Original Script

Letter from Steve

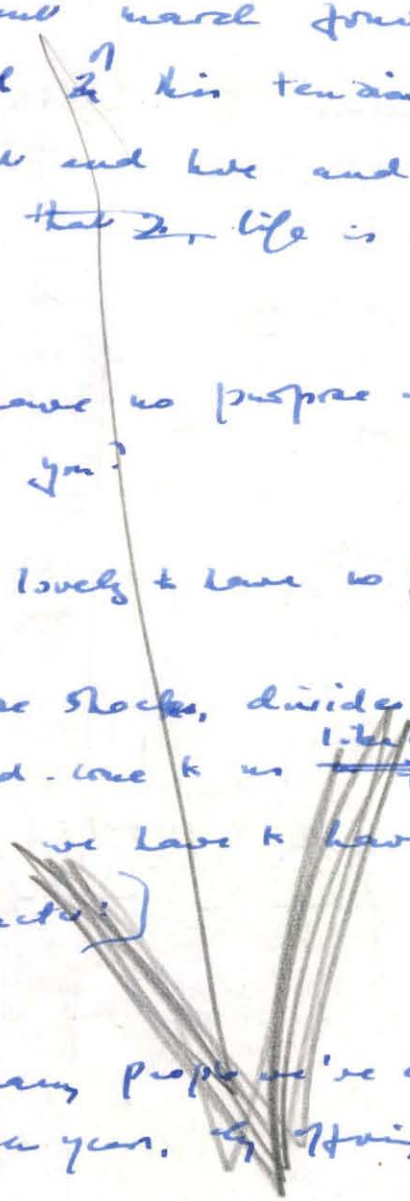
The German tradition (~~esp.~~ almost in America) sees life as a constant march forward along a belt of time. ~~[illegible]~~ We are all in the gripped of this tension ~~at the moment~~. It lays everything present and here and now waste.)

that life is never really tasted.

You have no purpose at all. Will the millionth star miss you?

How lovely to have no purpose.

Purpose shocks, divides, scars. People fall away from us. They shd come to us like a stream. (like a stream we have to have one place, one direction, one character.)



How many people we've driven away, in Rome, in the last few years, by offering only intimacy...

POWER IS NEVER SPIRITUAL.

Power is an agreement between men, and it impresses only men. The timeless isn't involved. We aren't being watched.

We are watching.

We could only be watched if we were separate creatures. But we have only made ourselves this. We are in fact not separate from the timeless:

The Jews were too moral, the Greeks too logical, to allow us Christ right away...

Christ, like all religion, ~~means~~ (begins with) the death of power: we have to cease endowing power with religious capacities (morality).

Our behaviour should be against a background of — if you like — the void: not, as hitherto, against a mirror; there is no mirror. [The ~~[illegible]~~ silences outside (which we shall soon 'explore') take no notice.

'Space', as we call our little idea of what lies beyond, ~~[illegible]~~ will renew God ~~[illegible]~~

It will join the world into one.

We cannot materialise religion, (i.e. as power): religion isn't the ~~[illegible]~~ backcloth of matter.] We can only bless matter.

Matter is our failure to overcome our gifts (mind).

Again, the mediaeval music. Pipes, cymbals, violins: taps, and little tunes, dances, quiet songs. To revel music again we have to go behind the Germans, to that. The German tradition sees Bach as 'a great step' beyond the mediaeval, which was 'simple' and 'without technique.'

But civilisation is one present time; one room. It begins and ends. But Inside it there are no steps, back or forward, great or small; ~~there are~~ only entitlements.

Our whole culture, life, has to be rescued from the German abstraction.

feeling: without the empiricism and surrounds of an ancient religious people.

that is, spiritual power.

~~people standing to attention, so to speak.~~

A German means by 'holy', ~~spiritualised, grave, silent: that is,~~ a lofty moral attitude: Holy | n.p. means divine and ~~lovely~~, intimate: it may be noisy, ~~it may be~~ a ~~little~~ dance, ~~it may be~~ a kiss. It may be perhaps ~~probably would be~~ a fool: ~~and~~ never powerful; you ~~can~~ cd. pass it by without a ~~second~~ glance.

Luther was disappointed afterwards: ~~('What have I do?')~~ ('What did I do?')

A most

the most bestial cruelties we committed ~~in the name of~~ for virtue.

The fool in the village:

America was a moral revolution.

and the shocks of life for which an organism ~~was~~ never prepared.

We have to learn how to eat again, how to evacuate, how to walk, sleep, sit, lie in bed, above all, breath. We get used to stunted, tense breathing. The lung doesn't get really full of air; we need this air for everything we do. A deep breath banishes tension at once.

~~The asphalt is enough to corrupt stance & walk.~~

People say that perhaps Döldwlin only feigned madness – when friends visited him. If so it was a sort of Buddhism: to remain free.

The Germans are rustics. Only the Jews gave them delicacy and style: and a rustic revenge was visited on the Jews.

Berlin was always a soft, pleasant city, though in the heart of Prussia: because it was made by Jews.

In Germany, the Jews made the mistake of all the Continental aristocracies: they kept to the towns.

Germany became Judah (a chosen people) through the work of the Reformers[x]: we will only understand what went on in the concentration camps if we see it as ~~the clean sweep of a~~ moral frenzy. Again: → [A]

[The furnace.]

x though rustic style, in the trad. of barbarism & tribal

INSERTS FOR END PART III

NOTES FROM SIENA.

Wagner was baroque abstraction; 'modern' music is its child (Schoenberg found the basis of his 12-tone theory in Wagner).

People say that Goethe compromised, studied his social convenience, flattered and snubbed as no artist should. ~~(Sycophantic among the nobles)~~ But this was the only way he had remain German and sane, to avoid rebellion. ~~[to the case]~~ Beethoven, saved by Austria] ~~This is why~~ He hated the romantics — (he because he saw the madness in them, where ~~which~~ but you the grace of God went he...

so much that

prevented GOTTA

his publish from printing Kleist).

In some way perhaps

We guide the Germans to committ the crimes and follies that are the natural effects of our thinking.

A For P. 121

Insert

NOTES FROM SIENA

It was then that the houses and rooms become bare, and thoughts disappeared, and figura ~~so~~ ~~stra~~ came in; that even a slightly diff. expression, a novel piece of furniture in your house, could make you suspect in the eyes of the glaring local priest, whose ~~gto~~ hands weren't gloved as they are today; that, alone, you slumped into a sort of neutral and passive oblivion — only company made you prepare decent food, a fire, and light — because, in yourself, you were worth nothing. This is perhaps the deepest feeling Rue is in the Italian, in high & low: that he is worth nothing, and consideration is wasted on him. It is why the meals we get — the breakfast we lay on the terrace-table with everything so carefully set — ~~and~~ seem to my now like ~~the~~ elaborate tributes ~~the~~ we are paying ourselves: it is why Pietro says after a meal with us, 'Ah, I feel good as I never do at home! I feel

settled, fit for anything, like a king!' Left to themselves, they break up a piece of bread, cut off a hunk of cheese, and stuff it in their mouths, as they leave the house to do a job of work in the barn, chewing absently. They eat standing, walking, lounging; even their sit-down meal are snatched and finished in a flash.

I can see it in our own priest, under his kindliness – a certain iron resistance to any folly, which means any resistance in the end. He refuses to let any young men in his house with his nephew, which means in Italian terms that he won't let ~~his nephew marry~~ her marry: he is afraid they may commit a sin (say, a kiss!) under the consecrated roof. His goodness bars everything: life, humour, fancy, warmth, extravagance. Erasmus warned Luther that all these things would go. And they went far more drastically in the home of catholicism than they did elsewhere. The ~~toll~~ revenge for Luther was taken on the Italians. From that time on the Church governed by fear, until finally, in our own time, it excommunicated communists, that is to say, ~~the~~ a vast proportion of Italian manhood, because

it failed to see that communism was satisfying the hunger of the Italians for a warm and protectively intimate image (~~Dinos~~ Armida's further still has a picture of Stalin in his bedroom) which ~~the Chu~~ Rome had been powerless to give since the sixteenth century.

Death in Venice

INSERTION.

Somebody says of the hero in DEATH IN VENICE that he always lived 'like this'---drawing his hand into a fist---never like this', letting it hang relaxed. And the result of the hero's ceasing to live in tension is sickness, madness & death. Mann's ~~ridiculous~~ theory of the artist as tottering on the edge of a chasm of decadence comes from this. The human creature is basically vicious in the German psychology. When the Italian says (as he often does), 'The German doesn't know anything about humanity', this is what he means.

I

Insert

The Americans in the square

(2)

~~Sometimes they seem like people watching~~

~~Watching the~~ Standing close to Italians, they are like people who have been broken from created life, and watch it (in the Italians) ~~for instance~~ from a great and sad distance.

The English and the American ~~that~~ path, too, — indeed, they started it — but were always checked by their aristocracy, the pragmatists ~~and empiricists~~

LETTER FROM SIENA

GREEKS

INSERT

The Greeks painted to Christ, founded our civilisation, and were decapitated by the Humanists, because their gods, for the first time, were living men. This is why they depicted in sculpture the human body exactly, in its grace and poise. (Minoan & Egyptian half-animal).

NOTES FROM SIENA



motor-cycle, and looks after everything — the oxen, the chickens, and the podere that lies on the other side of the road, a field sloping gently towards the stream among the saplings. We often ~~lean on the~~ lean on the terrace-wall — hidden among the mellow roofs of the house so that one can look straight down on to the dusty road — and stared across at this field in its mysterious shadows, with inclines and dips that make it impossible to know, even if one walks there for an hour. On the left stands the terracotta-painted palazzo and peasant-houses of Altopasquale — our local village, so to speak: they cluster together and dominate the whole of our little valley in a fussy way. And up the hill behind us, in the woods, there are other houses: with a narrow rocky path going up which is covered with ancient fossilised sea-shells and snails and mussles, all in perfect form only rock now. From its field ~~underneath~~ below the road, the house looks like a miniature castle behind massive sloping walls, and it might have been a defensive position at one time, ~~six or seven centuries~~ in the Middle Ages. This was the road to Volterra, and there was an unending feud between that town and ours.

In the darkness last night, on the rocky path above house, we met Giovanni for the first time. He lives in [illegible]

The road outside hasn't been asphalted and is a blinding dusty strip in the morning sunlight. I've seen a salamander twice, darting across the pebbles; and a Little Owl sitting on a milestone in broad daylight, staring at us, craning his neck round; also a grass-snake, and a weasle. There are many cuckoos in the woods behind us, and sometimes they sing on the lower note only, three straight notes like a train-hooter; and nearly always there is a nightingale at night, quite close to our window, quite alone. There are foxes in the woods but we never hear one bark. Sometimes a pheasant or woodgrouse flaps away close to the house, with an echoing cry of alarm. There are warblers and wheatears and stonechats; many house-martins, but I've only seen one swallow so far. The house-martins swooped over the house for a few days after we arrived but they seem to have lost interest now. I was surprised to see a jay yesterday with its wine-coloured breast, flapping down heavily from one branch to another. We look straight across at a wonderful property where there are vineyards, cornfields, grass for forage, olives, tomatoes, maize, and a stream hidden among saplings; the crop grows between vines. Two families work this land, which divides a valley and two hills in a checkboard way; and the <u>padrone</u> lives in town. From here

near the shepherd.

but not as far as Paolo the shepherd

Causes ~~[illegible]~~ hidden in the woods, Even in the darkness we could see that he was blond in the Italian way, with freckles: his eyes were large, and he had a frank, gay face (2) He made a sort of speech (the first of many ~~[illegible]~~): we must come to see him and his family; he heard we had come from Rome; ~~where it was [illegible]~~ and certainly the air here was invigorating and healthy, far superior to city air; ~~especially those day~~; his family would make us welcome; we would find them friendly folk, and in this part of Tuscany, once you had made a friend, he was your friend for life. He shouted all this across the darkness, standing on one of the slippery volcanic rocks that cover our hill between, with the still air all round us, and the sky clear and light overhead. We nodded in a bewildered way, and the moment he ~~[illegible]~~ he'd finished his ~~said the last word of his~~ speech he stalked off up the hill, with a theatrical, 'Felice notte!' ~~His voice rang out.~~ The speech gave no idea of his gaiety, and the soft, flexible intimacy ~~[illegible]~~ in him: of his frolics and puns and his devil-may-care laugh. We put him at twenty-two or twenty-three.

the shrubbery; his voice rang strangely in the still air, with the sky

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I

NOTES FROM SIENA

Begin P.S.

i) The valley. 'The road outside...'

ii) This house.

iii) Meeting Giovanni for the first time.

INSERTS I

INSERT P. 3.

... out of the house!

+

Here you have two victims in an argument about civilisation. They may even like each other better than they like most other people in the room, but they're helpless. ~~They have to struggle to the death (life)~~

The Italian, as always, sees only the stress: the inner argument escapes her, because

Life is finished and made for her, is not in the process of making, as it is for both the American woman and ~~his opponents~~ myself (an Englishman). 'Atlantic' means freedom: but suppose we have made a free hell!

+

The road outside .... (P. 5)? Or to open the book?

All early part of the book to deal with Blasa valley; state briefly the arguments of civilisation, to be taken up later, sparingly. Set picture first

||||| Describe house in first pages: the courtyard etc.

Courtyard:
rooms upstairs.
Gino's part.
The oxen.
The pigeons.

The chickens.
The woods above: the 3 houses.
~~Alta~~ The view from the terrace (describe the terrace).
Altapasquale (terracotta). The village sharp on the hill.

The first we see of Pietro – the path leading up the hill – in the darkness. The speech he gives, as if he has learned it by heart, about the tracing in hand, the [illegible] of the cities; how we shd. come and see them, [illegible] they were poor but we would find that the Italian could prove a good friend. And with the last word of his speech uttered he marched off up the hill like an actor in 'Julius Caesar.'

The road outside hasn't been asphalted and is a blinding dusty strip in the morning sunlight. I've seen a salamander twice, darting across the pebbles; and a Little Owl sitting on a milestone in broad daylight, staring at us, craning his neck round; also a grass-snake, and a weasle. There are many cuckoos in the woods behind us, and sometimes they sing on the lower note only, three straight notes like a train-hooter; and nearly always there is a nightingale at night, quite close to our window, quite alone. There are foxes in the woods but we never hear one bark. Sometimes a pheasant or woodgrouse flaps away close to the house, with an echoing cry of alarm. There are warblers and wheatears and stonechats; many house-martins, but I've only seen one swallow so far. The house-martins swooped over the house for a few days after we arrived but they seem to have lost interest now. I was surprised to see a jay yesterday with its superb wine-coloured breast, flapping down from one branch to another. We look straight across at a wonderful property where there are vineyards, cornfields, grass for forage, olives, tomatoes, maize, and a stream hidden among saplings; the crop grows between vines. Two families work this land, which divides a valley and two hills in a checkboard way; and the <u>padrone</u> lives in town. From here

the house looks Austrian, shaded with trees, with a steep slope in front of it. The owner has let it go to ruin, ~~and the~~ and will allow the peasants to occupy the vacant rooms. We went over there yesterday – the beams were propped up with tree-trunks, the windows were hanging open and birds had made their nests in their hinges; there were rat-holes, and the furniture was encrusted with filth. On the pride ...

a ~~tawny owl~~ Little Owl sitting on the side of the road in broad daylight, staring at us, craning its neck round; also a grass-snake, and a (beaver, weasle, otter?), There are many cuckoos in the woods behind us, sometimes singing three-times on their lower note only, like a train-hooter; and nearly always a nightingale at night, sometimes quite close to our window, quite alone. There are foxes in the woods, but we never hear one bark. Sometimes a pheasant or wood-grouse flaps away close to the house. There are warblers and wheatears and stonechats; many house-martins, but I've only seen one swallow. The house-martins swooped over the house for a few days after we arrived but they seem to have lost interest. To see them a lot in the town, with the swifts. I was surprised to see a jay with its wine-coloured breast the other day, flapping down heavily from one branch to another. We look straight across at a wonderful property where there are vineyards, cornfields, grass for forage, olives; tomatoes maize, a stream hidden among saplings, groves and beans; the crop grows between the vines. Two families work this land, which divides a valley and two hills in a checkboard way, and the padrone lives in the town. Half of the house still belongs to the padrone; he lets it go to ruin but won't have the peasants in it. We went over these rooms the other day — a house-martin had built its nest in one of them, the beams were being propped up by tree-trunks, and there were rat-holes. The furniture was thick with dust, and there were worm-holes. All the ~~interest~~ pride has been knocked out of the land for both the owners and the peasants. They ~~both~~ are in the hands of middlemen, who pull strings and influence the politics, ~~in the cities~~ The cities are living on the Italian earth like vampires. Hence you get a big communist vote, because the communists promise a state agricultural programme.

+

(2) The charity and harmony in Italy come from the common people. The aristocracy was destroyed by the counter-post-reformation; there was some faint activity in the eighteenth century — the Baroque, but the motive for this came from the north; it was European. After the renascence

Considering the insanity of their cooking, the English are the sanest people in the world, for keeping going as well.

It takes a person from outside the middle-class twenty years or so to discover that they aren't serious. You have to play with them. They enjoy playing: they take it seriously.

He works at the foundry, a boy of twenty or so. His mother died when he was a child, his father died last week, hang-nail. He watched the sculptors working in wax, and suddenly produced a tiny wax-figure too. It was a 'self-portrait' he said. He made himself look hideous: a kind of involuted ear with a cock's comb on top. The piece was bought, by an admirer, within, by a foreigner passing through. Everyone says, 'This is marvellous!' He doesn't know they can talk without meaning anything. His long journey has begun.

To make amends, the shepherd said he'd bring the milk himself to my cowshed, saving me a walk up the hill. We met him last night with his sheep, on the road outside, at dusk. He promised the milk for eleven on half-past, and brought it three hours earlier.

Since living among peasants all day, I've begun to realise how civilised drinking tea. It isn't the liquid on the tastebuds — it's the hour, the light in the sky, the thin porcelain cup, the chink of the spoon on the saucer, a delicate ritual two and three hundred years old. The snatched cup of coffee — a few sips of black liquid, standing up in a bar — has no culture in comparison.

STET

(1) The road outside has been asphalted and is a dusty shining strip in the morning sunlight. I've seen a salamander twice —

Saw Giovanni's house. A tiny, long, intimate-looking house with an outdoor stone staircase like ours, to the dwelling room above. It must be medieval. They hate it: 'dirty and inconvenient.' ~~They would like a we~~ They can't understand how we can call it beautiful, & they laugh. He has 2 brothers, Lorenzo, who works in town at a wood-factory, and Alberto, who looks after the podere with his mother. They have oxen, and 3 or 4 large fields with grain, vines, olives, some fruit trees. The woods slope up directly from the fields, making them look idyllic, ~~esp. in the morning, when the sun falls~~ & esp. now the wheat is getting high. Alberto is tall & gangling next to Giovanni; he smiles, shows bad teeth, 'a good lad!' his mother says. 'He works hard!' And Giovanni (who doesn't work hard) smiles & winks at us. She is a tiny, dark, wrinkled woman with blazing,

(is ~~both~~ countries ~~the~~ a daughter who had ~~broken~~ lost her virtue and be committed to the judgement of her father & executed privately)

Observant, grey eyes, and no teeth. She shouts & makes everyone laugh — 'Madonna cane! (a favourite curse) where's the sickle?' They work endlessly, even while we are there. G's mother is shrivelled and dried up with work. ~~They lost~~ ~~their~~ Her husband (the lost) in the war.

there remained only the common people. They were the presence that pervaded the land. Then was how Italy became the land of sound waves. The aristocracy had been anything but barbarians: they were calm and sound for themselves, like the Germans; but not for others. ~~The surrender and acceptance of the people was in them.~~

~~Because of this the Italians are the least aggressive of all people.~~

(3) (4) INSERT The House, Giovanni.

(5) Now and then in Italy you have the big Jews; a doctor perhaps.

(6) [Basically, The the] Italian and German ~~are~~ is a law unto himself, because their aristocracies [were the same: they] were never gathered under one monarch, as the French and English were; they were separate families, at war with each other, administering their own justice.

(7) For the French and the Anglo-Saxons truth is a detached body of facts. For the German and Italian it is the state of this feeling: if he is great, this feeling is the truth.

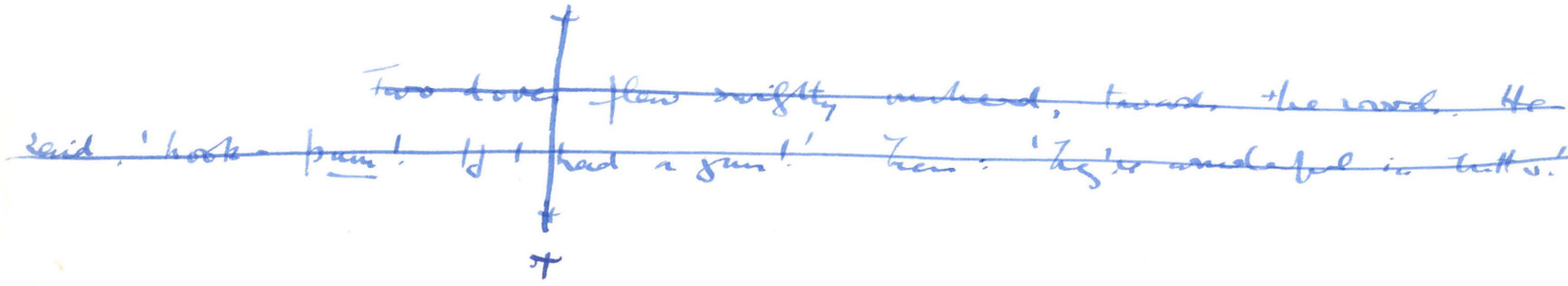
(8) Describing Giovanni's house.

(9) The two ~~beasts~~ oxen are kept roped up in their stall. Giovanni He calls them 'veal', and – smacking me on the rump – says they will fetch me a hundred and fifty thousand lire each. They never see the light of the sky, never have done. At the age of ten months or so they will die. They tug on their ~~ropes~~ chains. He says some people put them out to pasture, but they fatten better in the stall.

We walk inside, to the vines, corn, beans, and He cherry-trees also. He wants cleaner work. He has dreams. The land is a drudge that never stops for a moment, he says.

The earth groans with its cruelties. Remove them, and

the dreams will come.



The bulls are made to copulate with mobber cows: the sperm is then packed off to inseminate real cows all over the country, saving money and time. Thus, a masturbating cinéaste teaches its creatures masturbation.

+

Now and then I see certain names — of people fighting through like me. They look up out of the water irresistibly, after everybody thought they'd been pushed down for ever.

+

The flight from nature leaves men small and without authority, because unsupported.

+

People can't face the idea that everything has gone wrong — from politics to their most intimate habits. And until they do nothing can change.

+

For the first time the common people face a challenge. Everything waits for their decision.

+

With no religion to mitigate it, working on the land is hard and ugly. Peasants know this, in themselves. They'd like to go to church again. Italian men hang about outside the church doors, in great dark clusters, in every town. They say that since Pope Pius — excommunicated the Communists

7.

Sunday used to bring softness into the week — thought and art. Now they're bonkers as they haven't been since the ancient Roman empire. They look wistfully at the church-doors, some of them.

+

They ~~[illegible]~~ fear the sound of truth. ~~Men~~ You could tell the truth about trees, and they'd feel afraid. It could turn at any minute into the truth about themselves.

+

There is an abnormal summer nearly every year, and they say, 'There was an abnormal summer in 1767, in 1812, in 1658; in the month of July 40 years ago there was ice...'

+

Reality is always preferable because it was made by God. Dreams, systems, are made by men. ~~Art is the nearest to a reality made by men; religion...?~~

+

Art that is dream, self-expression or idealism is false art.

+

People who want to use their fists — secretly or otherwise — are always desperately confused about themselves.

+

They expect truth to be said in a comfortable voice: a bitter error.

+

Wherever more than two or three people congregate, truth leaves. This is a trick of our epoch.

+

What has always amazed me is the ~~complete~~ immunity some people enjoy from the power of ideas: and these are the people to whom you have to carry your ideas. Perhaps rightly?

+

Unless a book a play sticks like a screw she says, 'It hasn't told the ~~the~~ truth.' She is waiting for her own experience of life to unfold.

The words 'earthly paradise' show mistaken religion, by being redundant. The earth is the only paradise we know. 'Earthly paradise' comes from idealism, which ~~And idealism~~ make earth hell.

People are slaves. There is no any need for tyrants. People are slaves in themselves – in their gestures, their work, their thoughts, even their most intimate thoughts.

They look like slaves, moving through the streets. Their work has nothing to do with them. It buries them in. Their lives come to an end in a ~~kind of~~ dream – what have they been? who are they?

Children grow up looking at their parents as slaves. They are right. They go in revolt – they want other things. Then they become slaves as well. They have to be. Suddenly the lid closes down: the promises of adolescence are forgotten, and the one – among hundreds – who goes on with his promises is looked at askance, feared and avoided.

Standing in the street, people have ~~the look of~~ slavery in their eyes, in the way they glance round. They run to the evening paper like slaves. They don't want to read it. But everybody is doing it. The 'news' in it is no news at all, it's really always the same. It has nothing to do with their own lives. Their own lives will, in secret, in a house that is so like every other house that it is really no place at all.

The slave can switch on things — lights, radio, television. These create interim-entertainment; ~~until death~~, something to tide over with.

The greatest slaves are those who know most — the educated ones. They all have the same face. Meet one in a city and you've met the lot. They try to sound and look different, but the result is only perverse — a slave putting on a tyrant's ~~coat of office as pantomime~~ hat in pantomime.

[They are bigger dupes even than the common people]

Intellectuals are the apologists of slavery. They are the [great] renegades of modern life. They are the principal ones holding everything back: they control all the sources of slavery — the books, films, newspapers, art-galleries. Their task has been to turn even the last possibilities of freedom into new channels for slavery.

You can see it in their faces — pinched with work or drink, feckless, uncomfortable, perverse, with everything flowing from the brain because the rest of the being has been laid asleep, into slavery.

Watch the man with a vast belly swollen with drink, his fingers black with nicotine, after a night's sleep that started at three in the morning and ended at noon, with all the adulterated filth of restaurants and supermarkets in his intestines, saying, 'I'm a thinker'.

Watch the leaders of our civilisation, and you will know our civilisation.

(Insert A ~~LIVIO~~ etc. [A]

The more backward the community, the less slavery is evident. The more a community thinks it has arrived at ethical superiority, and is at the threshold of a new epoch, the more slavish it is.

I have never met one common person in any country, at any time, who looked with desire towards America.

That is a middle-class ambition.

+

A man who settles in America, in peace or war, is always in flight from his ~~own~~ problems.

+

Each flow of immigrants weakens America. Just when the real American is tackling the hell that his forbears have made ~~created~~ for him an immigrant points out the view across the Hudson: ~~River: the lights did illuminate expose his soul, and — hell or not — this is enough for him.~~ 'It's so big!'

+

America means the massacre of intimacy. Everything intimate was massacred — the Indians, the Mexicans, the southern aristocrats and lastly the negroes — to make America the perfect escape-hatch for Europeans.

+

~~The European flies to America away from his own intimacy.~~

The European flees to America from his own intimacy. ~~to America~~. [But children can only be bright up with intimacy] He therefore crushes his children, whether he likes it or not, because they need his intimacy.

Immigration to America is always an act of egotism. The children pay the price. They are the real Americans. Sometimes their voices are heard: ~~Tribe~~ cries in the wilderness. ~~But more often than not~~ Despair, ~~inhibition~~ ~~fear and~~ strange unexplained disorders take care of ~~those~~ them ~~cries~~ early in childhood, and the child muffles himself ~~here~~ of his own accord. Therefore you get ~~in the American~~ a ~~that~~ remarkable hurt wisdom in the American child~~hood~~. Before the jungle engulfs him.

