deal more important than the real ones...We’re just babies making up a game, if you’re right. But four babies playing a game can make a play-world which licks your real world hollow.’

[162](#) Writing to Francis on 10 February 1962 about *A Grief Observed*, Nancy Warner said: ‘I shouldn’t think one could doubt the authorship. “Le Style c’est l’homme”—which makes it the more moving. I think I recognize the reference to a friend’s death...as Charles Williams; (it ties up with a remark in “Arthurian Torso”.) And a good many other things tie up too. It’s a humble, moving, honest book; and many things in it ring a bell in one’s own heart—especially what he says about bereavement being one of the necessary “stages” in a complete marriage.’

[163](#) p.p.

[164](#) p.p.

[165](#) Homer, *Odyssey*, VI, 270–72: ‘The Phaeacians have no use for the bow and quiver, but only for masts and oars on the graceful craft they take pride in sailing across the grey seas.’

[166](#) p.p.

[167](#) The correction reached Gibb in time. The passage reads: ‘Don’t run away with the idea that when I speak of the resurrection of the body I mean merely that the blessed dead will have excellent memories of their sensuous experiences on earth. I mean it the other way round: that memory as we now know it is a dim foretaste, a mirage even, of a power which the soul, or rather Christ in the soul...will exercise hereafter’ (*Letters to Malcolm*, ch. 22, p. 155).

[168](#) Romans 5:8.

[169](#) The InterVarsity Christian Fellowship is a non-denominational organization, the purpose of which is to pray, study the Bible and witness to fellow students. It is evangelical and aims at conversion of non-Christians. Although it is primarily operative in the USA, it began at Cambridge University in 1877, from whence it spread to Canada in 1928 and to the United States in 1938. Today, there are more than 1,000 InterVarsity staff serving more than 34,000 students and faculty nationwide, while InterVarsity Press supplies quality literature suitable for the campus. Since 1941 InterVarsity has published a magazine called *HIS*, which reprinted a number of articles by Lewis without his having heard of it.

The Student Christian Movement came into being in 1889 as a loose network of students dedicated to missionary work overseas. It rapidly broadened its aims and membership to become the largest student organization in Britain. SCM was instrumental in bringing about the Edinburgh conference in 1910 which gave birth to the modern ecumenical movement. The Movement went on to play a vital role in the formation of the British and World Councils of Churches, and continued to be a leading voice on ecumenism. While Lewis knew something of the SCM at Oxford, and nothing about InterVarsity, the latter has done more to popularize his work.

[170](#) i.e. David Gresham.

[171](#) 'by a long interval'.

[172](#) Frank Percy Wilson was one of the general editors of the Oxford History of English Literature. His biography appears in *CL* I, p. 600n. He had undertaken to write a volume for the series on Elizabethan drama but he died on 29 May 1963, before he could finish. *English Drama: 1485–1585*, ed. with a bibliography by G. K. Hunter, was published in 1969.

[173](#) p.p.

[174](#) *Punch* (9 November 1895) featured a cartoon drawn by George du Maurier. It showed a timid curate having breakfast in his bishop's home. The bishop says, 'I'm afraid you've got a bad egg, Mr Jones,' to which the curate replies, in a desperate attempt not to give offence: 'Oh, no, my Lord, I assure you that parts of it are excellent!'

[175](#) Lewis was referring to Morris Motors, a mile from The Kilns. See *CL* II, p. 160n.

[176](#) In October 1963 the Conservative Prime Minister Harold Macmillan resigned due to ill health. He was succeeded by Sir Alec Douglas-Home, who served until 16 October 1964 when the election was won by the Labour Party. Harold Wilson was Prime Minister twice, from 1964 until 1970, and from 1974 until 1976.

177 Lewis was referring to meetings of the Inklings.

[178](#) Dr R. E. Havard and James Dundas-Grant often took Lewis to the Trout Inn at Godstow after meetings of the Inklings. Dundas-Grant said in 'From an "Outsider"', *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, p. 371: 'Sometimes, in the summer, after we had dispersed, Havard would run Jack and me out to The Trout at Godstow, where we would sit on the wall with the Isis flowing below us and munch cheese and French bread.'

[179](#) Sir Stafford Cripps (1889–1952) was converted to Marxism in the 1930s and became a leading spokesman of the left wing of the Labour party. In 1939 he was expelled from the party for urging a united front with the Communists. In 1940 he was appointed Ambassador to the Soviet Union and on his return to England in 1942 he was made Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Commons. He was removed from this office because he questioned Winston Churchill's war strategy, but he remained in the government. He was subsequently Minister of Trade and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

[180](#) Thomas Rice Henn, a great friend of Bradbrook's, had perhaps sent her a manuscript from his house in Ireland that smelled of tar, heather and mist.

[181](#) Lionel Charles Robbins, Baron Robbins (1898–1984) was a socialist economist, whose last major role in public life was to chair the committee on higher education. This resulted in the Robbins Report: *Higher Education: Report of the Committee Appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins, 1961–1963* (1963). This much-disliked enquiry ordered more undergraduates and more new universities, and nearly all academics disagreed with its conclusions. Opponents like Kingsley Amis, then at Peterhouse, Cambridge, commented ‘More means worse’—which became a famous phrase.

[182](#) Possibly the Puffin paperback of *The Magician's Nephew* which came out on 27 June 1963.

[183](#) p.p.

[184](#) The University of Oxford lists a number of special lectures of which the Romanes Lecture is the oldest and the most famous. Founded in 1891 by George John Romanes of Christ Church, it is given once a year on some subject, approved by the Vice-Chancellor, relating to science, art or literature. See the letter to Warfield M. Firor of 14 April 1950.

[185](#) 'Memoir'.

[186](#) Shakespeare, *King Lear*, V, ii, 9.

¹ See **Albert James Lewis** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL I*, pp. 1006–8.

² Harry was a gardener at Little Lea. In a letter to Warnie of 19 June 1913 Albert said: 'I don't think I have told you how I jumped out of the frying pan into the fire in the garden. In comparison with the men who have been sent from the Holywood Nursery, Harry was the most energetic, conscientious and intelligent man that ever handled a spade. Now, two men take four days to cut the grass alone' (LP IV: 25).

³ See **William Thompson Kirkpatrick** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL I*, pp. 1002–6.

⁴ See **Warren Hamilton Lewis** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* I, pp. 1011–14.

5 Prefects.

[6](#) See the biography of Noel Herbert Stone (1895–1918) in *CL I*, p. 36n.

⁷ See the biography of Stanley Forrester Browning (1896–1917) in *CL* I, p. 32n.

[8](#) See the biography of John Arthur Watson Bourne (1896–1943) in *CL* I, *ibid.*

⁹ See the biography of (Sir) Donald Innes Hardman (1899–1982) in *CL* I, p. 29n.

[10](#) See the biography of Stopford Brooke Ludlow Jacks (1894–1988) in *CL* I, p. 37n.

[11](#) Douglas Spencer Montague Tassell (1872–1956) was in charge of the Officers' Training Corps at Malvern. See his biography in *CL* I, p. 30n.

12 i.e. W. T. Kirkpatrick.

[13](#) Lewis was to have great affection for Harry Wakelyn Smith (1861–1918), nicknamed ‘Smugy’ or ‘Smewgy’, who taught Classics and English at Malvern. See his biography in *CL I*, p. 29n.

14 At Malvern College 'Hall' was a time when a student did his homework.

[15](#) This was, presumably, a book Jack was buying from Warnie. There are no other references to it in the Lewis Papers.

[16](#) 'The Old Boy' and 'Jimmy' were nicknames given to the Rev. Canon Sydney Rhodes James (1855–1934), headmaster of Malvern College, who was on the point of retiring. See his biography in *CL* I, p. 21n.

17 The Aston Old Edwardians was a football club in Birmingham.

[18](#) See the biography of Fitzgerald Charles Cecil Baron Hichens (1895–1977) in *CL I*, p. 29n.

19 *The Malvernian* was the school magazine.

[20](#) 'Tubbs' was Arthur Clement Allen (1868–1957), headmaster of Cherbourg School. See his biography in *CL* I, p. 16n.

[21](#) Shakespeare, *King Richard II*, V, ii, 24: ‘After a well-grac’d actor leaves the stage.’

²² Sir Robert Ponsonby Staples (1853–1943), painter, was related to Lewis through his great-grandfather, the Right Honourable John Staples (1736–1820), MP for County Antrim—from whom Lewis took his second Christian name. John Staples married Henrietta Molesworth in 1775. Their daughter, Elizabeth Staples (b. 1790), married the Rev. Hugh Hamilton (1790–1865), whose son, the Rev. Thomas Robert Hamilton (1826–1905) was the father of Lewis’s mother, Flora Hamilton. John Staples’s grandson, Sir Nathaniel Staples (1817–99), 9th Baronet, married Elizabeth Lindsay Head, and Robert Ponsonby Staples was their third son. Prints of some of Sir Robert’s most famous pictures are to be found in Lissan House, including *Cardinal Manning’s Last Reception* and *Gladstone Introducing the Home Rule Bill*. *The Ideal Cricket Match* is now in the pavilion at Lords. Other pictures may be viewed in galleries in England and Northern Ireland.

23 A nickname for 'Little Lea', the Lewis family home.

[24](#) Warnie Lewis recalled of Sir Robert Ponsonby Staples (LP III: 128–9) that he was ‘one of the most remarkable and scandalous characters of his time in the North of Ireland. His profession was nominally that of a painter, at which he showed some technical ability, but actually he struggled on the border line of bankruptcy in virtue of being the most brazenly impudent well born mendicant who ever afflicted a prosperous community. He was expert at the extraction of fees in advance for commissions which he extorted from those who fondly hoped that they would thus be rid of his society.’

[25](#) Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The School for Scandal* (1777).

[26](#) W. W. Jacobs (1863–1943), whose tales of the macabre include ‘The Monkey’s Paw’.

[27](#) Sir Henry Newbolt, *Admirals All and Other Verses* (1897), 'A Ballad of John Nicholson'.

28 i.e. Canon Sydney Rhodes James, the headmaster.

[29](#) Lewis's "'Carpe Diem' after Horace" is reproduced in *CL* I, pp. 34–5.

[30](#) The Lea Shakespeare Prize, given annually since 1869 for excellence in English studies, was donated by Charles Wheeley Lea (1827–98), a member of the Lea family whose company, jointly owned by the Perrin family, produced Lea & Perrins Worcestershire sauce.

31 *Berenice*, an opera by George Frederic Handel, was first performed in 1737.

[32](#) The Flower Song, 'La fleur que tu m'avais jetée', is from Act II of Georges Bizet's *Carmen*, first performed in 1875.

[33](#) Hubert Eisdel (1882–1948), tenor and teacher, whose musical training and earliest performances took place in England. Eisdel made several visits to Canada between 1907 and 1930 and in 1933 he took up permanent residence in Ontario, where he became involved in the Canadian music scene as a performer and teacher.

[34](#) On 9 January 1914 the results of the November examinations were published. Warnie had passed twenty-first out of 201 successful candidates for the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. See *CL* I, p. 47.

[35](#) Asked what he would like for a Christmas present, Lewis suggested the works of Thomas Gray (1716–71), author of ‘Elegy Written in a Country Church-Yard’ (1751).

36 i.e. “Carpe Diem” after Horace’.

[37](#) The poem was in the metre of Alfred, Lord Tennyson's *Locksley Hall* (1842).

[38](#) Robert Falcon Scott (1868–1912)—‘Scott of the Antarctic’—was the leader of the British Antarctic Expedition (1910–13) who reached the South Pole in January 1912 to discover that the Norwegian Roald Amundsen (1872–1928) had discovered the spot one month before. Even so, Scott was the most famous of the polar explorers.

[39](#) George Murray Levick (1877–1956) studied medicine at St Bartholomew’s Hospital, London, and on qualifying in 1902 joined the Royal Navy, where he became a specialist in physical and recreational training. Levick was appointed surgeon on the British Antarctic Expedition. There is an account of his talk in *The Malvernian*, CCCXLII (March 1914), p. 219.

40 Albert Lewis was suffering from neuritis.

[41](#) 'Squeaky' was the Lewis family doctor, Richard Whytock Leslie, MD (1862–1931).

42 'Master Willy' was J. W. A. Condlin, Albert's managing clerk in his Belfast law office.

[43](#) The 'Prologue' and other memories of speech day are preserved in *The Malvernian*, CCCXLIV (July 1914), pp. 238–42.

[44](#) Frank Sansome Preston (1875–1970), who succeeded Sydney Rhodes James, was headmaster of Malvern College from 1914 to 1937. Preston was educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge, and was an assistant master at Marlborough College, 1899–1914.

[45](#) The half-term report, which survives, contains the following comments by Harry Wakelyn Smith: ‘Omitting one lazy week, he has done well this term, and has made a really strenuous effort to become sound in Greek. His ability shows itself wherever English is concerned’ (LP IV: 185).

[46](#) See the biography of Anne Sargent Harley ‘Annie’ Hamilton (1866–1930), wife of Flora Lewis’s brother, Augustus Hamilton, in *CL* I, p. 7n.

[47](#) Euripides, *Electra*, 427–31.

[48](#) During the Ulster Crisis of 1906–14, Irish Nationalism spread to the extent that the majority of the population demanded some form of self-government. The Protestants, who had the sympathy of the Lewis family, were in the majority in the north-east and they viewed this development with alarm. When Westminster agreed to a form of independence the Protestants insisted on remaining in the United Kingdom.

[49](#) Lewis and Mrs Moore lived at 'Hillsboro', which is now 14 Holyoake Road, Headington, from 1923 until their move to The Kilns in 1930.

[50](#) Barfield had sent Lewis a copy of his new book, *History in English Words* (London: Methuen, 1926).

[51](#) Barfield, *History in English Words*, ch. 4, pp. 60–1: ‘That the seventeenth century saw the true genesis of many of our commercial and financial institutions is suggested by the fact that their names first appear at this time. Such as *capital*...and lastly the modern meaning of *bank*, which, like the names of so many protective and responsible institutions...is based etymologically on what we may call one of the oldest and safest of human occupations.’

