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Oct 24
1967Michigan Place
Crawfordsville

Dear Billy :-

I am very glad to get your letter .

" Be blunt " very well . As for things personal I said all I had to say , I think , and more than I could say over again in a certain letter which came back to me , read or unread , well or ill understood ? I know not .

For things impersonal then : and my self impersonal

:

I am interested in art and extacy ← , extacy which I would define as the sensation of the soul in ascent , art as the expression and sole means of transmuting , of passing on that extacy to others .

Religion I have defined as " Another of those numerous failures resulting from an attempt to popularize art . " by which I mean that it is only now and then that religion rises to the dignity of art . or from another angle . That art includes only so much of religion as is factive , potent , exalting .

Swedenborg has called a certain thing " the angelic language " by the way I will send you certain things out of Swedenborg that will save me much preface . It will take a week or two for me to get at them . This " angelic language " I choose to interpret into " artistic utterance "

Wm. Blake . has given us this dictum .

" Noah's rainbow , the triple bow of music , poetry , painting , by which we ascend " To meet God in the air "

. Coleridge has given us " KALON quasi KALOUN "

Kalon the greek for " The Beautiful " as it were Kaloun " a calling " to the soul .

Poetry is my " metier " the only one of the arts in which I have progressed beyond the kindergarten stages . Anything I do outside , word weaving , paint , harmony , is a make-shift , a contrivance to preserve " This body-rag-thing tattered on my soul "

I have never bothered you with my verse , you have not made it easy for me to do so until now .

Therefor , asking you to pardon what is yet imperfect , looking rather to what I have striven to express than to the technicalities and minutae of that expression , I give you that part of me which is most real , ~~furthest--distilled-----~~ most removed from the transient personality , (Persona , a mask) , most nearly related to the things that more permanent than this smoke waith the earth . .

For the form . (and from now . except when I note it the quotations are from my own stuff .)

Unless things infinite were known to us by sign
We perish touching them , and this my song
Were shattered as that dust ye call the stars .

k.

Some I will copy , some I will send you to keep and some that I have not time to copy I will mark to be returned . Of course much of it is in scraps and the best of it is getting ready for the time when Mr. Mosher will have intellegence enough to understand how valcoable , etc.

Some scraps of theory .

" The end of all art is this : that ye might have life and have it more abundantly " .

Hmn. I guess that treatise is too long to bother with now .

Voici . of things serious and less serious , For art (Oh also you must get " The Ten O'Clock lecture " in Mr. Whistler's "Gentle Art of Makeing enemies " . And all of Wm. Butler Yeats that you can lay hold of .) for art will not be gloomy or disgustingly seri serious , glum , in short , as folk make most things that they think are holy . .

Blake again " The only evils are cruelties and repressions " .

I throw in all sorts of stuff here , as much as I can lay hands on at this moment .

Some is literature , some mere autoobiography , some nothing at all I guess . . Some new , some older . I dont expect you to wade thru all of it at one sitting .

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This packet will be a scandal to the post if it gets any
larger . Will send more later if you want me to .

Perhaps I had better send one more lot anyhow
as i find on looking over these that there is hardly
the sort of selection here which will make intelligible certain
large remarks at the beginning of the note .
However in the better part of it you may find some entertainment .
Once can hardly get a system of philosophy into one letter
ergo you will have , if you want it , to take the hodge
podge as it comes .