+

I

INSERTS

A

~~[illegible]~~ The shepherd at the top of the hill gives us bad cheese and charges us ten lire more per litre for milk than the shops do; and Giovanni says, 'Philistine'.

+

Every American immigrant, in his heart of hearts, spits on the image of his mother.

+

The pagan's face, pressed close to mine, was flabby, pained, appealing, tragic, brutal, fightened.

+

The Italian genius is such that life is always a game — to be played earnestly or corruptly or mildly, according to character.

1.

There are no more negroes in America. There are people with dark skins.

+

The higher you ~~climb~~ climb, the greater the slave. Princes, kings, presidents, prime ministers – they can't even talk any more.

+

Jewish, negro, African, Arab, French, American, English, communist, Hindu – ~~names in~~ fancy-dresses, ~~batt~~

The newspapers describe yesterday evening's ball, where these they were displayed

+

A man on a motor-cycle with the silencer half off: he can wake up a hundred or so people, across the whole valley, to get himself three or four miles at little more than walking pace.

Have you got the nineteenth-century impasse, in its tyranny over our lives.

+

Laissez-faire: tyranny of ~~government by~~ the ignorant.

+

In Italian the word 'sano' means 'healthy, ~~unadulterated~~'

+

The great lie of the American 'experiment' was that it started with people fleeing from their oppressors. ~~They were fleeing from themselves. And they were all well-to-do.~~

~~America; founder fathers first settlers wanted the freedom to oppress: they scourged the land, murdered and raped.~~

+

The oppressed in Europe never fled. They never had the money ~~to do so. They stayed to fight.~~

The Englishman Rules America like the back of his hand: this country was massacred, too. At about the same time, by the same people (towards the end of the eighteenth century).

Pursuing the most enlightened policies in the world, America can only be renegade.

Europe, through endless wars, has always kept its peace. America, through endless peace, has never been free from war & hatred.

Educated (for want of a better word) Frenchmen, Germans, Englishmen, Italians, Americans, are as different from each other as chalk from cheese. But the common people of any of these countries - even America (wherever they've been left intact in their ghettoes, slums and settlements) - are the same, and could fit into the same room and understand each other perfectly, even without language. Only with the common people do you realise that we all have the same civilisation.

Two world wars prevented America from collapse, by turning her into an arsenal.

The last war exposed the real nature of the middle class - in Germany by the concentration camps, England by the mass-raids on Germany, America by Hiroshima.

[redacted]

One of the gravest errors of Anglo-Saxon moral development in the last 200 years was the abandonment of Catholic

Street-whores and courtesans as an accepted part of men's lives. With their abolition the full weight of male life fell on the wife, who already had her work cut out as mother. The frontier between male and female was torn open, and an atmosphere of carnage and no-man's-land prevailed there. Male friendship ceased — the fear of uncontained sexuality entering it began to dominate.

Above all, it started masturbation on a huge scale, as a natural practice for men & women until ~~some years after they were married.~~ marriage. ~~The effect of masturbation is to hinder the maturity — the mind and character — of a person; which is the reason for so many men-boys in the Anglo-Saxon world.~~

Masturbation hindered adventure, contact between people, and the natural turbulent movement of life. It made millions of separate individuals. Masturbation begins easily in the city-street: the woman next door is watched furtively as she puts out the washing, leaning over the clothes-basket and showing a pair of legs that take the breath away. ~~Then there are the magazines, the haunting shots of the female bosom~~

~~The woman,~~ Women, when ~~she marries,~~ they marry now, invariably get ~~gets~~ a man who needs ~~lot~~ more practice ~~yet.~~ He hasn't greased his joints with the women, for a fee. His laughter, ferocity, magnanimity, imagination, haven't been provoked as they would ~~of~~ in the hours spent with whores. The male is therefore stunted as a whole, and the search for women, which should be a merry thing, becomes a gnawing, destructive, lonely test of ~~the~~ his whole moral and physical flore. This is what abashes English and American boys sometimes when they meet Italians and Frenchmen: there is something about the latter that makes them seem twice as old; they aren't afraid to ~~throw~~ give

themselves airs and behave naturally; which means, right underneath, that they aren't afraid of women. They have been going with women most of them, since their sexuality developed, and ~~any other kn~~ anything else would mightily seem a diseased sort of life for them. This applies less to the French than it used to: they abolished their brothels after the last war, and one also has to consider that wherever there is protestantism — the religion of the lonely conscience there is masturbation. But France will never lose her wine or her whores: she is too great.

Certain women are born whores. Education, professions and sexual equality offer women only a fake independence: they grow get like boys in puberty, with a disturbing egotism that cuts right through the nature they were born with. And later they become men-women, holding down big jobs: you see them sitting in the restaurants with hats on, ridiculously powdered and painted — (because what should they want to make up for? can a man ~~[illegible]~~ sleep with a dividend, a book-contract, a ~~[illegible]~~ bring ?)

In France and Italy, where whores still to some extent prevail as an accepted part of life, you get armies of vieilles femmes. They are clearly vieilles femmes, who could never have satisfied a man. But in Anglo-Saxon countries the vieille femme is likely to pop into the most lovely woman, into the mother of children, for a moment — ~~[illegible]~~ without warning. The proper frontiers disappear.

Whores weren't abolished in the Anglo-Saxon countries — they never will be. Certain women will always insist on that sort of adventure: they were only made squalid and inhuman (to fit the men they now have to serve.)

The great lie of the American experiment was that it started with people fleeing from their oppressors. The oppressed in Europe never fled. They didn't have the money for the passage.

Only with the common people do you realise that we are all in the same civilisation.

Two world wars prevented America from collapse, by turning her into an arsenal.

The last war exposed the real nature of the middle classes---in Germany through the concentration camps, in England through the mass-raids on Germany, in America through Hiroshima.

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11.

England, like [the sister] France, is great in little things. ~~These never make a great spectacle.~~

The English and French are great in tenderness — the ~~the tenderest people on earth~~ fruit of aristocracy, united under kings.

+

An Englishman or Frenchman turned nasty is an ancient society showing its dark side.

+

England and France are one country; the land ~~between them~~ disappears under the sea for sixty miles or so at one point.

+

Through being given up as a bad job so many times, I had the maximum chance of rebirth.

+

The most difficult thing in life is to learn not to do anything out of policy. Only base people do this. But policies continually form, wherever there are ideas.

+

The longer we live here in the Elsa valley ~~surrounded by peasants~~ the more I think of certain things in the city — the intimate light in a café in Vienna, the settee in a café, in Salzburg, by the window, the glow of certain streets in Paris on a rainy evening. Before I never thought I would ever see a reason for the city.

It has been raining for days, with low misty clouds hanging all round the house, and there are uncanny thunderstorms at night that last for hours. I'm here alone, at the moment. The oxen underneath the bedroom stamp at night, and shift their chains, breathe out with a great puff every now and then; and when they feel peace, after the silence of the night has fallen, they slump down with a ~~great~~ thump into the sitting position. The pigeons flutter their wings suddenly, shift in their ~~nests~~ legs. The ~~[illegible]~~ valley lies bathed in water, unnaturally; ~~[illegible]~~ it is June.

Last night I went with Pietro to ~~a film in~~ the ~~local town~~ [illegible]
Toto the comic was playing. It was thrilling, being in the long, bare hall, with youths down in the stalls whistling, talking loudly, chewing chocolate, smoking, putting ~~our~~ their arms out on the back of the seats and crossing their legs over the seats in front.

Before the cinema we went to Poggibonsi, which two years ago, people say, had ten thousand inhabitants and now has forty thousand, tho' this is an exageration. The roads are being torn up, there are smoky trains passing through, an air of hurry and commerce, crowds going to and from works, cars jammed in the ~~[illegible]~~ sidestreets, the cafe's full. ~~The~~ Italians love this, and their faces look quite different here. Noise, light, company — these are ~~the things~~ what they yearn for, ~~in the silence of the countryside~~ ~~For~~ Their ~~countryside~~ lovely valleys have no culture. ~~It has~~ They are only ~~been~~ developed, physically.

~~When~~ By the time the film was over all the clouds had gone away and here ~~was~~ a full moon in a perfectly clear sky. The air was brisk and biting, as it is before a ~~clear~~ daylight sunlit day. The valley outside looked marvellous and rapt, in the hush. There were deep shadows under the olive-trees, and the woods looked ~~deep~~ black and mysterious. The lights of the town four kilometres away looked clear and bright like lamps hung out to celebrate ~~something~~.

When I went to sleep the silver moon light pouring in to the room through two windows seemed to fix everything, including myself, into one whole being.

The English are the great levellers. They have levelled everything down in their country to the point of stagnation.

At the moment Englishmen of position (any position) have their backs to the wall. They don't know why or how this is so. Therefore

they have no way of recognising or protecting themselves against the enemy ~~who~~ which will overtake them.

+

The moment you enter England (if you live abroad) you know it is a country of lies. But these aren't unpleasant lies. They are dreams about the past and future: intermezzi, to tide over until ~~the~~ the rebirth.

+

Nothing could be a greater error than thinking England has 'class'. Class in England is the same as in America – fancy-dress supported by money.

+

I've just had a book of mine through the post from the publisher: coming out next week. My first thought, taking it out of the wrapping, is, 'What's the use of publishing at all?' By being a book on sale, it ~~loses its~~ has no voice.

The only hope is that, in a battered state, months or years later, in a dim library somewhere, it might be picked out by a youth of fifteen, sixteen, in his dawn, and get its voice again. But until sales stop (if they ever start) there can't be a voice.

+

Yesterday I watched a chicken pecking away outside the waste-pipe from our kitchen. I thought to myself, 'You'd better look out – the shops nowadays sell poisons freely – in the soap for washing dishes, in the detergents for cleaning sinks.' This morning ~~the chicken~~ it was dead.

~~INSERT DREAM B~~ ~~INSERT LIVE~~

~~One's most secret hope, fingering through a book one has written, is that it will convert one's enemies.~~

+

The chickens have been in mourning all today since the

other one died. There was a tremendous clucking from the others when she was dying: it brought me downstairs, and she was just moving her claws for the last time lying on her side. The others were already in their dark house, in silence and they haven't emerged all day. There is utter silence from them; it is real and active, as I feel when I pass. Animals have a world of feelings we neither know nor respect. We only listen to ourselves, and our echoes. All the splendour, vast and minutely intricate at the same time, has passed away for us. The woods are silent to our ears: yet, in the evening time, they are a universe ~~much~~ bigger than a city, with no many voices, ~~held~~ ~~held~~ under a majesty we aren't ~~are~~ ~~hardly~~ aware of. [The beasts who are due for slaughter know more than we think. We ~~have become~~ are so gross and numbed that we depend on the slaughter, in concentration-camp conditions, of millions of creatures every day; and sometimes under such cruelty that if we knew about it we'd go vegetarian overnight, most of us. In the old days an animal was killed in its due time, after a life in one place. [We can't go on for ever feeding the world with ghosts – ghosts from our wars, our famines, our endless slaughters ~~or~~ ~~as pretext or another.~~ We need more than ~~the~~ ghosts to make civilisation.

+

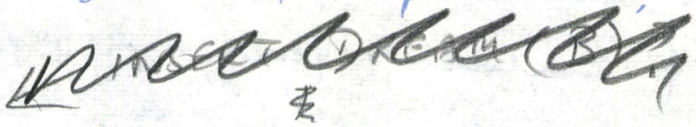
The pigeons were curious and awed at this death. They gayed towards the corpse from the barn-roof, and didn't flap about as usual. Then Gino the peasant came and ~~through~~ threw the corpse away. [The pigeons ~~played~~ flapped about again and went to and fro from the olive grove across the road as usual: the hen had ceased to die.

+

~~The Americans~~ We are all close to the Americans: the Italians in their ease and their horror of silence, the Germans in their vigour and their awe of power and success, ~~the French in their~~ the English in their empiricism ~~and~~ their puritan evolution, the French in their order – least of all, the French. [illegible]

We brought America forth on a wave of bad dreams. We can disclaim her. She is no responsibility of ours.

Though having no social justification for my existence, I began to find my proper justification.



The barber in the square said yesterday evening that the unusual weather was due to missiles being launched beyond the atmosphere. He said the scientists knew it influenced the weather, but kept quiet about it. 'They want to advance,' he said, 'even if it means sacrificing humanity. What an advance!' He said he'd never, in sixty years of life, known weather in Italy like this. It has been raining more or less continually for six months or so, and there was a two-month freeze-up in the winter. Nothing like it in Italian history is recorded.

Pietro, this morning, on his way to cut forage for the oxen, said he thought the cause was not missiles but the nuclear weapons. 'Here', an explosion,' he said, 'which displaces thousands of acres of air, and moves dense blocks of cloud!' He made a little speech — that the missiles were a logical necessity of the exploration of the universe, but the nuclear weapons had no justification.

You will hear only educated people talking about natural 'weather cycles' as being the cause. They are always the last to tumble to the obvious.

Gino and Egisto talking last night about oxen, after he'd put them in the stable. I said I wondered why the yoke was put across their necks, as it always looked so uncomfortable. He said, yes, it did seem a funny place, and you'd think their maximum

pull would be at the chest, like a horse's. But it had always been done: A horse was harnessed at the chest, oxen at the neck. I said there must certainly be a good reason for it, as it had been done for ~~hundreds~~ thousands of years and people weren't fools. We then ~~decided~~ realised that it was because the ox, like all the horned creatures, defends itself by the head, butting forward, so that all its strength must lie in the collar; while a horse fights with his hoofs, rearing up, and his main strength must be in his chest.

At the age of forty-one I'm less independent than I was as a student. A frown on my part could remove everything from under me and my wife's feet.

The tender ~~note~~ tone makes him at best uncomfortable, at worst want to sneer. It is like an accusation.

Sometimes I stop back in astonishment at what I have done in life. I mean, in horror. ~~These things are never what other people would expect them to be.~~

The worst was when I had the instruments of murder at my fingertips. I never committed a cruelty, But I committed blunders. Since horror was at your feet, you stumbled into it all the time and only woke up afterwards. The memory of this didn't terrify me in the years immediately following the war. They terrify me now, when they are all but forgotten.

The best thing I did in the war, standing by a machine-gunner, was to put my hand on his arm and stop him firing when a dozen or so Germans passed unsuspecting a few yards in front of us, a helpless target. I thought, in that instant, of wives, children, front doors with people standing at them.

had seen what went on. She said, 'No. All I saw was this women trembling, as I came out of the house'.

+

← INSERT?

America is a hell on earth, made by Christendom as a flight from its problems. I've never been to America but I know this from the testimony of the (one or perhaps two) truthful ones, and the faces of all the rest.

All Americans have a sense of hell, greater than any other people on earth. They never have no sense of heaven. 'Heaven' is lah-di-dah, ~~effete~~ effete, lofty, in the American psychology.

All real attempts at art in America must begin and end with a plunge into hell.

~~For the American~~ the soul is a stink for the American?

+

~~Every American immigrant~~ Every American immigrant, in his heart of hearts, spits on the image of his mother.

+

The pagan's face, pressed close to mine, was flabby, pained, appealing, tragic, brutal.

+

Tragedy belongs to the pagan world; drama to Christendom. Christian tragedy is always the story of a conversion.

+

Sex in Italy isn't adventure as it is for us. It doesn't lead, in the first adolescent passion, to light, literature, journeys, but ~~it leads~~ to family. It means imprisonment ~~and suffocation~~. Sex is the pleasant fetter which the mother puts ~~sees stay~~

on ~~your~~ his mistr for ~~the whole of your~~ life. ~~The Italian~~ He always marries his sister.

INSERT I B

Last night I dreamed of an English town ~~where there was~~ with a public lavatory. It was in a dark street with some lighted shops. A crowd was milling round the lavatory-entrance, and I ~~wanted to pee badly~~ needed ~~needed to go in badly its services badly~~. People were pushing to get in, and the English decided that this couldn't go on. It had to be organised, in the name of fairness. They therefore arranged that people should go in in fives: no more than five at a time were to be allowed in. This created order but when the crowd had eased off the rule still remained, that only five at a time should enter. I still hadn't had been in, ~~my pee~~. But the rest of us couldn't make up the number of five: there were only four of us. I was railing against the English way of doing things, while we waited for a fifth ~~man~~ to come along.

In the end I pissed up against a shop. A couple passed and the man wanted to do the same: but his girl, with large bosoms, clung to his arm and said, 'No, I'm already late! And they walked on.

LS' America ~~is~~ for the lost and ~~the~~ damned? ~~(confession)~~ ~~[it presents the ideal community for the unresolved]~~ ~~he said~~

The Italian genius is such that life is always a game — ~~for him~~ to be played ~~[illegible]~~ earnestly or corruptly or mildly, according to ~~his~~ character.

+

I thought I found that very house the other day, quite near here. I saw the hill they crossed, just in front of the barn-window where we were watching. Nothing seemed to have changed. I saw the tiny courtyard from which we ~~saw~~ watched English soldiers flee, leaving their hats, radios and maps behind them; then the Germans ~~came~~ were in and peered around curiously.

From the hill, a farmhouse where a family ran out of a flaming haystack, screaming. +

DREAM (B) Insert

I never killed a man. I mean, I never sighted a rifle or machine-gun on one. I did believe I could have. Already, at that time, the desire for war had passed out of us: there has to be some personal anger for war. People lived in cities can't do it. I used to fire my guns on to a map reference, and watch the puff of smoke, before we advanced. This is more up a citizen's street. The results are more terrible. Finally, they are Hiroshima.

+

I say 'I never killed a man' like a question. Like someone waiting to be denounced.

+

~~For the Anglo-Saxon I've 'escaped' here (I mean,~~

America kept the world power — which was that of an arsenal ~~supplying arms~~ after 1945 by remaining an arsenal in an indefinite, and now 'cold', struggle with the east.

+

1941: collapse of France, England alone in a war against two military states comprising ~~over~~ about 300 million people; ~~1941: the~~ America, a bacchanalia of money-making.

+

In Siena yesterday, as we were coming out of a romanic church, a notice near the front giving a list of all the films showing in town.

+

It isn't the actual look of the cathedral in Siena that makes it the most serene ~~and intimate~~ church in Italy for me, but the mystery that ~~seems to be a combination of~~ combines bitter struggle, dust from the past and from commerce, a sternness and ferocity together with a compactness that comes from uninterrupted intimacy, and a fineness of imagination in a bewildering amalgam. The shaft of dusty sunlight on a wall reminded me of where I was born – the tramlines, the squalidly vivid shopfronts, the dust, the grimy houses; and the square outside, echoing with sounds, was like the stern back yard of a factory; and there was the sense of a university as well, the pale, lonely work, the slow, the intimate connection with silence; commerce, study, ~~power, above all~~ independence. ~~The heart of Tuscany: Florence is a battlefield by comparison.~~

+

When the oxen are led from ~~out of~~ the stall ~~into our tiny courtyard~~ downstairs to be put in the yoke they look like queens coming out into the light, tall and pure and white, blinking and wondering.

+

~~When a woman puts aside her culture to work and fight like a man she loses her sex.~~ A woman has a definite culture, magnificent and intricate, creating an atmosphere round her that is fabulous ~~and exciting, and~~ and rarely social, ~~rarely anything~~ or ~~do~~ even to do with dress and looks. French women have this culture to greatness. English women had it once, and will again after the present evil ~~evil~~ interregnum.

I noticed the women in Siena yesterday – a certain light curiosity and expectancy that reminds me of the French. They were the only Italian women Boswell got on with. ~~Siena was the only place he could settle~~

+

Livio the shepherd appeared yesterday with a calf of seven or eight months. He had arranged with Gino the peasant to keep it overnight in his stall with the two oxen, as it must go for slaughtering early this morning. It was due to the butcher in the square. People want tender meat these days and were prepared to pay for it. We said what a pity it was to kill a creature so young. It was a cow-calf — still small and baby-looking, with loose skin round the neck and skinny legs, the eyes wide and round. 'Yes!' Livio said. 'Poverini!' Poor creatures! But today people ate meat as never before. Not so long ago meat was a special dish — for Sundays and holidays. That was how he grew up. Now everybody, including his own family, ate meat at least once and sometimes twice a day. And the large cities had to be supported. So more and more beasts had to be slaughtered, even when it was really uneconomical — as it was in this case, since the calf would bring more than double the price in ten months' time. It was a situation, he said, that couldn't go on, unless they found a way of manufacturing meat in factories! They'd found ways of producing wine without grapes or — ! And the result, of course, was that the feeding of the animals was forced. What took six months, in terms of weight, now took two or three. This couldn't have a good effect on the quality of the meat, which lacked taste and fibre, and in the end it must have an effect on the race itself. What was the reason when you did not only inseminate cows and oxen on a large scale but reared the young in a forced way, with special foods, and even — they had started this in some countries — kept them in batteries like chickens, away from the light and natural air until they were ready for slaughter? You needed culture to make bones, liver, tissue, circulation — how far could you play about with that? In the old days you fed your animals to nature and they were slaughtered when they were strong, heavy, full-grown

beasts. The meat was tasty and substantial, and if the pasture was good it was tender as well. But nowadays there was a madness for meat, and the madness had to be satisfied. ~~if you wanted to remain in business.~~ "But what a pity!" he said, "what a pity to send off this beast to slaughter when by putting it out to pasture another year a more you could get twice or three times the weight, and much more tasty meat, too!" In the end, it must lead to animal-factories, where the breeding, feeding and slaughter were all centralised. But what would happen to the race? ~~he asked again.~~ It must get degenerate. Diseases would start. The doctors, as fast as they'd got round to one disease, would be faced with another. The effect of over-fed meat was also apparent in ~~the human liver~~ people: eat pork from a place where the pigs were kept more or less still all their lives, eating offal from a trough, and sooner or later your liver would feel it; whereas eat eingehale - wild boar - and you were all right, because that meat was healthy. To be healthy for the human ~~creature~~ digestion meat had to be ~~free and exercised~~ healthy itself. Just as we would go down the drain if we never took exercise, and gorged ~~instead~~ ourselves all day ~~instead~~, ~~and ate all the time~~ so do the animals. But human beings won't think of that side of it. In our present benighted ~~epoch they~~ state we leave everything for the next generation to solve.

+

~~As I say, the peasants know.~~ We await the collapse of the huge cities with their influenzas, ~~diet~~ dietary complaints, congested lungs and periodical intestinal plagues, of what the doctors magically call — because they can't account for them — 'virus' diseases ⊗ and with it the end of the city-civilisation. The winners will be the towns, which in every country are becoming stronger and more independent, as the first exodus from the huge cities begins.

The greatest problem are for the Anglo-Saxon countries, especially England, where the city stalks across the entire land, and an authentic country life hardly exists any more.

+

To ~~the classic middle-class mind~~ some people to expose yourself naked is to expose yourself in ~~your~~ darkness and boldness. To ~~the common people,~~ For others ~~the classic To the classic common mind of the common people~~ it is to expose yourself in goodness and light.

It is a matter of the experience each one has of himself.

+

The purer the middle-class, the greater the collapse. The most spectacular collapse in Europe since the last war — from the biggest empire ever to have existed to total dependence on another country (America) for its survival — has been that of England. This will be followed by the far more dreadful terrifying collapse of America, proportionately as its middle-class is the purest in the world, and least supported by the presence of any other.

+

The immigrant needs to keep America inwardly weak and hopeless, so that no one can say as they did in his own country, 'I'm better than you.'

~~Thus~~ No hierarchies — the secret of all survival — can form there.

+

A visit to America once a year, and an American passport, make him feel 'modern.' ~~In fact, he is a nineteenth-century renegade.~~ Whenever he goes he breeds a fear of the direct statement.

+

The immigrant understands almost at once, that ~~he can~~ if he smiles when he is really boiling with anger inside, ~~and he~~ he will

be put down as 'cheerful'. This is what he means by freedom.

+

By taking away the power of the direct statement from your children, you smash their nerves and perhaps distort their health for life.

Love is the one direct statement their lips will always try to form; and this will undo all your upbringing.

+

The Americans I know are so ready to love, ~~so wonderfully gentle~~ so gentle and considerate, that they must have grown up in the most unthinkable hatred.

+

The statement from a European, 'The Americans are children' means 'I am middle-class'

The American problem is one not of under-development but over-development. An common people know this.

+

Only the prodigy counts in America, ~~and more~~ He is then thrown on the rubbish heap, and another prodigy takes his place. So you have the picture of a few prodigies (changed several times a week) performing in front of a vast rubbish-heap.

+

The prodigy is a man who squanders his powers because he knows they haven't lasting value.

+

The total collapse of power is a great moment of grace to be awaited.

+

America presents an enormous problem to the rest of civilization: how to contain ~~the~~ her eruption when it comes.

+

I remember when we were issued with gas-masks at the time of Munich crisis, a year before the last war. They came

in square cardboard boxes rather like Baster egg boxes (the ones where you expected lots of caramels inside the egg) ~~[illegible]~~. I leaned out of the window on the warm September day and watched them being delivered at the houses opposite. Ours didn't come the first day: I think. I wondered what would happen if we were caught off the hop by hidden war — the other side of the street would be saved, we not. Then they ~~came to us~~ arrived. One per head, which meant we got five. I was alone in the house when they came. The gas-masks seemed flimsy, a bit of rubber and glass, and I tried mine on in front of the mirror in the room we ~~only~~ used on Sundays, with the settee and two armchairs, ~~there nothing changed~~. I tried to measure the gravity of the situation by gaying at myself with a gas-mask on. The elastic held it round one's head, and one could adjust the little metal strap to one's size. ~~And we~~ I stared through the great glass goggles. The mouthpiece was round, and pierced like that of a telephone. But it was impossible for me to penetrate ~~[illegible]~~ ~~the~~ that lovely autumn weather to the point of gravity. I couldn't make it ~~[illegible]~~ real. And I couldn't relate the mask to gas in any way. Everything was impossible a dream. The shops were full, the streets were hot and dusty, ~~the city~~ London was vast and full of the most intricate ~~things~~ systems ~~that~~ which it seemed impossible to interrupt. Being brought up in a city, I could only connect things with ~~a~~ dream-reality; it was like being brought up in a dream. The meat that came to the table had no connection with ~~the~~ living animals one saw in the fields ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ on holidays; the trams and buses and trains worked ~~[illegible]~~ by themselves, in a ~~system~~ schedule devised by no particular person; Monday was washing day, Thursday the day we had sausages, Friday was pay-day, Saturday the evening-out; ~~[illegible]~~ they weren't connected with dawn and dusk. And the gas-mask was ~~like~~ also something in a dream. The political pamphlets I used to read said they were useless — they wouldn't even protect you from a cold-germ. And so they were doubly unserious: first because the war would never happen, and secondly because they were useless ~~anyway~~. ~~A~~ They were perfect dream-things. ~~[illegible]~~ Stood ~~standing~~ in front of that mirror trying to look seriously like a child ~~[illegible]~~ in a gas-raid. But it only looked like someone ~~with~~ in a rubber

mask, ~~[illegible]~~ I gayed across the street, wondering. I seemed to spend most of my time wondering. I wondered what reality. What was it? What did it feel like? It never seemed to come down our street. I think this is what a city offers, a marvellous dream — marvellous because it is intricate and the fruit of long civilisation. Everything we did was surrounded by a fond and devout dream, that had grown out of the ages. Everything had its place in the dream and meant nothing apart from the dream: 'lettuce' meant the salad you had on Sunday afternoons; ~~in the summer, and also at lunch, rarely, when it was sweltering hot~~; sugar was what came in thick blue bags; Monday evening was a radio-programme called 'Monday night at Eight'; which was the clean smell and the whole being of Monday, realised in sound-form; the pile on the table-cloth was evening-time, when the white meal-cloth had been taken away. Reality was this dream. But one wondered, just the same. There was a perplexed pause in one, now and then. Some people cling to the dream all their lives — the real born city-people; they insist, hiding their eyes, it is reality. The tea is what comes in those silvery packets, with coloured labels; fish comes wrapped in newspaper, ~~etc.~~ Or ~~One can emerge~~ gradually from the dream. Much ecstasy is lost. But reality is also a marvellous inheritance, because it was made by God, ~~and dreams aren't.~~ Sooner or later the city-dream grows too big, and the perplexity in people's faces grows, until no one is capable of making reality any more with his own hands and his own brain. England? America?