[52](#) Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, ch. 6: 'I said it very loud and clear;/I went and shouted in his ear.'

[53](#) Homer, *Iliad*, I, 5: 'And the will of Zeus was fulfilled.'

[54](#) 'Words', *The Observer* (17 January 1926), p. 3.

[55](#) There is much about Lewis's long narrative poem, *Dymer*, in *CL* I. It was written over a period of years, and was published under the pseudonym 'Clive Hamilton' by J. M. Dent of London on 20 September 1926. It was reprinted under his own name in 1950.

[56](#) William Force Stead (1884–1967), an American living in Oxford, was Chaplain of Worcester College, Oxford, 1925–33. See his biography in *CL* I, p. 529n.

[57](#) This was Stead's *Shadow of Mount Carmel: A Pilgrimage* (London: R. Cobden-Sanderson, 1926).

[58](#) Stead, *Shadow of Mount Carmel*, 'Transition: Dilemma of Determinism', pp. 67–71.

[59](#) Stead concluded his book (p. 235) with an account of the death of an old friend in northern Italy. Stead was present when a Catholic priest administered the last rites, and the book ends with the words: 'It is true that disease and the desolation of the body are a part of man's experience; but only a part, and I believe, a negligible part, when the many activities and interests of life are viewed as a whole. I saw in the germs of the disease, destroying the body, the very environment in which they had been thriving, how evil in the end works out its own destruction. In the priest I saw the churchman's solution to the mystery; God administering mercy and grace through the divine institution. And when I take the place of my friend, I should like the priest to be at my side.' Stead converted to the Catholic Church in 1933.

[60](#) Stead, *Shadow of Mount Carmel*, p. 13.

[61](#) See the note on the Italian critic, Benedetto Croce, in the letter to Owen Barfield ('Great War' Letters, Series I, Letter 6). Lewis's distrust of Croce is summarised in *Christian Reflections*, 'Christianity and Culture', p. 15: 'The present inordinate esteem of culture by the cultured began...with Matthew Arnold...After Arnold came the vogue of Croce, in whose philosophy the aesthetic and logical activities were made autonomous forms of "the spirit" coordinate with the ethical.'

[62](#) Émile Coué (1857–1926), whom Stead met on his pilgrimage, was a French psychotherapist remembered for his formula for curing by optimistic autosuggestion: ‘Day by day, in every way, I am getting better and better.’ His teaching achieved a vogue in England and the United States in the 1920s.

[63](#) 1 Corinthians 15:8.

[64](#) Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 188: 'Quodcumque ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi': 'Anything that you thus thrust upon my sight, I discredit and revolt at.'

65 The remainder of the letter is lost.

66 Lewis and Barfield were planning their annual Easter walking tour.

67 i.e. *Shadow of Mount Carmel*.

[68](#) *ibid.*, pp. 16–18.

[69](#) *ibid.*, p. 125.

[70](#) *ibid.*, p. 240.

[71](#) *ibid.*, p. 240, 'Ponte Santa Trinita', 40–9: 'Once in a perfect dawn, here I have seen/An eastern sun searching the utmost west,/Air burning clear as a prophet's eyes, when far/In the unexplored, white in the infinite blue,/A whole Apocalypse of peaks unknown/Stood out and startled me,—I had not dreamed/Of those invisible watchers over all,/While here I gazed and found no sign of them/At noon or evening—like another world/That shines out of a distance and fades again.'

⁷² Lewis detested the poems of T. S. Eliot and particularly those that appeared in *The Criterion*, an influential literary periodical launched by Eliot in 1922. In an effort to ‘expose’ Eliot and his like-minded poets, Lewis devised some nonsense ‘Eliotic’ poems which he and others sent to *The Criterion*, hoping they would be published. In his diary of 9 June 1926 he wrote: ‘I...wrote to Stead thanking him for the book and enclosing for his criticism, a parody of T. S. Eliot wh. I had just scribbled off: very nonsensical, but with a flavour of dirt all through. My idea is to send it up to his paper in the hope that he will be taken in and publish it: if he falls into the trap I will then consider how best to use the joke for the advancement of literature and the punishment of quackery’ (AMR, pp. 409–10).

[73](#) Owen and Maud Barfield had been living at Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire, since they married in 1923.

[74](#) Helen McFarlan Douie (1849–1926) was the mother of Maud Barfield. See the biography of Matilda Douie ‘Maud’ Barfield in *CL II*, pp. 1016–17.

[75](#) After taking their BA degrees, Owen Barfield and Cecil Harwood lived for a while at Bee Cottage in Beckley, four miles north-east of Oxford. Lewis often walked out to see them. They liked the pub at Beckley—the Abingdon Arms—and met there from time to time.

⁷⁶ John Livingston Lowes, *Convention and Revolt in Poetry* (London: Constable, 1919), p. 175: ‘Regarding the proliferation of journals dedicated to “new” movements in poetry, the trumpets of the elect are still blowing about the stubborn walls of Jericho. And indeed I cannot put more tersely the general attitude of the fervid little insurgent periodicals towards the public, than in a superb remark of the equally insurgent Billy Sunday: “They say I rub the fur the wrong way. I say, let the cats turn round!” For myself, I confess to unfeigned delight in the insurgent propaganda. Its fine ardor and alacrity of spirit, its enthusiasm for ideals, its eager hospitality to all poetic Ishmaelites, self-exiled from Abraham’s bosom, are metal more attractive than a complacent and impeccably correct inertia. And military poetry is more to edification than poetic or any other pacifism.’ See the reference to John Livingston Lowes in the letter to Owen Barfield of 27 September 1927.

[77](#) 'Great strength is in humility' (apparently in medieval Scots); in St Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, *enarratio* on Psalm 92:3: 'in humilitate est tota fortitudo'.

[78](#) This was Barfield's unpublished poem, 'The Tower', first mentioned by Lewis in his diary on 21 June 1922 (*AMR*, pp. 52–3). The manuscript is among Barfield's papers in the Bodleian Library.

79 i.e. Wordsworth, *The Prelude*.

[80](#) Tacitus, *Agricola*, III, i: 'Reconciliation of things previously incompatible'.

81 'reversal, change'.

82 The British Museum.

[83](#) Hugh l'Anson Fausset's review of *Dymer* appeared in *The Times Literary Supplement* (13 January 1927), p. 27. See the extract of his letter to Lewis of 29 September 1926 in *CL I*, p. 675n.

84 'the poetic mind' (lit. 'the mind that creates').

85 'the pathetic mind' (lit. 'the mind capable of emotion or feeling').

[86](#) Aristotle, *De Anima*, III, 5, 1–2: ‘And one mind [the pathetic mind] corresponds in becoming everything; the other mind [the poetic mind] corresponds in making everything. The latter alone is immortal and ageless. But we do not remember because this is without emotion. The pathetic mind dies.’

[87](#) Edith Sitwell, *The Sleeping Beauty* (1924).

[88](#) Thomas Hood (1799–1845).

[89](#) Robert Southey (1774–1843).

[90](#) 'But nothing of what I have written above forbids general agreement amongst everyone that an Orphic poem should be a topic for human conversation.'

[91](#) Tolkien was referring to Barfield's recently published *Poetic Diction: A Study in Meaning* (1928). See ch. 4, 'Meaning and Myth'.

[92](#) Barfield's unpublished novel, 'English People', the typescript of which is in the Wade Center, Wheaton College.

[93](#) 'we have all sinned'.

94 Molière, *Le Tartuffe* (1664).

[95](#) John Masefield, *Sard Harker: A Novel* (1924).

96 These arrangements for a visit to the opera are in the style of Wagner's Valkyries.

[97](#) The letter is held in the Public Record Office for Northern Ireland.

Lewis's mother, Flora, began to suffer with cancer in February 1908, and the first of two nurses arrived at Little Lea on 12 February. This was probably A. M. Davison, known as 'Nurse Davison'. Flora was operated on at home on 15 February, after which she rallied for a while. The trouble soon returned and Warnie came home from Wynyard School in July 1908. During Flora's long illness there was at least one nurse in the house all the time. Warnie attached the following note to a letter from Davison to Albert Lewis of 19 July 1908 (LP III: 107-8): 'A. M. Davison was the senior of the two nurses in charge of Flora Lewis during her final illness. She speedily became a friend of the family's, and remained so for years after the tragedy' (p. 108). Nurse Davison was present when Flora Lewis died on 23 August 1908.

[98](#) 'Stephanos'.

[99](#) Shakespeare, *Othello*, II, iii, 93.

[100](#) ‘And a noble pair of pterodactyls, and a pair of dragons, and the Terrible Lizard (dinosaur), and his terrible she-lizard.’ This Latin elegiac couplet seems to be about the creation of the animals.

[101](#) Charles Kay Ogden and I. A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923).

[102](#) Terence, *Woman of Andros*, 253: 'To treat an affair of such moment so carelessly!'

[103](#) 'things perceptible to the mind'.

[104](#) Jakob Boehme (1575–1624) was a German Lutheran theosophical author. He was the recipient of mystical experiences, and he claimed that in his writings he described only what he had received from divine illumination.

[105](#) Jakob Boehme, *The Signature of all Things, with Other Writings*, trans. John Ellistone, introduction by Clifford Bax, Everyman's Library [1912]. See Lewis's comments on this work in the letter to Arthur Greeves of 3 January 1930 (*CL* I, pp. 858–9).

[106](#) These are characters in Barfield's 'English People'.

[107](#) *CL* I, p. 867.

[108](#) Dr Joseph Tegart 'Joe' Lewis (1898–1969), Lewis's first cousin, was born in Belfast on 2 September 1898, the son of Albert's brother Joseph Lewis and his wife Mary. He was educated at Campbell College, Belfast, after which he read Medicine at Queen's University, Belfast. He took his MD in 1924, and was subsequently a member of the Royal College of Physicians, 1927, and a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, 1936. He spent the most of his life as a bacteriologist in the Belfast Infirmary. During the Second World War he served as a lieutenant-colonel in the Royal Army Medical Corps, 1939–45. Dr Lewis had written to Jack Lewis about the bookcases which belonged to his mother, and which had been in Little Lea for many years.

[109](#) J. W. A. Condlin, Albert Lewis's managing clerk, was still dealing with the business of his employer's estate.

110 'Sandycroft' was the home of Dr Lewis's parents.

[111](#) Dr Joseph Lewis was one of the doctors who attended Albert Lewis during his final illness. See the letter to Warnie of 25 August 1929 (*CL* I, pp. 806–7).

[112](#) Lewis was remembering the walking tour he took with Barfield, Cecil Harwood and Walter W. Field from 4–8 April 1930 and described in detail in the letter to Arthur Greeves of 29 April 1930 (*CL* I, pp. 892–5). ‘Quirinal’ was their private word for urinal. Most of this letter is in the metre of *Hiawatha*.

[113](#) See **T. S. Eliot** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1028–30.

[114](#) At this time Dom Bede Griffiths was living with two friends at Cloud Farm, and in an undated letter to Lewis he repeated the proposition made earlier about helping Barfield with an income if the latter chose to edit Coleridge and could not get backing: 'I have a proposition to make, which I should like to know if you think feasible. If Barfield should not be able to get anything from an American university, do you think it would be possible for us to make an arrangement about it. We...have an income of about £800 a year between us, which it is impossible...to spend all on ourselves. Do you think Barfield might be led to accept a sort of Closed Fellowship for the purpose of bringing out an edition of Coleridge, or anything else he likes to do? We don't know exactly how much we shall have over, but we could certainly provide £100 a year for two or three years' (Wade Center). In the end, Barfield was unable to spare the time to work on Coleridge.

[115](#) Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, 496.

116 '(appeal) to sympathy'.

[117](#) This was an unpublished essay by Barfield.

[118](#) Sir Monier Monier-Williams, *A Dictionary: English and Sanskrit* (1851).

[119](#) 'another'.

[120](#) Friedrich Leopold von Hardenburg (Novalis), *Hymns to the Night* (1800).

[121](#) Novalis, *Hymns to the Night*, No. 3, 2: 'Broke the band of birth...light's fetter.'

[122](#) 'Sleep stepping...ancient tales...Heaven's opening'. The entire line from the second of Novalis's hymns is: 'Sie wissen nicht, daß du es bist der des zarten Mädchens Busen umschwebt und zum Himmel den Schoß macht—ahnden nicht, daß aus alten Geschichten du himmelöffnend entgetrittst und den Schlüssel trägst zu den Wohnungen der Seligen, unendlicher Geheimnisse schweigender Bote.'

[123](#) 'by definition'.

[124](#) Lewis hoped that Eliot would publish his article in *The Criterion*.

[125](#) When Eliot finally rejected 'The Personal Heresy in Criticism' it was published in *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, XIX (1934). It later became the first chapter of Lewis's joint work with E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Personal Heresy: A Controversy* (1939).

[126](#) See **Mary Neylan** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1054–5. She was a pupil at St Hugh's College, Oxford, 1929–32.

[127](#) Mary Ethel Seaton (1888–1947) was an authority on the literature of the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. She was born in Rangoon in 1888 and educated at the Ladies' College, Guernsey, Portsmouth High School and Girton College, Cambridge, where she took Firsts in all three parts of the Medieval and Modern Language Tripos in 1909 and 1910. She held the post of Lecturer in English Literature at Girton College, 1911–16, and in 1925 became Fellow and Tutor in English at St Hugh's College, Oxford, where she remained until 1957. Her books include *Literary Relations of England and Scandinavia in the Seventeenth Century* (1935) and *Sir Richard Roos, c. 1410–1482: Lancastrian Poet* (1961).

[128](#) William Langland, *The Vision of William concerning Piers Plowman*, with Prefaces, Notes, and a Glossary by Walter W. Skeat (London: Early English Text Society, 1867–84).

[129](#) John Gower, *English Works*, Introduction, Notes, and Glossary by G. C. Macaulay (London: Early English Text Society, 1900–01).

[130](#) *Gawain and the Green Knight*, ed. J. R. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925).

[131](#) *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose*, ed. Kenneth Sisam (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1921).

[132](#) *Ancient English Metrical Romances*, selected and published by Joseph Ritson (Edinburgh: Goldsmid, 1884–5).

