



ANCHOR LINE

T. S. S. CALIFORNIA

March. 8. 1924

My dearest Ruth,

WE shall be at Port Said to-morrow & it's time I were writing to you again. It is being a voyage particularly without incident, as we shall land only once, for a short time, before reaching Bombay. But one unforgettable thing has happened - the approach to Gibraltar. I was fortunate enough to wake before sunrise & went on deck. We were steaming due east & straight ahead was the orange glow spreading over the sky. Toward the centre of it the bright lines of land on either side converged & left a gap - quite a small gap between little lumps of land, for the straits were 20 miles

away or more. We were aiming straight
for this little hole in the sky line where
the light was brightest & I had the
most irresistible feeling of a romantic
world; ~~as~~ we had only to pop through
the hole like Alice through the garden
door to reach a new ^{scene} ~~world~~ & a whole
kingdom of adventures.

The other important thing that has happened
to me is that I ~~have~~ in some way strained
left ^{my} hip in the gymnasium about 5 days
ago. It gave me considerable pain for
two days like sciatica, a pain in some
important nerve all down the leg - the
sciatic nerve I understand is in the back
of the leg & this one was in the side. The
leg is much better, though not yet well.
I ran ten times round the deck this

morning; but that doesn't prove as much
as you might think, because it is rather
the lifting movements that are weak -
However I have a fortnight, nearly, to
Darjeeling & I've little doubt the hip
will heal right by then.

I have finished reading Mauricius Ariel
with much interest; I knew the early
life in Hoff & the last scenes in Trelawney's
Reflections, which I think you have read, a
charming book, but I have never before
read a connected account of the whole
life. Shelley certainly had an extraordinary
gift of love, & love of a very pure &
sublimated kind. Mauricius makes out that
he had lost his love for Mary Shelley &
was in love with Anne Williams at the
end. But he shows at the same time that
his relations with Mary remained of a
very tender sort & he was very thoughtful
on her behalf, and as they lived in the

same house with the Williams, it is a little difficult to make out that he preferred Anne to Mary. It is an interesting story because in so far as Shelley's relations with Mary were impaired it was simply by the friction of everyday life; he was the most unselfish of men but the glamour of Mary wore off a bit when he saw her as a housewife. She certainly had little enough of his society when he was making poems; but I'm inclined to think that she had Shelley all the time. It might interest you some time to read the book which is translated into English (my copy is in French); or you might get Dowden's life from the London library.

I have many thoughts of you dearest me, & I think reading Shelley's life has made me think about you very particularly. I fear I don't make you very happy. Life has too often been a burden to you lately



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and it is horrid when we don't get more time to talk together. Of course we have both had too much to do & I have hated thinking that it must fall upon you to do the car for instance, which has often been an unpleasant grind, when you might otherwise have been painting china, or one thing or another more profitable to your soul. Somehow or another we must ~~be~~ contrive to manage differently; to have some first charge upon available time for our life together.

What with a car & a stove and our new house altogether we seem to have got terribly stuck with material considerations & how often we talk of nothing

but what has to be done to keep the
ball rolling as though it were so much
business to be transacted! I think we
might get that better perhaps by resting
together & to value the perfection of
everyday home life & trying to feel that
little arrangements belong to our ideals.
There is a satisfaction if not enjoyment
to be got from just arranging things well,
& certainly in doing things themselves un-
pleasant or indifferent provided the end
in view is sufficiently present to the mind.

I don't mind in the least seeing you as
a housewife; I like it & I like the way
you carry it through & I like the pleasant
relationships which make about you.

But I don't want you materialised
housewifery - you have to control the
business & not allow it to control you -
as indeed you do; but keep a watch on
yourself.

I much hope you will somehow find
time for painting china this summer
dear one; it is so good for you & makes
you so nice. Don't think you must
spend hours of time knitting knickers for
John etc.; if that must be thought of
from a money point of view you could
probably sell the china for the extra
money you would pay for getting a large
part of such work done for you or buy
things ready made; and anyway put
the spiritual ~~that~~ sort of thing first. You'll be
occupied I know a great deal in the
garden. I think the you should

get a roller before long - or how would it
be to get a boy to come & roll every Sat.
afternoon - or some such scheme?

Dear love it makes me happy to be
writing to you & thinking of you now.
It won't be so very long after you get this
before you go away from Cambridge. I do
hope you will have a good change - do what
you like, enjoy yourself, & be free from
worries - why shouldn't you spend a
few days in London & see plenty of people
it would be good for you.

I shall hear in your first letter how
you enjoyed the Greek Play & whether
Northfield has begun building the wall.
How I wish I could hear from you
at Port Said to-morrow

I have told you almost nothing about
my activities on board or about my compa-
nions. I read & write & play a certain



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amount of deck timber; and about every other evening Bridge. We have got up an oxygen apparatus from the baggage room and have been playing about with it. Irvine finds fault with it, but if it is all sound - doesn't leak in spite of the desperate haste with which it was put together it should do well enough - I'm bound to say I think it a big if.

Things have got to the tiresome stage when people I have never spoken come up to me & begin asking questions about the expedition - some of course have heard one lecture - or ask leave

to take my photo - consequently I tend
to be unsociable at one extremity or
other of the boat, where one can usually
get away from the crowd.

The weather has been perfect though
hardly warm enough except the first
day in the Mediterranean. I can't believe
it will be hot even in the Red Sea
but I suppose it will.

It was very jolly seeing the Sierra
Nevada again & also - long stretch
of the African mountains, though
Mt Atlas didn't clear.

I'm awfully bad about writing ^{and}
- ends of news about life round me
aren't I. I suppose I ought to tell
you about deck competitions; but they
don't interest me & I entered for none
except - I've been persuaded
me to go in for a spoon & potato race
in which I had a brilliant success
& was only knocked out in the final
where one potato was really impossible.

I long for some news of the great
world; we have a few snippets of
news - this morning I learned
that a Frenchman murdered his
aunt; I suppose she was impossible.

With my darling Ruth, I will take
care of you - with great love for
your loving, George