+

It has been raining, with thunderstorms and wind, for three weeks or more, after a ~~very doubtful~~ weird troubled spring. This has never been heard of in Italy — not in June. In And the winter was equally abnormal: heavy snowfalls, and recurrent frosts, over a period of two months or more; biting winds as late as April. For years now the old Italian spring, that should begin — in its first intimate signs —

as early as February and March, ~~in the south~~, has been lacking. Ordinary people say, 'It must be something we've been doing since the war — atom bombs and missiles — they disturb the atmosphere!' Middle-class people say, 'The world's going mad! That's the explanation!'

The city-dream ~~grows first from~~ is born out of the latter, historically. In the end, it makes an idiot.

+

~~When a pagan flings out of a relationship, pouting and wild, never to return, unyielding to appeals, it is because he (but usually she) can't rise to the~~

The proud who fling out of a relationship, pouting and wild, never to return, unyielding to appeals, do so because they can't rise to the feelings of love they've aroused, and secretly know this.

+

America is 'free.' You can think, say, claim what you like. The line is drawn only at violence and personal insult. You can say you want to 'burn' literature, or 'create' it for the first time. You can say you're an empire in yourself, the first philosopher, the last; that music must 'speak'; that you have come to make the ~~first~~ first music out of 'silence'. ~~that you~~ You're 'free'; after all: why not? The result is that everything dies, all language, even the earth; all form. ~~The result is formlessness.~~ And even all these ideas — from burning literature to making silence — came from form: other people's.

+

~~The American joins clubs, chases new ideas, throws~~ ~~[illegible]~~ The American comes to Europe to find form. A hopeless adventure.

+

Freedom is a form.

+

~~I talk so much about~~ America ~~because the~~ has been the only active society since the war: rejecting her (a part of ourselves) is ~~our first~~ a step to our own active society.

+

The first thing that money-anxiety kills is sex. It happens to us once a month or so. 'The money hasn't arrived yet' — fearful words.

This is why the Italians are still less interested in sex than other peoples: la miseria.

+

A dream: lying back in a cart behind the great flanks of a horse, on a road like the one outside, gravelled, with cobbles underneath; on a hot, still day; ~~a~~ my hat tipped forward over my eyes, the reins loose in my hands.

+

England for the last two hundred years, and America since she came into being, have tried to take the splendour out of life.

~~Of course, the attempt was doomed from the beginning.~~

+

~~She said,~~ 'I hate the English. They are stand-offish and cruel to children.'

~~He~~ speaker's place of birth: Berlin.

+

Livio the shepherd won't leave milk any more because we complained to our neighbours that he gave us bad cheese: or rather, it wasn't bad but two or three weeks too young, so that much of it was liquid, and it weighed ~~[illegible]~~ 3 etti more than it would when mature.

I met him in the village yesterday, on the feast of

Warsaw, Berlin, Stalingrad, Rimini, New York.

+

After this attempt at world-culture ~~(which is~~ (or world-murder), we may all go home again and live our own lives, with our children, speaking our own language, talking over our own fire in the evening: this will happen fast in America, perhaps first.

+

The collapse of America, the deluge which will all but flood the world, will mean the end of the lines of communication: people will go home again.

+

Americans are men serving a life-sentence for crimes that they cannot quite specify: they will be allowed to return home again, soon.

+

In a way, Americans have served their life-sentence for us. ~~But prison~~ Long confinement changes people, ~~they have to leave~~ for good.

+

The collapse of America won't even be noticed.

+

I took a bath in a hotel yesterday and was excited at the civilisation. I looked at everything as if I'd been away from it for years, whereas it has only been a month. And the books on the dressing-table. I opened two of them. The village just outside the window, where we are known by everybody, looked far away, as if I'd never seen it before. I read some of one book: by an American; fragments about the deluge, murder, and life-sentence; a deluxe edition; in Europe he wouldn't even find a publisher, which would at least keep him sane.

Everything shone in the room: the fake wood (compensate, or hardboard, covered with a wood-veneer, sometimes paper covered with

11.

Corpus Christi', and asked him, 'What shall the milk today?' He was dressed in his best, with a neat trilby hat and feather. 'Ah,' he said, 'I forgot it — today being a holiday!' They were just strewing flower-petals down the middle of the street for the procession. I made a mock lunge (lunge) at him and he laughed in his bashful way.

He will forgive me for his having done something bad to me.

+

The peasant across the road who is sometimes jokingly called 'il mafioso' [— the mafia man —] because of his stocky, brigand look told us yesterday that at one time, before the war, the procession of Corpus Christi was a marvellous affair, with the whole square in front of the church packed with people, and the church itself a mountain of flowers. But the pope of that time decreed that communists were to be excommunicated, so nearly all the men began to stay away; now you see the church half-empty, and the Corpus Christi procession is mostly of the children, who go carrying their lilies, dressed in their communion white. People won't communists because they didn't believe in God, he said, but because they wanted a good deal of the peasants.

His eyes shone when he talked about the old Corpus Christi processions.

+

For the pagan, the world 'suddenly' turns on him. 'They suddenly started shouting at me!' He can't see how he could have aroused such indignation.

+

The toll of the world war: 50 million Europeans; 170 million Americans.

The cities razed to the ground between 1935 and 1945:

veneer, Pietro's brother — a carpenter — told us last week), and the marble which looked fake because of the presence of all the other things in the room, the uncomfortable signorile beds, made to impress the peasant but not to sleep tired foreigners, the water tap which is already half-off, the dim lights; and the books, that try to speak to us.

I lay in the bath and dreamed what ~~the ideal~~ a pleasant city: I mean, the city where everybody else ~~would be~~ is a dreamer, too. But the dream would be the object, not an ~~side~~ idiot effect.

~~'Ideal' is a dirty word; one should say 'pleasant'.~~

The city is always an attempt. Dreams begin in a town, and make the town grow. People flock there, to participate in the dream. But by then it's too big, the tender requirements of dreaming have been ~~ravaged~~ broken.

Art tends towards the city — towards its creation. The cities, which will have to be smashed up to make way for fields again, have come out of our dreams. ~~Still~~ Aren't we ~~never be~~ ever going to be still! What a terrific amount of unrest, to arrive at Christianity.

+

We need to get there like the Etruscans and Greeks: already the name 'Christianity' seems unnecessary. We need to be so religious that we are in the godhead, and everything we do is like a prayer. There you get the Etruscan and early Greek smile. Christ has spent all this time trying to bring us round to that.

+

We shall take our trousers down and throw them away. It will only be funny as long as we can still see the trousers. When they've rotted and weeds are growing up by them (better still, a crop) it won't seem funny at all.

Skirts as well!

Christ is waiting, with his Etruscan smile.

Try to exercise power, be offended, with somebody, with your trousers down. Then Christ will begin.

Yet you could write a book with your trousers down. Say a prayer. Kiss. Smile: a smile is especially favourable.

There are nowadays women-conductors, women-priests. But music, like religion, isn't a branch of ethics. To do this listen to music & believe in God in order to be good.

Women can't be leaders, except ethically. Like Joan of Arc. They have no ~~head~~ need to lead. They are, ~~in themselves.~~ ~~Sexual dolls are always thrown to those who do lead, for this reason.~~

Even a wicked smile is favourable: it is in the right direction.

Truth can never be thought & written by the sexually perverse.

I have never been to America.

Women lead by being.

At Babylon I can't remember if I really had a sense of marvellous liquid richness, from the trees and the past, or whether it was the words, ~~'I sat down by the waters of Babylon'~~ By the waters of Babylon I sat down and wept' I ~~which came~~ that came into my head and made me feel it.

I saw no waters. Only trees and rich foliage, following a river-course that might be dried up now. And a dusty village near by. A woman with her veil drawn up to her eyes

watched us.

Going to Babylon was like driving towards heaven all morning. The road was bumpy and if I remember right went between trees at certain places, close to a river, and ~~through~~ across open desert. We ~~didn't see a soul~~ saw no one the whole way.

+

~~Pietro~~ Gianni and his brother ~~Luigi~~ Lorenzo burst in — are we going to Siena? Yes. When? In half-an-hour. Can ~~Pietro and a friend~~ ~~Gianni~~ ~~you~~ get a lift us far as the village? Yes, Luigi will go on his own motorcycle. 'Be careful!' I say with a laugh. 'Ah!' Luigi says, taking my meaning, 'I'm loaded — son' caricato — devo scaricarmi! I must unload myself!'

'He isn't capable!' Pietro shouts. 'His pipe is that small —!'

'But full — Dio buono, full!' Another great laugh, swinging round on his toes, plump and red-cheeked with health, ~~and goodness~~ his eyes beaming.

'No, no, don't believe him — he isn't capable — he doesn't know what to do with it — it just isn't big enough — if there's a vertical entrance — a horizontal one, he doesn't know the difference!'

And here Lorenzo ~~Luigi~~ gives a bashful glance up the stairs to see if there are any women ~~who~~ who might overhear.

Then with another burst of laughter, they are gone.

It reminds me of sunlit Sundays ten years ago, near Rome, before Italy broke completely with her past... The same loud vigorous voices, and the stillness outside, the sparkling light.

+

~~Pietro says~~ Gianni claims he goes to Poggibonsi twice ~~a week and~~ spends a thousand lire each time on a tall, handsome ~~young woman~~ whore with fine legs, ~~who takes him home with her~~. He told me this out of earshot of ~~white~~ my wife. ~~was away for a few days.~~ He doesn't like the idea of ~~making~~

going home with a girl; ~~in a respectable basis~~ he says ~~to his mum~~ ~~mamma~~ being officially engaged: You approach the girl's father, and if he agrees to you being engaged he visits you home, and this is the first of many long, ~~boring~~ tedious visits to ~~which you are~~ throughout life. He doesn't want that, he says. And this woke, a small, dark woman worked in the home, about, ~~waiting for it.~~ 'When is he going to marry?' 'When are you going to do a deal for my work?' As ~~you~~ leaves all the work / the padrone — ~~the boss~~ in the vines, the olives, the vegetables and ~~the cutting / the peace~~, as well as the cleaning / the stables — ~~for~~ ~~elder brother~~, Alberto, ~~while his younger brother works as a carpenter in the village.~~ They ~~take~~ a little ~~advantage~~ of him. He is 'back and forward', they say, ~~feed~~. But he has imagination, 'fantasia'. He used to paint marvellously as a child; And they respect this. He has a special path to tread, they say, and they don't know what this is. Now does he.

He came with us / to Siena, ~~stayed~~, alone. He / Italian company is ~~changing~~. It is all outside. There isn't any interior. It is all noticing ~~things~~ outside, ~~in~~ ~~they~~ flooded by. (piecemeal) / ~~but~~ ~~he~~ / in the Italian way; without sustained ~~and~~ ~~exciting~~ ~~he~~ / ~~and~~ ~~he~~ / ~~and~~ ~~he~~ / ~~and

produce of the land — the grain, corn, wine, olive oil, vegetables — all goes to ~~Pietro's~~ Gianni's family; and ~~forty-seven~~ fifty-three percent of the money derived from the sale of the cattle (what from head a year) goes to ~~the padrone~~ them as well — the rest ~~this~~ is all the padrone gets. So ~~Pietro's~~ Gianni's family has a house (which though they despise it ~~the which~~ is solid, with massive walls and a sturdy roof) standing in a field perched high among the woods, for which they pay no rent, plus all the food, wine and oil they need for the year, plus an income; ~~to keep themselves;~~ while the padrone pays the taxes as the land, because he owns it. Worked out on paper, the family is better off than any industrial working family; ~~worker;~~ though it is true the worker gets health ~~the official~~ benefits & pension, which the peasant doesn't.

The peasant has doesn't ~~never~~ know yet what it means to be disinhaited, to pay for everything he needs, to and get nothing by love or habit or natural right: ~~he only sees the cars the workers drive in~~ he only sees the cars flash by and says, 'Ah — signori!' — gentlemen! The other world of gentlemen!

Give the peasant palaces of gold, remove every trace of miseria from Italy, clean up the south, and he will still ~~see~~ lie and dream, 'The city, the city!'

+

I imagine Babylon marvellously cool after the desert, with the sound of bells, and the air sparkling between the roofs, with the same flat terraces that you see today in Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo.

+

When we got back from Siena it was dark, and we found ~~Pietro's~~ Gianni's brother, ~~Angelino~~ Alberto, and ~~Livio~~ Paolo the shepherd, working on the ~~road that leads~~ rocky path up the hill; ~~to the houses;~~ the endless flows of water this year have mined the gullies, and they have to be cleared out every week or so. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni had got out of

the car fifty yards back, to visit Pelapanquale. ~~a friend~~ ~~pahaps~~ he knew his brother was working there, and wanted to avoid reproach. His brother said quietly to me in the darkness, pushing at his long spade, 'Did my brother come back with you?'

Everyone seems to ~~bridge~~ grudge Gianni ~~him~~ this journey to Siena. ~~Pahaps they're afraid we'll corrupt him,~~ finally. I believe he makes ~~me~~ much of these journeys with us — even the ones into the village: it is ~~he wants to show us off as his friends~~: a kind of new social position. Sergio who lives a little further down the road ~~Dino~~, next door, joked also with his wife & son, joked about it as Gianni got out of the car, he was ~~sunburned~~ and cried to us, 'it, standing in the darkness, spare and ~~swathy~~,' 'If you're going to take him to Siena, take me as well! I love Siena!'

Siena ~~seems to~~ shines for them, distantly. And it has started to for us, too: The glittering city.

Yet ~~there are lots of~~ everybody has a car or motorcycle locally. Paolo ~~Livio~~ the shepherd has a car ~~one~~. ~~Pietro, brother Luigi~~ Lorenzo has a motorcycle; so has ~~Silvano~~ Renato, ~~Dino~~ Sergio's son, who works at a marble ~~factory~~ yard in ~~Poggibonsi~~ Certaldo. Yet they never go to Siena, Florence, much less Lucca, Pisa.

Our trips are different: ~~They are trips to the fabulous.~~ ~~And~~ the neighbours seem to say, 'Please ~~At least~~ put us on the ~~a~~ rosta — for your trips to the fabulous!' We are like passports to the city for them.

~~Gino the peasant here in our own courtyard~~ Gigi cried as we were starting out, said when we started out, with Gianni in the back of the car, smiling in his abashed way, 'You're not taking him to Siena? Make him walk!' Then laughed in his boyish, throaty way.

+

The thunderstorms continue. Rain more or less night and day, with bursts of very hot sunshine. Danger for the vines; and the grain is late.

The world is supposed to be divided between two men. But we don't feel their power — no more than the movement of a leaf. There is no power left in the world. Here are two men

sunk in nineteenth-century ambition, going through a nineteenth century performance ~~to~~ without a breath of power. We only need to wait a little.

+

I forgot to say that ~~[illegible]~~ Paolo the shepherd brings the milk again.

+

Rebellion is always in a tradition: ~~this~~ never madness. Christ was in a tradition of messiahs: a form awaited him — the form of parables and healing miracles, the promise to deliver Israel. The rebel always chooses, and always respects, a form. Tradition is never a bad word for him.

+

Everybody is delighted and flattered by ~~Pietro~~ Gianni. The peasants smile. Imagination casts a great light.

+

~~Pietro~~ Gianni looks a little Scandinavian. ~~the vivacious, freckled, slightly blond type you have in Italy sometimes.~~ I remember the same thing in ~~Stefanella, in a family I knew in Rome:~~ ~~another Italian, near~~ a young Roman girl — the same wild, freckled, clowning nature, with blue eyes that seem to open into space when they laugh. The blond Italian: Dashing, restless people. They will burn life quickly if given a chance. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni's father came from the Veneto, and so (people say) he may have a touch of Austrian blood. His father died young in the last war, transporting ammunition for the Germans, walking ~~before~~ behind ~~with~~ the cart; ~~two oxen, and a cart;~~ he stepped on a mine; had he been leading the oxen instead of following behind the cart he wouldn't have been killed.

+

In Siena we saw boys rehearsing for the palio: beating drums, throwing flags high in the air, ~~and~~ catching them, swinging round with their flags twirling. People looked on in an unconcerned way. We were fascinated by their costumes and looked at

them closely as they passed: in every detail they are the same as in mediaeval times, like the palio itself. The Sienese are fierce; you can see it in the eyes of their young — a certain daring and impulsiveness, which nowadays isn't used, except in quick family encounters. Like much of the Sienese countryside, the city itself has changed little since mediaeval times. The middle ages were its baptism, as they were the baptism of all Europe, except we can hardly see it now.

+

I was excited to hear that the Etruscans settled this valley, along the road that runs outside, called the Elsa valley.

+

I went cherry-picking with Gianni yesterday, along narrow, dusty lanes, high up among thick woods and cornfields, where the sun goes down late. It was just on the way down when we left, disappearing behind a vast plain, like a table over the world. We passed the lane where his father was killed; there are a marble slab. B. Vittorio, died here tragically in July, 1941. Then we went on to where the family lived 20 years ago: A grey, tumbledown house with all its bricks and stones showing, the courtyard overgrown with tall grass, the steps up to the door entangled in weeds; a man's jacket half hanging out of an open window. We climbed a tree and picked a basket full of cherries, not quite ripe because of the late summer. Vines were tangled with the tree, and there were clusters of grapes in embryo. Noises came from the woods which I involuntarily thought were traffic noises, but they were birds. Everything stands quiet and withheld, in a dignity that excludes us altogether.

+

In the middle of the rain and thunderstorms last week a priest said on the radio or television, 'Summer will come — and stay — on June 17th!' That was three days ago: since the morning of June 17th it has been hot with a blazing sun, and the temperature is now normal for this time of year. I've been reluctant to write this down, for fear of tempting the gods to bring the storms back.

Two guesses about the priest: he has divine insight; he knows somebody high up in the government, who knows what missile or nuclear practices in the Mediterranean.

+

Due to the hot weather, Gianni is working again. A day's work makes him disgruntled and resentful. He came in the dark yesterday, on the back of his brother's motor cycle, to deposit two bags of grain in one of our outhouses, to be picked up later by Paolo the Shepherd. He tugged at Lorenzo's cycling jacket and said, nodding towards me, with a flickering, hurt smile, 'Which of us is fortunate, eh? Is he all right or not? Tell me!' And Lorenzo disclaimed the question, turning away. The work is an affront for him: a personal insult; he has a horror, like many Italians, of getting his hands dirty; the best thing about my work, in his eyes, is that I don't get my hands dirty. Hence the exodus to the towns. Actually they get their hands dirtier in a factory than on the land, but it's fashionable dirt. This morning Gianni came bright and early, as I was washing the dishes: his face was clear and untroubled again. He'd slept well.

+

Clouds again. I looked out of the window just now and thought was: 'I shouldn't have written anything about the weather!' (This is how paganism justified itself).

+

The sun has gone completely again.

We heard some Renascence music on our portable radio: ~~the ...~~ ~~evening~~ dances, with pipes, cymbals. It was so lovely that all I could think was, ~~As~~ the grace and tenderness have passed out of us; We don't know how bleak and damned we are; and We can't discover — except by compassion. ~~We have a long road to travel.~~ A man who three a few centuries ago split someone's head open with his sword had more tenderness and quiet, more ~~silly~~ ~~passion~~ love and ~~more lovely~~ humour, than we have, with our ~~civic tea~~ peaceful hands.

+

The sun is out and resplendent. I ~~lay~~ lie on the terrace naked, gazing at the woods that rise above the house.

+

~~At~~ The butcher the other day: ~~he said~~, 'You should go ~~there~~ Certaldo — it's very interesting, some wonderful ruins and old houses!' ~~Absentmindedly~~ Absentmindedly, not really intending ~~concentrating~~ it, I said, 'È bello?' — is it nice? 'Bello!' he said in a baffled tone. 'No, no, not at all — only the modern can be bello for me!' Solo il moderno!

+

~~Gino~~ Gigi has long arguments with the oxen when he arrives in the morning. 'Good God — Dio buono! — what the devil have you been doing here?', as he pushes open the door and enters the dark stall. 'Your chain all twisted! And look — look! The mess down there! Up! ~~Up there!~~ Up! What a fine night you've had! Porca la Madonna!' ~~Madonna!~~ Of course, they don't answer.

~~One morning they came in from collecting forage and immediately~~ After he'd taken the ~~heavy wooden~~ ~~holster~~ yoke off them this morning ~~the tallies of the~~ one of them ~~two~~ stepped up into the stall without waiting, ~~and began walking in~~, trailing his ~~ropes~~ halter-ropes behind him. Gino watched ~~him~~ her and said quietly: 'All right — now you're ~~come~~ going in — what are you going to do?' He meant to say, how was she going to extricate herself from the ~~...~~ ropes? And for answer the beast stopped, gazing before her, vast and queenly, a tower of white in the dark stable, admitting she was puzzled: and ~~Gino~~ Gigi then bent down and untied her.

+

The romanic church at Cellole is dark like a tunnel, with thick pillars down on either side ~~to the chancel~~. At the door there is the sign ~~sign~~

The common people are an endless queue waiting to enter the middle class. Their values are the same, only they don't live by them, though they would like to.

+

I mean by the collapse of the middle class when everybody is middle class.

+

When everybody is middle-class money will no longer be a passport; ~~to anything~~ then there is the question 'How should we live?'

+

~~The American middle class (that is, all Americans) drew in back in 1945 into the money-society of the nineteenth century by being~~ America in 1945 was a privileged class living at a level roughly three times higher than that of the rest of the Christendom. Therefore the rest of Christendom became a kind of lower class. ~~While this lasted — even the old aristocracies, between 1945 and abt 1965.~~

Only for themselves were the Americans on the threshold of the ~~moneyless~~ classless society. ~~because they had achieved the universal middle class.~~ But not for the rest of us. ~~Therefore~~ 'America' as a power in the world (privilege) was quite different from 'America' as the place people ~~[illegible]~~ lived in.

The discrepancy between the two ~~[illegible]~~ Americas had ~~the rest of~~ Christendom in complete confusion for twenty years after the last war.

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Even now when I hear of an American, even a relative, ~~I know~~ she's just out of college, married, her husband bought her a two-seater Chevrolet for a wedding present, she's flying to New York this week, she has a nice job in ~~a factory~~ Washington — I experience that tingle of confused awe and resentment ~~of privilege~~ which I long ago ceased to feel towards ~~the~~ richer and ~~the~~ more privileged people in my own county. All my own countymen, including the millionaires, ~~and certainly~~

of Solomon's knot. Not one of the pillars is uniform. The altar is dark, dark, ~~with a~~ only just developed ~~come~~ from a sacrificial altar. Everything lies in the darkness of first thought, ~~where [illegible] form~~ grow. There is the first calm and astonishment of Christ, after paganism — the first moment. Nothing is clear yet. Everything is growing. The darkness is necessary for that. The pagan itches to sacrifice perhaps a twinge from the past — but, inside, there is this calm. He has to learn it slowly.

There is a young priest with glasses, like a Russian in his quick movements, with ~~and~~ his talkative mother, tiny and clear-spoken.

After that first moment of conversion ~~is the test: the dawn.~~ Everything wakes up slowly, like flowers in the morning. The sunlight begins to pour through the open doors, down into the tunnel between the pillars, towards the wounded altar, where there are ~~are~~ slender ancient columns, ~~[illegible] only one of which remains.~~ [Gradually the hill-top wakes up; outside the door there is an avenue of trees, ~~as well~~ in line with the pillars. The sunlight will be hot and blinding. It touches the church like a baptism. It seems like ~~Here it is~~ the first light there ever was. ~~the baptism: the moment we always return to; the most important experience we had — the touch of light, here and there all through our lives, baptising our moments into themes.~~

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The German only knows one way of redressing a crime: by committing another. This isn't because he's bad but because morality means law for him, not tenderness. ~~Therefore~~ His crimes proliferate endlessly. [There again, the change will come soon. There isn't long to wait, ~~It only needs the end of law: [illegible] of life based on law and~~ before Germany can return to the innocence; that is, return home. It only needs the end of law.

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The middle-class everywhere would have collapsed abruptly in 1945, but it was kept alive by America: it only needed a visit to America to revive the nineteenth-century dream of government by ideas.

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INSERT

NOTES FROM SIENA

~~I've never been to America.~~ I mean by America the moral society: the country started by a moral attitude. ~~For me, the living hell.~~

~~First~~, The publicity-history of America as taught in the schools: a group of ~~Americans~~ English pioneers settled in Virginia; America came into being; it continued to be taxed by the English king, unjustly, as a colony, and fought for its independence against English forces.

The facts: a group of Puritan English gentlemen settled the country as colonists; their first struggles were shielded by ~~and~~ English colonial forces; when they were safe and established, taxes for the maintenance of these forces were still expected; and a rebellion was staged against the tiny force of hired German soldiers that was under English command. The American War of Independence was fought at Westminster — by men like Fox — and George III graciously accepted the results of his typically German blunders.

the dukes, generals and impresarios, are a lower-class for me.

+

The problem for Americans is that at the moment of going home they will have no home to go to. ~~That will be the eruption.~~ But the home will be found, deeply interior, fragile as a dream, drawn most from ~~the~~ ranch-memories. ~~of the Nineties.~~

+

~~Livio~~ Paolo the shepherd will be moving soon. He has made 'millions' ~~of lire~~, Pietro told me. He did it by ~~making~~ means of 'sacrifices': as shepherd's life has no holidays, and ~~Pietro~~ Paolo never had less than a hundred sheep at a time. Five years ago 'he was nothing.' He isn't on mezzadria, like most of the other peasants here, that is, committed to giving the padrone half — ~~actual~~ now forty-seven per cent — of his yield. He has made his money slowly, trickle by trickle — on his ~~pecorino~~ cheese, his ricotta, his sheep for butcher's meat; apart from that he has oxen, and sells them for veal; and pigs. He pays little for the rent of his house — perhaps sixty thousand lire a year. He has a regular deal with one of the hotels in the village to sell them pecorino cheeses. Now he'll move to ~~San Gimignano~~ the village, ~~or at least nearer, to San Gimignano~~ ~~and perhaps~~ to become a butcher himself.

There are three families on the hill above us — ~~Livio's~~ Paolo's, ~~Pietro's~~ Gianni's and another belonging to a family ~~which mixes little~~ on mezzadria. ~~and one another.~~ ~~Livio~~ Paolo and the ~~other~~ mezzadria family both mean to move; leaving only ~~Pietro's~~ Gianni. ~~In a short time the Italian countryside will be a desert.~~

~~Livio has a sharp, Etruscan face with large, still eyes, and there is little expression in his face, except perhaps a trace of fear. He would throw himself into a panic for ten lire. He's rarely in the village. When he is he walks alone. His wife, a pretty young woman, with a fine, soft skin, has just given birth to a second child, and looks exhausted. He doesn't seem to let her rest.~~ She has a flinching, self-doubting look, as if ~~she yearns~~ yearning for society. 'It's too isolated here!' she says. There is only the ~~wood~~ forest, at the edge

of their field; and the sound of pigs rooting close to the house.

Paolo seems quite un-Italian. But then a determined money-maker never seems to belong to his own country.

+

~~'Money!' Pietro said today. 'A beautiful thing!' It means travelling where you like, eating when and what you like, keeping what company.~~

STET

A letter from Paris: the thrill of seeing French writing. Ecstatic and intimate. The dream realised by an ancient society. The Aristocracy inherited by everyone: like a kiss.

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Living here feels like our first taste of reality.

+

My only way forward was by clowning. Well, happily I enjoy clowning.

Clowning is the last resort of a thwarted imagination.