[133](#) Lewis mentions this document in the letter to Warnie of 24 October 1931 (*CL II*, p. 10). In 1930 Lewis, Mrs Moore and Warnie purchased The Kilns for £3,300. It appears that they paid £300 in cash, while Mrs Moore was responsible for £1,500 of the mortgage, Lewis £1,000 and Warnie £500. On 2 October 1931 Mrs Moore signed a mortgage document from the bank, and this letter confirms the amount owed by each brother. On receiving this letter, Warnie wrote the following reply to his brother: 'Area Headquarters, Shanghai Area, China, 9/12/31. My dear Jack, In confirmation of our talk regarding the transfer to ourselves of the mortgage on "the Kilns", executed by Mrs. Moore on the 2nd October 1931, this confirms the verbal agreement thus reached, that in spite of anything to the contrary which may seem implied thereby, your interest in the said mortgage is of the value of £1000 (one thousand pounds), and my interest is of the value of £500 (five hundred pounds). Yours, Warnie' (Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/7, fol. 5).

[134](#) Edmund Charles Blunden (1896–1974), poet, teacher and critic, was educated at The Queen's College, Oxford, after which poetry and literary journalism claimed most of his time. He returned to Oxford as Fellow and Tutor of English at Merton College, 1931–45.

[135](#) Blunden had probably written to compliment Lewis on the poems in *The Pilgrim's Regress*.

[136](#) *The Pilgrim's Regress*, Bk. X, ch. 10. This poem is reprinted as 'When the Curtain's Down' in *Poems* and *CP*.

[137](#) Lewis's poem is a parody of *The Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens*, which celebrates events of the thirteenth century but was first published in 1765. It is reprinted in *The Oxford Book of Ballads*, sel. and ed. James Kinsley (1969), pp. 311–12 and the first verse runs: "The King sits in Dunfermline toun,/Drinking the blude-reid wine;/“O quhar will I get [a] guid sailor./To sail this schip of mine?"

[138](#) This letter was originally published in
The Times Literary Supplement
(2 May 1935), p. 22, under the title 'The Genuine Text'.

[139](#) J. Dover Wilson, *The Manuscript of Shakespeare's Hamlet and the Problem of its Transmission: An Essay in Creative Bibliography*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1934).

[140](#) 'the proper settling of preliminary doubts and difficulties'.

[141](#) 'F1' or 'F1' is a standard abbreviation for the 'First Folio' of Shakespeare. Shakespeare's earliest plays are referred to as folios or quartos according to the folding of the printed sheets, and therefore the size of the book. The First Folio of Shakespeare's plays was published in 1623. *Hamlet* was first published in a Quarto in 1603, the First Folio version in 1623.

[142](#) This letter was originally published in
The Times Literary Supplement
(23 May 1935), p. 33, under the title 'The Genuine Text'. Cf. J. Dover Wilson, *ibid.* (16 May
1935), p. 313.

[143](#) 'prudent'.

[144](#) Shakespeare, *King Henry V*, II, iii, 15–16.

[145](#) *The Works of Samuel Johnson*, Vol. VII, 'Johnson on Shakespeare', Preface 1765, p. 73:
'Mr. Pope...collated the old copies, which none had thought to examine before, and restored many lines to their integrity; but, by a very compendious criticism, he rejected whatever he disliked, and thought more of amputation than of cure.'

[146](#) Elizabeth Holmes, *Margaret* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1936).

[147](#) 'A Lyrical Narrative', a review of Holmes's *Margaret*, appeared in *The Times Literary Supplement* (6 June 1936), p. 474. 'It tells,' said the reviewer, 'in a series of more than sixty lyrics, many of them free in form and constituting altogether an original kind of lyrical narrative, the story of Margaret's life from infancy until she comes through hunger, thirst and despair into full possession of herself...The whole poem reflects with an enchanting freshness the truth of a sensitive soul's unfolding.'

[148](#) Holmes, *Margaret*, p. 21, 'Soliloquies at Night,' 23–34: 'Margaret...Whispered in eager speech/With all people that were dwelling/In all places of her mind/...And some that stranger seemed,/Shadowy, of uncouth speech,/Until she found them telling/Things she had heard of but could never reach.'

[149](#) *ibid.*, p. 88, 'The Recall', 42–52: 'Now she prays/A storm-wind to sweep and shatter/This stoniness/Where she lay quite alone/With her heart till it died,/Or turned to stone,/It too, inside.../Nothing seems much to matter/These days,/To Margaret.'

[150](#) J. B. S. Haldane, *Possible Worlds and Other Essays* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1927), 'The Last Judgment', p. 309: 'It is possible that under the conditions of life in the outer planets the human brain may alter in such a way as to open up possibilities inconceivable to our own minds.'

[151](#) Before this note could be posted Lewis received a letter from Greeves. He therefore appended a pastiche of Jane Austen's *Emma* before going on to make further suggestions for his Irish jaunt.

[152](#) Ivor Armstrong Richards (1893–1979), literary critic with a lifelong preoccupation with language and poetry, was born at Sandbach, Cheshire, on 26 February 1893. He was educated at Clifton College and Magdalene College, Cambridge, from where he graduated in 1915. Being a proficient mountaineer, he contemplated a career as a professional guide. However, after publishing, among other things, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1925), which inaugurated the modern critical movement at Cambridge, he was elected a Fellow of Magdalene College in 1926. In 1929 he published *Practical Criticism: A Study of Literary Judgement*, in which he argued in the introductory chapter that ‘Stock Responses’ were ‘disadvantageous and even dangerous’. Lewis was in total disagreement, and argued on behalf of them in Chapter 8 of *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (1942) (see *CL* II, p. 779n). In 1939 Richards exchanged Cambridge, England, for Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he was a professor at Harvard University, 1944–63. He returned to Cambridge in 1974 and died there on 7 September 1979.

[153](#) I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (London: Oxford University Press, 1936).

[154](#) Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I, v, 77.

[155](#) Frank Samuel Herbert Kendon (1893–1959), poet and academic. During the First World War he served with the Royal Engineers in Egypt. After the war he went up to St John's College, Cambridge, where he read English, taking a BA in 1921. On leaving Cambridge he joined the staff of *John O'London's Weekly*, where he learnt to be a copy-writer. In 1935 he joined the staff of the Cambridge University Press, where he remained until 1954. His books include an autobiography, *The Small Years* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930). It was Kendon's plan to publish a volume of poems all of whose writers would be anonymous. The work appeared as *Fear No More: A Book of Poems for the Present Time by Living English Poets* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940). Six copies were printed with a list of the authors' names for the National Libraries. Lewis had four poems in the book: 'Essence' (p. 4); 'Break, Sun, my Crusted Earth' (p. 72); 'The World is Round' (p. 85); and 'Arise my Body' (p. 89). The first, third and fourth are reprinted, with revisions, as 'Essence', 'Poem for Psychoanalysts and/or Theologians', and 'After Prayers, Lie Cold' in *CP*.

[156](#) Royal Army Service Corps.

[157](#) Maureen Moore married Leonard Blake on 27 August 1940. See **Leonard James Blake** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1023–4.

[158](#) There was some confusion at this time as to who was the master of Glenmachan. Sir Robert ('Bob') Ewart had died on 12 August 1939 to be succeeded in the baronetcy by his cousin Sir Lavens Mathewson Algernon Ewart, who himself died on 21 September 1939. He in turn was succeeded by an American cousin, Sir Talbot Ewart of New York, who died without issue in 1959 to be succeeded by the present baronet, Sir Ivan Ewart. Thus, while the title moved out of Sir Robert Ewart's immediate family, Glenmachan itself was given to Sir Robert's sister Gundreda Forrest, who lived there until her death in 1978.

[159](#) Forrest Reid, *Apostate* (1926).

160 i.e. Jane ('Chanie') McNeill.

[161](#) This letter was originally published in *Theology*, LXI (November 1940), p. 304, under the title 'The Conflict in Anglican Theology'.

[162](#) Oliver C. Quick, 'The Conflict in Anglican Theology', *Theology*, LXI (October 1940), pp. 234-7.

[163](#) Brewer had won a demyship to Magdalen, and as he would have Lewis as his tutor, he wanted to know what he should read in preparation for his work.

[164](#) Arthur Hazard Dakin (1905–), the biographer of Paul Elmer More, was born in Boston. He took his BA and Ph.D. from Princeton University in 1928 and 1933, after which he received a Ph.D. from Oxford University in 1938. During the Second World War he served in the United States Navy. His publications include *Von Hügel and the Supernatural* (London: SPCK; New York: Macmillan, 1934), *Man the Measure: An Essay on Humanism as Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1939), *A Paul Elmer More Miscellany* (Portland, Maine: Anthoensen Press, 1950) and *Paul Elmer More* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960).

[165](#) Lewis's answers to Paul Elmer More, dated 25 October 1934, 5 April 1935 and 23 May 1935, appear in *CL* II. The correspondence between Lewis and More is held in Princeton University Library.

[166](#) In Geoffrey Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (c. 1385).

[167](#) Charles Williams, *Religion and Love in Dante: The Theology of Romantic Love*, Dacre Paper no. 6 (London: Dacre Press, 1941).

[168](#) Mr Colquhoun had probably asked about the talks in the series 'What Christians Believe' that Lewis gave over the BBC on 11 and 18 January and 1, 8, and 15 February 1942. This series was published with the first series on 'Right and Wrong' as *Broadcast Talks*.

[169](#) Theodora Bosanquet (1880–1961), literary editor of *Time and Tide*, was born in Sandown, Isle of Wight, on 3 October 1880, the daughter of Frederick Charles Tindal Bosanquet and Gertrude Mary (Fox) Bosanquet. After taking a B.Sc. from University College, London, she taught herself to type and was secretary to Henry James from 1907 to 1916. During the First World War she worked in the War Trade Intelligence Department and the Ministry of Food, for which she was appointed MBE in 1919. After the formation of the International Federation of University Women she served as executive secretary, 1920–35. Bosanquet was literary editor of *Time and Tide*, 1935–53, and a director, 1943–58. Lewis knew her through his association with *Time and Tide*.

[170](#) Cicero, *De Legibus*, III, 8: 'Let the welfare of the people be the supreme law.'

[171](#) In the end Charles Williams's *The Forgiveness of Sins* (1942) was reviewed by Willoughby Dewar in *Time and Tide*, 23 (12 September 1942), pp. 723–4.

[172](#) Bernard Bosanquet (1848–1923).

[173](#) Rosamund Rieu (1922–), later Cowan, was the daughter of editor and translator E. V. Rieu, whose biography appears in *CL* II, p. 564n. She read English under Lewis at St Hugh's College, Oxford, and took her BA in 1943. Her interview with Stephen Schofield, entitled 'Women as Pupils', is published in the *Canadian C. S. Lewis Journal*, no. 4 (April 1979), pp. 4–9.

[174](#) On 27 September 1942 Rieu heard Lewis give a talk on 'Miracles'. A copy of her letter to Lewis dated that same day appears on pages 6–7 of 'Women as Pupils': 'Dear Mr Lewis, I knew beforehand that I should be much moved by your address to-night, and I knew from experience that I should sit entranced, but I never dreamed that I should approach remotely near to believing in the subject of your talk...If only I had allowed myself to be swept off my feet, to accept what at the time all my reason, all my imagination and all my senses, seemed to warrant, I should without hesitation have pronounced on my return home, "I believe in miracles." But as it is, when so much of your address was based on the tacit agreement of the main structure of the Christian faith, it would be absurd for me to believe in an isolated part of it as miracles, as to believe in the Resurrection if I doubted the Virgin Birth. I should love to know if you yourself consider that your arguments could in any way apply or be of value if they did not assume Christianity. I mean, if you were not a Christian, would a deep appreciation of the validity, logicity and desirability of those arguments be ground enough on which to base your conversion, or are they only of true value to those who already believe?'

[175](#) Sister Penelope was working on a translation of St Athanasius' *The Incarnation of the Word of God*, published in 1944. For details see note 6 to the letter of 19 February 1944 (CL II, p. 603).

[176](#) Tinidril is the naked, unfallen 'Eve' of *Perelandra*.

[177](#) Lewis met these nuns when he visited St Mary's Convent, Wantage, the mother house of the Community of St Mary the Virgin, on 20–22 April 1942. During the visit he gave some talks to the junior sisters on 'The Gospel in our Generation'.

178 i.e. sinusitis, inflammation of the sinuses.

[179](#) Psalm 39:3.

[180](#) Helen Tyrrell Wheeler (1924–) was born Joan Helen Florence Tyrrell. She was educated at St John's High School, Newport, and St Hilda's College, Oxford, 1941–5, where Lewis was her tutor for two terms. After taking her BA in 1945 she was acting head of the English Department at Christ's Hospital, Horsham, 1945–9. There she met and married her husband. The couple taught in the English Department at the English School in Cairo, 1949–51. In 1951 they settled in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, where her time was shared between caring for three children and teaching adult education for the Department of External Education run by Oxford and the University of Kent. Helen Wheeler is the author of two Macmillan Master Guides, *The Mill on the Floss by George Eliot* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1986), and *The Prelude Books I and II by William Wordsworth* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988). For her memories of Lewis, see her essay, 'Wartime Tutor', in *We Remember C. S. Lewis*, ed. David Graham (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman, 2001), pp. 48–52.

[181](#) During 24–26 February 1943 Lewis gave the Riddell Memorial Lectures at Newcastle upon Tyne. They were later published as *The Abolition of Man*.

182 Lewis was unable to attend a meeting of the Socratic Club.

[183](#) *A New Commentary on Holy Scripture: Including the Apocrypha*, ed. Charles Gore, Henry Leighton Goudge, Alfred Guillaume (London: SPCK, 1928).

[184](#) Mark 5:9.

[185](#) 'The Clarendon Bible' consists of six volumes of commentaries on the books of the Old Testament gathered together as *The Clarendon Bible: Old Testament*, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926–47), and ten of commentaries on the New Testament published by Clarendon Press between 1922 and 1939.

[186](#) The King's Arms.

[187](#) i.e. Lisbeth Greeves, née Lizzie Snowden Demaine. See the letter to Arthur Greeves of 22 April 1951.

[188](#) Romans 8:23.

