

Mary meets Belle in London, Aug. 21, 1910

1910. __ [6-7]
a note
on graph paper

Iffley, <Sunday> Aug. 21, 1910

Dearest Bernhard,

I was really quite charmed by Miss Greene,¹⁶ and wish this might be the beginning of a permanent relation, such as for middle-aged, bourgeois, romantic souls sigh for.¹⁷ Men are supposed to like Episodes, but I do not think thee is that kind, and I hope thee will make this into something lasting and agreeable. I shall certainly help thee, both for thee and *per conto mio*, for I love her youth, her élan, her intelligence. I find her remarkably attractive too. Human relations do count such a lot! Let us have this one *perfect*.

One thing, dear, I want to say in thy ear. Don't boast to her, either of thy moral and intellectual qualities.¹⁸ She will enjoy them more finding them out. I have played a serpent's [1.2] (i.e. a wife's) part in encouraging thee to talk too much about thy virtues and excellencies. It seemed balanced by thy attacks of humility, but I think it is a mistake with other people, and I saw she had noticed it. For example, if the conversation is unusually good chez nous (which I am by no means so sure of!) let her discover it when she comes. *Und so weiter*, especially about thy own differences from a superiorities to the rest of mankind. Excuse this marital word, but I want thee to appear at thy best,¹⁹ and I know how young people laugh at our middle-aged, self-complacency. I say two words to myself to one to thee.

I have been this morning going over my accounts with the very appalling result which thee will [1.3] observe on the enclosed sheet. The items that are not thine and mine, which perhaps I should not have undertaken, are Karin's Ball £15.10/ and the doing up of the Basement £5.5/.

Certainly the ensemble is terrific and fills me with the worst presentiments for I had £200 and something to start with, received another £300 from thee, and now need another £200 to see me safe to Italy. Of course the furnishing of the Villino and our new range and many things for our kitchen, which are one only time of spending, come in here, and our many music rolls. But the moment the pressure of economy is loosened things to

¹⁶ Mary had gone to lunch with Belle and Bernhard on Saturday at 1.30, as he had suggested in the letter of Thursday, Aug. 18: 'And will you lunch here Saturday at 1.30?'

¹⁷ quoted Samuels, p. 110,20-22; cited p. 620.

¹⁸ quoted Samuels, p. 110,23-26; cited p. 620.

¹⁹ quoted Samuels, p. 110,26-27; cited p. 620.



in a frightening way. I shall try to be as careful as I can of the expenses this year, and Aristeia will surely help me.

At any rate, enjoy thy next two months. That will be a real “asset”, [1.4] and we can always call a halt and settle up affairs if we seriously feel they have gone too far.

It was like dropping one’s sand-fly bitten body into a cool lake, and feeling the healing waters close over one’s head, to drive into this peaceful gate last night, and see the sunlight on the smooth grass. I shall enjoy this fortnight (barring pangs of hunger!), and I believe it will make everything easy this autumn. I am simply drinking in peace and repose. I wish I could send it to thee, packed up in this letter, not disturbing the other very delightful conditions!

Thine in affectionate confidence

+ + +

B.G. told me she was spending Morgan’s money now, but would be on her own in Italy, so thee must treat her to that.