+

~~Pietro burst in a usual this morning, for the second time, didn't~~ I was writing and turned him a grave face. 'Smile!' he said. 'What's happened? Something's wrong?' 'No, no!' I said. I wanted to say I was doing something serious. But it would take two years to explain — a grave face said more in a moment.

~~Then when he'd gone I dived upstairs~~

~~New forms, atonal-tonal-toneless music, new theatre, new arts —~~

+

New forms, new artistic expressions, atonal music, — non-visual painting, non-tonal music, non-verbal writing: the middle-class loves new gadgets. They are for people with time heavy on their hands, and money to spend. ~~One way of looking away from Nemesis.~~

+

~~Art follows on life.~~ There isn't any reason to sponsor or encourage art. You may as well sponsor sleep or love.

+

~~A man with something to say just says it.~~

~~Form follows after.~~

A hungry man cries out, 'I'm hungry!' He doesn't spend an hour choosing his form of speech.

+

A marvellous sunset. We walked up the hill and looked across the whole vast Elsa valley. The few light clouds were bright yellow, like all the midsummer afternoons one had ever known as a child. And towards the sea the sky was deep blue on one side and the colour of the sea itself on the other, a light greenish blue. The ~~Pistoia~~ hills of the Pesa valley were dim and peaceful in the distance. The houses down below, including our own, shone red. There was a nightingale close to ~~Dino's~~ Sergio's house, and a few cicadas, and the raucous sound of frogs.

+

Those who are outraged by you understand you well enough. Only they're afraid to overhaul their lives, which your ideas would require.

+

I was surprised last night when ~~Dino~~ Sergio told me that he also was leaving soon with his family. * The house, ~~which is~~ a few yards down the road, will ~~then~~ stand empty. Together with three other families he has bought some land on the outskirts of the village, and ~~the~~ a house for all four of them is being built now. He won't have a garden to speak of, as he has now. And he'll be five miles further from his work. ~~He'll have~~ There will be two rooms, plus a kitchen and a bathroom. He's never had a bathroom before.

+

That will leave us with no near neighbours at all.

With friends yesterday at a tiny hillside church. Standing in the garden there was a large terracotta coppo, a pot used once for storing oil, and now quite fashionable for garden, they wanted it at once — to stand in their own courtyard. ~~to put in a lemon-tree in for their garden.~~ The priest — a small, resentful-looking fellow, without much heart — ~~'dry' young man, as the Italians would say, not fluid in temper~~ — said crisp that he'd ~~just picked this~~ bought this one from a nearby peasant, and didn't want to sell it. But, he said, we could try a certain Antonio down the road, in the house beyond the wayside shrine: he had several, and one of them was as large as this. We went down and inspected the thing in the man's chicken-house: black with filth but still serviceable. He would give it a clean-up, he said. He was a thin, dark, erect young man with the large Etruscan eyes, his face was able — ~~and the ability which~~ I've noticed this more than once ~~in this countryside among the peasants~~ here — to look suddenly questing and joyful, though in fact it is ~~being~~ neither in itself, but seems to make a ~~in a kind of~~ throw-back to those first Etruscan years of grace centuries ago, when even the common people had a culture; so it seems from their ~~nakedness in their~~ naked dances, because nakedness has to be shared, it can never be made into a ~~exclusive, a~~ privilege. ~~Sometimes you get the same look — the eyes become wide and dark, and the face loses all its waywardness — the neck is longer, the back straight, while the man is bargaining about his oxen, his grain or — as in this case — his blasted pots.~~ We asked him to name a price: no, no, he said at once, laying shyly, he didn't have an idea! He would enquire, and we would enquire, and then we'd come back after we'd both enquired. ~~in a few days (minus the friends — we would do the bargaining for the friends).~~ We did enquire, but no one had any idea: the pots used to be made at a place called Impruneta, near Florence, but now they aren't used, ~~except by 'signori' in their garden, for lemon-trees or oleanders.~~ So we returned to the priest who was out. ~~He was not working on the land; he has two parishes, and therefore two Poderi, and there is only he and his father to do the work.~~

~~So he's out until eight or eight-thirty every evening. We went a second time, and caught him just as he was returning from the fields, looking rather hurt and resentful at having worked with his hands.~~ So Down to the peasant again ~~What does he say?~~ He hasn't shaved for two days and considering that he works out of doors all day he could look healthier ~~in the face than he does.~~ The strange dark Etruscan light breaks on his face as he smiles — yes, he's cleaned the pot! We must come and see it! There it stands, remote and mellow-looking, in the courtyard. How much will we offer? I say five thousand. No, no, una sciocchezza! — that's a trifle, he says at once. Much more, he wants. How much? Well, He's heard from the priest that, well, these things are — well, quite in demand ... We stand there patiently, waiting for the dirge we've heard so many times. ~~been hearing all our lives for eight years or more to end.~~ I ask, 'Well, how much!' And he says softly, 'Una trentina di mille!' 'Just a little' thirty thousand. The priest, he says, gave that much for his. (Extraordinary this! — a priest in his condition gets forty thousand lire a month and has to keep a family on it). He couldn't, by the terms of his own conscience, let it go for less than thirty — certainly not less than 25 — or 20 at the very minimum. Such things were precious, he said (he had no idea a week before that there could exist anywhere in the world a person poor enough to give money for a dirty, useless pot which has been standing in his chicken-run for twenty years or more, always alert to be thrown away). And He was sure of being able to sell the thing at his price later on. And — to tell the truth (this meant he was going to tell a lie, which he did) — he was only offering it for sale because he was moving house soon and didn't want to take it with him.

So we turn away. 'Niente da fare!' After a few brief goodbyes, during which he offers us something to drink and we refuse, we leave. A telephone-call to the friend: 'Offer him 15000!' they say. We go to the prior a second time. Again he's out: at work on his land. But just as we divine out of the courtyard he divines

In the [illegible] He doesn't pause when he sees us, but drives straight to ~~the~~ his door. Nor does he even turn when we walk up to him. He's ~~is with his father and his wife, and neither of them glance at us; they're~~ used to visitors — in fact, they ~~are~~ plagued ~~with them~~ him because ~~their~~ his church is of historic interest. ~~The world outside this little hill is rich, idle and inconsequent for them.~~ When I spoke he turned from unloading the car, ~~looking~~ seeming hurt and resentful at the idea of having worked with his hands. What ungratiful devils the Italians are! I thought. They have this marvellous sun that pours down, seeds spring up like magic, they have wine and oil and, nowadays, plenty to eat: but the dirge goes on — they work, the rest of the world is a signore! All foreigners are signori: 21 million 'gentlemen' come to Italy every year to be soaked of their money (which they may have saved up for five or ten years, just for this trip of a lifetime). That the 'gentlemen' could have interests, could want to see Italy, is impossible: for Italy has no culture, no dream, no interests; that all went out with the remnants of the aristocracy, centuries ago, at the time of the post-reformation; the church took command of those things, and left — work; eating, drinking, sleeping. So what are all these foreigners ~~doing~~ come to see ~~seeing~~ at my bare stone walls, have you, and gape at dirty pieces of clay and broken torsos, and a filthy palace that leaks rain, and ~~a~~ bits of manuscript and painted canvas that should have been burned long ago in the name of sanitation? Very well, if ~~they~~ you want to put on airs, and coo, and ~~bleat~~ try to persuade you be interested in such things, I'll smile too — but you'll pay for it, and smile at you as if you were a pretty wall-painting, if there's any paying to be done! let them pay for it! They want something, they use money like water, let them ~~spring~~ sprinkle a drop of water on you! Smile back at them, bare your teeth (that's how it's done, apparently), and they cough up! I asked about the copper. What price should we pay? He stood

And this was the trend of what the priest had to stay, ~~standing there~~ there with his sleeves rolled up, his arms frail and pale underneath the day's sunburn, and then he talked. First he was busy, he said, very busy — and therefore didn't know as much about these things as he should.

Yes, I replied, you're very much 'in giro' – you go around a lot. 'No, no, he was quick to reply.' I'm not going round – I work!' And he gave me a fanatical look. And I told him I ~~knew already that he had two podere to work, at which he nodded salkily, with the memory of his day's talus fresh on his mind.~~

~~I told him~~ 'I've offered the peasant 5000 lire,' I said ~~for his blasted pot~~ – 'Not that it's ~~was~~ my affair.' ~~And~~ At once he ~~said~~ replied in his day, hard, way, without a trace of charity ~~anywhere~~ in his ~~being~~ face. 'No, no, 5000 is a sciocheyja! No, no, they're worth much more than that!' I replied to this: 'I offered him 5000, and he said 30, ~~one~~ – so perhaps we both ~~made a mistake~~ exagerrated a little?' No – no, he didn't think the peasant had ~~made a mistake~~ exagerrated: 30,000 was quite right. After all, these things were coming into demand (a lie). His mother had told him that many tourists had exclaimed at the pot ~~standing by the fruit~~ in his garden (a lie). They weren't producing them any more (a lie). They had great historical interest (a lie) because they were hundreds of years old ~~(a lie)~~ (the biggest lie of all) ~~as they are now~~ then.

I said ~~I didn't think they were really so old.~~ They might be only about 20 ~~50~~ years old. Thirty, perhaps. 'Yes!' he said. 'They might be ~~fifty years old!~~ thirty!!' 'Or less,' I said. 'Even less!' (~~which means~~ he is confused for a moment) ~~he has his values mixed up for a moment – saying something~~ 'old' ~~is saying its~~ means ~~but~~ dirty in his eyes, ~~but he has learned that the reverse seems to be~~ is true for tourists, ~~and~~ so he has a second, ~~quite~~ two values, one primary and one opposite secondary value).

'The price of a thing,' he went on, ~~with the sickening~~ ~~my smile~~, his glasses flashing ~~in a~~ fanaticallly ~~way~~.' depends on who wishes to buy it and who wishes to sell! It depends on the need and passion of the person buying. The more he wants a thing the more he has to pay for it!! ~~With that bit of philosophy I thought we'd better give up. Save quickly, said goodbye to kept.~~

~~And~~ Now I'm supposed to go to ~~that man for absolution~~?

I confess my sins to him! And who does he confess his sins to? He doesn't even know he's committed any!

He then demonstrated to us — that not only himself the peasant down the road was a liar, too. 'As a matter of fact,' he said, 'I even paid a bit for my pot.' I misplaced 'acquired' that copper mine — and he made a round, shrewd gesture with his fingers, — I think — acquired it, I suppose, — and he added — 'I simply — I simply — I simply —

who come ~~[illegible]~~ at the rate what two dogs in season (is this why he never wears a cassock or a dog-collar, to make himself seem a custodian?), plus the fact that he pays no rent and gets money for any wedding, funeral or baptism that takes place in his church. This is the child of poverty and want who vows to bleed foreigners for his own or his peasants' profit, if he can: not that the peasant is doing so bad either — he has two massive oxen, and a number of calves, and a fair-sized piece of land, a house he pays a minimal rent for, chickens galore; and he's just bought himself ~~to~~ some new land near the village, on which he's going to build another ~~to~~ house — which is much more than I could do. Still, I'm the ignore and he's the child of want. It's really time the common people everywhere woke from their dream: and realised that society is theirs. Quite a responsibility — and the last thing they want.

~~Lino~~ Sergio and his wife ~~Amanda~~ Catarina came to us in the evening and sat in our kitchen. We talked about the church. He asked what kind of church most of the foreigners who come to the village belonged to: in Germany, England, for instance. Were they all Christians? Yes, we said, many of them ~~the~~ were 'Protestants', many Catholics — all ~~they were~~ Christians. 'How ~~did~~ do ~~they~~ Protestants differ from us?' he wanted to know. We said, mainly in the matter of confession: they don't confess. 'Ah,' he said quickly, in his direct, intelligent way, his eyes gleaming in a ruddy, lean face, 'they don't believe the priest has a special position —!' 'Exactly,' we said. 'The pope isn't a Vicar of Christ in their eyes — the priest is only another man for the Protestant.' And ~~[illegible]~~: 'The protestant believes that every man's conscience is his own, that he can't go to another man to free himself from blame but must find his own way, through self-examination.' At once ~~Lino~~ Sergio cried, leaning forward in his ~~[illegible]~~ erect way: 'Then they're more religious than we are! They examine

everything they do! Isaac's why foreigners seem so responsible compared with us – so polite and thoughtful! whereas we think, Oh, I can swear and behave badly today because tomorrow I'm going to confess, and purify myself! I know men who think like that; he went on. 'Religion is the reason why they're bad! Can you imagine that?'

~~Sometimes~~ Italy (seems to me) the ~~strangest and~~ most unfathomable country in Christendom. Motives, decisions, ~~thoughts~~ moods are an enormous pool of mystery, to the people themselves. There are a thousand explanations – Etruscan, Roman, Greek, Moorish, Christian, Phoenician, feudal, Inquisitorial, Spanish, Austrian, Gothic – far more than any one creature can know.

We lived in Rome for years before we so much as touched ~~the~~ Italy's them ~~of Italy's skirt~~ and found she was naked ~~She couldn't be undressed;~~

Everyone here is godly ~~religious~~ – ~~Pietro, Dino,~~ Gianni, Sergio, even Paolo, Livio, even ~~Gino~~ Gigi the peasant who lives in the village and discours the past. They're all quite clear about it: they don't go to church, nothing would induce them, but it has nothing to do with the mystery.

~~Pietro~~ Gianni when he enters a church makes a pleasant, noisy little kiss towards the altar after he has ~~made the sign of the madonna and child, with a little light before it, which~~ crossed himself. When he was fourteen he painted a remarkable Madonna and child: they've ~~put~~ in the wall of their kitchen, with a little light in front. A ~~wonderful~~ amazing sweetness pours out of the eyes of the child; In the Madonna there is ~~grace and light, and softness~~ a lingering grace and forgiveness, something specially gentle that makes you look up at her again and again. It is a ~~tiny~~ bit stylised – ~~a tiny bit~~ from centuries of style; and it has

~~to~~ live ~~of~~ by the land now. As the houses on his land were empty, there were no longer ~~any~~ any peasants. And he was obliged to follow the current 'madness' and move to Florence, where he will find a city-job. He said he knows men who have moved to Florence where they earn half as much as on the land, and live in miserable rooms — but they're happier.

He said that those who had moved to the city first, among the peasants, were those who had made most money: that the ~~land~~ hunger for city life didn't come from miseria; 'People want to be machines now.' ~~[illegible]~~ + +

The land seems to create ~~a kind of~~ horror in ~~the~~ people ~~who work on it~~. Not in all: not in ~~Dino~~ Sergio, for instance. But the others feel cheated and insulted. ~~No dream surround the land.~~ As their minds grow, the horror grows. I remember digging sods once, in England, to earn a ~~bit~~ scrap of money. I watched the mounds of sods rising all round me ~~each~~ every day. There was a fearful blankness in the field, ~~where I worked~~, even when the sun shone, even at dawn. ~~It was the~~ I felt horror ~~of~~ at the blankness: ~~just~~ the chasm. My mind had nothing to grasp on ~~perhaps that was it.~~ I hated the land as if it ~~was~~ personally insulted me — as I see ~~Lietto~~ Gianni doing now. I was working with no one. There was no community: no farmhouse to go back to, no great fire in the ~~the~~ hall; the land wasn't mine. And so it is in Italy: ~~no~~ the dream has ~~been made~~ gone, perhaps longer ago than we think, perhaps centuries ago. There is nothing precious to cling to ~~in the land~~ — nothing gay, no ~~pleasant~~ intimacy. Nothing that ~~spoils and~~ flatters the human creature. ~~On the people~~ ~~we~~ The peasants really do live like dogs: this is true of ~~Lietto~~ Gianni, of ~~A~~ ~~Dino~~ Sergio — they expect no more, but they dream of more. Only the town can give them the flattery and attention they need.

They move to town to inherit ~~a~~ dignity, of which they've ~~they've~~ been ~~always felt~~ thwarted. This is what ~~being~~ 'modern' means for them,

Sienese attention to detail. His drawings of Christ are exact, stern. He hasn't painted or drawn for eight years now. Not enough time, he says with a laugh. He looks sad and oddly distracted sometimes: he hasn't been near this house for three days now. I saw him yesterday at ~~Pescille~~ Altopascio ~~a collection of peasants' houses on the other side of the road~~. He came into the stable yard with a quaintly delicate-looking shopping bag in his hand; he was going shopping, he said. 'No work!' ~~Dino~~ Sergio cried ~~said~~ with a laugh. 'No work again!' — ~~And he~~ then added, 'Strikes aren't necessary for you — you're on strike every day!' ~~Pietro~~ Gianni laughed and turned away. ~~and~~ then we saw nothing more of him.

~~Pietro's~~ His mother is devout and strict in a natural way, tho' she never goes to church; probably despises the priest (tho' he doesn't know it): ~~with~~ patient, darkly flashing eyes ~~that seem to~~ that take in everything ~~in a second~~ at a glance, with direct intuition; she's half the size of any of her sons, and they obey her like slaves. ~~Christ and the Madonna are very close to the mother in Italy (in any religious Christianity) [illegible]~~ For ~~Pietro~~ Gianni, swearing and behaving badly ~~[illegible]~~ are like assaulting his own mother. This is what stops him.

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Who knows what caution Pietro's mother is advising him to, in his relations with us? ~~Perhaps~~ She knows where his weaknesses lie.

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Every evening when he comes home from work ~~Dino's~~ Sergio's ~~Silvano~~ Renato goes to the ~~Madonna~~ the madonnina ✓ at the side of the road and says a quick prayer and crosses himself.

~~It is an act required to be reg~~ ~~that seems~~

~~For Dino~~ ~~Dino~~ Sergio seems to insist on this as an act of decency and uprightness.

+

Signor V. and his family came today for a few minutes. He owns a large vineyard near Florence, and a wine-factory. He told us he was selling his share of the ~~leaving the~~ business, as it was hopeless to try to work and

We went to Colle Val d'Elsa today: there are the typical medieval lanes, intact, with the houses close and flat on either side, with the minimum number of windows, and those small; and tunnels that disappear far under the houses, joining one lane to another; and hidden squares which are still not asphalted, and where people still sit outside their doors, talking. The streets are clean, a massive village — occupied now by dozens of families — sits astride the road, dominating two valleys: there is a sense of order and well contentment. Down below is the industrial part of the town, with tall chimneys and pastel-shaded blocks of flats: noisy and crowded, but not really separate from the old town that sits intact on its hill. Will everyone want to move down to the new part? It has happened in Castel Fiorentino: they leave the lovely old houses on the hill and go down to embrace the noise and smoke; what used to be a wonderful town ten years ago is now an abandoned slum. And it will probably happen to Castelfalfi, which has the same medieval town perched on a hill, with the industrial part below.

And then perhaps, after twenty or thirty

a perhaps stone, middle-class people will move into the ancient towns with their massive walls, as part of a fashionable movement (from abroad): they will escape the lack of traffic, ~~the~~ and the noise and fumes. So there will be a swing-back. And people will move into the country, into the old abandoned houses (as we've done here): and from it the country with a dream again.

~~[illegible]~~ and the reason why they'll take half the pay, ~~to live~~ in town.

STET

We await the Christianisation of the land. This took place in the north, but the north was weak enough to succumb to industries (a further, brutal stage of Christianisation). The historical root was all wrong: ~~the land was originally worked by slaves, in Roman times, and the~~ pagan slavery ~~of paganism became the~~ was taken over into Christianity as serfdom; ~~of the Christian domain;~~ we see the last rebellion against feudalism now, ~~and the last vestige of that system;~~ STET ~~from~~ Perhaps now ~~as the~~ Christian dream will begin to surround the county as well, coming from the town; the land ~~in the words,~~ will be 'nature' even for those who work it.

~~Our epoch is fighting out the last remaining contradiction between paganism and Christ.~~ (last of the Christian contradiction)

They won't discover dignity in the towns, when they move there. They will have worse (more intimate) indignities than they ever imagined (we ~~especially the English and Americans~~ could tell them what it).

But they'll discover what dignity is, perhaps, and how they may attain it.

If no dream has been created for the land as in Italy — as if, as in England, it gets broken — the land becomes a cemetery. ~~for those working on it.~~ They run to the cities for fear of death. They get more solitude in the cities: their doors aren't open day and night any longer. ~~They are in the country.~~ But they get a sense of eternity: through introspection.

The land in England is a vast cemetery covered with aerodromes, barracks, factories, ~~and~~ filthy junkyards left over from the ~~last~~ War, ~~which the people have been too lazy,~~ ~~and degenerate to~~ because confused,

~~clear away, even 20 years after.~~

Yesterday we went to see ~~Dino's~~ Sergio's new flat on the outskirts of the village. It stands a little away from the road and overlooks a cornfield, with a view of a corner of the Elsa valley. The walls have to be painted, ~~and~~ the doors and windows varnished, then it's ready. ~~His wife~~ Catarina ~~Amanda~~ has never seen it and refuses to go until they actually move in. Her excuse always is, with a dark, laughing, timid look, 'I have too many chicks!' 'Always chicks!' ~~Dino~~ Sergio says with a laugh. He was anxious to know what ~~he~~ we felt next the new place: there is a bathroom with green tiles ~~— the first time he's had running water, let alone hot water —~~ and a flushing lavatory, and next door there's a large kitchen. He plans to put a bench in the corridor with cushions, to sit and talk in the evening, when the kitchen is too hot. The building had been carefully, with even solid wood for the doors instead of the usual veneer-covered compensato, hardboard; and the design was pleasant — humble and gracious. It had been done by an old friend of his, he said: no architect had entered into it, which was perhaps ~~the reason~~ why there was nothing silly about the design, and nothing botched about the work; all the money had gone into the building. ~~He was relieved to hear us saying how much we liked it.~~ He was relieved when we said we liked it. 'What a calamity if you had it!' he cried. There's nothing to pay for twenty-five years — no taxes of any kind, ~~as the land is~~ no rates. A special government concession, this. We stood gaying out of his windows. Soon he'll be sitting on a real lavatory, lying in his own bath, putting on lights that are strong enough to read by, ~~the evening, unlike those we have here.~~ gaying at television. I tell him, 'A man with his own house is a king!', and he says, 'Yes, yes!', his eyes fixed on me with a tremendous fierce enthusiasm. ~~He wants to learn, little by little, how not to live like a dog, and the city~~

~~will teach him.~~

We left ~~Dino~~ him in town and drove back alone. He came to us later that evening, at what time, and said with a beam, 'The ~~city's~~ town's a beautiful thing!' He said he'd been in the café near the square watching television. 'You find out what's going on in the world!' And he added, 'Here – of course! – one can breath good air, there are things we all need here, but it's outside the world we're cut off!' He didn't want to be right inside the town: He wanted just to see it when he opened his eyes in the morning, ~~windows~~, and to hear its noises. He wanted to be able to stroll into it. That was why he'd chosen a place on the immediate outskirts.

~~At~~ Outside his new house he pulled some bushes aside and said, 'Look – there inside!' It was a wayside shrine and we were amazed to see that it was the same madonnina that stands ~~outside his~~ in the road here, 'Our Lady of Pancolle.' ~~Our Lady of P—~~ He was born in Pancolle, so that there is a double significance, ~~and his present house next door to us, has the same Madonna outside, put there nearly a hundred years ago~~ 'A good sign, don't you think?' he said. He'd only discovered it after he'd bought the land and planned his house: ~~with the three other families:~~ so he felt he'd done right.

He has been on strike for three days – the peasants on Meggadoria struck several weeks ago, and now it's the land-workers' turn ~~(those who are paid by the day)~~. They're asking for a seven-hour day, which means a forty-two hour week, and rise. He says the strikes will go on until the government produces a decent plan for the land. And he believes there'll be clashes with the police.

+

~~Pietro~~ Gianni returned again yesterday, looking quiet and ~~rather~~ numbed. He said

he'd been working nearly all the time, on the ~~corn and the grain~~ maize. He hardly smiled.

The work tears him from his ~~[illegible]~~ life, which is still in darkness, forming. And he talks ~~[illegible]~~ from a great distance. A day's idleness is enough to bring him to life again.

+

~~Pino~~ Sergio last night explained that the great shame of the countryside was still the mezzadria system, though he and ~~Pieto's~~ Gianni's family and ~~[illegible]~~ Paolo the shepherd are now free of it. ~~The land, which is rich and fertile, languishes because of the weight of this system, pulling~~ ~~under the dead weight of this system~~ Tuscany, he said, ~~which~~ a ~~is~~ marvellously rich and fertile ~~county~~ land, is being abandoned like the desert, because of this system. People won't work land that doesn't give them a decent living. He himself had a good employer, so he worked hard and willingly. But the big house on the other side of the hill, ~~and~~ where we go to fetch our drinking water, and the group of houses called ~~Pescille~~ Altapasquale, are still mezzadria: 'The people work like dogs, ~~and~~ yet their lives are at a standstill!'

One of the padrone, nicknamed 'zampa' — paw or hoof — because of his limp, never keeps accounts, and always pockets the yield from any sale. His part should be 27%, but since he never keeps accounts it ~~[illegible]~~ works out at nearer 70% or 80%; ~~[illegible]~~ the rest has to feed two families (~~[illegible]~~ when seven people) who do all the work. On the other hand, some say this is quite untrue, and that he suffers as much as his peasants. To do more for them, he would run the land at a loss.

'Why aren't there real ~~[illegible]~~ padrone?' I ask him. 'That is, men with a function — to keep the accounts and pay the wages and arrange the sales, the house-repairs, machinery?' (Why are they all absentee landlords?) 'Ah, that's the fattore!' he said. Every padrone has a fattore — ~~the~~ a man who administers several pieces of land and takes his percentage! ~~from each padrone.~~

~~The~~ But fattore isn't exactly farmer (which was what I meant), but more what we call ~~is what we would call the farmer, though in fact he doesn't live on the land, and is more~~ like an agent. He doesn't live on the land, for instance, so that he is absentee in a sense, too.

The padrone has no function except to own the land and take part of the yield, unless he's an exception: a pure landlord in an epoch when everything he was once ~~essential~~ useful for — justice, administration, ~~providing~~ ~~the focal point of~~ local civilised life — has been taken over by the government. Thus, Responsibility has been taken from him; he's heavily taxed and the high level of wages makes it impossible for him to ~~live by the land as he did once~~ invest as he did. This means that ~~Yet~~ no new responsibility has taken his place. If he gets money elsewhere — for instance, from industry — he lets the land go to the devil, and uses it for week-end 'hunting'. This ~~is what~~ has happened to many hectares of land over the road, where Livio pastures his sheep: it isn't worth the owner's while to pick ~~the superb grapes, and the olives~~

~~The~~ 'Padrone' (landowner) in Italy means 'signore' gentleman, which means somebody who doesn't work. High & low despise the land. Just as the peasants abandon their farmhouses, the landlords abandon their lovely villas, which ~~[illegible]~~ bore and disgust them.

~~The responsibility lies with Rome, Dino said. But there they're too busy thinking of themselves, the politicians, as whom the [illegible]~~

+

We begin to realise the difference between the meggadria families and the others, ~~this is the~~ a difference between light and dark. Whenever we go to the well for water on the other side of the valley we stop and talk at the big house, where ~~the~~ two meggadria families are; we've spent an evening with them, we drink their vin santo. But we don't know them by name. ~~They don't call us by our Christian names as everybody else does.~~ We don't know them as we know Pietro, Livio, Dino, Gino, Silvano, Renato, Amanda, the little girl Graziella at ~~the group of houses called Pescille.~~ ~~And the meggadria family here, too, where Graziella lives, are unknown to us:~~ They always seem bowed in work, and ~~we haven't~~

~~even spoken to them.~~ They ~~seem separated~~ are shy, ~~separate~~ speechless and remote, as if they were afraid of ~~so as~~ shame what we thought of them. ~~under the weight of something invisible~~ Yet they work no harder than the others. We've talked ~~also everything~~ from politics to crops over at the big house, we know them all separately, but they're still dim to us. They did present themselves to us individually and personally: they neither enquire our names, nor do we enquire theirs. Only the lovely child, the younger boy, do we know by name.