[189](#) Greeves had probably asked Lewis about Letter 16 in *The Screwtape Letters* which deals with the 'Generous Conflict Illusion'.

[190](#) Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34.

[191](#) 'For the right Faith is that we believe and confess: that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man...Who although he be God and Man: yet he is One, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh: but by taking of the Manhood into God.'

[192](#) This is a letter of reference for Tyrrell, Lewis's former pupil, who was applying for a position at Christ's Hospital, Horsham.

[193](#) Margaret Clara Adèle Deneke (1883–1969), musician and member of Lady Margaret Hall, was born in London in 1883. She was educated privately and over the years she became an accomplished pianist and an authority on the works of Felix Mendelssohn. Her sister, Helena Deneke (1878–1973), was educated at Oxford, and on the death of their father in 1916 they moved to ‘Gunfield’, Norham Gardens, Oxford. Helena taught at the women’s college, Lady Margaret Hall, while Margaret made Gunfield one of the Oxford centres of music. They became friends with Paul Victor Mendelssohn Benecke, Classics Tutor at Magdalen College, whose family they knew in London. In order to help the university and Lady Margaret Hall, Margaret raised £45,000 by giving 225 recitals during four tours of the United States. She led the college choir at Lady Margaret Hall and was for years librarian to the Oxford University Musical Society. She was made an honorary Fellow of the college in 1931, and in 1952 the university recognized her services to music by making her an honorary MA. Margaret Deneke, who died on 3 March 1969, was the author of *Ernest Walker* (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), and *Paul Victor Mendelssohn Benecke 1868–1944* (Oxford: A. T. Broome and Son, [1944]).

[194](#) Margaret Dora Mendelssohn Benecke was the sister of Paul Victor Mendelssohn Benecke (1868–1944) who had died on 25 September 1944. See the biography of Paul Victor Mendelssohn Benecke in *CL* I, p. 517n.

[195](#) Benecke's funeral was held in Magdalen College Chapel on 28 September 1944. For an account of the funeral see *The Oxford Times*, no. 4,357 (29 September 1944), p. 8.

[196](#) This letter was originally published in
The Times Literary Supplement
(2 December 1944), p. 583, under the title 'Basic Fears'.

[197](#) *The New Testament in Basic English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press in association with Evans Brothers, 1941). *The Basic Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments in Basic English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1949) was made by a committee under the chairmanship of S. H. Hooke.

[198](#) The Greek in Colossians 1:15 translates literally as ‘all creation’ (as indeed the New Revised Standard Version has it). Lewis was concerned about the idea that the Greek original refers to *all* creation, not simply the living things.

[199](#) Greeves took exception to what Lewis had said in *Beyond Personality* about God being fully revealed in Christ. At the top of this letter Greeves wrote 'Not a good argument.'

[200](#) Arianism denied the full divinity of Jesus Christ. This heresy was named after its author, Arius (d. 336), who held that the Son of God was not eternal but created before the ages by the Father from nothing as an instrument for the creation of the world. Jesus was, therefore, not God by nature, but a creature susceptible of change, despite the fact that He was different from all other creatures in being the one direct creation of God. The teaching of Arius spread through the Roman world and claimed many adherents until Constantine called a General Council at Nicea. There, in 325, the opponents of Arianism, under the leadership of St Athanasius, defined the Catholic faith in the coeternity and coequality of the Father and the Son.

[201](#) James 1:13.

[202](#) John 6:68.

[203](#) Richard Francis Blake, born 8 January 1945.

204 *That Hideous Strength* was dedicated to Jane McNeill.

[205](#) i.e. *The Great Divorce: A Dream*, published on 14 January 1946.

[206](#) This letter was originally published in
The Times Literary Supplement
(3 February 1945), p. 55, under the title 'Basic Fears'.

[207](#) Robert Young, *Analytical Concordance to the Bible* (1879).

[208](#) Colossians 1:16: 'All things were created by him, and for him'.

[209](#) Letter 8 of *The Screwtape Letters* concerns the 'law of Undulation...a series of troughs and peaks...[God] leaves the creature to stand up on its own legs—to carry out from the will alone duties which have lost all relish. It is during such trough periods, much more than during the peak periods, that it is growing into the sort of creature He wants it to be. Hence the prayers offered in the state of dryness are those which please Him best...He wants them to learn to walk and must therefore take away His hand.'

[210](#) Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34.

[211](#) This letter was originally published in *The Times Literary Supplement* (14 July 1945), p. 331, under the title 'Above the Smoke and Stir'.

[212](#) Milton, *Comus*, 979.

[213](#) Milton, *Paradise Lost*, III, 556–7.

[214](#) Milton, *Comus*, 981–2.

[215](#) Milton, *Poems: Reproduced in Facsimile from the Manuscript in Trinity College, Cambridge*, ed. William Aldis Wright (Menston: Scolar Press, 1972).

[216](#) Milton, *Comus*, 4.

[217](#) Henry More, *The Immortality of the Soul* (1659).

[218](#) Brewer's time with Lewis had been interrupted by the war. Now back from serving in the army, he had again asked Lewis how he should be preparing for his university studies.

[219](#) Edith Elizabeth Wardale, *An Old English Grammar* (1922).

[220](#) Henry Sweet, *An Anglo-Saxon Primer* (1882); *An Anglo-Saxon Reader* (1876).

[221](#) *Beowulf and The fight at Finnsburg*, ed. Friedrich Klaeber (1922).

[222](#) *Beowulf: With the Finnsburg Fragment*, ed. A. J. Wyatt, new edn, rev. R. W. Chambers (1943).

[223](#) Dr Pollard had sent Lewis a watercolour painting of an ungulate, or hoofed mammal, in fact, a goat. It was probably the picture of the 'altruistic ungulate' he mentioned in his letter of 20 April 1954.

[224](#) Theocritus (c. 310–250 BC), pastoral poet, was probably born at Syracuse and spent part of his life on the island of Cos. He is known for his poems, *The Idylls*, which present in dramatic form dialogues between rustics, and with charming freshness the country life of Sicily.

[225](#) Pollard was one of many readers of *The Screwtape Letters* who pointed out to Lewis that, in Letter 1, the man who had just come out of the British Museum would not have been able to see a number 73 bus going past. See Lewis's letters to Jocelyn Gibb of 9 and 12 October 1960.

[226](#) This letter was originally published in *The Times Literary Supplement* (27 October 1945), p. 511, under the title 'Above the Smoke and Stir'.

[227](#) B. A. Wright, 'Above the Smoke and Stir', *The Times Literary Supplement* (4 August 1945), p. 367: 'The opening and closing lines of *Comus*, which state the argument of the poem, are based directly on Plato's *Phaedo*.'

[228](#) John Donne, *Poems*, Vol. I, ed. E. K. Chambers (London: Lawrence & Bullen, 1896), 'Air and Angels', pp. 21–2.

[229](#) Judah Abrabanel, *Dialoghi d'Amore* (1541).

[230](#) Shakespeare, *King Henry IV, Part 1*, iii, I, 27: 'Diseased nature oftentimes breaks forth.'

[231](#) Johannes Kepler, *Harmonice Mundi* (1619), Bk. IV, ch. 7: 'a large organism'.

[232](#) *ibid.*: 'it breathes out through the craters of mountaintops as if through a mouth and nostrils'.

[233](#) A friend of Sayer's in the English Congregation of Benedictines at Ampleforth Abbey, near York, wanted Lewis to visit and give a talk. Lewis was making a play on the anonymous poem, 'There Was a Young Lady of Riga' which went as follows: 'There was a young lady of Riga/Who smiled as she rode on a tiger,/They returned from the ride/With the lady inside,/And the smile on the face of the tiger.'

[235](#) This letter was originally published in *The Times* (7 December 1946), p. 5, under the title 'Jane Austen's Home'.

[236](#) Richard Arthur Austen-Leigh (1872–1961), the great-great-nephew of Jane Austen, was Clerk of the House of Commons and the author of several books on Austen, including (with William Austen-Leigh)

Jane Austen: Her Life and Letters: A Family Record
(1913).

[237](#) Elizabeth Bowen (1899–1993), novelist, was born in Dublin of Anglo-Irish Protestant parents. Her many works include *The House in Paris* (1935) and *The Death of the Heart* (1948).

[238](#) See the biography of Lord David Cecil in *CL* II, p. 182n. He is the author of *Portrait of Jane Austen* (1978).

[239](#) William Hugh Curtis (1880–1957), great-grandson of William Curtis (1803–81), was founder of the Curtis Museum, Alton, Hampshire. He is the author of *The Curtis Museum, Alton, Hampshire, 1855–1955: The First Hundred Years of a Small Museum* (1955) and the posthumous author of *A Quaker Doctor and Naturalist in the 19th Century: The Story of William Curtis by a grandson, William Hugh Curtis* (London: Bannisdale, 1961).

[240](#) Dorothy Darnell (1876–1953) founded the Jane Austen Society in 1940. Under her guidance it had a membership of more than 800 by 1946. In 1949 she founded the Jane Austen Museum. See her obituary in *The Times* (14 October 1953), p. 10.

[241](#) Charles Beecher Hogan (1906–81), a lecturer in English at Yale University, is the author of *A Bibliography of Edwin Arlington Robinson* (1936). His personal papers may be found at Harvard University.

[242](#) Elizabeth Jenkins (1907–). See *Collected Reports of the Jane Austen Society, 1949–1965*, with an Introduction by Elizabeth Jenkins (1996).

[243](#) Sir Geoffrey Langdon Keynes (1887–1982), surgeon and literary scholar, was educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge. Though he later worked in general surgery, he specialized in thyroid, gastrectomy, hernias and breast cancer. At the same time he edited the writings of William Blake and John Donne, and is the author of *Jane Austen: A Bibliography* (1929).

[244](#) Mary Lascelles (1900–95) received a BA in English from Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, in 1922. After a number of teaching posts, she was Fellow of English at Somerville College, Oxford, 1932–67, Vice-Principal, 1947–60, and University Lecturer in English, 1960–6.

[245](#) Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis (1895–1979), Fellow of Yale University, 1938–64, was founder and editor of the Yale Edition of the Horace Walpole Correspondence.

[246](#) Sir Edward Howard Marsh (1872–1953), civil servant and patron of the arts. He was serving in the Colonial Office when, in 1905, Winston Churchill became Parliamentary Under-secretary for the Colonies and invited Marsh to become his private secretary. For the next twenty-three years Marsh was at Churchill's right hand whenever he was in office. After Churchill resigned this office and left on active service in the army Marsh became an assistant private secretary to the Prime Minister.

[247](#) Chauncey Brewster Tinker (1876–1963), James Boswell scholar, graduated from Yale University in 1899, and after a brief period at Bryn Mawr College joined the faculty at Yale in 1903, retiring in 1945. His many works include *The Letters of James Boswell* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924).

[248](#) Gerald Wellesley, 7th Duke of Wellington (1885–1972), the third son of Lord Arthur Wellesley (4th Duke of Wellington), succeeded to the title at the death of his father in 1943. He gained the rank of lieutenant-colonel in 1939 in the service of the Grenadier Guards. After serving in the Second World War, he held the office of Lord Lieutenant of the County of London, 1944–9, and the office of Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, 1949–60.

[249](#) Sir Clough Williams-Ellis (1883–1978), architect, attended Trinity College, Cambridge, and took a BA in 1901. He opened his architectural practice in London in 1903, becoming at the same time a life-long advocate and protector of the environment. He is best known for Portmeirion, the village he built between 1925 and 1975 on his private land in Snowdonia, Wales.

[250](#) Sydney Adams (1905–80), schoolmaster, was born in Oxford on 15 September 1905 and read Mathematics at St John's College, Oxford, taking his BA in 1928. He was sixth form maths master at Aldenham School, 1929–31, senior maths master at Sedbergh School, 1931–44, headmaster of Bancroft's School, 1944–65, and tutor in maths at Millfield School, 1965–72. He retired in 1972 and died on 1 August 1980.

[251](#) See the letter to J. O. Reed of 9 January 1953.

[252](#) Terence Hanbury White (1906–64), novelist, was born in Bombay on 29 May 1906, the only child of Garrick Hanbury White and Constance Edith Southcote (Aston) White. At the age of five he was sent to England to be brought up by his maternal grandparents. After attending Cheltenham College he went up to Queens' College, Cambridge, in 1925 to read English. He completed his degree course in 1929, submitting a thesis on Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*. After teaching for two years at St David's, a preparatory school in Reigate, he was appointed head of the English department at Stowe School in 1932. He excelled in the role of the old-fashioned schoolmaster, but resigned in 1936 to become a full-time writer. In 1938 White published *The Sword in the Stone*, the first instalment of what was to become an Arthurian tetralogy entitled *The Once and Future King* (1958). White loathed the post-war Labour government and in 1947, after a windfall of £15,000 when his children's book *Mistress Masham's Repose* (1946) was chosen as the book of the month in the USA, exiled himself in Alderney, one of the Channel Islands. He died on 20 January 1964.

[253](#) T. H. White, *Mistress Masham's Repose* (1946). Some of its characters used the English of Jonathan Swift's time, so Lewis imitates this in his letter.

[254](#) Laputa is the flying island in Part III of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.

[255](#) 'You have a guilty-plea.' (In other words, Lewis seems to be saying that he pleads guilty to the accusations of the satire presented by White.) For an example of the Latin phrase in a court setting, see Cicero, *Pro Ligario*, I, 2.

[256](#) Green was engaged to June Burdett. They were married on 31 March 1948.

[257](#) 'Alas!'

[258](#) W. P. Ker, *Epic and Romance: Essays on Medieval Literature* (London: Macmillan, 1897);
English Literature: Medieval (London: Williams & Norgate, 1912).

[259](#) Oliver Elton, *A Survey of English Literature: 1780–1830*, 2 vols. (London: Arnold, 1912); *A Survey of English Literature: 1830–1880*, 2 vols. (1920); *A Survey of English Literature, 1730–1780*, 2 vols. (1928).

[260](#) E. K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1930).

[261](#) Elmer Edgar Stoll, *Shakespeare Studies* (New York: Macmillan, 1927); *Art and Artifice in Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933).

[262](#) Caroline Spurgeon, *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us* (1935).

