

-1- London. 24 Aug 1944

I just went of St George's Gallery, and saw Mrs Bondy who was recommended to me by Mr. Belyden, and who is Mr. Schlesinger's friend. She told me that Schlesinger had left London most probably on his way to India.

Most of the paintings in the galleries are bilge. Not worth the canvas on which they are painted. Most of them are silly "abstractions" and "vapid" cubist stuff done over and over again by hundreds of men and women whose names one can't even remember because their work is not worth remembering. Mixed with these are Henry Moore drawings, Modigliani, the Impressionists and the Paris School. One small scrap of a drawing by Picasso was priced at £240, and next door I saw an ~~at~~ automobile firm selling a ^{new} car for £200! But Picasso is really a great painter. I saw a very large book of all his drawing and the terrific energy and creativity of the man is amazing. Most of these drawings were new to me in the sense that the experience was quite different. There lies the magic of Picasso. I also saw a new book on his sculpture! He has done a terrific amount of work in all mediums. And when I was in Bombay I had not seen so much of his work in variety to decide his top place in art. But now I really believe him to be the greatest living artist.

How is Ara getting on arranging his things to come? Has he done his pass port?

I am very sorry for the delay of this letter. But I had nothing much to write about during the first few days in London. -2-

I must thank you now, for all of you seeing me off on the Pier, and for the garlands and lillies. I was sorry you could not come on ~~ship~~ the "Canton" although Keku Gandhi had brought passes for all of you, but he came late much after you had left. I was imagining you all going into a restaurant and chatting over cups of tea thinking how wonderful it was to be going to Europe. I must thank Krisnan too. He was the last image I took with me of Bombay ~~with~~ standing with the images of my wife and mother, brother and step-father as the ship slowly moved out of the dock away and away... As the ship was moving it suddenly started raining, as though nature was mourning. But there was bright sun-light when the ship touched Tilbury Docks London on the 8th inst. I thank Krisnan very much for the book he spontaneously presented to me. I whispered to him that my heart was heavy; that I was taking a risk and that I had no money or something to that effect. And he encouraged me by telling me of a man (whose name I did not catch) who took several degrees ^{from Universities} working at various jobs, hamal and so forth. And with that encouragement I was plying through the seven seas.... to an unknown destination... unknown in my sense of the word. But the Emigration Office stamped ~~on~~ my passport and stamped out my hopes. I never knew that would be my fate. However I am getting used to my predicament now.

With love to you ^{five} and Krisnan.

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