And you can see the difference in the cattle, too. The bull at the big house is 'bad', and has to be castrated soon; the oxen there are tied too close to the stall, and look overworked. But at Altapasquale ~~And where Graziella lives~~ the calves look innocent and undisturbed, as the people do. ~~as the herself does.~~ ~~The feeling~~ A sense of panic and ~~dark~~ drudgery ~~that you~~ seems ~~to get under~~ to accompany meggadina — transmits itself to the beasts ~~too~~ ~~they~~

+

~~In America a man sits down to write also reality and has to enquire, 'What is it?'~~

+

A dream no longer surrounds this house for us, now we've lived here; ~~for some time~~: it's ~~perfectly~~ real to us, quite ~~in the sense of~~ untouched by dreams of any kind. I remember our coming early one morning, before we moved ~~here~~ in, as our ~~way~~ ~~along~~ ~~down~~ way back to Rome, and standing in the tiny courtyard looking down the road; ~~the path outside~~; the whole valley was just waking up, and the spring-light sparkled; there was ~~an absolute~~ perfect stillness, and a few birds ~~singing~~ sang in the woods above the house. The courtyard ~~was the first thing that struck us:~~ it enclosed the house perfectly, with a tall crumbling wall where the gate used to be, and a low arch on one side where ~~the cart is kept.~~ In the blaying sunlight of an afternoon. We could imagine sitting in a corner of this courtyard in the blaying sunlight of an afternoon, for tea; the light would glitter on the windows upstairs. But now we only go ~~into the courtyard~~ there to draw rain-water from the well; ~~for washing up;~~ the courtyard is a workplace — for oxen, chickens, bags of grain, empty demijohns, carts & ploughshares, Gigi's motorcycle, our car.

As for our rooms, they are flatly real, too — the place where we work, or sleep, or eat Gigi goes to and fro outside all day; the dog barks at the oxen and frightens them. The country looks the same — as vast and serene, but there, too, is no dream. It only enters you; it isn't a matter of sight or pleasure, or indeed anything felt at all. The silence of the country at night is the silence of your sleep: it isn't the scene of hopes, desires, memories. There is no country idyll. The delight of the English countryside isn't there: nothing like Bavaria, the Tyrol, Carinthia; no dreams and follies have been weaved, life hasn't been drunk deep and recklessly. Yet the stupendous valley lies there like a garden specially made for you, which you can hardly bear to look at, especially now, before the earth is quite parched or the earth shimmers with heat like a mirage. Not a pleasant little garden; no roses, except the wild ones; no hum of talk that you might hear on a Provençal farm, with people seated round a table; only needs are served here, and perhaps not all the needs, either. We've lost interest in comfort — in the little rituals of home that mean so much to us in Rome. Only in Rome has a dream been made. Here we hardly go in our the tiny sitting-room. We're either working or at table, eating. The kitchen is where we live, leaning over the table, a bottle of wine in front of us, in the dimness, with a shade drawn over the window against the sunlight. Sergio promises to take us to where he works, several kilometres up the road, on the other side of the valley: 'You'll say it's beautiful!' he cries. But for him it's just there: he recognises in something we shall beautiful. Yet we feel the same as he does, now: no positive delight — even in the shattering early-morning sunlight that pours down on the vineyards and cornfields

opposite; there is only the touch of it on one's skin, and the glow that is right inside you; you aren't separate, which you must be for delights. The countryside produces you: the sun brightens you, a dark sky darkens you. You're no longer aware of your place in the world, quite. There is only work, in its purity: and one part of the day leads to the next unawares, as things grow in the fields. We are more completely than ever before, but with fewer delights. ~~If we had no work already, what could our work be? It would have to be in the fields. Or at most to do with the church.~~ Only the priest provides a dream here: ~~in this world; in the last few centuries~~ he has made such a monopoly of it that ~~life has been stifled in its proper development~~ among the people, humble dreams and follies ~~of people~~ haven't spread and coalesced among the people naturally, to make delights. Nature bestows, defends, enriches. There's only her to learn in. Well, she seems quite reliable.

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~~It's so magical that you can only say afterwards, 'It was magical'.~~

Magic can't be seen, tasted, even felt, while you're under its spell.

+

Another strike today, this time of the peasants again, the meggadri. They are all collecting in town, as usual, so that there are endless rows of motor-cycles outside the south gate.

+

Went to Florence. I had a strange impression, that city people haven't ~~City people seem pushing and morally numbed.~~ Another impression: that full human presence. The city is living for them. Their eyes, cheeks, chins, not to say bodies, aren't fully developed. ~~They're behind a veil.~~ The restaurants seem only to symbolise the act of eating; the smells aren't wholesome, as if the food was manufactured in underground cellars. ~~The sparkle has gone that made cities exciting. Their necessity has gone. They are congregations~~ Cities are just mad congregations now — stampedes, ~~They started as congregations to dream: but now they're~~ at deadlock; ~~the dream isn't wholesome — you need to be developed for the~~. ~~Cities will have to have first-aid from the country: they~~ Cities will become death-traps of disease, perhaps. ~~and slow degeneration.~~ Just as the Plague was the climax of the rise of the towns.

+

If you live in a city you have to forego self-government. You don't know where you're being led. ~~You prefer congregation to [illegible]~~ You can't have both congregation & truth. ~~[illegible]~~

+

The man of affairs is always base. The world spins round him. But he is its fulcrum.

+

We happened to tell Sergio that we'd been looking for Coppi, and also the priest with his trentina di mila lire; he cried, 'Pots – I've got two of them – at least two – beauties!' And he laughed: 'Why don't you come to me first? Everything is in your doorstep, and you go miles away to argue with priests!' Tomorrow morning, he went on, we would walk together to Altopasquale and look at them.

Next morning he & I strolled along the path together, in the first heat of the day. We were talking about dung, for some reason. I told him how my father had always collected the horse-dung outside in the road for his garden – in the days when there were still a few horses. 'Ah!' he said, 'then your father must have been peggio (worse) than you!' 'How do you mean?' I asked him. 'I mean, he must have done more work – he was poorer!' 'Yes', I said, feeling confused. ~~Even for Dino work is what you do with your hands then what is the rest~~ I wanted to say, 'But I work, too!' But I stopped.

The pots were never better than the priests, or the peasants. They were lying in the mud by the house where Sergio was born. ~~Dino was~~ ~~[illegible] time until last year.~~ We rolled them into the stable-yard and cleaned them up a bit. The oil had eaten through their bases, but since holes would be made in them anyway, for tree-planting, this didn't matter. The peasant's wife, ~~Graziella's mother~~, who has wondering, quick, ~~observant~~ ~~[illegible] laughing~~ eyes, and a face capable of the most extraordinary bursts of tenderness and passion (when she is arguing about the price of her chickens, for instance)

~~in a quick flash back to the expression that in ancient times went into dancing and love,~~ said to me doubtfully, 'They're bell; wait they!' And Sergio ~~Dino~~ echoed her: 'Yes, they're nice!' But until that moment the things had been ~~were~~ shameful junk. ~~for them~~

A few days later Our friends sent ~~a~~ their man over in a small truck to pick them up. There were three pots in all. He roped them round securely, and when Sergio ~~Dino~~ asked him what trees were going to be put in them, he said, 'None. They'll just be put on the terrace. Empty. As ornament!' And Sergio looked wistfully surprised. ~~this seemed even more surprising.~~ From being ~~having~~ used as a receptacle for oil to being used as a vase was not such a step, but this one was a step into another world. There was silence. ~~It's he said that.~~

Before he drove back again the man had lunch with us: he has liquidly black, penetrating eyes and a mild way of speech, reflective and patient. He said there was a feeling of rebellion all over Italy, but 'vague' rebellion: no one was sure what he wanted to rebel against, or indeed if there existed anybody to rebel against; he just wanted to move — into the towns if he lived in the country, to another house if he lived in the town. It came from centuries of misuse of the padrone's prerogative, he said: 'We have to go through that phase — I myself felt rebellion against the padrone once, but I have passed through it now.' ~~His padrone is foreign, so he has travelled far from his own world.~~ He is ~~seems~~ paler than the ~~other~~ peasants, though he used to be a peasant ~~was~~ ~~one~~ himself; — he seems more delicate, withdrawn, quietly discriminating. He has the air of thinking life out all the time, in his ~~the~~ mild and patient way. ~~[illegible]~~ It seems to have meant a sort of ~~been a~~ religious experience for him. If an Italian has a real transformation of experience, which is ~~was~~ very rare, ~~indeed~~ it is always religious, I think.

+

Early morning: the sunlight pours down, fresh and sparkling. I empty some ashes on ~~to~~ the dump outside the courtyard. The dog lies half in the shade, where the fledgling pigeons are. There is the sound of bees. The whole valley lies dreaming. In any other country this would be an idyll.

Gigi will take the fledgling pigeons down soon, before they can fly, wring their necks & eat them roasted.

A memory: in the war, coming down the stairs of ~~the Sadler's Wells~~ a theatre ~~Theatre~~ in London, ~~Opera House~~, in my new uniform. I'd only been an officer two days. A couple passed me, laughing, and ironically sang, in my direction, 'There'll always be an England!' ~~in my ears.~~ I was so English! So English!

The will to destroy England came from inside.

They succeeded: now there is an interesting junkyard, ~~[illegible]~~ and twenty years of thinking ahead. ~~[illegible]~~

+

'If I should die, think only this of me, That there is some corner of a foreign field, That is for ever England!' These times were ~~[illegible]~~ always ~~[illegible]~~ presented to me as a half & joke in England. Yet that is a moving ~~marvellous~~ sonnet.

+

Yesterday three men came, dressed in suits, with collars and ties. They stepped out of a car and after some murmuring advanced toward the courtyard. A telegram arrived at the same time, and my wife ~~Annette~~ was downstairs signing for it. The dog, attached to a long rope that extends just to the edge of the courtyard, started barking like mad. The three men drew nearer, and stood by what would be the gate if the house wasn't falling to pieces. One was young and ~~was~~ plump; another slim ~~thin~~ and very dark; ~~[illegible]~~ and the one between them was ~~in the middle~~ rather shrivelled and ~~[illegible]~~ tired-looking; he was apparently the leader. ~~It was the leader who~~ He spoke first, with the muzzle of the dog close to his trousers: 'What is this dog doing here?' We stared and gasped. Catarina, Sergio's ~~Amanda, Dino's~~ wife, was in the house and came on to the balcony ~~terrace~~ with me. We watched my wife ~~Annette~~ gather up the dog's line and draw ~~then bring~~ the dog inside. The three men then advanced.

faces quite expressionless. Some rapid thoughts went through my head: were they police? Had they come to arrest somebody? Had we done something wrong? They advanced like Italians ~~very~~ sure of their power. The leader then stopped in the middle of the courtyard and, looking up at us — he had decided to treat ~~Annette~~ my wife as a shadow, and the removal of the dog as a duty — said he understood a peasant came to the house every day, and what was his name? ~~Amanda~~ Catarina answered him, with her childish half-smile. ~~And~~ Where was this peasant now? He'd gone home, she said. Had he left a key? She didn't know. He then advanced a few paces further and said, taking a piece of paper out of his pocket, 'Voi povete legere?' — can you (plural) read! ~~Amanda~~ Catarina shook her head and said, 'No', in an intimidated way. He turned to me: 'E Lei?' — and you? I said with a touch of irony, 'Yes, I think I can read,' and the other two — ~~who were~~ rather like his henchmen ~~— valets —~~ made agreeable noises through their noses. He then extended his piece of paper: 'Perhaps you can read this, then!' I went downstairs and took the paper from him. It was signed by the ~~woman who~~ owner of the house, ~~saying~~ & said, 'These gentlemen have ~~a right~~ my permission to enter the house.' I ~~handed~~ tried to hand the paper back to him, not quite understanding, ~~and~~ but he held up his hand: 'No, you can keep it.' There was a silence. He stood there. The others stood there. I stood there. The thoughts were still in my head: Had something gone wrong? Were these police? Had the owner, hitherto ~~a~~ a friend, gone mad and decided to ~~chuck~~ throw us out? I returned indoors with the letter: ~~— a~~ They seemed to know what they were going to do and I didn't, so I thought I'd leave them to it. And we went on with our lunch ~~while~~ upstairs. But they stood there, ~~murmuring in the courtyard outside. Amanda went on sweeping~~ Catarina ~~could~~ remained on the balcony. Then the leader called out: 'Has the letter been read?' ~~Amanda went back~~ Catarina came into us, to the balcony and ~~he~~ repeated the question to ~~her~~ us, at which I shrugged & said, ~~While we sat feeling surrounded threatened~~ 'Why, yes!'

~~and rather scared. We'd made a beautiful risotto but neither of us wanted to touch it now.~~ 'They want to see you again,' she said. ~~Amanda murmured from the balcony.~~ This time the fury broke in ~~got into~~ me and I dashed down with the letter still in my hand. 'And this is addressed to no one,' I said. 'And in any case, since we've ~~have~~ rented the house and we're ~~we~~ paying ~~rent~~ money for it, it's against the law — Italian law — for you to enter!' The answer to ~~this~~ this, with much shuffling and scowling, was that he was unaware I knew anything about Italian law. ~~(I think he was unaware at first that we weren't peasants: his manner seemed was meant for peasants) — Amanda didn't seem to think there was anything unusual in his manner).~~ I ~~then~~ told the 'cadet' ~~him~~ that I thought he'd been very discourteous, that he had no right to question the existence of a dog in my own courtyard, or to ask people if they could read. But, I went on, all this ~~that~~ having been said, he could now enter the house courteously, with my permission, if he wanted to. But he turned away at this, sweating profusely. No, it was all right, he wouldn't come in. So they went off again: ~~the underling~~ ~~I imagine he was~~ the young man — at a safe distance — called out to me that the signore had only asked if we spoke Italian, ~~(a lie)~~, knowing we were foreigners (a lie); ~~and was trying to please us;~~ and secondly that the dog was dangerous — ~~dangerous 'era scritto in faccia', it was~~ for that reason he'd asked for it to be taken away (a lie). A most ~~very~~ mysterious incident. Catarina ~~Amanda~~ said she thought that the shrivelled man was 'il maestro', a schoolteacher of the village; and meanwhile we had recognised the slim man as the local bank-manager. We realised they must have come to view the house for a possible sale; or perhaps the schoolmaster was ~~the~~ an assessore for mortgages — we knew the owner wanted to get one ~~a mortgage to reconstruct the house~~. Catarina ~~Amanda~~ left quickly — the Italian fear of being in an imbroglio: one never knew what power a signore could yield. It left us feeling disturbed and indignant. All at once we seemed to have had a slimpse into fascism; we ~~and~~ realised what a superficial part of fascism

politics had been. I wouldn't have liked to be a Jew or communist thirty years ago under such a man. Yet I know that, being Italian, that man is forgiving and gentle underneath. The terrible thing is be what he could provoke other people to do. He provoked me to anger. What did he provoke as a young man? Was he a fascist once? He had the fascist style of walking, the contemptuous delivery, the irony, the uplifted chin. What had he provoked Germany to do? Fascism was only a game; but the rest of the world learned to take it in earnest, for or against. What a strange genius these people have: a flick of the wrist, and there 25 million dead. The uplifted chin.

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How ready we are to feel, 'The police have arrived. The van is waiting outside!' Yet we are free.

+

We were told yesterday that the reason why there are so many vipers about, especially in the woods, is that the peasants no longer keep herds of pigs. As the land is abandoned, and the pigs that remain are kept in stalls, the vipers thrive: they are a delicacy for pigs, and their sting has no effect on them. At one time the herds of pigs were left to roam in the woods. This is a tiny effect — dangerous for us — of a great change. Who knows what others there will be?

+

The rich poison every experience, as they themselves are poisoned. Wherever there are rich there are problems for the future — wars, disease. Why should we go on crucifying them? We make rich people to absolve ourselves from responsibilities.

The rich accept our verdict to be damned.

+

He has written a book of aphorisms. Because he's an American they say he's trying to discover a 'new language', and has had the

It wasn't simply that they had less power: the human creature dwindled.

~~land (that is home)~~

America started as a criticism of the rest of the world. Then it developed as a land (of home), ~~and as a land had to must reject its origins~~ that is, like the rest of the world.

In the period of American rule our great men dwindled forms; they no longer had the old fabulous stamp of authority. ~~they were members of the universal lower-class.~~

~~And, also~~ Under the new rule, no ~~man~~ He could no longer have authority in himself alone, by natural dispensation.

America was the enthronement of original sin. ~~(the soul a charnel-house)~~.

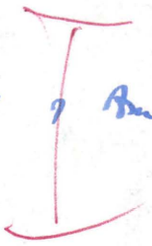
America-the-society and America-the-home can often be seen alternating in the same face. ~~In the immigrant they can be sometimes alternating: a bitter struggle sometimes as a struggle.~~

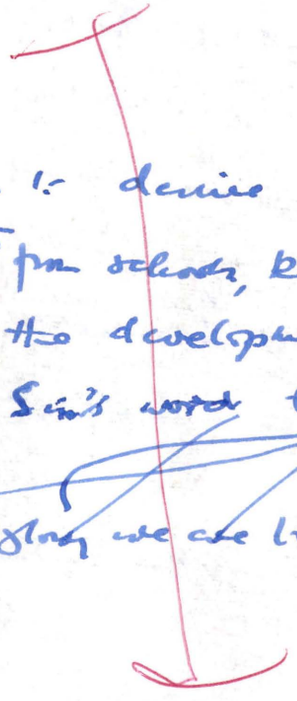
The immigrant only has the first; ~~and~~ looks wistfully ~~and lovingly~~ at the second.

The second is surprisingly like England.

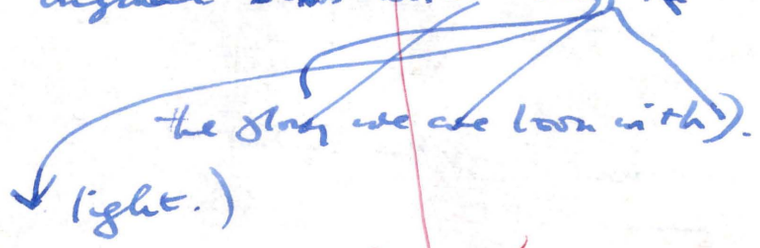
The immigrant has created the maximum hatred of Europe

in America, the maximum dated of America in Europe.
~~In either place he is the opposite.~~





The newman was to derive everything from congregation ~~&~~ from schools, knowledge, ~~social works,~~ and the development of his 'talents' — original Sin's word for ~~the~~ ~~intimate)~~



the glory we are born with).

light.)

courage to attempt a 'new form'. His courage consists in going back two hundred years ⊙ ~~a step in the right direction~~ → A step back a hundred years only — to the nineteenth century and 'new' forms, 'new' language — would have required no effort at all. ~~requires no effort at all~~

+

Our epoch is the stalest for many centuries past: a rehash of everything thought and achieved before we were born; The first epoch of mankind ~~not~~ to have presented nothing ~~something~~ new ⊙ Marking time is so automatic with us that we take it for what life ~~is and~~ always is ~~was~~

+

We think of the Victorians as vigorous and self-assured, full of ~~the~~ beans ⊙ ~~all the time~~. But if you read Victorian books you find a strange lack of stamina and consistency, and great ambiguity of values. This applies as much to George Eliot as it ~~does~~ to Jerome K. Jerome: in fact, the more serious the approach, the greater the possibility of error. The world was too much with them. They had ~~the~~ enormous public energy — ~~the~~ hard work, ~~the~~ thoroughness and ambition — but real quiet, the fibre of ~~real, undisturbed~~ thought, was lacking in them: the last writer you had it in was Jane Austen; after that, in Thackeray, Dickens, Hardy, Wordsworth, Tennyson, you get a broken world. They seemed not to be ~~were too much in public. It seems, from their work, that they couldn't get~~ alone enough: yet terribly lonely. The world outside clamoured in such a way ~~so much~~ that the creature person ~~human creature (who must value himself like a king if he is to be a writer)~~ became ~~[illegible]~~ 'private'. ~~At~~ Their tone of speech ~~in their books~~ waves between virtuous ~~pre-digested~~ ~~received~~ public comment and private uncertainty.

That was the height of our moral-society. ~~our American epoch.~~

AMERICA

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We met the owner of the house ~~in the village~~ and she [illegible] as we'd done well to send the three "signori" away. Her daughter [illegible] written ~~sent~~ the note, she said, and then had come to her most shocked [illegible]terwards saying we'd refused him entry. It was true — he is the local

schoolmaster; and an unpleasant individual, she said. Most important, he had offered too low a price for the house; he'd wanted to buy it.

She speaks with tired eyes that flash dramatically now and then, opening her mouth wide to enunciate her syllables. Her expressions seem no different from what they would have been six hundred years ago: as with all the other villagers. Their faces are in the early frescoes, the work of the so-called primitives. When she wraps a scarf round her head to go to church, our padrona makes it seem like a cowl, ~~from the middle ages~~. The village has hardly changed ~~a trick or stone~~ since the fourteenth century: its prosperity suddenly ceased then, and it fell under the heel of Florence, ~~and Siena~~.

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~~A~~ The Sienese are (so like) the French, ~~of Italy~~ quick, intelligent, ~~fine~~ proud, with even a touch of their ~~French~~ tenderness, ~~and proud~~ ~~is this the Etruscan root?~~

+

The ~~Ma~~ friar with a vast belly like something out of ~~Botticelli~~ Boccacio said, hardly able to breathe, his hands on his hips, 'Let him (a guide) take you down to St. Jacob's — there's nothing interesting there — but it's quite nice the way the sunlight plays on the alabaster windows. The nuns will give you the key!'

And inside this church, built still like a pagan temple — in the middle of the eleventh century, we found perhaps the ~~most extraordinary gift of all~~ (best thing) in the village. There behind the altar, faint and almost gone — as if by its own will — was a wall by Bartolo di Fredi, the Christ white, delicate, ~~marvellous~~ haunted, pained, ~~too~~ with such an unbelievable tenderness that ~~you feel~~ you wanted ~~to faint, and~~ to watch it ~~for~~ ever; the Madonna presses her face close to ~~Christ, as~~ his, he lies in the last agony, his face is contorted; ~~with real pain as di Freddi himself must have known~~; their faces are pressed ~~to~~ closely, like lovers, and are so tired, so worn, and ~~so wonderfully~~ ~~pure and~~ ~~so~~ wonderfully truthful, that ~~they~~ it could could have happened yesterday, you feel the crucifixion as it was happening, all the terror,

NOTES FROM SENA

III

Moral power: the 'American' theme (middle-class) to remake the world (through original sin): the contradiction is therefore between the power given by Christ (the liberation) to the creature, to make his own life, and the doctrine absorbed through him but not from him, of original sin; so that power is used morally, that is, to remove dirt, the past, intimacy, from the world.

(∴ The middle-class forged a world so terrible out of Christ as to make him necessary.)

if you have a weak liver the suppositories avoid it and go striaght

But, above all, the simple grief was there. Never in my life have I seen anything so loving in paint. And the colours are almost gone, more than they are in his frescos, at St Augustine's: in S. Gimignano; in this one, the wings of the angels seem to beat and make a wind in the background, behind the rapt crowd, and Christ, his mouth open with a kind of yearning expression, stands close to the dying Madonna, holding a child in his arms. The Madonna seems to shrink into death, frail and tiny, the face so extraordinarily lovely that again you want to shudder. I couldn't understand why Christ was holding a child. I thought it was meant to be himself, in flesh, perhaps.

~~It makes you feel there was no painting after the fourteenth century.~~

~~Art is love.~~

Love is a long path, a discipline and understanding.

After dark yesterday we went up the hill to the Meggadra family, above Sergio's house: their place is hidden behind cypresses, with a great natural courtyard in front. There are three of them, a couple and a daughter; they were still working in the darkness, getting the forage into the barn. This is the hard part of the season, when first the grass has to be cut and then the grain: the wheatfields have already turned yellow, with the first real heat, after being olive-grey for so long. In the dark stall, behind the flanks of the oxen, we talked about conditions. They were leaving at the end of the summer like everybody else, they the man said. From the whole of the countryside will be empty, then where will the food come from? He knew of a great podere up the road where eighty people or more would soon be leaving. He himself could no longer work eight hectares with his wife and daughter alone, and look after the beasts as well. This is why we've never seen them on the road, or at Altopasquale: they're always at work. They also are Meggadra. The owner of the land is good to them, but that doesn't reduce the work: they will go to a smaller podere, of two or three

[illegible], still on Meggadria. The woman leaned in the doorway, a rake in her hand, and said that she wondered ~~at the [illegible]~~ at the food people would soon be expected to eat. ~~The meat was no longer healthy~~ The animal no longer lived properly, and this meant the meat was bad: who knew if it wasn't harmful, too? She didn't believe in levaments for chickens, broiler-houses: and she could tell a broiler-house bird at once. On their birds, she said — they'd had five hundred at one time — were healthy and free to roam where they wanted to. We went upstairs with them, and sat at table while they ate their late dinner, and the daughter told us that at a baker's near by an inspector had found a great sack of plaster; this was put in the ~~bread every day~~ flour to make weight. And many of the bakers used starch, she said, to whiten the bread. ~~What~~ Was that why there were so many complaints today, among people who seemed to live and work healthily — complaints of the liver and stomach and kidneys? The penalty for putting ox's blood in wine to give it colour was six months imprisonment now. But what about all the other chemicals they put in? If you drank trade-wine you could feel it circulating round your stomach in a burning way: this was the acid they put in. It really did burn your insides, and the result after ten or twenty years of drinking ~~that were unthinkable~~ could be imagined! Real wine never made itself felt in the stomach like that. If it warmed you, it warmed the whole of your body.

~~Pietro~~ Gianni is lost again in the whirl of work. He came for a few minutes this morning at seven, and he won't be back from work until ten — half-past this evening, when ~~Luigi~~ Lorenzo will pick him up on his motor ~~bike~~ cycle at Alto-Pasquale. The harvest is just starting: the wheatfields are now yellow and golden, and many of the fields in the other valleys have already been reaped. Everybody is up at four, and to bed not much before eleven.

~~Again I feel Pietro is being taken along blindly and can't find out who or what he is in this work that turns like a wheel you can't stop.~~

To day is ~~St. Peter and Paul~~ St. John's day, and we gave ~~Pietro~~ Gianni a ~~little~~ present of three tiny books of reproductions, Dufy, Cezanne, Breughel. He picked up the Dufy first and said how simple the drawing was, quietly ~~pencil or pen~~

We went up to his house yesterday on the edge of the woods and had salami and wine with his mother and ~~Angelino, his brother, who works the land.~~ Alberto. She leaned over the table tiny and black, ~~all the teeth missing,~~ and told us ~~how~~ that she had no appetite nese days and had to force ~~all~~ her food down. There was too much work, and ~~for this reason~~ she always felt better in the winter for that reason. We promised to show her how to prepare a vegetable broth for the day, ~~and we shall give her wholemeal flour — which comes to us from a bar~~ to be cooked with wholemeal flour: then she can absorb enough substance to work, without eating. She said ~~Angelino~~ Alberto was her best son, ~~and~~ ~~Luigi~~ Lorenzo and ~~Pietro~~ Gianni were both 'birbanti'-rascals. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni was also a "scorpente" — a snake, she said with a laugh: he was ~~never so~~ never so happy as when he wasn't working. He wanted to find a profession, but what could he do?, The ~~poorwing!~~ poor creature! ~~the poor creature~~ He had to work in the fields to bring ~~them~~ in a little cash, but he ~~wanted a profe~~ ~~profession~~, he was ~~so~~ too bright and clever for that work! ~~Pietro~~ Gianni is always saying that he hopes I'll have some ideas about this. Well, we'll go to Rome together soon, and see if there's anything. I suggested he should try ~~and find~~ a job at one of the airports: Good money, the illusion of constant flights, optimistic presence of ~~the foreign world~~ foreigners; a perfect ferment for the Italian soul ~~soul~~

Talk with a dear friend (American immigrant) about America. ~~Talk with a dear friend (American immigrant) about America.~~

America is 'young', she has a problem of whether she will ever grow up; she needs Europe so badly: all the old stuff. She is also doing marvellous work, ~~which apparently means that they are alive — rather like us.~~

Everything American has to be marvelled at — apparently because you don't expect idiots and children to do ~~anything~~ anything. ~~Of course, that Europe does is to be expected~~ One sees so clearly where the error

about America start.