[263](#) S. L. Bethell, *Shakespeare and the Popular Dramatic Tradition* (London: King, 1944).

[264](#) Joseph Lewis Coppack (1887–1966), Lewis’s cousin, was writing from 3 Asiatic Terrace, Sandycroft, Flint, nr. Chester. He was born in Sandycroft on 6 November 1887, was a draughtsman by profession, and died on 18 December 1966. His family connection with Lewis was as follows: Lewis’s great-great-grandfather, Joseph Lewis (1803?–90) of Sandycroft, Flint, had a daughter, Mary Lewis (1829–72), who in 1847 married John Coppack (1818–69). Their son William Coppack (1848–1933) was married twice, the second time to Jane Roberts (1861–1936), and these were Joseph Lewis Coppack’s parents.

[265](#) This was Lewis's great-great-grandfather, Joseph Lewis (1803?–90), of Sandycroft, Flint. See *CL* I, p. 1014, and *LP* I: 233.

[266](#) Richard Lewis (1832–1908) and Martha Lewis (1831–1903). See *CL I*, pp. 1014–15.

[267](#) These were the Ballard Mathews Lectures on *Paradise Lost* given at University College of North Wales, Bangor, on 1–3 December 1941. See the letters to Emrys Evans of 14 March and 30 October 1941 (*CL* II, pp. 472–3, 494).

[268](#) A copy of the *Methodist Recorder*, founded in 1861 and still published today.

[269](#) Lewis is replying to Greeves's criticism of *Miracles*, ch. 16, where it is stated (p. 171): 'The remark so often made that "Heaven is a state of mind" bears witness to the wintry and deathlike phase of this process in which we are now living. The implication is that if Heaven is a state of mind...then it must be only a state of the spirit, or at least that anything else, if added to that state of spirit, would be irrelevant...Christian teaching by saying that God made the world and called it good teaches that Nature or environment cannot be simply irrelevant to spiritual beatitude in general, however far in one particular Nature, during the days of her bondage, they may have drawn apart. By teaching the resurrection of the body it teaches that Heaven is not merely a state of the spirit but a state of the body as well: and therefore a state of Nature as a whole. Christ, it is true, told His hearers that the Kingdom of Heaven was "within" or "among" them. But His hearers were not merely in "a state of mind". The planet He had created was beneath their feet, His sun above their heads; blood and lungs and guts were working in the bodies He had invented, photons and sound waves of His devising were blessing them with the sight of His human face and the sound of His voice. We are never *merely* in a state of mind.'

[270](#) John 21:12–13.

[271](#) *Miracles*, ch. 14, p. 172: 'The sacraments have been instituted. Certain spiritual gifts are offered us only on condition that we perform certain bodily acts.'

[272](#) This letter was originally published in *Time and Tide*, 28, no. 33 (30 August 1947), p. 935, under the title 'The Suggestion from Old English'.

[273](#) Lewis was replying to a letter from Patrick Laurence Heywood, of Christ Church, Oxford, entitled 'The Suggestion from Old English' and published in *Time and Tide*, 28, no. 30 (9 August 1947), p. 862. (For the entire correspondence on this subject see Peter Misketh, 'Two Lewis Letters from Time and Tide' published in *CSL: The Bulletin of the New York C. S. Lewis Society*, 36, no. 1, January/February 2005, pp. 12–13.) Writing two years after the end of the Second World War, Heywood complained of 'this dull apathetic England which seems to wish neither to work nor want, where literature has played out her passions, and where stage, screen and Press offer little expression of national enthusiasm'. He compared this state of affairs to the economic situation of tenth-century England: 'Social and family life had been disrupted after the ravages of the Danes: again and again we had been fighting with our backs to the wall, forced into accepting peace with little security.' And yet 'civil war and Danish invasions did not break the English spirit.' The men of Wulfstan's time, he insisted, did not sink into the kind of malaise that seemed to afflict England in 1947 because Anglo-Saxon England possessed a literature rich in heroic and moral sentiment. In *Beowulf* and *The Wanderer*, and in the Middle English *Piers Plowman*, medieval Englishmen found imaginative and emotional support against the temptation to despair. To the soldiers returning to Oxford from the Second World War, 'Old English literature offers...a view to finding a way to live out of the present chaos' and 'is well worth the discomfort of the Bodleian benches'. He went on to observe that many returning undergraduates found that Old English possessed 'great appeal'. In an aside that Lewis found of special interest, he said: 'It has been suggested that the economic poverty of Scotland was the main reason for the scarcity of great artists at any time in that nation. Although Anglo-Saxon England was an even poorer country, the gleeman suffered from no lack of inspiration or material for his song.'

[274](#) This letter was originally published in *Time and Tide*, 28, no. 34 (6 September 1947), p. 948, under the title 'The Suggestion from Old English'. Lewis was here replying to a letter by an anonymous 'Undergraduate' (now known to be Kingsley Amis) who took exception to Heywood's letter. In his letter, also entitled 'The Suggestion from Old English' and published in *Time and Tide*, 28, no. 32 (23 August 1947), pp. 911–12, the 'Undergraduate' maintained that to many undergraduates Old English studies 'are void of appeal...In their view, the subject's presence in the syllabus is no more than the relic of a nineteenth-century craze, itself the product of the desire of scholarship of that era to trace origins as far back as possible; also, the subject recommends itself to examiners by being easy to mark...The warriors and broken-down retainers who strut bawling across its pages repel by their childish fits of self-glorification and self-pity; exploits stated but not shown to be glorious are shown but not stated to derive from self-interest dressed up as duty and lust for renown masquerading as nobility...The cheapest contemporary novel has more to teach us than these painful reminders of what we have long outgrown.' This letter was reprinted in Kingsley Amis, *Letters*, ed. Zachary Leader (London: HarperCollins, 2000), pp. 137–8.

[275](#) This letter was originally published in the *Church Times*, CXXX (3 October 1947), p. 583, under the title 'Public Schools'.

[276](#) B. G. Sandhurst, *How Heathen is Britain?* Preface by C. S. Lewis (London: Collins, 1946).

[277](#) In a letter to Walter Hooper of 2 June 1979 Dr Baird said: ‘The passage to which I alluded appreciatively in my note to [Lewis] is found on the last 2 pages of ch 9 of *Miracles* (in Bles pp 80 f; in Fount pp. 70f.)’ The passage referred to consists of the last two paragraphs of ch. 9 of *Miracles*, pp. 68–9, in which Lewis discussed the corruption of Nature, pointing out that we should ‘Offer her neither worship nor contempt’.

[278](#) This letter was first published in *The Times Literary Supplement* (29 November 1947), p. 615, under the title 'The New Miltonians'.

[279](#) A. J. A. Waldock, *Paradise Lost and Its Critics* (1947).

[280](#) In his essay, 'The Tutor: A Portrait', in *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, Brewer introduced this letter as follows: 'Toward the end of my time as an undergraduate, I decided I should like to do research and become a scholar...I took schools in December 1947, along with a small number of others especially keen ex-servicemen who wished to do particularly well. We had been granted an extension of six months to the course because of the interruption of war service to our studies. In my case, being earnest and hardworking rather than clever, I certainly "over-prepared the event" and, as might have been expected, the examiners made hay of us.'

[281](#) Brewer deleted the name written here.

[282](#) i.e. Lewis's Preface to *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*.

[283](#) i.e. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*.

[284](#) Kenneth Hopkins (1914–88), poet and man of letters, was born in Bournemouth, and after leaving school at the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to a builder's merchant. In 1938 he set out to sell his poems from door to door. He eventually made his way to London where he came to know the anarchist and publisher Charles Lahr and his circle at Lahr's Red Lion Street bookshop. After serving in the Second World War he worked as the literary editor of *Everybody's*, a magazine concerned with social justice. Later he lectured on English literature and taught creative writing at several North American universities. His autobiography, *The Corruption of a Poet*, was published in 1954. His championship of the cause of the Powys brothers—John Cowper, Llewelyn and Theodore—reached its zenith with his biographical appreciation, *The Powys Brothers* (1967). He was an active member of the Powys Society.

[285](#) Lewis had been interviewed by Helen Calkins in September 1947, but her interview was turned down by *Harper's Magazine*. She wrote to Lewis in February 1948: 'When you gave me that momentous interview last September I told you that *Harpers* had a manuscript of mine... Although my manuscript was rejected, the Editor of Harpers' Religious Publications felt that mine was "a book which just had to be written". Unless I can convince you that my book is like that, how can I dare to ask you to read it? Would you read it?' (Wade Center)

[286](#) This letter was first published in *The Oxford Magazine*, LXVI (29 April 1948), p. 380, under the title 'Charles Williams'. See J.M.T.'s reply, *ibid.*, p. 380.

[287](#) J.M.T., 'Charles Williams', *The Oxford Magazine*, LXVI (4 March 1948), p. 346.

[288](#) Goodridge was writing a paper on 'Free Will' to read to the Oxford University Socratic Club. See the reference written for Goodridge of 1 January 1950.

[289](#) Samuel Alexander, *Space, Time and Deity* (1920).

[290](#) Alexander's book played a significant part in Lewis's conversion, and he wrote about it in *Surprised by Joy*: 'I read in Alexander's *Space, Time, and Deity* his theory of "Enjoyment" and "Contemplation". These are technical terms in Alexander's philosophy: "Enjoyment" has nothing do with pleasure, nor "Contemplation" with the contemplative life. When you see a table you "enjoy" the act of seeing and "contemplate" the table...I accepted this distinction at once and have ever since regarded it as an indispensable tool of thought...It seemed to me self-evident that one essential property of love, hate, fear, hope, or desire was attention to their object. To cease thinking about or attending to the woman is, so far, to cease loving; to cease thinking about or attending to the dreaded thing is, so far, to cease being afraid. But to attend to your own love or fear is to cease attending to the loved or dreaded object. In other words the enjoyment and the contemplation of our inner activities are incompatible. You cannot hope and also think about hoping at the same moment; for in hope we look to hope's object and we interrupt this by (so to speak) turning round to look at the hope itself' (ch. 14, pp. 153-4).

[291](#) This letter was first published in
The Times Literary Supplement
(19 June 1948), p. 345, under the title 'Othello'.

[292](#) Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, X, 250–1: ‘It is the face of a true maiden, whom you would believe to be alive and willing to be moved—had modesty not stood in the way.’

[293](#) Richard Bentley (1662–1742), *P. Ovidii Nasonis Opera, e textu Burmanni, cum notis Bentleii hactenus ineditis, necnon Harlesii, Gierigii, Lemairii, et aliorum selectissimis* (Oxford, 1826). This edition put together notes from various scholars (Bentley most notably) in order to achieve the best possible critical text of Ovid. The reference is to Gottlob Benedict von Schirach (1743–1804), *Clavis Poetarum Classicorum, pars posterior* (1769), on Ovid and Virgil. (The first part (*pars prior*) was published in 1768 on Horace, Terence, and Phaedrus.) Schirach was born a year after Bentley died; strictly speaking, it is not Bentley who quotes from Schirach (as Lewis has it), but rather the editor of the *omnium gatherum* for this edition of Ovid. Schirach's Latin note translates as follows: 'Well-brought-up young ladies scarcely dare move for reasons of modesty when in the sight of men.'

[294](#) Dante Alighieri, *Paradiso*, XXV, 111: 'Pure as a bride, silent and motionless.'

[295](#) Christopher Dawson, *Religion and Culture: Gifford Lectures Delivered in the University of Edinburgh in the Year 1947* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1948).

[296](#) 'in simple terms'.

[297](#) 'in my own opinion'.

[298](#) Dawson, *Religion and Culture*, p. 17: 'The numerous works on the history of religion during the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries depend for the most part, consciously or unconsciously, on the older philosophical syntheses of Hegel and Comte; and even to-day it is still necessary to insist on the intimate relation that exists between the naturalistic theories of evolutionary development current since the nineteenth century, and the strictly idealist conception of an inevitable progress to perfection which is a manifestation of the progressive self-realization of the absolute spirit in history.'

[299](#) See 'The Funeral of a Great Myth' in *Christian Reflections*, pp. 105–7: 'We must sharply distinguish between Evolution as a biological theorem and popular Evolutionism or Developmentalism which is certainly a Myth...The finest expression of the Myth in English... is...Keats's *Hyperion*, nearly forty years before the *Origin of Species*. And on the continent we have the *Nibelung's Ring*.'

[300](#) Dawson, *Religion and Culture*, p. 31: 'If the modern world has lost the old naïve extraverted belief in a rational universe which clearly manifests the power and intelligence of the Divine Author, the other way of spiritual experience is still open. Natural Theology says not only look up and look out—it also says look down and look in, and you will find the proofs of the reality of God in the depth of your own nature. The philosopher and the scientist may question the probative force of this experience. They may say that any feelings we may have beyond bodily processes are but our experience of our own conscious processes, or if, as more commonly, they admit the reality and the importance of a psychological region below the surface of consciousness, they may say that this is nothing but the irrational substratum of man's animal nature. But the men of religious experience—the saints and the sages—have always taught that the further man penetrates into the depth of his consciousness and of what lies below his consciousness, the nearer he approaches to spiritual reality.'

[301](#) It is likely that Lewis was replying to a letter from Miss Helen Peacock, a friend of Charles Williams, who was head of production at Oxford University Press.

[302](#) Sal Stokes was a friend of the Lewis family, and a particular friend of Jane McNeill.

[303](#) See **Brother George Every SSM** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1030–1.

[304](#) As Sarah Neylan's godfather, Lewis felt he should give her some suitable advice on the occasion of her confirmation, which he was unable to attend.

[305](#) Alec Craig, *The Voice of Merlin* (London: Fortune Press, 1946).

[306](#) This letter was first published in the *Church Times*, CXXXII (20 May 1949), p. 319, under the title 'The Church's Liturgy'.

[307](#) See E. L. Mascall, 'Quadragesimo Anno', *Church Times*, CXXXII (6 May 1949), p. 282.

[308](#) Brewer had just been appointed a lecturer in English at the University of Birmingham.

[309](#) This letter was first published in the *Church Times*, CXXXII (1 July 1949), p. 427, under the title 'The Church's Liturgy'.

[310](#) W. D. F. Hughes, 'The Church's Liturgy', *Church Times*, CXXXII (24 June 1949), p. 409.

[311](#) This letter was first published in the *Church Times*, CXXXII (15 July 1949), pp. 463–4, under the title ‘Invocation’.

[312](#) Edward Every, 'Doctrine and Liturgy', *Church Times*, CXXXII (8 July 1949), pp. 445–6.

[313](#) The 'Benedicite', found in the Prayer Book service of Morning Prayer, has as its source the Song of the Three Holy Children (vv. 35–66) in the Old Testament Apocrypha.

[314](#) Song of the Three Holy Children, vv. 41–57: ‘O ye Stars of Heaven, bless ye the Lord: praise him, and magnify him for ever...O yet Frost and Cold, bless ye the Lord: praise him, and magnify him for ever...O yet Whales, and all that move in the Waters, bless ye the Lord: praise him and magnify him for ever.’

[315](#) 'preconception'.

[316](#) This letter was first published in the *Church Times*, CXXXII (5 August 1949), p. 513, under the title 'Invocation of Saints'.

[317](#) See Edward Every, 'Invocation of Saints', *Church Times*, CXXXII (22 July 1949), pp. 481–2.

[318](#) John Jewel (1522–71), *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (1562), *Homilies, Book II* (1563).

[319](#) William Laud, *Conference with Fisher* (1639).

[320](#) Jeremy Taylor, *Dissuasive from Popery* (1664).

[321](#) 'The occurrence of an important transition in customs often passes unnoticed.'

[322](#) Keats, *Endymion*, IV, 614: 'His first touch of the earth went nigh to kill'.

[323](#) 'goodbye'.

[324](#) John Milton, 'At a Solemn Music' (1630), 1: 'Blest pair of Sirens'.

[325](#) The story of Lewis's part in the Commission to Revise the Psalter is told in George Musacchio, 'C. S. Lewis, T. S. Eliot, and the Anglican Psalter', *Seven: An Anglo-American Literary Review*, 22 (2005), pp. 45–59.

[326](#) Doris Allan was secretary to the Commission to Revise the Psalter.

[327](#) Miss Barker was a secretary to one of those on the Commission to Revise the Psalter.

[328](#) Musacchio, 'C. S. Lewis, T. S. Eliot, and the Anglican Psalter', p. 52: 'Eliot and Lewis wanted to keep the Coverdale translation of the Psalms in print. In the autumn of 1962 Eliot wrote Donald Coggan, Chair of their Commission and by then Archbishop of York, asking about "the copyright position of the Coverdale text without the revisions." He reminds Coggan of "a hope I expressed at our last meeting," "the hope that the unrevised Coverdale should be retained in print and made available as a classic of English prose.'" In the end, the work of the Commission, *The Revised Psalter*, did not contain the Coverdale translation. In 1980 the Church of England published *The Alternative Prayer Book* which contains a new translation of the Psalms. The Coverdale translation is available only in copies of the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*, which is still used in some churches.

[329](#) Common Prayer Book.

[330](#) This letter was written the day after Lewis came home from the Acland Nursing Home, and is in the hand of Walter Hooper.

¹ *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 11 (1919), p. 317.

[2](#) *AMR*, p. 254.

[3](#) *SBJ*, ch. 13, p. 160.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ *ibid.*, p. 161.

[6](#) Owen Barfield, *Poetic Diction: A Study in Meaning* (London: Faber & Gwyer, 1928; new edn, 1952), ch. 8, vii, p. 141.

⁷ See the reference to the 'Summa' in Lewis's letter to Barfield of 28 June 1936 (*CL* II, p. 199).

[8](#) *CL* II, pp. 107–8.

[9](#) *ibid.*, p. 199.

[10](#) 'reality'.

[11](#) This was Barbara Barfield (1892–1953), who worked for the Ministry of Defence for a while in the 1920s, and then looked after her parents. None of her plays has been published.

¹² Barfield, First Letter: 'When you say at the beginning of your second letter that truth implies two terms—one, an *object* or *fact* and the other a *mental complex* related to that fact—I have to join issue at once, and indeed I am not sure that we are not up against the great divide straight away. Your drawings seem to express the same idea pictorially. Truth to you (correct me, if I am wrong) is something you *look at* (mentally of course), while reality is something you *are*, but never *see*. And I think I am also right in supposing that you restrict the sphere of 'true-false' to the *phenomenal*, while the *real*, you think, one only 'contacts' via moral (and possibly aesthetic) intuition. You then affirm that you see no reason why these intuitions should have any connection at all with judgments, except as possible objects of them...What I want to say at the moment is that *I* do not usually think of truth in that manner at all. To me it is not a sort of accurate copy or reflection of something, but it is reality itself taking the form of human consciousness. At the stage at which truth appears, or true thinking, there is no distinction possible between the thought and the object thought of.'

[13](#) 'the faculty of the imagination', according to Aristotle. In his *De Anima*, Book III, Chapter 3, section 6, 428a, imagination (i.e. Latin *imaginatio*) is 'The faculty by which an image presents itself to us'.

[14](#) Barfield, First Letter: ‘So far, I have not been tackling the question but giving a sort of personal apologia—trying to express the general mood or quality of my manner of thinking, so that you can bear it in mind, as I have been trying to bear in mind what I got from your first letter. In the words of the Scotchman, “I’m not *arguing*, I’m tellin’ ye!” The point is that the idea of reality being a temporal continuum which we have to arrest and break up for the purposes of speech and logic is to me not merely an interesting fact, which I admit and then take no further note of, like the fact that I cannot jump over the Moon. It is a part of the whole meaning of the words “logic”, “term”, “judgment” etc. to me, and is present in my consciousness every time I use them or hear them used. Now, I *think* this conception is more vivid and real to me than it is to you...If so, it is worth while our realising it—worth while, I mean, for the purpose of locating more exactly the difference between us—which I take to be the principal object of this correspondence.’

[15](#) Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*, II, v, 72.

[16](#) Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, VI, 534–5: ‘Of awful promise, when the light of sense/Goes out.’

[17](#) Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, III, 830 ff.

(1.) Change in order to look at a nearer object–i.e. reduce telescopic power.

[18](#) Barfield, First Letter: ““The soul is stronger than its world” is so overwhelming to me that I find it almost meaningless. It is as true and untrue as the proposition “Jam is home-made.” And this is the basis of my quarrel with the logical mode (i.e. judgment = belief) as a vehicle of anything worthy of the name of *knowledge* or *truth*—that, in order to make a proposition *mean* anything, the terms have to be artificially taken out of time and deposited on an imaginary shore in the land of Nowhen...It makes me feel quite uncomfortable and ashamed.’

[19](#) Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, I, 398–400: ‘But huge and mighty forms, that do not live/Like living men, moved slowly through the mind/By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.’

[20](#) Sir William Temple (1628–99), *Miscellanea* (1690), Part II, Section 4, ‘Upon Poetry’. (1.) Of course you might make these statements *on other grounds* e.g. archaeology, biology, metaphysics.

21 'The question falls'—a legal term which indicates that a dispute or issue has been resolved.

[22](#) Barfield, First Letter: 'A "term" to me is something very vague and unreliable. It presents itself as a more or less arbitrary "cross-section" of a process taking place in time. This is true even of terms which at a given time are more or less fixed and identical in the consciousnesses of large numbers of people. In addition to this...it changes with each person who thinks it.'

[23](#) Genesis 27.

[24](#) Sidney, *A Defence of Poetry* (1579–80), 63: ‘Now for the poet, he nothing affirmeth, and therefore never lieth.’

²⁵ Lewis was referring to Emmanuel Kant's statement in the Preface to his *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics* (1783): 'I openly confess, the suggestion of David Hume was the very thing, which many years ago first interrupted my dogmatic slumber, and gave my investigations in the field of speculative philosophy quite a new direction.' Hume awoke Kant from this 'dogmatic slumber' by showing the importance and the difficulty of justifying knowledge claims. Hume argued in *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751) and *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1758) that we have no rational justification for believing that every effect has a cause, but that we simply believe this out of habit.

[26](#) Barfield, First Letter: 'I quite agree with you in drawing no distinction between "logical" & other judgments. Once we are dealing with thought expounded in judgmental form, once we are asserting *that* something is etc., we are in the sphere of what you intelligibly call the "dical". I shall call it the *o8 si* [from a Greek particle here meaning 'that'], because it makes me feel grand, living, as I do, in Golders Green and not in Oxford. The question before the House is the relation (if any) between the and inspiration-imagination consciousness. A subsidiary question is: (i) should words such as *knowledge* and *truth* be applied *only* to consciousness in the sphere, (ii) should they be applied *also* to inspiration-imagination, or (iii) are they applicable *at all* to *o8 si* consciousness? So far as I am aware at present your position here is (i). Mine is nearer to (iii), but I do not think these subsidiary questions are important in themselves. They are more a question of the use of words, and the deciding factor as to the correct use will be the answer to the main question...As far as I can see...the relation between imagination and *o8 si* psychological, is determined in time, and is analogous to the relation of a fruit or pod to its flower.'

[27](#) Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), I: 'It is impossible to conceive anything at all in the world, or even out of it, which can be taken as good without qualification, except a good will.'

[28](#) Barfield, First Letter: 'This inspiration-imagination is, for me, the source of *meaning*. I am not quite clear what relation you postulate between *truth* and *meaning*, but I suggest that it is the existence of meaning which discriminates truth from truism. I should like to emphasize this, and to know if you agree. Terms, then, for me, are perpetually tending—in order to satisfy the demands of strict logic and what we call the “laws of thought”—to lose their meaning, so that propositions approximate more and more to the form $x=x$ (which I still regard as the only proposition (outside those dealing with pure quantities) that conforms to those laws without compromise). Meaning is, however, renewable at the fountain of inspiration, flowing through imagination to analogy, and thence either (a) into metaphor and so poetry or (b) into hypothesis and so science.'

29 'Hag' was an unpublished poem by Lewis.

[30](#) 'well-dressed lady'.

[31](#) 'seriousness'.

[32](#) Barfield, First Letter: ‘You appear to me to be begging the main question when you speak, in your last letter, of “people who have no other qualification than a knowledge of the terms involved...” Agreed again, that there are an enormous number of terms in which—for practical purposes—we do not need to worry about this “cross-sectional” nature.’

[33](#) See the reference to Mrs Moore's need of an operation in the letter to Arthur Greeves of 26 June 1927 (*CL I*, pp. 700–1).

[34](#) See the letter to Albert Lewis of 28 May 1927 (*CL* I, p. 697).

(1.) This is not (or not *entirely*), ironical.

[35](#) Antaeus, son of Gaia and Poseidon, was a frightful giant who was invincible for as long as he remained in contact with his mother (the Earth).

36 'smallness' or 'meanness'.

37 'spirit', 'temper' or 'soul'.

[X](#) Think it over. You'll see why.

[X](#) Think it over. You'll see why.

[39](#) 'secondary matter'.

[40](#) Barfield, Second Letter: 'I am rather nonplussed by what you say of metaphor...It is in my view precisely the things which are *sui generis* which can, to begin with, *only* be expressed by analogy, the analogy afterwards becoming a *meaning*, via metaphor (if we are lucky). I thought we had a *measure* of agreement on this head, which was the principal subject of my thesis. If there is none, we are going "further back" with a vengeance. Whatever your view of knowledge, you surely do not think that it can be administered—provided the exact formulae are found—to a purely passive recipient? You would agree, I take it, that the most a conversation can do—and above all a philosophical conversation—is for A, by uttering symbols which are the result of his inner activity, to bring it about that B develops a corresponding activity?...What I am asking you to do, and what I am trying to do myself, is to apply the same delicacy of perception and willingness to build for yourself on the basis of what is suggested, as you already do when confronted with anything that is an acknowledged form of "art" or "poetry". But, instead of this, you seize on my metaphor with rough hands and try to fit it into a straight waistcoat. For shame! Suppose you were reading *Prometheus Unbound* aloud to me, and I were to shout out "Stop! He says his soul is an enchanted boat. Right! Boat moves over water, therefore his soul must move over her singing. But that is absurd." Would you have enough spirit to kick me downstairs? I believe, at any rate, that you would succeed in "dissembling your love".' J. P. Kemble, *The Panel* (1871), I, i: 'Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love,/But—why did you kick me down stairs?'

[41](#) Psalm 23:1.

42 'after the fact'.

[43](#) In Matthew Arnold, *The Strayed Reveller, and Other Poems* (1849). Also, Virgil, *Aeneid*, II, 61.

[44](#) This is Lewis's altered version of Psalm 23 (Coverdale):

The Lord is my shepherd: therefore can I lack nothing.

He shall feed me in a green pasture: and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.

He shall convert my soul: and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness, for his Name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff comfort me.

Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me: thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.

But thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

[45](#) Virgil, *Aeneid*, I, 402: 'Brightly she shone, her neck rose-coloured.'

[46](#) Propertius, *Elegies*, Bk. II, Poem 28, 49: 'There are, amongst those below, so many thousands of beautiful women.'

[47](#) Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I, v, 32–3: ‘the fat weed/That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf.’

⁴⁸ Benedetto Croce (1866–1952), Italian philosopher, historian and critic. His aesthetics were profoundly influential in Italy before the Second World War. Lewis had in mind two of Croce's most important works, *Aesthetics as the Science of Expression and General Linguistics* (1902), and *The Essence of Aesthetic* (1921). In his works on aesthetics Croce held that an artist's mental images, communicated by physical artifacts, constitute works of art. See the reference to Croce in the letter to T. S. Eliot of 2 June 1931 (Supplement).

[49](#) See Croce, *Aesthetics as the Science of Expression and General Linguistics*.

50 'perceptible God'.

[51](#) The letter in which Barfield asked for this clarification is lost.

[52](#) A rhetorical trick which argues that ‘Since you, too, do X, then I can do X, even if X is unjustified.’

[53](#) Plato, *The Sophist*, ch. 44, section 259e, 'Without taste and without a liking for Philosophy.'

[54](#) A reference to the Scythian Policeman in Aristophanes's *Thesmophoriazusa*, 1.