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The cathedral at Siena: people pottering about and peering at stones, pillars, freezes, inscriptions. The pulpit by Pisano, etc. They all look so hard. They could get more by closing their eyes.

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The little group of village-intellectuals sits at the café on the square. A couple of women-teachers like wizened ~~[illegible]~~ eunuchs, smoking and drinking. A man with a ~~[illegible]~~ slim grey beard — the charlatan's badge. They sit stiff with pride, each of them looking the part they've chosen. They have the spirit of contradiction — it makes them feel rebels: you say something, and I contradict. They look derelict, grey, corrupt, exhausted, absolutely and completely desexed, without an ounce of presence. The children depend on them.

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At every step the intellectuals hold us back. ~~They are the retrograde element.~~ Everything we do is by permission of their cant and fashions. ~~The new ruling class.~~ They are ~~The most impoverished ruling class ever to have governed.~~ strong only by power of evil.

+

~~Were there French settlements here?~~ Sometimes I can hardly believe we aren't in the Isle de France when we walk in the country beyond the woods: the same spacious, ~~stoping hills~~ stoping fields ~~except for the massive slowing light instead~~ Certain names sound French — Cellole, Pancole. Someone told me there were French settlements along the Mediterranean coast about the time of the Moorish invasions.

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We went to the Etruscan tombs behind Cellole. A narrow path that was clearly ancient went at the side of a wooded slope: there were long ruts in the cobbles as you see them at Ostia Antica and Pompeii, made by ~~carts and chariots~~ wooden wheels. A peasant told us that we had a walk of only two ~~a couple of~~ hundred yards to the Tombs, but there was no sign of them. This is so Etruscan, I thought. ~~the tombs.~~ A path went off right, ~~up the slope,~~ turning back on itself, ~~the direction of the one we were on, and I remember~~ ~~I said~~ ~~'I remember thinking that the tombs might very well be up there,~~ ~~I said,~~

41. my first feeling was that its unobtrusiveness,
"I wonder if the tombs are up there — that's a typical Etruscan thing to do."
I meant the unobtrusive path, suddenly slipping away from the road, between
bushes and trees, was a sign that it led to the tombs. ~~And~~ The road we were on had the same mystery and
quiet as at Veii, ~~near Rome,~~ where the Etruscan Apollo was found:
the path hugged the side of the ~~slope~~ hill in the same way, and you entered a special immensity
of countryside, ~~where there was~~ with a deeper silence, ~~than anywhere else~~, as if
marvellous things had gone on there, at the dawn of life. And this was the
same. The hills rolled away towards the sea, with increasing light.
The sea ~~may have been much~~ was much closer then. ~~In fact,~~ You find pure sand
there — you can pick it up and it will leave your hand clean ~~like a beach~~ ~~like as if~~
~~you were a few feet from the sea~~ like the sand of the beach.

We got to the end of our ancient road and found
a tall villa among cypresses; and then, under a great wall, thoroughly
enclosed and sheltered like something in a child's tale, there were ~~three~~ few medieval
houses huddled together. The place ~~It~~ was strange and ecstatic, with ~~the~~ towering,
dark trees, some of them lime-trees in blossom, which ~~you~~ one hardly ever sees
here. We asked an old man where the tombs were, and ~~I'd thought~~ ~~apparently~~ my guess
~~right~~ proved right — they were at the top of the unobtrusive path ~~we'd see~~. So we walked back,
~~and found~~ The hill ~~where~~ with the open tombs ~~were~~ looked rather sad; they were only
great holes in the earth; some of them ~~with~~ had rough steps leading down.
~~There were~~ No paintings. In one or two you ~~see~~ saw the complete tomb,
based of its sarcophagi: ~~it~~ domed, with a raised bank of earth round the
sides. We found pieces of hard terracotta, which must have come
from statues or buildings or tools. As always in Etruscan places,
there was a sheltered valley, locked from the outside world. We wondered
where the town had been, and guessed that its site ~~have been~~ ~~it might~~ ~~have been~~ be that of the
villa, or medieval houses, now stood, which the restful name Bron Riposo: ~~places are passed from generation to generation, after~~
~~all, and~~ the spot seemed hallowed in that way ~~— enormously ancient,~~ with an ancient security

that seemed to ~~speak to you~~ address me directly.

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Poor ~~and~~ or uneducated people disgust her. ~~She despises and looks down on them~~ She would like to raise them up to spare herself the disgust. ~~And remove the guilt. She is a great believer in 'equal opportunities' and~~

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Everybody must have 'opportunities'. They must have a chance of 'education'. But is education an opportunity? The nineteenth-century rises or falls by the answer to this.

Hordes of deformed monsters emerge from the schools and universities every year, in increasing numbers. They went in for 'knowledge', and came out ~~dulled, lonely, masturbating~~ ignorant of the simplest sensations and pleasures.

It took me 20 years to find my feet after ~~recover from~~ a bout of 'education'. I had only learned how to eat dust and ashes.

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A group of American women and girls in the square at Siena. The girls bewildered, timid; the women stock-still, seemingly immovable. These are the people the immigrants ~~and the Americanised~~ calls "children"? On the contrary, they have a terrible maturity. ~~They've never been young~~

The girls are pretty, wondering: ~~what~~ such goodness & oppenness ~~character~~ compared to Italian girls. ~~The Italian girl lacks form.~~ They have conscience and self-examination: the ingredients of ~~therefore~~ sex. ~~The American girl has all three: yet the Italian girl scores because of the form implanted in her nerves. The American's nerves have been shattered: worse even than the English, which ~~who~~ at least had other worlds than the nineteenth century to fall back on.~~

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~~The~~ Americans ~~have been crucified for us~~ ~~This is the story of the~~ ~~in the last~~ ~~two decades.~~ They profited from the war and ~~were~~ was easily led into the trap of thinking they one could profit from the peace.

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I don't mean by 'crucified' simply 'impaled' or 'sacrificed'. I mean something to do with Christ.

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It ~~would~~ might have been better for England had she not been helped in the last war. She would have fought her way through to a ~~new country, whereas she only preserved herself geographically. It would have taken twenty to thirty years, which is the case anyway~~ new life. It would have taken twenty or thirty ~~or~~ years. But it will have taken that anyway.

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France was the first country to revive morally in Europe after the war, because she received least help. England will follow. ~~Germany will flounder for many years, having become the rich man's paradise~~ Western Germany will flounder for many years, in proportion to the dollars she received: Eastern Germany will lead her, and provide the ~~thinkers, artists~~ genius.

Success is the herald of moral collapse.

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At the end of the war the middle-class forced power on to America to save itself responsibility.

Nemesis wasn't in the form of ~~E~~ their destruction: but the middle class became so huge that they were swamped.

+

After the last war, So great was America's resentment and jealousy of the two ancient societies ~~of Europe~~ — England and France — that she built up Germany to ~~the point where she overshadowed them~~ ~~that country overshadowed~~ ~~everybody~~ ~~else~~ them. ~~America~~ ~~She was building up her own assassin.~~

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First as ~~a~~ majordomo, then as ~~a~~ lackey, England has tried follow every twist and change in American policy since the war, in the mistaken belief that this policy was guided by self-interest,

whereas it was only guided by success.

America fêtes those who spurn her (successfully). ~~his, again, is the principle of success~~

England's exclusive alliance with America was the most fatal alliance she ever developed. ~~She paid for it not only with the power~~ The price she paid ~~for it~~ was ~~not only all~~ her power, then her soul.

The Englishman's error was not to know that the American hates to be followed.

Yesterday evening we strolled down to ~~Dino's~~ Sergio's to tell him we were going away for a few days. We found that his brother's family was with him ~~also~~ for the harvest. ~~But~~ The atmosphere round ~~the~~ his house was dark and heavy — ~~the atmosphere of Italians when they work hard.~~ because of the work. Their approach to everything is the appearance of drags, by long inherited instinct. Hard work bows and degrades them. Only ~~Dino~~ Sergio showed a little spirit. They hate to show themselves in ~~down-moments~~ this state. He came to the foot of the stairs outside the house with his brother, as if to warn us silently not to come in. The evening-meal was just being got ready. It was ~~fairly~~ dark now and they had just ~~come in~~ got in from the fields. ~~Amanda~~ Caterina didn't call down to us as usual, and the rest of the family sat huddled on the steps at the top, in silence. ~~Italians enjoy nothing.~~ They see us — all foreigners — apparently enjoying things, looking forward to things, arranging things, and they say to themselves, 'It's because they're signori, because they do no work.' But their signori enjoy things no better: they only make a pretence of it — sometimes a life-long pretence. Nothing is enjoyed — from sex to lolling in a chair in the cool hours. (Things excite — in moments; sex excites, maddens. But) There are only the bare functions of life. If you walk you must be walking somewhere, if you sit it must be because you're tired. None of the infinite pleasures of our lives can be explained

when they throw themselves on ~~the~~ a bed. Life has no taste. It just is. ~~And we feel~~ much the same: we're like trees, rather. Life has only its functions. And since it is nature that orders these functions, it has nothing wrong about it, and makes for strength.

Sergio's ~~Dino's~~ brother had a word for it: he said, 'This is an ugly moment for us; è un brutto momento. ~~And~~ They had to sell for prices lower than usual, he added: because the millers abused the situation and took advantage of the sudden great supply. ~~On sadness!~~ Everything is bald, degutted. Dog's

+

We met ~~The village~~ an art-restorer ~~came to see~~ who told us that he'd work ~~He said that he himself had~~ brought the Bartolo di Fredi fresco in St. Augustine's in S. Gimignano to light about thirty years ago, and had been paid five hundred lire for his work: he was talking about the St. Augustine mural, the one with Christ gazing down on the dying Madonna, with files of angels behind him, their wings in tumultuous repetition. He said I was wrong to think that Christ was holding ~~himself as a~~ Christ the child: ~~in the flesh: Christ was~~ he is holding the spirit of the Madonna; the spirit, departed from the body, was always represented as a baby in arms, with a halo.

He said he didn't know anything of the mural in St. Jacob's, the tiny convent-church. I described it to him warmly, but he still shook his head. He said it was certainly not a Bartolo di Fredi, but probably of the same ~~a~~ maestà, ~~a family group of painters, of the same period.~~ from the same time, perhaps the same school.

End of Section

He took us to a tiny village where a mural had just been found, ~~behind~~ along the altar ~~in~~ of a Romanic church ~~that belonged to a monastery once.~~ We drove behind him, with Luciano Guido the 'brigand' in our car from the farm on the other side of the road, and two of the children from his farm: they ~~who~~ sat hushed and thrilled because of the ride. The priest who had made the find was a 'politicone',

~~to them~~. Harvest-time ~~is~~ isn't exciting ~~everywhere else. Everybody joins in~~ here. I think of it – Germany's England – ~~in the there are~~ the flares at night, ~~of~~ taking food and drink into the fields, ~~there is~~ the excitement of working ~~at night~~ late, the warmth, ~~and when the dawn is coming through~~. Love and flirting are associated with ~~the~~ our harvest; there are long traditions of harvest merriment ~~associated with harvest-time in Germany and France and England~~. But not here. In England the harvest-home used to be celebrated at the squire's house, sometimes for three days running, with bottless barrels of beer and great beef-carcases and hams and puddings, at an immense table where all the villagers sat and where, in the ~~first~~ first stage, the squire and his family served. But in Italy the aristocracy was destroyed by the church, piecemeal, because it was divided in itself. And the aristocratic image – which makes the form of all society – has not fallen in Italy. For an aristocracy provides the model of life for all the later generations, and the history of a country is strictly according to its aristocratic background. Aristocracy is the cradle of politics, family-life and the form of our most intimate yearnings and desires. There had to be that flame in life, to make it possible for each of us to inherit a form at all in himself.

We didn't go in to the house. We heard ~~Silvano and~~ Renato calling down to ~~Dino and his brother~~ Sergio to hurry and come up for the meal. And as we were walking away we heard ~~Amanda~~ Caterina shout, her mouth full of food, 'Maiala, ~~what the devil!~~ literally sow – why can't you come when you're called!' They all sat down to eat: not to feast together, but simply and solely to eat. In a few seconds it would all be finished, ~~this gobbling~~, and they would be on their feet again, to prepare for the last act of the day,

~~Guido~~ Luciano said — a machinating man. He was tall and sallow-pale, with lined face and quick, ~~with disbelieving~~ eyes: ~~and~~ he puffed at a cigarette, ~~outside the church in a feminine way.~~ blowing the smoke out without inhaling, and ~~he~~ talked swiftly and clearly, but in a tortuous way that made it difficult for us to understand. There was some difficulty about who was going to pay for the restoration. It was a Madonna and child very much like the Madonna of Pancole, and from the same period, in the fifteenth century. The child held a dove, and had the same chubby cheeks. Only ~~this~~ the ~~Madonna in the~~ central panel could be restored — the other figures were too faint: one of them seemed to be an old man with a book. Moses perhaps, very much like ~~the~~ a faint figure we had seen on one of the pillars of the romanic church at Cellole. This chapel was privately owned, by someone in Siena, and he would foot the bill, the priest said. Then he went into a description of how long it had taken him to get matters this far: he had always known there was something behind the layers of whitewash above the altar ~~apparently~~. ~~I wondered what his motive was.~~

Perhaps he wants to turn the church, which in his parish, into a mild tourist attraction, to increase what must be his very poor revenue. When we left him and he ~~walked~~ strolled back towards his own home, ~~he~~ I saw he began scrutiny and talking to himself, with unseeing, backward glances. Not a man goes to his tiny church. They all sit outside at the café, and they call him Father Bruno. But not one of them goes in. It now seems to be a sort of self-betrayal for a man who isn't old and retired to go into a church: only in the towns and the cities do you see it — the lawyers, perhaps a clerk or two, putting in their appearance with their wives and children.

2

Their nerves are still sound, but their goodness has been impaired: they are healthy exploiters ~~so to speak.~~

2.

A few minutes after we got back three men ~~arrived~~ lumbered into the courtyard and waited for Gino the peasant. ~~It is strange how~~ I could tell their exact class ~~and station of a person~~ from their build: they were thick and heavy men, with rather ~~stern faces~~, dressed in suits but not carefully; ~~dressed~~, not ~~either~~ peasants, nor signors either but in between — ~~clearly~~, fattori, the farmers. They had come to bargain for one of Gino's oxen. They found it too thin, and went away after a lot of loud talk. The dog didn't bark at them. Their voices echoing across the tiny courtyard were blantant and hard, but they didn't touch the nerves. We'd been away four or five days, and everything inside the cool, dark, closed house looked strange. It had all lost its smell. We put the chairs out on the terrace again, started the refrigerator which makes the light blink and fade, ~~[illegible]~~ opened all the shutters. Gino said it had been hot — in somma, he added; he always says this, with his peculiar bull-like duck of the head; meaning, ly in somma something like 'more or less.' There was no relish in getting back. There were just the facts: the things to be done. But gradually the nerves began to take their silent comfort. We found ourselves staring before us again, across the massive Elsa valley. The nerves seemed nearly fibres that we could ~~[illegible]~~ feel in our bodies: they are getting sturdier all the time. ~~are steady and sturdy~~ The silence enters into the body slowly. It comes down the hill like the wind, through the weeds — a cool breath ~~[illegible]~~ rustling the trees. Most of the grain has been cut now. Sergio's ~~[illegible]~~ is in sheaves, ~~and~~ what they call BARCHE — meaning ~~[illegible]~~ ~~really~~

~~[illegible]~~ stacks, ~~huts~~ ~~but in this sheaves~~ piled rather like Arab mud- ~~in the shape of~~ huts, with the ears inwards, to protect them from the rain. Our own grain hasn't been cut yet. ~~Grano~~ Grigi is always last. And he'll do it mostly by machine, leaving narrow rows ~~where it can't go~~ which the wheels can't manoeuvre because of the vines ~~or~~ olives ~~that are~~ dotted everywhere.

We'd ~~went~~ been away for a 'rest' – a few days by the sea. After the first day I caught a chill and spent the rest of the time in bed. The resorts were crowded and sticky, with ears clustering the narrow streets like ~~in~~ a city. Luckily we lived inland, close to the mountains. After my second or third bathe in the sea my ears closed up in a strange way. It was like a ~~sharp~~ device by nature to stop hearing what was being said round me. With every hour I heard less and less. In a panic one might, not long before dawn, I heard bells in the farthest distance and suddenly realised they were just down the hill, beafening. I leapt up, shaking my head, which brought back a little hearing in one ear. That day I went to a doctor ~~I knew~~ and he produced the magic pill – in this case, a suppository, ~~by habit,~~ and said that the congestion was caused by a combination of sea-water and catarrh from ~~the~~ a chill. I ~~went to~~ wanted him to ~~have my ears~~ syringe ~~d~~ my ears with warm water, but he said this wouldn't be necessary. Everything seemed distraught nerves there. The world looked distant to me, because dumb – a strange unhinged world: I could see people's faces all ~~that~~ the more clearly; their naturally distraught expressions, the heavy pouts, ~~and~~ eyes that strained and squinted. My comfort in ~~that~~ those few days was hanging round the bookshops. I came back every evening with a little pile of books and put them all round me on the bed, in an effort to keep ~~sanity~~ sake. And the talk was all about books and paintings and music – with a hollow, grim ~~underwent~~ basis of tedium underneath. Nervous diseases will grow in ~~that~~ our world, I'm sure of it. There ~~will~~ may even be nerve-plaques. The

causes will not be ascertained: from being too general and too numerous. Diseases like herpes, with its strange and vague pains, may spread like the common cold. Each country may have its plague in accordance with its character: Germany, from the remorse and self-horror in the young; England, from bad food; Amerika, from abstraction, sheer detachment; France, from excess of sarow faire; Italy, from the imitation of foreign life (therefore, because an imitation, the least of all).

In my bedroom I looked at the packet the doctor had given me and was aware a lot of chemical names. He said it would cut out the catarrh. I hadn't asked him for a magic pill, but it was second nature in him to give it. I left him as deaf as I found him. I stuck one or two suppositories in my backside and a few hours later began to feel much worse than before. In fact, poisoned, I hadn't taken drugs for years, and was surprised at myself for suddenly accepting one for a mere chill. Chills should be indulged and given way to: they are the body's excuse for a rest, and the body should be obliged. And I knew my body: at least, I felt I did, after years of learning. Above all, I wanted my blasted ears cleaned out! But I couldn't get anybody to do it. They suggested sticking things in my backside, such a injection or more suppositories, or having a strong drink, or going to bed, but the ears — being so simple — were never mentioned. And I got deaf and deaf. A Yehudi Menuhin record, where he plays the Bach Solo Sonatas, nearly brought them back again by sheer marvel and splendour. But next morning I was as deaf as before. It was a Sunday morning. I'd stopped taking the suppositories, begun to feel less poisoned. I also remembered the doctor saying, 'I should have the suppositories instead of the tablets, because if you have a

weak lives, the suppositories avoid the liver and go straight to the blood — the medicine isn't good for the liver! So ~~I now realised that the man had given me a~~ very probably he had poisoned me, of course, it ~~may have been a~~ might be mild poison, but ~~it must be a poison of some kind~~ to harm the liver; a substance must be poisons, coming called a medicine; ~~and~~ I noticed that there was vitamin PP element in the thing, ~~presumably to~~ I wondered if it was too after boost the liver ~~to take~~ compensate to the harm ~~that was being done to it~~ it had done. A funny sort of medicine, that! And my feeling with poisons is that, while they might save you in a very dangerous spot, they weaken you in the very place where your complaint lies: so that if you take me to cope with flu, you may recover quickly but you'll be ~~more prone~~ weaker than to flu, after, & perhaps more prone to. ~~afterwards, and catch it frequently~~. This has been my experience anyway, with my own body. To be healthy, you have to change your life. A pill won't do. But if you've down with something mild you have to give your body all the natural supports it can get: if you aggravate it further with poisons the immediate complaint will go, but something else will follow later. That's why, when they give you antibiotics, they have to pump you with vitamins (at least, they should do — ~~but~~ though many English doctors, in this conviction that the body is a kind of static machine ~~iron skeleton~~ into which 'germs' pour from the outside, drift), for the simple reason that this medicine destroys not just the wrong bug but the right one as well — the stomach bacilli; ~~in the stomach~~ so that next time you get an invasion of the wrong bug it will have even less of the right bug to fight it. Only when I ceased to be afraid of my body, and to realise that it had a ~~changing and~~ evolving life all of its own, did I — or rather, it — become clear what the ~~difference between poison and~~ messages ~~it~~ passed up time when it was in discomfort.

I was lying in bed on that Sunday morning — the sunlight

looked rather sickly as it does when one is ill — and suddenly, in a moment of revolt, I jumped up with the words ringing in my head, 'I won't have a spell put on me!' It felt like being on a tropical island, where the tribes lay their spells; it had heartbeat and someone close by — perhaps in another house, up the valley. Anyway, I shaved myself, and made an immediate appointment at the local hospital. In a few minutes I was there, with the doctor waiting for me, his eyes like a boy's: and a nun at his side. 'Ears!' he said, and I shouted Yes! with a smile. 'This way.' And to my delight he actually sat me down to look at my — ears! He shone a light into them. 'Completely bunged up!' he said. 'Effect of the sea.' Then, to my further delight, the nun bore the familiar semicircular tray towards me, to hold under my ear, and the doctor took up the familiar glass-syringe. Then, lukewarm water: squish! And ah-h-h-h! All three of us said, 'Ah-h-h-h!' together. I could hear! Hear! I could hear the world! I wanted to hug him and dance them round. Bodless tiny pellets of wax came out into the tray. Then the other ear! Again, I could hear! Hear! Hear! Like bells across the valley. I was free — free to walk alert in the world, not peer at it any more like a visitor! And my body felt better, too. The chill was still there, but what was a chill? Back in my bedroom I packed at once, ate a bit of lunch, then drove off. Right away from the scene! Back here, where the tiny courtyard lay in silence, the valley seemed to look down at me a little reproachfully. (rocky pathway up the hill)

Later that evening, after dark, when everything lay in the night — hush,

heard ~~Angelino coming~~ up the road behind his two oxen. The wheels scraped and tumbled over the stones. ~~And now and then~~ He cried, 'Va! Via! Camina! Cam-i-na! Va! Forza! Forza!', sometimes in a soft voice, ~~encouragingly~~ ~~and sometimes with sudden sharpness~~ encouragingly, and then with sharpness as the wheels took a steep incline. He said, 'Va, va, va,' in a strangely deep and absent way, as if his voice came out ~~was coming out~~ of Etruscan times. I followed him up the hill, hearing his soft cries and the scrape of the ~~his~~ wheels all the way. Half-way up I met Gianni ~~Luigi~~ and Lorenzo ~~Pietro~~, ~~going down~~ – their way to the village by motorcycle, and when I told Gianni ~~Pietro~~ that I'd been in bed with a chill, he said in a burlesque way, waving his arms, ~~'Ah,~~ 'You should have stayed here with us! You're better off here! We have aria pura here – ~~pure air~~, peace – we're free from diseases – don't leave us again!' He'd become ~~had got~~ thinner in the last few days, ~~and~~ ~~in the last~~ his face was bronzed. An their grain is in now. He said the work had lost him two kilos. And now they were off ~~going~~ ~~into the village~~ to enjoy themselves. The air was soft all wound; the village lights shone on their hill, like a crown held up. I walked ~~went~~ on up and came to Gianni's ~~Pietro's~~ house just as Alberto ~~Angelino~~ was turning into the stableyard ~~barn~~ with his oxen. It was now past ten and Gianni's ~~Pietro's~~ mother was still working, bringing forage in from the fields. The bull-calves made a great din when the oxen came into the stall, and the father ~~fatter~~ of them ~~the two~~ tore away from its ropes to feed from the mother: Alberto ~~Angelino~~ indulges this, and gives the beast an affectionate smack on the rump – 'He's ~~'Ti~~ fatter than the other one', he said. 'Because he ~~it~~ gets more compliments – more affection – and it always manages to break ~~get~~ free!' If an animal didn't get proper affection, he said, it didn't put on weight properly, and its meat was much less choice.

After the oxen were chained up ~~to their stall~~ he had to

help bring in ~~grass~~ ~~forage~~ forage. The electric bulb failed, in the hot, dark stable, and they ~~had to~~ used a candle. Then there was the cutting of the grass at a ~~circular wheel~~ ~~to be~~ handworked circular scythe, ~~done~~, first the soft clover and maize-leaves, for the young, and the ~~ordinary~~ coarser, dryer grass for the oxen. ~~Angelina~~ Alberto turned the wheel while his mother fed the grass into the chute, in great armfulls. He seemed elated, a bit drunk, and swung the wheel carelessly, telling his mother that the grass was no good, too dry! He'd been working at another podere all day, and it seemed to have excited him: he ~~is~~ almost ~~never away from home, and~~ never ~~seems to~~ goes to town, ~~for women; he~~ ~~behaves awkwardly when not at work.~~ His face is long and striking, in the stark Etruscan manner, ~~but~~ not good-looking like Gianni. He has bad teeth like his mother, ~~has none at all.~~ They gave me a glass of wine and ~~they~~ piled me up with eggs, and I began to walk down. In the meantime ~~my~~ our dog, which was ~~in~~ on heat, had escaped, and I had to walk up and down the hill calling her name and peering alert among the bushes and trees. I went to the top of the hill where ~~Livio~~ Paolo lives, in a rambling, tumble-down farmhouse, but didn't go into his courtyard for fear of alarming him and perhaps getting some gunshot in my ear. Then I gave ~~it~~ up and came down. The result would be a litter of mongrels, but — oh, well! I went to bed. And after an hour or so ~~the~~ the dog appeared, with a small, yellow-looking half-breed ~~behind her~~ in tow, trailing ~~half~~ a chain. I felt hot from wine, overtired. ~~But~~ ~~the chill was leaving~~ The nightingale who always sits close to our bedroom window made his familiar call: one long soaring whistle, and a few warbles, then silence; just the beginning of a song — never more; at first it sounds like a dog crying with its high-pitched yet soft whistle, ~~and~~ the brings enormous comfort — the world is suddenly calm. The moment I hear his brief, and endless,

call, I feel better, and fall asleep.

+

A ~~To take up the narrative again:~~ America ~~[illegible]~~ is the most ~~[illegible]~~ spiritual nation in the world.

+

God and the devil are equally spiritual.

+

The poor who emigrated to America were always renegade: they abandoned the fraternity of their street, their village, their country, in order to become not free but middle class.

+

The European can't see how independent the American is of his Buick, his eight-laned highway, his day and night television. The American can't see how independent the European is of his traditions, his ancient buildings and careers.

+

There is nobody more arrogant and blasphemous than the painstaking democrat: he would scrutinise God for marks of qualification.

+

A Jew becoming an artist, a Gentile finding Christ: the same process.

+

Nothing is sadder than a man and wife each having a profession: it turns their sex into a kind of self-abuse.

+

An Italian in misery always goes to ground like a dog: he has to be alone.

+

The German nightmare is so great because it thrived on riches after the war.

+

Art is never experiment. Experiment is the making of a synthesis out of two propositions. But there is nothing synthetic in art. Truth presents one proposition, all the time.

+

There is nothing new in what I'm saying. Of course, I could dress it up to look so: if it was old...

+

A German has never had a discussion in his life. An idea is what stays in his mind until it is knocked out by somebody else. In speech he always addresses an uncouth provincial – himself.