[55](#) Barfield, Second Letter: 'Your R_1 , R_2 puzzle, and the tree with two blossoms, and the Eleatic paradox are all pretty sound objections *if* Reality & knowledge were both objects determined in space and time. You cannot proceed from the One to the Many, as long as you think in terms of things extended in space. The point about the Eleatic "elenchus" is *just to arouse realisation of this fact* in someone who has not yet realised it, but you are not that someone and nor am I. What it proves is that language–prose language–logical language–is always either meaningless or inaccurate. But we know this, and by agreeing to argue at all, we have shown implicitly tht we are both willing to provide that willing suspension of mathematical accuracy which constitutes philosophic faith...I appear to have got somewhat heated and, perhaps, somewhat confused. It seems to be absolutely impossible to conduct this discussion without flinging *petitios* at each other's heads. Perhaps you will be more successful in locating the difference. Are we coming back again to the nature of language? You do agree that it is all figurative and metaphorical and based semantically on *sensibilia*, do you not?...Tell me where we are.' (1.) That was why I suggest 'Philip drunk & Philip sober' in my last.

[56](#) 'it is asked'.

[57](#) Barfield, Second Letter: 'I did not intend for you to take the "pod" analogy as an exact correspondence stage by stage in any sense, nor did I intend any allusion to values. As far as I can isolate the gist of the comparison, it was meant to emphasize the relation between a "becoming", and thus *mobile* and *alive* state of an entity and its "become", *still*, *dead* state. When a flower reaches the pod stage, it has completed its cycle of changes, its history, and is at rest in death. Further changes (decay etc.) do of course occur, but they are occasioned by other laws than those of the flower's own unfolding form.'

58 ‘virtually’ or ‘potentially’.

59 'in actuality'.

[60](#) 'Always the same in being unique in itself'. An allusion to Plato, *Symposium*, 211b, and *Phaedo*, 78d.

[61](#) Barfield may have been referring to this passage in his Second Letter: ‘Supposing you are looking through a piece of coloured glass without knowing it. Now suppose someone tells you that this is so, and you set to work to rub off the colouring matter. You will then see more perfectly the reality which you have always been seeing to some extent i.e. *as coloured*. The glass and its colouring matter being part of reality...you may say, if you will, that you are now seeing a *different* reality; but since you never really saw the colouring matter, but only *through* it, while now, though you can no longer see through it, you can actually see the powder lying about on the ground, your objection is perhaps on the peevish side. It amounts, in fact, to saying that you cannot both look and not look through coloured glass at the same time.’

62 'what is apparent to man'.

63 'thing in itself'.

[64](#) Barfield planned to go with his wife and baby to Greece for about six months. In the event, they did not go, but in 1929 Lewis drew a picture of what he imagined the Barfield family in Greece would look like. See the drawing at the end of the Great War letters.

[65](#) At the conclusion of his Second Letter Barfield said: 'P.S. I need your prayers just now. I have embarked on a really long and complicated novel.' This was the unpublished 'English People'. Lewis wrote to Arthur Greeves on 17 October 1929: 'Barfield's novel is finished and already refused by one publisher' (*CL I*, p. 838). See Lewis's criticism of it in the letter to Owen Barfield of 1929 (Supplement, p. 1510).

[66](#) In Plato's *Theaetetus* Euclides the Megarian repeats to his friend Terpsion a conversation between Socrates, the mathematician Theodorus, and the youth Theaetetus. Their subject is the nature of knowledge. Socrates asks Theaetetus if learning about a field of study is the same as becoming wiser about that field of study. Theaetetus agrees with this proposition, and Socrates then asks if wisdom is the same as knowledge. Theaetetus agrees that it is, and says that geometry, astronomy, mathematics, and other disciplines are branches of knowledge, and that they constitute knowledge. Socrates replies that this answer does not define the meaning of the term 'knowledge'. Theaetetus answers that knowledge is the same as perception. Socrates replies that different people may have different perceptions of the same object, and that their perceptions of an object may be based on the appearance of that object. The appearance of an object may change without any change in the object itself. The appearance of an object may be either real or illusory, and the way in which an object may be perceived may change according to the subjective condition of the perceiver.

Plato, *Theaetetus & Sophist*, with English translation by Harold North Fowler (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, Loeb Classical Library, 1921; 2002), 155e–156a: 'The uninitiated are those who think nothing is except what they can grasp firmly with their hands, and who deny the existence of actions and generation and all that is invisible...For them the beginning, upon which all the things we were just now speaking of depend, is the assumption that everything is really motion and that there is nothing besides this, but that there are two kinds of motion, each infinite in the number of its manifestations, and of these kinds one has an active, the other a passive force. From the union and friction of these two are born offspring, infinite in number, but always twins, the object of sense and the sense which is always born and brought forth together with the object of sense. Now we give the senses names like these: sight and hearing and smell, and the sense of cold and of heat, and pleasures and pains and desires and fears and so forth. Those that have names are very numerous, and those that are unnamed are innumerable. Now the class of objects of sense is akin to each of these; all sorts of colours are akin to all sorts of acts of vision, and in the same way sounds to acts of hearing, and the other objects of sense spring forth akin to the other sense.'

(1.) In fact he distinctly says that what is an agent in one context may be a patient in another— (157a.): ‘And that which unites with one thing is active and appears again as passive when it comes in contact with something else.’

67 'for fun'.

68 'the more clever'.

69 '(the) unrefined'.

70 'sensations'.

[71](#) 'motion'.

72 'objects of sensation or perception'.

73 'perception by the senses'.

[74](#) Plato, *Theaetetus*, 157a: 'It is not possible to know firmly.'!

75 'knowledge'.

[76](#) Lewis was at Little Lea visiting his father from 21 December 1927 until 11 January 1928.

[77](#) Plato, *The Republic*, 509b.

[78](#) Great Western Railway.

[79](#) Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, I, vii, 21.

80 'self'.

[81](#) Barfield dedicated *Poetic Diction* to 'Clive Hamilton'.

82 'in a passive state'.

83 'matters'.

84 'matter'.

⁸⁵ Rudolf Steiner, *The Way of Initiation or How to Attain Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, trans. Max Gysi, Foreword by Annie Besant (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1908), ch. 5, pp. 143–4: ‘Place before you the small seed of a plant. It is then necessary...to create with intensity the right kind of thoughts, and through these thoughts to develop certain feelings. In the first place, let the student clearly grasp what is really presented to his vision. Let him describe to himself the shape, colour, and all other qualities of the grain of seed. Then let his mind dwell upon the following train of thought: “This grain of seed, if planted in the soil, will grow into a plant of complex structure.” Let him clearly picture this plant to himself. Let him build it up in his imagination. And then let him reflect that the object now existing only in his imagination will presently be brought into actual physical existence by the forces of the earth and of light. If the thing contemplated by him were an artificially-made object, though such a close imitation of nature that no external difference could be detected by human eyesight, no forces inherent in the earth or light could avail to produce from it a plant. He who thoroughly grasps this thought and inwardly assimilates it will also be able to form the following idea with the right feeling. He will say to himself: “That which is ultimately to grow out of this seed is already as a force now secretly enfolded within it. The artificial duplicate of the seed contains no such force. And yet both appear to be alike to my eyes. The real seed, therefore, contains something invisible which is not present in the imitation.”’ This work later appeared in an expanded form as *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment*, trans. George Metaxa (London: Anthroposophic Press, 1947).

[86](#) This was an early use of one of Lewis's important ideas—'Bulverism'. His essay, 'Bulverism or The Foundation of Twentieth-Century Thought', was first published under the title 'Notes on the Way' in *Time and Tide*, 22 (29 March 1941), p. 261, and was republished in expanded form in *The Socratic Digest*, no. 2 (June 1944), pp. 16–20. It is reprinted in *EC*. In it he said: 'You must show *that* a man is wrong before you start explaining *why* he is wrong. The modern method is to assume without discussion *that* he is wrong and then distract his attention from this (the only real issue) by busily explaining how he became so silly...I have found this vice so common that I have had to invent a name for it. I call it "Bulverism"' (*EC*, pp. 588–9).

[87](#) In Gnostic creation stories, Ioldabaoth or Yaldabaoth is the demiurge, or inferior creator of the material world.

88 Immanuel Kant's 'Categories of Understanding' are found in *The Critique of Pure Reason*.

[89](#) In Plato, *The Republic*, 359b–360b, Glaucon defends the opinion that people don't practise justice for itself, but only for fear of what would befall them if they did not. By way of illustration he tells the story of Gyges the Lydian, who has a ring that will render him invisible.

[90](#) Sinon is the Greek spy through whose craft the Wooden Horse was taken into Troy. The account of how he deceived the Trojans is found in Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book II.

[91](#) Shakespeare, *Othello*, III, iii, 166.

92 North and South Hinksey are villages south-west of Oxford.

[93](#) 'Foster' has not survived.

⁹⁴ Lewis was referring to the period 1922–3. ‘In those days,’ he said in the Preface to the 1950 edition of *Dymer*, ‘the new psychology was just beginning to make itself felt in the circles I most frequented at Oxford. This joined forces with the fact that we felt ourselves...to be escaping from the illusions of adolescence, and as a result we were much exercised about the problem of fantasy or wishful thinking. The “Christina Dream”, as we called it...was the hidden enemy whom we were all determined to unmask and defeat. My hero, therefore, had to be a man who had succumbed to its allurements and finally got the better of them.’ He said in his diary of 24 May 1922: ‘Meeting Barfield...we walked to Wadham gardens and sat under the trees. We began with Christina dreams: I condemned them—the love dream made a man incapable to real love, the hero dream made him a coward. He took the opposite view and a stubborn argument followed’ (*AMR*, p. 39).

[95](#) 'The Douglas Scheme' is named after Clifford Douglas (1879–1952), originator of the theory of Social Credit. In the note attached to his diary for 1923 Lewis said: 'Barfield has, if anything, improved by marriage. I enjoyed my little stay greatly. We talked a great deal, about Steiner, the Douglas Scheme, and the changes we had gone through even in the short time we had known each other' (*AMR*, p. 277).

96 This pamphlet cannot be traced.

[97](#) Lewis recorded in his diary of 7 July 1923: ‘Harwood...told me of his new philosopher, Rudolf Steiner, who has “made the burden roll from his back”. Steiner seems to be a sort of panpsychist, with a vein of posing superstition, and I was very much disappointed to hear that both Harwood and Barfield were impressed by him’ (*AMR*, p. 254). Cecil Harwood and Barfield became Anthroposophists shortly afterwards.

[98](#) In some lectures Steiner gave in 1919 and published as *The Influences of Lucifer and Ahriman: Man's Responsibility for the Earth* (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1954), Steiner divides the devil into two beings, Lucifer and Ahriman, and shows us how neither is bad per se, each provides gifts to human beings that further our evolution, and that it is we who must learn to balance these gifts in our individual lives.

[99](#) See Virgil, *Aeneid*, II, 276–7: ‘Such was the art of perjured Sinon, so insidious, we trusted what he told.’

[100](#) 'we have been betrayed'.

101 *Hoi polloi*: 'the masses'.

¹ *Socratic Digest*, no. 1 (1942–3), p. 6.

2 *ibid.*

³ The autobiographical portions of this biography are taken from the account of Bide's life in *CG*, pp. 631–5.

⁴ Penelope or 'Polly' Bide, who became a television producer, died on 11 July 2003.

5 Milton, *Samson Agonistes*, 834: 'All wickedness is weakness'.

[6](#) Derek Brewer, 'The Tutor: A Portrait', *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, p. 119.

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 120.

[8](#) *ibid.*, p. 123.

⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 132–3.

[10](#) 'Dante's Statius', *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (1966), p. 101.

[11](#) Andrew Cuneo, 'Selected Literary Letters of C. S. Lewis' (2001) (Bodleian Library, MS. D.Phil. c. 16354).

[12](#) *ibid.*, p. 89.

[13](#) *ibid.*, p. 88n.

[14](#) 'A Note on Jane Austen', *SLE*, p. 186.

[15](#) *Aristophanes, Birds*, ed. Nan Dunbar (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

[16](#) Nigel Wilson, 'Nan Dunbar', *The Independent* (21 April 2005), p. 42.

[17](#) *ibid.*

[18](#) Austin Farrer, *Said or Sung: An Arrangement of Homily and Verse* (London: Faith Press, 1960), p. 57.

[19](#) *Lighton C.S. Lewis*, ed. Jocelyn Gibb (London: Bles, 1965), 'The Christian Apologist', p. 25.

[20](#) *ibid.*, p. 26.

[21](#) Austin Farrer, *A Faith of Our Own* (Cleveland, Ohio: World Publishing Co., 1960), Preface, pp. 8–10.

[22](#) Frances Buss (1827–94), school reformer. In 1850 she established the North London Collegiate School for Girls where she was able to offer a good education for girls whose families could not afford the fees of a private school.

[23](#) Back cover of Katharine Farrer, *The Missing Link* (London: Collins, 1952; Penguin Books, 1955).

[24](#) See Lewis's letters of 2 April and 9 July 1955.

[25](#) See Tolkien's letters to Katharine Farrer of 30 November 1947, 15 June 1948 and 7 August 1954 in *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, ed. Humphrey Carpenter (1981), pp. 124–5, 130, 183–4.

[26](#) Alastair Fowler, 'C. S. Lewis: Supervisor', *The Yale Review*, 91, no. 4 (October 2003), p. 65.

[27](#) *ibid.*, p. 66.

[28](#) *ibid.*, p. 71.

[29](#) *ibid.*,

[30](#) *ibid.*, p. 79.

[31](#) Bodleian Library, MS. D.Phil. d. 1880.

[32](#) See Godfrey Harrison, *Alexander Gibb: The Story of an Engineer* (London: Bles, 1950).

[33](#) Dorsett, *And God Came In*, ch. 4, p. 95. Letter to Lyle Dorsett of 16 September 1981.

[34](#) *ibid.*, p. 104.

[35](#) *ibid.*

[36](#) Douglas Gresham, *Lenten Lands*, ch. 1, p. 5.

[37](#) *These Found the Way: Thirteen Converts to Protestant Christianity*, ed. David Wesley Soper (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1951), 'From Communist to Christian', p. 82.