+

Education shocks and tears a good and simple mind from its moorings, and may produce a nervous, alarmed, morbidly alert state. The first symptom of education is acute stink-consciousness.

+

One is always understood, somewhere.

+

The universe is bounded by our thought: if our thought is small and poor so is the universe.

+

B

We are piecing together the ruins of our civilisation after the American epoch – or rather, episode: so are the Americans.

~~Therefore why does he say that what I'm doing here is piecemeal!~~

+

The Americans adopted an eighteenth-century constitution from the English, turning the king-by-inheritance into the president-by-election, with roughly the same powers, advised but not responsible to a council, and subject to veto from parliament ~

Congress.

Unlike the English system, which developed with time, putting more and more power into the hands of the first a prime minister of the council, the American remained bewildered and paralysed in its original conception. The result is the accumulation of the maximum power in the hands of one man, without the power to rule.

This cumbersome system — of kingship shorn of anything kingly, and therefore ~~reduced~~ rendered impotent — was distributed all over the world after the last war as an act of progress. The result was to create dictatorships everywhere, some civil and some military.

In fact, the system was no progress: it was simply a negation of the past (it put a man of the people in the king's place). Advance is never achieved by negating the past. You may just as well turn a tree upside-down and expect it to function naturally: it will probably flower somehow, but it will go back to the original model.

+

The 'beautiful' girl nowadays — slim like a boy — has been made by queers and hermaphrodites.

+

There is nothing deeper and stiller than a German's hatred of England, if he feels it at all. It gives him pleasure to mock and belittle what he always learned was bigger than himself. England / ~~made him feel his identity~~ / a provincial.

Europe has a provincial part and a metropolitan part, like the male and female.

+

There is nothing keener than the madness of Germany and Italy.

+

The man who tells the truth will always be blamed for what goes wrong.

+

I remember walking down to the sea from the road one evening alone, near Ancona, ~~30 years ago~~. The column had stopped and the trucks were all drawn into the side of the road. It was dusk, and I was surprised to find the sea so close, ~~by~~, and a smooth, deserted beach. ~~That was twenty years ago~~ Everything seemed impossible to me then, except what was. I had a peculiar sensation on that beach which made me linger. I can't even tell what it was even now. ~~But it was~~ ~~seemed~~ a sense ~~feeling~~ of the ~~strangeness~~ exotic~~ism~~, an independence, adventure, ~~all combined~~. I had taken a few steps and was quite away from the army, quite alone. I think we were coming up from Greece to join a new attack. The sea was smooth and quiet; the beach seemed such a luxury — 'seaside' had always been ~~was a~~ crowded; ~~for me~~ ~~place~~ here I could throw off my clothes and jump in if I wanted to. Perhaps my body had the premonition ~~sensation~~ that it would be here again, a few miles from this spot, some years later. ~~alone~~ For a moment, I was quite alone, as if in tune with myself as I would be after the war. But my mind didn't believe for a moment that I'd ever see Italy again.

My first visit to Rome was short, cursory: that was strange — not to know that I would live in the city for years of my life. I hardly looked at the city itself. Yet the seed must have been sewn then. Otherwise why did I go back — hardly thinking? ~~each time~~? The seed was cast so deep, perhaps, that the mind knew nothing. I stayed at a hotel in the burrow of streets in the Spanish quarter, just for two days. The thing to do was to ask the hall-porter to fix you up with a woman for the night. All Rome was copulating. He fixed up myself and a friend; ~~up~~ we had to travel to the outskirts, in one of those tiny war-buses which consisted of a canvas box behind a motor cycle ~~like~~ in which you could hardly stand up. I went alone to do the arranging: I was surprised at myself — at the methodical way I arranged our pleasures; we would bring the food and wine, enough for four; I saw both girls, and approved. And in the evening we went.

Those outskirts must have been quite close to the Vatican: the city was much smaller then. There were great blocks of flats that stood alone: they seemed to me exotic and marvellous. The women had a flat, well-furnished. One was serious and delicate in her movements; the other plump, ~~and~~ giggly. We sat round a small table, eating and drinking without appetite. Then we found the maid more attractive than either of them and to ~~to~~ their horror, ~~of the women~~ — and the spellbound outrage of the ~~maid~~ girl maid — ~~we~~ made advances at her. She was ushered and hurried out of the place, ~~quickly, having been all smiles before.~~ The night was distraught and ridiculous. I had instilled in my friend a horror of the clap, having caught a stiff dose of it myself in England. So neither of us did anything, to the bewilderment of the women. So there were four people aching with desires, on a hot night, with the mysterious and smiling and intimate city outside quite dark and silent; and none of them was satisfied. That was a strange beginning in a city. Yet I felt happy in the morning. The light was clean and sparkling as I'd never seen it before ~~(though I didn't know this)~~: it ~~seemed~~ gave to give promise — with the bustle from the streets outside, for below — of wonderful events. Who knows what first lesson the city was teaching me? Even now I can't unravel it. But perhaps that was a twilight evening ~~a [illegible]~~

+

We have absorbed Christ: his story, rebellion; the cross has entered ~~our lives~~. ~~He is~~ We have him in our behaviour. Our probity is his. But he offered us a religion. And now it's time to look at it. Otherwise we're simply moral. And who can be moral without a reason for long?

+ STET STET

~~Q~~ America is the climax of morality without a reason, spirituality without God.

+

1) A religious man ~~can~~ never tells you what religion it is: definition limits; ~~and~~ ~~therefore~~ therefore how can ~~do you~~ be define the limitless?

+

in the street far below---of wonderful events.

We've absorbed Christ: his story, rebellion; the cross has entered us. We have him in our behaviour. Our probity is his. But he offered us a religion. And now it's time to look at it. Otherwise we're simply moral. And who can be moral without a reason for long?

America is the climax of morality without a reason, spirituality without God. She is the most spiritual nation in the world.

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The poor who emigrated to America were always renegade: they abandoned the fraternity of their street, their village, their country, in order to become not free but middle-class.

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But A religious man can never tell you what religion it is; definition limits, therefore how can he define the limitless?

He pointed the way!

'Not me but he that sent me.' It has taken 2000 years just to get the direction right.

putting more and more power into the hands of the first or prime minister of the council. The American remained becalmed and ~~paparysed~~ in its original conception. The result is the accumulation of the maximum power in the hands of one man, without the power to rule.

This cumbersome system---of kingship shorn of ~~anything~~ anything kingly, ~~and therefore rendered impotent~~---was distributed all over the world after the last war as an act of progress. The result was to create dictatorships, some civil and some military.

In ~~fact,~~ the system ~~was no progress: it was simply a negation of the past (it~~ put a man of the people in the king's place, but didn't remove the king. ~~Advance is never achieved by negating the past.~~ You may just as well turn a tree upside down and expect it to grow that way: it will flower somehow, but it will return to the original model.

INSERT IF

If was kingship shorn of anything kingly.

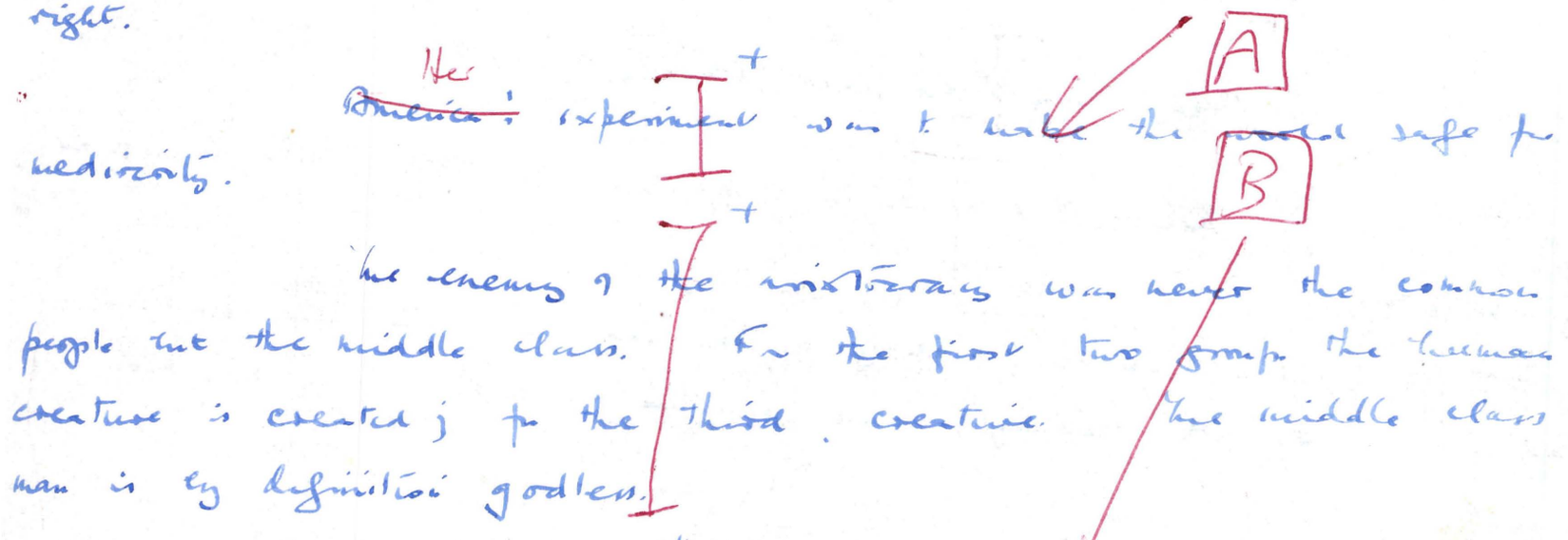
Do I mean America or Babylon?

Because we ~~we~~ never got to grips with the religion we have no philosophy. On one side we have morality in life; and on the other abstraction in thought. (Religion makes the flow of blood between them).

Our philosophy is paltry because at best it discusses the possibility of religion: that is, it never gets going.

+

'Not me but the God that is in me!' He pointed the way: it has taken two thousand years just to get the direction right.



+

~~America's~~ Her experiment was to make the world safe for mediocrity.

A

B

+

The enemy of the aristocracy was never the common people but the middle class. For the first two groups the human creature is created; for the third, creative. The middle class man is by definition godless.

+

For the common people and the aristocracies cleanliness was given; for the middle class it has to be created.

+

The American epoch was one of lip-service and the deliberate moral tone. Subscribing to this tone meant you agreed with the murder of the aristocracy. You could now be popular in the middle-class sense: that is, self-annihilating.

+

Aristocracy means the utmost development of the single ~~human~~ creature, for better or for worse. Middle class means the utmost development of safeguards, for better.

+

We are no judges of better or worse: we cannot

choose our world. ~~We cannot create.~~

+

Everything intimate must be slower: slower eating, slower speaking, slower thinking. We have to put a brake on the universe: like a man of good nerves holding back ~~a pair of~~ horses.

In the last epoch of sound nerves — the early eighteenth century — these things were all slower.

~~Pace is the horrified flight from self.~~

+

The quicker the civilisation the more terrible the nemesis.

+

In Italy, only Rome isn't barren.

+

She thinks she is anti-English. But she is only horrified by aristocracy.

+

F The most tender folly of America was to believe that she had done away with history, and was accountable only to the present.

+

If you do away with the past you do away with the future, and are a slave to the present. Life will never let you rest.

+

The marvel of middle-class life is that it achieves nothing in itself; ~~no contribution at all to the intimate~~ its forms and habits are all a wreckage. Yet it offers the possibility of new life to every creature.

+

The middle-class has brought nothing by way of life: it has only imitated and destroyed. But it is the instrument of change, and will be obsolete when its work is done.

+

God preserve me from triumphs.

+

When you are betrayed you are made free. The choice of good or evil lies open before you. At no other time is there such a stark and clear choice.

+

Your misery in betraying should of course be incomparably greater than your misery in being betrayed.

+

The practical problem of the future is shattered nerves: these tire without work or labour; much more sleep is needed — a continual recuperation. It is a kind of production-problem.

+

Nerves are kept alive by light and air, by movement, early hours of sleep and regularity. When they are challenged civilisation is challenged.

+

They say, 'The politicians are mad with their H-bombs and abortive conferences.' But every modern home totters on the edge of madness, perhaps more than the politicians!

+

A man who ~~stamped~~ turns (back on his own) his problems ~~are instead of solving them~~ will have a growing ~~horror~~ distaste for ~~of~~ what he calls 'private' attitudes, 'private' literature, 'private' art. ~~It is~~ They are his name for truth.

+

Traditionally men rather than women were promiscuous: the brothels were for men, after all. Desires in women are much appeased by the sucking child, ~~and by love of the child.~~

The Christian marriage is unnatural: without brothels, disastrous (especially in the Anglo-Saxon countries where you marry your best friend). New habits will form round it.

+

At half-past five this morning, soon after we woke up, there was a fierce storm and a tremendous wind swept through the

[illegible] we rushed about closing doors and shutters, and getting things in off the terrace. The dog was terrified and kept close to us. The water cascaded down off the roof in a great chute. Our rainwater-well filled up again in no time, ~~with~~ there were blinding flashes of lightning. Then, as we lay in bed waiting for it to stop, we heard the first bird sing, and the cloud began to draw away. Sergio had gone to work at four, though it was Sunday — because of the grain that has to be got in after the strike-delays: the strikes have delayed the harvest so we overtime necessary — and we saw him tramping back, soaked through, at about seven, his food-basket still full; ~~suspended from a stick on his shoulder~~ Grannis came down later and said he'd been soaked from head to foot: he'd been building a barche of wheat-sheaves and couldn't leave it until the 'roof' was on; he had wrung the water out of his clothes. At four that morning, when he'd started work, the sky had been clear and there'd been stars: dawn brought the storm. He said he hadn't arrived home before one in the morning, and then he couldn't sleep because of the great heat and the mosquitoes: he lay smoking, then leaned out of the window; now and then he gave his brother Lorenzo a good kick, [illegible] for sleeping so deeply.

It still isn't real July weather. The usual heat hasn't come. Yet the Val d'Elsa is one of the hottest and dryest regions north of Rome. Strange that if you say to someone, 'It isn't normal, the weather this year', he will look vague and say, 'Certainly — no great heat has come.' He doesn't remember how the other years were: the Italian has such difficulty in projecting himself beyond present sensations.

They say over their half of Italy's grain has been lost this year through the abnormal winter cold and the spring-rains.

One of the oxen here is sick with tuberculosis, and Gigi has had to sell her at a loss of forty thousand lire. The padrona complains, in her singsong, wan, mediaeval way: a long dirge

She has been putting a fine story about that this is a 'villa' even a 'palazzo' — for which we pay a pittance. Since we are foreign people find our twinkling credible: foreigners are signori who expect bathroom and polished wardrobes wherever they go, ~~and throw their money away.~~ When I explained to a shopkeeper yesterday that far from having a bathroom we had no water and little electric light, and no lavatory to speak of, he seemed relieved: he'd been worried that the general conspiracy to charge the foreigner fancy-prices ~~(according to the foreign~~ might have been undermined. 'If', he said, 'you'd like a really nice place another year, in Assisi, four rooms with a bathroom, kitchen and all conveniences, I have it. Furnished, as well.' I asked him how much it would be and he made the classical Italian reply, which never differs so much as by a word, in whichever province you happen to be: 'Ah, quello non posso dire — that I can't say. But certainly we would come to some arrangement...'

+

The July heat has settled in. The rocky path up the hill is beginning to look blinding white, and the cicadas are louder, echoing across the valley. But there is always a cool, balmy breeze that comes down through the woods from the sea (otherwise the Etruscans wouldn't have been here). When I walk up the hill I scan the path in front of me carefully for snakes. The vipers can go right across your path, as they can't see or hear, ~~and don't dart off quickly as the grass-snake do.~~ A dog will stop short when it is aware of a snake on the path, and sit down, quite still. The heat makes the walk uphill slower: the dog plods along with head drooping, tongue hanging out. There are great yells from Luciano at the top of the valley, egging his oxen on while he shokes what in his seat: 'Dio buono, camina! Madonna troia!'

+

Yesterday I saw the fattore of the land: he is to be go-between for the owner of the house and me. There are mis-

understandings about ~~when~~ when to pay the rent and to whom, ~~what repairs fall to me and what to her~~; about the pozzo nero, the 'black well' as it's called meaning the lavatory which is just a hole through the floor; and the payment of the bill for the 'disinfecting' of the house ~~that is, whitewashing~~ of the ~~downstairs rooms~~, which she is ~~trying~~ an adamantity to make me pay. ~~pin on to me~~. He told me with a clear, confidential look that the fattore who had found us ~~involved of finding in the~~ house in the first place was responsible for the mess: it was the vice of this man to plant a misunderstanding between two parties, to his maximum gain. Anyway, he would straighten it out. He would talk to ~~the other~~ this fattore, ~~to the interior decorator~~ and then to the padrona. He had heard both sides in the dispute and thought it could be cleared up with a good word all round. So I paid two months' rent and left. She is setting up a great moan, he told me, about the sick ox: it should never have happened, she said. 'But we're all losers on that deal,' he murmured.

+

Why, ~~did you~~ are we to believe that thought ~~didn't~~ doesn't come from private life? and ~~indeed every~~ all great things?

+

Every Italian peasant wants to be a 'signore', that is, a man with money and no work. In a way it's similar to England, where the common people were ground so hard that their initiative was stolen for generations.

+

The rich live the lives we ~~form~~ make for them: in an epoch they're barely literate, ~~morally unctious and a prey to whim~~ shiftless, ~~and~~ nerve-wracked ~~isolated, haunted~~ by lack of responsibility, ~~and~~ always on the move.

+

In the dead of the night a couple come together in unsuspecting intimacy, from long habit, and find they're strangers.

+

We have no form to give the rich. They're a relic from former times. ~~We have to make everything all over again.~~ We can no longer elect these harlequins to spin our dreams for us.

+

At last we have to take responsibility for ourselves.

+

The English lost their genius of combining power with intimacy: ~~their power cascade~~ everything they had cascaded down in a few years, due to this. Given a position of the slightest power, the young began to write letters like policemen. No other mode was available to them.

+

All women are betrayers. It is their life-giving speciality.

+

A woman who isn't a betrayer has something wrong with her sex.

+

She has already forgotten the two wars that turned her life upside-down and wrecked the predictions of her menfolk. She is busy again constructing the status quo that 'of course' has always been there and 'of course' is safe and can never fade. She clings to ~~this feeble~~ her dream with the ~~wonderful~~ marvellous vigour and simplicity of a German. It seems to take about 20 years. The first war ended in 1918 and Hitler was at it in 1938.

The Germans build a massive house and say, 'this is eternal', even if they have to do it once a year.

+

On Sunday we again walked in the 'Isle de France' country down the road, after the storm. It always seems as if no one has ever really been there ~~before, except perhaps~~ since centuries ago. The path winds between cornfields and lava-rocks and saplings, and emerges at the crest of a hill from which one can see a ~~massive~~ thickly wooded mass of hills, falling into a deep valley. In France or England that path would be full of reminiscences — Louis XV had once passed there with his mistress, it used to be a stagecoach road in the time of Dame Buster, Henry VIII loved to hunt there, the ~~Scotch~~ Scots or Burgundians were degeated there after a battle lasting three days... But here, if

there is a touch from the past at all, it is classical. And so you have a sense of pure countryside: nature worked over and formed perhaps more than any other in the world, and yet bare. There has been no aristocracy. No magic has baptised the paths and woods: except in ancient times.

No picnics — no tender little ceremonies. Gianni's brother said we must come up and have a "merenda" with them, perhaps at the edge of the woods. Merenda is a lovely word, at least it sounds lovely: meaning snack or picnic. But nothing would be done with tender relish. We would snatch at a lump of salami and drink a glass of wine, probably standing; and then make off. We sat in Gianni's kitchen a few days ago and ate a few mouthfuls, washed it down with some wine, and we were there for a few minutes, and afterwards I suddenly thought, "Well, we've had the merenda!" There could be nothing like the picnic in Monet (?). Nothing like the buxom girls with overflowing beer-glasses: nothing like France, Austria, Germany. No care for the human creature. I think this will always be so. I did think I'm right to say it's miseria, and will end with the end of miseria.

The Italians are so ancient, not in time but in feeling: it is their quality, always was. They're ancient like cicadas or salamanders. There isn't real tender regard for the human creature: no flirtation, delight, folly — and these that make up the picnic. furnish more than

Sometimes I think that Italy is nothing but classical. The Renascence, certainly the baroque, seem nothing. Florence, Siena, Parma, Ravenna — the towns of the Renascence: nothing. Tuscany is as bare as any other part of Italy: only the towns are like jewels, set in the plains. There hasn't been magic in the country: except before Christianity.

Perhaps this drive for the town which they all have now

is ancient. The town provides the only meaning, always has.

There aren't the great county houses that you see in France or England. They haven't determined the shape of the land. When you find them they are closed and hidden — turning their backs. They don't frown on to a valley like the ~~an Austrian or German castle.~~ schloss. They don't stand clement and intimate mild like a Queen Anne house in the Cotswold country. Their touch hasn't entered the people.

The Etruscans had the magic. But it was nothing similar to that of our aristocracies. (must think more about this)

+

~~The~~ Letters from New York — bright, thrilling, crackling with work and prospects. The promise of heaven on earth.

~~But yet~~ this wilts us secretly: a bondage. Like ~~waiting for the~~ the Second Coming, that never came. ~~in the middle ages.~~ There's to do here and now. We can wait — we think we can: but our bodies, nerves, can't ~~must~~ be kept in abeyance.

+

This is the Etruscans — 'here and now.' Did the Italians inherit this? They have No beyond: No truncation of life into past and future ~~and present~~: into time. Remember how indifferent the Sicilians are to time and age. Is that ~~the~~ classical? Is that why the Italians have no reminiscence? Their past and future are the now? And so their earth doesn't change: in speaking once it spoke for all time? Were the Etruscans ~~it~~ Italy's baptism?

+

~~Did the Etruscans baptise Italy?~~

+

From one 'Isle de France' hills we saw a great wall sticking up from a wooded valley ~~on one of the hills~~, broken and jagged, surrounded entirely by thick undergrowth ~~woods~~. ~~And turning, so as to~~ And beyond it, where there were fields, lay what they call the 'old castle', a group of farmhouses perched on a bare hill. ~~a place everybody tells~~

~~we we must go~~ ~~Lucas~~ Paolo's brother lives there, we are told; he is also a shepherd. And there are ruins. But what ruins we can't make out. Is this strange towering jagged wall, suddenly thrusting out of bushy woodland, alone in a vast landscape of hills and shore valleys, part of those ruins? ~~Are they~~ Is SV ancient or medieval? The map tells us nothing.

We decided to drive there, or as near there as we could get by car. It meant taking the road to Volterra and turning right. There was another road, going direct through the woods from where we lived, but we'd never been able to get its whereabouts clear. So we took this obvious road. It climbed up and up, overlooking the strange and stirring hills below Volterra, that sometimes look as though a massive freezing wave had passed over them and ruffled them. ~~in p~~ Mist and clouds floated in the valley. There were thick, dark woods, and then light fields, all laid out like an immense map as far as we could see. At the top of the hill we asked for Castel Vecchio and were told we'd passed it; there was a path to the left which we had it noticed. And we drove back down the hill carefully. There it was, going surreptitiously away from the road at an angle, ~~was a path that sloped down~~ sloping down between trees. We noticed a shepherd at the corner, his face much like ~~Lucas~~ Paolo's, and guessed he must be the brother: then we drove on slowly. The path began to hug the side of a hill, with a small valley on the other side, in exactly the style of an Etruscan approach. And I began to feel the sunlit happiness I always do on an Etruscan path: a special golden ~~feeling~~ sensation, as if one were at the edge of a great event. As always, with an Etruscan path, nothing ahead could be seen; but suddenly one ~~would~~ came ~~come~~ out onto a vast opening, and spaces. ~~We did~~

~~Exactly this~~: There before us, shining on the crest of a hill, were the two farmhouses, and beyond them were rolling hills as far as Castel Fiorentino, on the road to Florence. We drove up to the courtyard and asked two peasants who were sitting outside, 'Is this Castel Vecchio?' Yes, it was. Were we after the ruins? they asked. Yes, we were. Ah, well, they were further on, along the path that ran at the side of the house (also mysterious, and clearly a continuation of the other one at one time), and it had to be done on foot. A car would be no use. The path went through woods, over rocks and streams; and it took about three-quarters of an hour, before we reached ~~the 'Torre'~~ the 'towers'. What were the so-called towers? we asked them. Ah, that they couldn't say! But certainly they were interesting for those who understood such things. There were holes in the ground — tombs, people said. 'They must be Etruscan!' I told them. They shrugged, and one of them said (with a smile that) he'd never ventured inside one: he was always afraid the roof would fall in, and also there was danger of snakes — they lurked in holes, under stones, and he wasn't in a hurry to be bitten by a viper!

Once, he said, a lawyer — a small, fat man — had spent a month there looking at the ruins ~~every~~ day by day, ~~with~~ a book in his hand; and when they'd asked him what there was of interest in the towers ~~there~~ he ~~'d~~ only said quietly with a smile, ~~politely~~, 'You wouldn't understand — non capite, voi!' We must come another day, they said, because it was already too late in the afternoon; ~~and~~ it would soon be dark: it wouldn't do for a cristiano to get lost in the woods! And they made faces and laughed. Was Paolo's ~~Luca~~ brother there? we asked. Yes, he lived there, and he'd just taken his sheep up to the road. We

explained that we lived near ~~Luso~~ Facts and got our milk from him. Then we must be the foreigners who'd taken ~~that~~ the house at the foot of the hill, they said — yes, they'd heard! They got the nationality wrong — they thought we were Swiss — but it was extraordinary how far the news had travelled, on to this lonely farmhouse that sat commanding a huge valley as far as the eye could see, in the brisk wind and sparkling sunlight.

Then they ~~also~~ talked about the war. Moroccan troops had been there — fearful fellows, they said, who cut off ears and never spared Germans when they caught them: they ~~simply~~ cut their throats from ear to ear. English and Americans had also been there: they had bartered wine and eggs for tinned food and sugar. A German had stayed up a tree with a machine-gun for two or three days, until the English or Americans bought the tree down from under him. They spoke ~~It made it seem that~~ as if the war ~~was~~ had been ~~the~~ last thing ~~that had~~ to have really happened ~~to the place.~~ there. And It seemed not to have changed a stone since then. The silence was immense, on the hillside. The same two families had remained there. ~~And~~ They talked about the troops, the Moroccans and their French officers, as if they ~~could see~~ their faces were before them now, and ~~as if~~ those same troops ~~were elsewhere now, but~~ existed now, identical and unchanged ~~now~~, only elsewhere ~~from the valley~~. Youth, they said, is unmindful of things in war: ~~they~~ boys lose all sense of family, and homes, crops, other people's belongings, ~~become~~ are meaningless to them.

It was getting chilly and the sun ~~was~~ had started going down. We ~~'d~~ would come back another day, earlier, so that we would be back before dark. As we drove away they sat with their eyes on us, calm and mildly inquisitive.

I remember driving through Baghdad with Nuri the surgeon and him saying, 'I love this city! I could never leave. It's always new to me!' ~~He said that even after living there all t~~ We were passing near the brothel quarter. He said that a man was often worn out by thirty in Baghdad, sexually. Sometimes impotent. 'Friendship is more important!' Nuri had bulging eyes, and the sweat poured out of his face.

The entrance to the brothel-quarter was narrow — just enough room for a man or two to squeeze by: so that the police could examine you for weapons on entry, and no crowds could suddenly storm through. Some politicians were jealous of its existence — as an hotbed of politics and subversion.

Only the poor went there. The better-off had established houses in the city, under a madame. I remember one madame to whom we used to go for racing tips: the jockeys used to come to her for their women, and she got their hottest ~~tips~~ advice. But she rarely let anything go. She was small and plump with sparse, greying hair — like nearly all the madames there are, it seems. She received me in a stuffy sitting-room with great framed pictures of George VII on the wall, and the then princess Elizabeth and duke of Edinburgh.