[38](#) Gresham, *Lenten Lands*, ch. 1, p.11.

[39](#) *ibid.*, ch. 7, p. 55. Italics added.

40 *ibid.*

[41](#) *ibid.*, ch. 8, pp. 69

[42](#) *ibid.*, ch. 9, pp. 79–80.

[43](#) *ibid.*, ch. 16, pp. 140–1.

[44](#) See Barbara Wall in the Biographical Appendix to *CL II*, pp. 1077–8.

[45](#) See **Marjorie Milne** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1053–4.

[46](#) Christian Hardie, 'Three Letters from C. S. Lewis', *The Chesterton Review*, XVII, nos. 3 and 4 (August/November 1991), pp. 393–4.

[47](#) 'A Colleague's Note on C. S. Lewis', *Inklings-Jahrbuch für Literatur und Ästhetik*, Band 3 (1985), p. 177.

[48](#) *ibid.*, p. 180.

[49](#) *Oxford University Gazette*, CII, no. 3511 (8 June 1972), p. 1079.

[50](#) *The Case for Christianity* (New York: Macmillan, 1943).

[51](#) Clyde S. Kilby, *The Christian World of C. S. Lewis* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), Preface, p. 5.

[52](#) An account of Kilby's 'Visit with C. S. Lewis' is found in the Wheaton College literary magazine, *Kodon*, 8 (December 1953), pp. 11, 28, 30.

[53](#) *The Great Divorce* (London, Bles, 1946; Fount, 1997), ch. 12, p. 90.

[54](#) 'Writing at Wheaton', *Wheaton College Alumni Magazine*, XXVIII, nos. 7, 8 (July–August 1961), p. 6.

[55](#) *The Christian World of C. S. Lewis*, Preface, p. 6.

[56](#) 'Richard William Ladborough (1908–1972)', *Magdalene College Magazine and Record*, new series, no. 16 (1971–2), p. 6.

[57](#) See the biography of Alexander Dunlop Lindsay in *CL* I, p. 655n.

58 The earthy and jolly character in Shakespeare's *Twelfth-Night*.

[59](#) 'Professor John Lawlor' (obituary), *The Times* (7 July 1999), p. 23.

[60](#) Lawlor, *C. S. Lewis: Memories and Reflections*, Preface, p. xiv.

[61](#) H. G. Wells, *The Outline of History* (1920).

[62](#) Joy Gresham, 'The Longest Way Round' in *These Found the Way*, pp. 15–16.

[63](#) See **David Lindsay Gresham** in the Biographical Appendix.

[64](#) See **Douglas Howard Gresham** in the Biographical Appendix.

[65](#) William Ernest Henley, 'Invictus' (1875), 15–16: 'I am the master of my fate;/I am the captain of my soul.'

[66](#) Gresham, 'The Longest Way Round', p. 23.

[67](#) *ibid.*, p. 24.

[68](#) Dorsett, *And God Came In*, ch. 3, pp. 90–1.

[69](#) Gresham, *Lenten Lands*, ch. 2, p. 17.

[70](#) *Lighton C.S. Lewis, 'The Approach to English', p. 63.*

[71](#) Fraçoise d'Aubigné Maintenon, Marquise de (1635–1719) was the wife of the French poet Paul Scarron. After his death she was charged with the education of the children of King Louis XIV. She obtained a great ascendancy of the King, and they were married in 1684. Warnie wrote extensively about her in *Louis XIV: An Informal Portrait* (1959).

[72](#) *Letters of C. S. Lewis*, pp. 44–5.

[73](#) See the account of the trip to Greece in Green and Hooper, *C. S. Lewis: A Biography*, ch. 13.

⁷⁴ The thesis was published a few years later under her married name, Kathryn Lindskoog, as *The Lion of Judah in Never-Never Land: The Theology of C. S. Lewis Expressed in His Fantasies for Children* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973). An expanded edition of the book was published as *Journey Into Narnia* (Pasadena: Hope Publishing House, 1998).

[75](#) J. B. Priestley, *Margin Released: A Writer's Reminiscences and Reflections* (1962), p. 188.

[76](#) Kathleen Raine, *Farewell Happy Fields: Memories of Childhood* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1973), ch. 1, p. 35.

[77](#) 'Kathleen Raine', *The Daily Telegraph*, (8 July 2003), p. 21.

[78](#) Ibid.

[79](#) Kathleen Raine, *The Lion's Mouth: Concluding Chapters of Autobiography* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1977), p. 73.

[80](#) *ibid.*, p. 99.

[81](#) 'Kathleen Raine', p. 21.

[82](#) St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*.

[83](#) *CL* II, p. 176.

[84](#) See the biography of Fr Victor White OP under the name 'Gordon Henry White' in the *Oxford DNB*.

[85](#) 'George Sayer' (obituary), *The Daily Telegraph* (7 November 2005), p. 21.

[86](#) *Remembering C. S. Lewis*, pp. 331–41.

[87](#) See **Lady Dunbar of Hempriggs** (Maureen Moore Blake) in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* I, pp. 986–8.

[88](#) See **Leonard James Blake** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL* II, pp. 1023–4.

[89](#) *BF*, p. 208.

[90](#) *Tolkien: A Celebration: Collected Writings on a Literary Legacy*, ed. Joseph Pearce (London: Fount, 1999), pp. 1–16.

[91](#) *The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien*, p. 164.

[92](#) These recordings were originally issued on a gramophone record, *J. R. R. Tolkien Reads and Sings his The Hobbit & The Lord of the Rings* (Caedmon Records, 1975) and are now available in *The J. R. R. Tolkien Audio Collection* of four CDs, read by J. R. R. Tolkien and Christopher Tolkien (London: Caedmon/HarperCollins, 2001).

[93](#) Sayer, *Jack*, p. 352.

[94](#) *ibid.*, pp. 347–8.

[95](#) *ibid.*, p. 363.

[96](#) 'The De-Christianization of a Christian Love Story', *VII: An Anglo-American Literary Review*, 11 (1994), p. 30.

[97](#) 'A Sacred Poem', *Theology*, XXXVIII (April 1939), pp. 268–76.

[98](#) The Preface to *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*.

[99](#) Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/7, fols. 10–11.

[100](#) Anne Scott, 'An Effortless Conversion', *Sceptre Bulletin*, March–April 1995, p. 23.

[101](#) The following obituary of Herbert Thomas Walker appeared in the *Richmond News-Leader* of 5 June 1930: 'Herbert Thomas Walker, well-known businessman, died at his home, 3009 Park Avenue, after a long illness. Funeral arrangements have not yet been announced. Mr. Walker, who was a member of a prominent Georgia family, moved to Virginia thirty-two years ago and became prominently connected with the business world of Richmond as the senior member of the firm of Herbert T. Walker and Son, advertising specialists. He was a son of the late Thomas Willis Walker and Mrs. Julia Adams Walker of Athens, GA. His father was a leading member of the Georgia bar of the period antedating the war between the states and died from the effects of wounds received in the battle of New Hope church. The death of Mr. Walker follows closely that of his wife, which occurred last April 8.'

[102](#) William Henry Boyer, the son of Frank D. and Eleanor N. Boyer, was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, but up until the time of his marriage resided in Cumberland, Pennsylvania.

[103](http://www.combatwife.net/memshanower.htm) See www.combatwife.net/memshanower.htm

[104](#) Jacob Creath Shelburne was the son of Thomas C. Shelburne and Hattie L. (Fennell) Shelburne.

[105](#) *Richmond Times Dispatch* (17 June 1942): 'Richmonder is Honoured: Mrs. Shelburne Wins Barrow Poetry Prize. The Barrow prize of the Georgia Poetry Society has been awarded to a Richmond poet, Mary Willis Shelburne, it was learned here today. The \$50 cash award is considered one of the outstanding honours for American poets. Mrs. Shelburne, who is the wife of J. Creath Shelburne, is a member of the executive board of the Poetry Society of Virginia and a member of the Poetry Society of America.'

[106](#) *Saturday Evening Post*, 219, no. 40 (5 April 1947), p. 146.

[107](#) *Encounter with Light*, a brief account of Vanauken's conversion, was originally published anonymously by the Church of the Covenant, Lynchburg, Virginia, in 1961. A second impression was published under the name Sheldon Vanauken by Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, [1976].

[108](#) *Encounter with Light*, p.1.

[109](#) Sheldon Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1977), ch. 2, p. 16.

[110](#) Jonathan Poletti, 'Path Trod by Sheldon Vanauken', *New Oxford Review*, LXIV, no. 1 (January–February 1997), p. 25.

[111](#) Vanauken is confusing about dates. In the biography he contributed to *Contemporary Authors, New Revision Series*, vol. 35 (1992), p. 388, he gave 1936 as the date of his marriage. However, in *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 2, p. 24 he said he was in his 'third year of college' when he and Davy met, which would mean they married in 1937.

[112](#) Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 2, pp. 37–8.

[113](#) Poletti, 'Path Trod by Sheldon Vanauken', p. 26.

[114](#) Bodleian Library, MS. B.Litt. d. 632.

[115](#) Vanauken later revised and published his thesis as *The Glittering Illusion: English Sympathy for the Southern Confederacy* (Washington, DC: Regnery Gateway, 1985).

[116](#) *Encounter with Light*, p.6.

[117](#) Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 4, p. 97.

[118](#) *ibid.*, p. 99.

[119](#) Years later Wabash made another offer. As Vanauken explained in *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 5, p. 156: 'I did not ever go there because of my gratitude to Lynchburg College.'

[120](#) Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 7, p. 165.

[121](#) Vanauken, *A Severe Mercy*, ch. 9, p. 210.

[122](#) Vanauken described their last meeting in 'Putting the Neighbour First: The Idealistic Years', *Under the Mercy* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1985), ch. 3, pp. 60–1.

[123](#) Sheldon Vanauken, *Under the Mercy* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1985), chs. 3 and 4.

[124](#) Vanauken, 'Putting God First: The Obedience', *Under the Mercy*, ch. 6, p. 122.

[125](#) Sheldon Vanauken, *Gateway to Heaven* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980).

[126](#) Vanauken, 'Putting God First: the Vocation', *Under the Mercy*, ch. 5, p. 102.

[127](#) *ibid.*

[128](#) Vanauken, 'Putting God First: The Obedience', *Under the Mercy*, ch. 6, p. 112.

[129](#) *ibid.*, p. 125.

[130](#) *ibid.*, ch. 9, pp. 215–42.

[131](#) Sheldon Vanauken, *The Little Lost Marion and Other Mercies* (Steubenville, Ohio: Franciscan University Press, 1996).

[132](#) Hugh Warner is the subject of Nancy Le Plastrier Warner, *Hugh Compton Warner: The Story of a Vocation* (London: SPCK, 1958). There are short biographies of all the family in Francis Warner's twin autobiographical poems, *By the Cam and the Isis 1954–2000* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 2005). For the biography of Hugh Warner see Oxford Notes, 22.

[133](#) See the biography of Nancy Warner attached to the letter of 26 October 1963.

[134](#) *By the Cam and the Isis*, Cambridge Notes, Dedication.

[135](#) *ibid.*, Cambridge Notes, Dedication.

[136](#) *ibid.*, Oxford Notes, Dedication.

[137](#) *ibid.*, Oxford Notes, Dedication.

[138](#) *ibid.*, Notes, Dedication.

[139](#) *Hugh Compton Warner*, p.27.

[140](#) *By the Cam and the Isis*, Cambridge Notes, 378.

[141](#) *Hugh Compton Warner*, p. 125.

[142](#) *ibid.*, Prologue, p. 9.

[143](#) See the biography of Thomas Rice Henn in *CL* II, p. 112n.

[144](#) *The Dream of Gerontius* (1865), a poem by John Henry Newman, was set to music by Edward Elgar, whose oratorio for mezzo-soprano, tenor, bass, full choir and orchestra was first performed in 1900.

[145](#) *By the Cam and the Isis*, Cambridge Notes 204.

[146](#) *ibid.*, Cambridge Notes 211.

[147](#) 'let the more difficult reading be preferred'.

[148](#) CG, pp. 92–3.

[149](#) Though the bulky thesis was completed, it has never been published in full. See Francis R. Le Plastrier Warner, 'Das Gedankengebäude des Agrippa von Nettesheim,' *Antaios*, V, no. 2, July 1963 (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag), pp. 122–42.

[150](#) See the letter to Nancy Warner of 26 October 1963.

[151](#) See the letter to Francis Warner of 27 October 1961.

[152](#) See **Nevill Coghill** in the Biographical Appendix to *CL I*, pp. 984–6.

[153](#) See the biography of Lord David Cecil in *CL* II, p. 182n.

[154](#) See the biography attached to the letter to Edmund Blunden of 1933 in the Supplement.

[155](#) See the biography of F. R. Leavis attached to the letter to Christopher Derrick of 2 August 1956.

[156](#) John Beer, 'Basil Willey: 1897–1978', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, LXVI (London: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 484.

[157](#) Basil Willey, *Cambridge and Other Memories, 1920–1953* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1968), p. 29.

[158](#) *ibid.*

[159](#) Basil Willey, *Christianity, Past and Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), pp. 149–50.

[160](#) Acts 16:9: ‘And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.’

[161](#) Bodleian Library, MS. Eng. lett. c. 220/4, fol. 30. Aufidius is the general of the Volscians, who is first the enemy and then the ally of Coriolanus in Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* (1623). Aufidius greets Coriolanus, 'Thou Mars! I tell thee, We have a power on foot' (IV, v, 124–5).

[162](#) Basil Willey, *The English Moralists* (London; Chatto & Windus, 1964), p. 11. See [n. 141, letter of 22 Oct 1963] for a list of the 'Moralists' on whom Willey lectured over the years.

[163](#) Henry Norman Spalding (1877–1953), philanthropist. In his early life Spalding stumbled on a book about the history of India which kindled in him an interest in the Far East. He settled in Oxford and devoted himself to the attempt to cultivate better relations between the West and the East by fostering scholarly approaches to the history, art, religion and philosophy of Oriental countries. He was so impressed by Zernov's work that in 1965 he founded the Spalding Lectureship in Eastern Orthodox Culture, with Zernov as the first holder.