A minister with a Canadian wife interested in Rockefeller fellowships, refrigerators and sexual equality was instrumental, I heard later, in getting that brothel quarter closed. His prime minister ended by being dragged through the streets with his pet cut off; and his king and prince-regent were shot dead by an excited group of soldiers (as the man who led the revolt against them was shot dead by another excited group of soldiers some years later).

The minister (who told me that he'd been received at Buckingham palace 'which is more than most Englishmen can expect') got ~~cut~~ off with life-imprisonment.

The brothel-quarter survived them all, I'm sure.

A letter from the padrona — an answer to my conference with her fattore. The words run close together, in one round, breathless scrawl, as if from centuries of ~~machination~~ cajolement and legal wrangling. She won't specify precisely what I owe her (over and above the rent I pay): if you define your position too closely you can't move out of it later.

When we go to see her she talks about the Pope, or her son, or how intolerable and untidy her daughter is, or about the religious experiences she has had. She talks ~~dramatically and~~ rhetorically, opening her mouth wide, with flashes of humour and irony. Then everyone is by the time she has finished we are too tired and hungry to think about bills, ~~and we disperse.~~ We've been wrangling mildly for two months now. Some deep Italian wrangles go on for five, fifteen years. Sometimes they go from one generation to another, abolishing time. ~~in the same chant and dirge.~~

+

~~Dino~~ Sergio told us that to get to the ~~towers~~ ~~ruins near~~ 'towers' ~~so-called 'old castle'~~ ~~the so-called 'old castle'~~ we needn't take the road to Volterra at all: ~~but~~ we only to walk from a point just beyond the ~~next village~~ woodshire, where a narrow (called) path cuts straight into the hills. It would mean ~~the~~ a difference ~~between a journey~~ of one ~~and three~~ or two hours.

So yesterday we tried it. We packed up some bread and cheese and wine and drove to the next village, then ~~along a~~ took the narrow rocky path into the hills behind: he'd told us to go as far as a villa that stood alone in its own poderr. We found the villa and left the car in the courtyard, at the end of a drive of cypresses. Then we ~~found~~ spotted someone to show us the way — the peasant's wife. She was nursing a child on the grass, surrounded by tiny ducklings. There were two ways to the ruins, she said, one straight through the woods, and difficult to keep to because, the ~~[illegible]~~ undergrowth, and the other a real path that would take at least two hours. We could see the ruins protruding out of the woods on the next hill, jagged and split. In the winter, she said, the

path was easy enough, because the trees are bare, but in the summer you needed a guide: on Sundays the husband was available, but today he was working. 'Anyway, I'll show you!' she said with a smile. We walked across the forecourt of the villa; ~~again:~~ a Roman family owned it, she said, and came only for August every year. The shutters were tight closed, and the walls were in good order. The fields were perfectly still, all round. The villa, with its mellow, painted walls, gave it all a touch of splendour and ~~intimacy~~ grace.

The path was almost invisible, and it meant ~~ploughing~~ treading through thick bushes ~~all the~~ the whole way, ~~like a heath.~~ What about the other path, which was wide and well-shaded with trees? It would take too long. But we decided to try it. A scirocco had started and the sunlight was very misty and yellow, and the usual cool breeze from the sea had dropped. A few clouds were forming.

The path went there down a slope between trees, towards a dried riverbed at the bottom, like a valley you expect to find in the Tyrol, except that there were no tall trees, it being too ~~[illegible]~~ dry. Across the path there were boulders and the polished roots of trees, sometimes providing a stairway down. We were soon sweating. The dog rushed along excitedly, yawning and puffing.

The stones in the riverbed were covered with ~~smooth~~ shining mud, yet ~~when one~~ the moment you touched ~~it~~ them with ~~one's~~ your foot ~~one~~ you found it ~~[illegible]~~ the mud ~~[illegible]~~ ~~wet~~ ~~but~~ turned to dust at once. There was a great silence in the woods, with the occasional flap of wings and the cry of a bird, and the endless rattle of the ~~grillos~~ cicadas.

At the riverbed we collected sticks to walk with, and an ascent started through darker woods than before, the boulders of the path mottled black and grey ~~in the way of~~ with lava, ~~stones~~, ~~with~~ and large smooth pebbles now and then. We ~~began to~~ wondered ~~whether~~ ~~this~~ ~~it~~ this had ~~[illegible]~~ been a modest roadway in Etruscan times, leading from one valley

to ~~the~~ another. Storm-clouds were forming inland and there was the hushed sound of thunder in the distance. It wasn't likely that ~~they'd~~ the storm would ~~come~~ to us: the weather was clear in the direction of the sea.

The ~~s~~trees grew smaller as we went up, and the vegetation ~~was~~ became thicker on either side, with the sun gleaming through the leaves on the jagged path. It reminded me of the biblical countries — I couldn't place exactly where: but it had something to do with the light, a certain dim yellow sparkle, ~~and~~ a sense of dawn, ~~of some kind~~, but dawn in history, something exciting that had happened collectively, with the glow of a wonderful story told at night. ~~I'd had the same feeling near Baghdad — at~~ Babylon, perhaps; ~~at~~ the arch of Tesiphon; ~~by~~ the orange-groves near Tel-a-viv, ~~the~~ Haifa; ~~by~~ the mountains of Kurdistan, ~~or~~ the Lebanon; ~~in places like~~ a Syrian wadi where there ~~was no vegetation at all~~ were only gleaming boulders as dry as bone, and the rolling desert as far as one could see. It reminded me of Lake Galilee, as ~~one~~ you look ~~s~~ down on ~~by~~ it after a sudden turn in the road. And there was the glitter of the Mediterranean — Algiers, the squalid ~~ville~~ Philipsville, Bizerta.

At the top of the hill we seemed no nearer than ~~when~~ begun at the ~~we'd started~~ beginning. Then in a clearing ~~we~~ suddenly ~~see the~~ caught sight of the towers in a clearing. ~~so-called~~ ~~towers~~. ~~They were~~ ~~One of them~~ ~~any~~ ~~especially~~ The tallest of them gleamed in the light, like a ruined temple you might come across by the sea, from Greek times, its tracery near the top still faintly visible: and it had that slight, dusty fineness of great age. Yet at the same time it did it seem ancient. Mediaeval, perhaps. But there was something marvellous ~~had happened~~ about the place ~~there~~ itself. The dense heath clung all round it, and hid everything at the base. We were still a long way ~~as~~ from it, and the path had trickled out, taking us in ~~another~~ the wrong direction. At the side ~~we found~~ of the ~~one~~ the tallest tower ~~like ruin there was~~ we could see a low building, its four walls intact, ~~apart from the~~ only roofless: the pointed end-walls ~~roof~~ showed that

it wasn't classical; it could have been a priory, a chapel. The 'tower' could have been part of a castle-wall, the rounded watch-tower at one corner. A ruin from ancient times would have sunk further into the earth; but these stood their original height, we could see that.

We plodded on, and every glimpse we had of the towers showed that we were going further away. At the end we found ourselves again at Castel Vecchio, the group of farmhouses at the top of a hill, where we'd talked with the peasants; and we knew that the path leading from there to the ruins was a another hour's walk, over very rough ground; the evening was already drawing in, so we decided to return another day, early one morning, and take the path straight through the underground; shown, we would wear stout shoes and bring sticks. If there was anything Etruscan over there, besides these mediaeval ruins, it was right that we should have to fight for them: the Etruscans don't like to be fathomed.

The aim of German politics is always to destroy England. For the third time (now with the help of America) it has succeeded and each time England brought it on herself. This makes a reciprocal stimulating effect. England then revives, and fights back. Something mysterious is being fought out here, with France sacrificed in between.

England was in danger of mistaking a policeman for civilisation; America a clean lavatory; France repartee; Italy machine and Germany what they call culture.

Rome was the one Etruscan creation that survived.

+

The result of having no brothels is that every woman becomes a bit of a common ~~whore~~.

+

~~Lino~~ Paolo ~~the shepherd~~ brought us ~~two litres~~ of milk ~~yesterday~~ ~~which~~ that went sour almost at once. This follows an affable conversation with ~~his family~~ him: the more affable we are the more we lay ourselves open to be deceived. Here is your pagan, intact from ancient times. He goes about his lonely devices on the principle that ~~thinking~~ they're invisible.

+

The thing was to develop a proper sense of human life. This was done. It was the effect of Christ. He attributed to everybody — the outcast, women, heathen, slaves — a proper life. Isn't it written, he asked his judges, that 'ye are all gods'! Everything grew from that: the Renascence cities, medicine, Luther. People are no longer carried off in childhood, in enormous numbers. There is a certain grip on our fate. We have planted some kind of immense safeguard on life. There is Christ's coolness and detachment round us.

But we haven't quite understood. He never meant by 'ye are all gods', that we could hurl thunderbolts and stop the seasons. So we're suddenly engulfed, by a fate we don't understand, and on which our grip is really very fragile ~~indeed~~: a massacre, a famine, a war; fifty million dead in a moment. A greater mortality-rate than before, in fact...

He meant the glow of gods, inside us. [We have great things, inside us. It's enough just to be.

A god makes friends with fate. He knows better than not to.]

+

A Greek village under a dry, gleaming hill of boulders: I stand on the wooden balcony of a house ~~looking at~~ with an

interpreter, looking down into the street which is covered with pebbles and has no pavement. We have been searching houses for arms. To my surprise a pretty girl of my own age is standing below. She is blonde and slim, with a delicate, rather French face. I speak to her, and she answers in French. The interpreter is ribald: he is an old, pot-bellied, ragged man. She tells me, gaying up mildly in the sunshine, surrounded by the silence of a treeless countryside, that she lives in the nearby city. I promise to come to her house. Then she is gone. It all happens strangely. The interpreter says he has never seen her before. How she can have come from the city, without a car, in war-time, we did know. He says she must have walked! with a dirty laugh. But the road is lonely, through foothills, and there are partisans and brigands everywhere.

I meet her at her home in the city. This is a large house near the bay. At the door downstairs I am shushed quiet by a maid ~~—~~ she puts a finger up to her lips, then draws me by the hand up two or three flights of stairs, in darkness and silence. At the very top we emerge into the open air again. It is ~~a kind~~ the of roof and she whispers me to stay there. Then she leaves, closing the door behind her.

I wait there for some time. Not a sound or movement comes from the house. I can't even hear the city outside. The night is quite dark. Then the girl appears, swiftly, with great mystery, suddenly opening the door and standing before me like a blond shadow. We talk in whispers. Can she come ~~into~~ down to the square? No. Can she walk along the quay with me? No. Can she invite me into her house? No. I shrug and wait. But she can drive out to the village with me, she says. I nearly jump with astonishment. ~~She~~ 'I live there', she says. 'Live ~~there~~ where!' In the village where we first spoke: the family has ~~Yes: or rather, they have~~ a tiny house there, where she can invite me there, quite alone. Not tonight, however. I must

take her back to the village one morning, and come to visit her in the evening of that day.

She was to be in the village-house quite alone, except for her maid. Her maid went everywhere with her. She seemed only just out of school. But then so was I. She gave me an exact description of where the house lay. I was to come quite alone and find the house without asking passers-by.

I walked through the village in the dead of night, passing silent groups of men, and found the house, down a little incline, perched on the side of the hill. She and the maid were waiting inside. The maid was soon sent to bed, and we sat at the table together, in the dim light of an oil-lamp. I made approaches to her, but every approach brought me a smack on the face. Yet immediately she provoked me to approach her again; and again a smack on the face. We kissed and even lay on the bed together. But every movement I made, even of my fingers, brought me a fresh smack on the face. After an hour my face tingled and was as red as a radish. But I kept on smiling. And when I'd had enough I staggered to the door to leave, and to my astonishment she said in a hoarse, bitter whisper, 'Some people can never finish what they start!'

~~But what had I started?~~ There are some experiences which remain inviolate, and are as mysterious decades after as they were at the time.

+

At one time the child of noble birth was put out as a page to a great house: if you can't serve you can't govern.

+

Through the ages England was always a kissing country. Foreigners talked about it. You were kissed — on your lips — when you arrived and when you left.

I can remember in childhood the last relic of this ancient habit: the soft, rich kiss from the past, in the dim backstreets; the smell of lace, powder, on the old women.

+

Reading for a time, Erasmus He calls it 'this raving world'. He and Thomas More shared the same hope of an impending great civilisation. Thomas More was beheaded by the English reformation (1534), Erasmus's work was ruined by the German reformation (1520 on war)

I glimpsed a possible civilisation at a concert in London. Or was it Salzburg? The faces were young, quiet, inquisitive.

We saw the Duccio panels in Siena, placed in a kind of sealed room with curtains and conditioned air, under specially placed lights. Rather like a mortuary. The attendant explained some of the colours to us: gold meant faith or holiness; gold thread or a cloak of gold separated the disciples, Our Lady and Joseph from the others; purple was the colour of royalty. The colours, he said, were ground from precious stones. One could spend days on each panel unravelling its symbols, he added. We stared and listened. Duccio was called 'the Greek' sometimes: and there is a late-Greek finish in his work. None of the turmoil of Freds: it is all symbols and scholarship. The fixed, light colours seemed to have found their destiny in this sealed, artificial room. I was glad to get outside, and as I predicted to myself while inside, I couldn't remember a thing of what I'd seen. The attendant had also showed us a needle behind the main panel which records the entrance of each person by measuring the increased humidity, and makes the necessary adjustment to the atmosphere. Apparently, the panels have been rescued from various churches where they were hidden in side-chapels or behind altars: then they were — most of them — carefully cleaned. I think they would be more themselves in their original dark places — ~~They'd better be careful a workman doesn't come in by mistake one day and put his ladder through the lot. Italy doesn't like vacuums.~~ we could come on them suddenly.

Our art-restorer says that these attendants 'might have come' a chiacchieroni — gas-bags — and that 'some' of the colours used were from precious stones, 'perhaps'.

We've ~~arrived~~ come ~~to~~ this ~~ridiculous~~ ~~atonal music through~~ being in the grip of German music for so long. It is the impasse brought on by ~~German abstraction~~. The connections You might call it the music of no feeling. ~~We no longer has anything to~~ ~~do~~ with dancing and singing; are dead. Even the rhythms of life are missing. Just the brain ~~those intimate connections are dead~~ dictating sounds. ~~becomes 'interesting' for audiences of connoisseurs~~

+

There was much to attract the German in America - the moral-society: the fussy to-do about culture, the ~~loud~~ more professions of interest and enthusiasm and ~~moral~~ cooperation, the committees and endless ~~dead~~ lectures on every subject on the earth, the mania for encyclopedia, the vast projects. ~~That was why~~ The two countries ~~became so~~ grew close to each other after the last war, though they professing hatred for each other.

+

Our choice is between being eclipsed by America or by Germany. We have had the first and now we are going to have the second. The second is better because we can fight it. (The struggle is an old one: We know its terms.)

And, who knows, this third time it may yield its result and meaning?

+

~~Pietro's~~ Gianni's lips ~~give a~~ show signs of ungoverned passion in childhood. ~~This~~ It was the first thing I noticed about him. ~~They have~~ His lips are actually ~~[illegible]~~ the shape of lips closed hungrily round a nipple: extra ~~skin~~ flesh has formed on both sides. Today he mentioned it and said he was going to have a little operation some time, to remove the extra skin. He said with a laugh that he'd taken too much milk as a child, and had ~~been~~ sucked sugar or a thumb ~~the rest of the~~ between times!

This morning he brought down a live chicken and a basketfull of marrows for us. ~~Gino~~ Gigi says, trying to make a laugh out of it, that we're spoiling him, by always taking him in the car. ~~Silvano~~ Renato, Sergio's son, said yesterday — not realising what he'd said until he'd said it — that ~~Pietro~~ Gianni occupies the dog's place in our car; we'd picked up

a slab of travertine for a table in the afternoon with Pietro to help us, and to get a grip on it while I drove the seat where the dog usually sits.

The girl up the hill, who lives alone with her mother and father, in a slough of work from dawn till dusk, sometimes gets moral about Gianni: 'Even signori have work to do,' she tells him. 'Why do you leave everything to your mother?'

~~Of course his mother is a secret encouragement. He has the intimate blessing of his family. Jesus was formed in that way, to the annoyance of the neighbours.~~

His mother pressed money on him yesterday — ~~a small, fierce woman~~ she shouted fiercely, 'Take it! Take it!' when he demurred. When we got to town he quietly bought himself a packet of cigarettes.

+

And through America the German could have the satisfactory sensation that he was by-passing England: An intimate triumph to speak the language without acknowledging the hated source.

+

One should write a book about America, then visit it. Nothing could be more hopeless than the other way round.

+

Yesterday I read about the factory at Montecatini where young workers are dying prematurely of cancer and where men are old at the age of fifty-five. A fertiliser-factory. That fertiliser also goes into the earth, and appears in our food, presumably.

Such a thing stands out in Italy: the background of nature is intact. In the Anglo-Saxon world it was absorbed into life, and taken as normal, until there was a general collapse of nerves. The deaths were swallowed up inside the old story of industrial calamity.

We took our bread over to Luciano's family this morning for baking: they have an oven outside and our two loaves will go in with theirs. They all gape at the whole meal: why isn't it white? Yet they grow and cut and thresh the grain themselves: take it themselves to the 'mill' where it is smashed about until robbed of nearly all taste and value, then they get it back looking like French powder! They say wistfully, 'Who knows if it's our

grain we get back!' Of course it's quite a deal & the 'mill' they then sell the rest of the grain back to the peasants as chicken-food and as wholemeal flour to reinforce the ox-forage. On the old stone-mills have been closed up. They don't stand locally.

+

Thomas More said that the Bishops were chosen hastily but after a careful search for the most unsuitable man. ☺
But how can a good man exercise power?

+

The weather is strange again. Every afternoon at roughly the same time there is a storm with lightning that darts straight down on to the fields, with deafening claps of thunder. The rain is sudden, brief and torrential. Then there is a clear evening. There was a slight earth-tremor along the coast a few days ago.

Graziella told us that a streak of lightning had come within four or five metres of this mother who she was bringing in some forage. He himself was standing by the house, she ten metres away, and it struck between them. The noise was immense. He asked her when she got back to the house if she'd been frightened and she said, 'No, she hadn't even seen it. The lightning.' He spoke about her in a knowing way. 'She would have been frightened all night if she'd seen it!' — with a laugh. He probably didn't tell her about it. the lightning.

+

The other religions look complete to us because we see how absorbed people are into them — the Chinese, Indians, Japanese Hindus, the Buddists. Naturally we can't see how completely absorbed we are in ours. Only they can.

+

We can as much try to change our religion as a white negro can try to be a negro. It's easier for a negro to become a white.

+

Go as many journeys as you like, but he will always look you in the face at the end.

+

Christianity is being fought out all the time. The Hindu

can see it in the buses and roaring trains, in the ridiculous tall chimneys gushing smoke, in the strained, pale faces, the astonishing cities that have no glory.

+

And the other religions are absorbed into the paraphernalia: Muslims, Hindus, Buddists, Confucians, they all begin to use our furniture — from Education ~~even~~ to the concept of Progress.

+

He bestows strictly according to the smiles he gets. Therefore he finds himself in the hands of hypocrites — who know how to smile.

Here you get the effect of power without ~~religious~~ enlightenment.

+

It is difficult. We have no other age to turn to for what we're after. But we have to follow their examples.

+

Now we await enlightenment on the whole question of power.

+

The Italian is Judas. But we must remember that Judas wasn't an unkind man. ~~And~~ He loved Christ like a child. He kept the finances honestly. Only he didn't understand. He thought they were going to make a marvellous life — here and now: but instead Christ offered himself to be killed, that is, he capitulated the struggle.

And when Judas understood he hanged himself. Who can say he doesn't know this man?

+

Last night there was an opera in the village square. ~~In~~ During each interval there was violent hammering and ~~busy~~ scenes shifting: lacking a ~~as there was no~~ curtain, they had hit on the ugly device of shining arc-lamps in the faces of the audience, so that we ~~were partly~~ should be blinded. There was a woman-conductor, wreathed in a long tight black gown down to the feet that made the look ~~bizarre and out of place~~ sinister and snaky. ~~The effect of her presence was strange~~ She made ~~the performance~~ it seem like a school performance, ~~partly~~; and she appeared with the main singers at the end of each scene, ~~on the stage~~ like their schoolmistress. Her movements were round and graceful, and sometimes the

lips moved in a dancing way – like in a foxtrot. ~~in a waltz~~ She was complete and clear. It was Verdi, but ~~there was no~~ minus the drama, that is, a shell. ~~at all.~~ We nodded and dozed. In the ballroom scene the chorus knocked together like farmers bidding for livestock: ~~they had no idea what to do with themselves, and~~ the men's idea of aristocratic manners was to tie paper streamers round the necks of the women, who then bared their teeth in an aristocratic laugh while they were being throttled; the conspirators were dressed quite inexplicably in ~~a~~ shiny green night-dresses and sleeping caps, like old women out of Dickens, with swords and daggers underneath. In the minuet they formed a crowd so that you couldn't see what was going on – you had to assume it. When ever the tenor got ~~the~~ applause his face broke into a delightful boxer's ~~[illegible]~~ grin. The music was all there: the woman conductor seemed to be teaching it to the orchestra a she went along – there were the notes, this was how it was written, and this was how it ~~was~~ must be played; obvious! ~~Verdi was fixed and monumental.~~ When she did interpret the music it was ~~all~~ 'emotion' showing-off: but luckily ~~they~~ she got tired of that very clearly ~~in a few seconds.~~ The soprano ~~had a voice but~~ sang like a peasant-woman calling the chickens; ~~when she was~~ in passionate moments she ~~sounded~~ was like a peasant-woman on the flirt ~~flirting with a man~~ ~~and~~ or being tickled. When the tenor was dying at the end the chorus looked on like ~~people waiting~~ a queue at the post-office. The thing ~~it~~ dragged on until one in the morning. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni was with us, dressed ~~up~~ to the nines. Two seats away was the fattore who had found in our house – he ~~said~~ shouted 'Brava!' after one of the soprano's arias ~~[illegible]~~ as if she'd just bought an ox for half its value (he admired her without thinking her honest). The smell with which everyone here is impregnated – ~~Dino~~ Sergio, ~~Pietro~~ Gianni, ~~Gino~~ Gigi, ~~all these who work in the stalls~~ – of sweet grass, oxen, ~~hay and earth~~ and volcanic soil, ~~faintly sweet and cloying~~ drifted across the audience, mixed with cheap cigarette-smoke. As the people with windows looking on to the square had ~~clearly had orders to keep~~ their lights switched off, but ~~because~~ these ~~they~~ flashed on for a second here and there a second in a pleasantly Italian way, that this not to be noticed. – somebody groping ~~his way~~ across a room, making a pick search for something. Flags were draped out of the windows above the stage for the last scene, and incomprehensible

INSERT

1

The Gospels could be taken literally, unlike the Old Testament; they were the description of a man; .....

Their 'humanism' was thus a revival of classical learning in order to reinstate men in the status Christ had given them: it was naturally unsympathetic to the doctrine of original sin.

2

It lingered in the literal reading of life: ritual, the miracles, stories of the saints, superstitions encouraged by the priests, naturally suffered.

Due to the hot weather

one of them was an old map of the Atlantic coast of America, with the word 'Boston' written ~~clearly~~ across it. ~~Within~~ At ~~the end~~ curtain-call ~~two seconds of the end~~ the stage was a chaos, ~~the~~ the ~~main~~ principal characters mixed up with stage-hands while the applause was ~~still~~ going on. The bass, who had got the biggest hand of the evening, had his thermos flask with him and took a swig. Poor old Verdi! But ~~still~~ perhaps he would have enjoyed it. They got the music right, at least. ~~Only it is as like~~ Being Verdi performed by oxen. There was something natural about it. But ~~it was clumsy.~~ ~~And~~ Oxen haven't ~~have little~~ much a sense of drama (1) ~~At least, not so that you'd notice.~~

+

No sense of aristocracy, no art.

+

Aristocracy means ~~ability~~ to show yourself naked, to ~~any state~~ Naked, we are capable of infinite embellishments and caprice.

+

The middle ages were restless to move on beyond their pagan structure. This is why they came to an end.

+

The ~~pagan~~ slave of Sheloman's empire had become the Christian villein or serf. But Christianity worked invisibly all the time. Any man could come into the first dark churches. So the slave began to awaken.

The middle ages came to an end in the revival of learning: this didn't mean the revival of pagan texts only but the revival of the New Testament (the Greek text) ~~in the original Greek.~~ ~~XX~~ brought the 'reason' of Christianity, that led straight to the eighteenth century: the Gospels could be taken literally, unlike the Old Testament; they were the description of a man; John Colet, More and Erasmus wanted the 'restoration of theology' after ~~the~~ centuries of thinking in symbols, allegory, number. They

(1) INSERT →

Thus, 'humanism' was a revival of classical learning as a reinstatement of men, through the originator of such a desire Christ.

This is why ~~what we call~~ the renaissance of learning in Italy was the reformation of religion elsewhere. (2)

The Enlightenment, which might be called ~~that is,~~ the effect of the Greek Version, is missing in the Italian.

~~Humanism wasn't the study of men but the study of Greek and Latin.~~

+

Another strike yesterday, of the meggadri. There were dozens of motor-cycles outside the village gate. ~~for the meeting held there in the evening.~~ They are asking for some form of peasant-ownership: the state should take over the responsibilities of the landlord. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni and I passed a field where the grain lay uncut: the thick, golden ears were drooping; perhaps twenty or thousand lire have been ~~were~~ lost there. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni came in the evening and gave us a little speech on the need for agrarian reform: the grain-production in Italy had gone down unbelievably in the last few years, he said; as more and more people ~~left~~ leave the land, and there was less wine, wheat, barley, oil, corn, livestock, so prices ~~would~~ go up; as a result the workers ~~would~~ make more pay-demands, and this ~~would~~ sends the prices up ~~even more~~ still further. Result: chaos! He said we needed a system like in Russia, where the state controlled everything. I said to this that the state could be a cruel landlord, too: with which he agreed. Once he has made his speech he will often agree with the opposite argument: the speech was only a kind of ~~rhetorical exercise~~ like a ~~which must be interrupted, or as the~~ statue, which for an Italian, must be ~~be~~ martial or monumental in some way. It means anything at all.

Nobody seems to want to buy the hundreds of hectares of abandoned land. ~~Livio~~ Paolo the shepherd, for instance, dreams of becoming a butcher, whereas with the money he has saved he could buy a good piece of land which would never lose its value. The fattori — the ~~farmers~~ agents who in any other land would be the new class of landlords — are simply entrepreneurs who have flats or houses in town and want to stay there.

Italy had a weak and ~~[illegible]~~ divided aristocracy, which also preferred to live in town, ~~and neglect the land~~ Much of England's

stability came from the aristocracy's keeping to the land ~~and building~~ their the houses they loved there. Italians were astonished when they saw English nobility living in the country, and in close connection with the peasant: tenants. so close that the word 'peasant' died out in England and was replaced by 'labourer'.

The Italian countryside aches for another dictator — benevolent this time and without connections in Germany — who will fix prices and create a stable market.

Dictatorships seem to hold no fears for the Italian: every single person we know locally + belongs to the communist party. It has become the mark of social decency.

A lot of reading in these days — closed in my room.

It was commerce — the new rich class — that destroyed the monasteries in England in the time of Henry VIII. After that, you could die like a dog if you didn't have a job. That final place of mercy — the abbey — where you could go for a crust of bread, could never be replaced. Here is the chill of Anglo-Saxon life at its root.

She took a job in America but now wants to leave. 'America has no heart or soul', she says.

Her birthplace: Hamburg.

+

I repeat, the only hope is nakedness.

+

Your Utopias, your descriptions of a possible society, will never do it.

+

After More has written his Utopia, there is still the problem of power. He punishes his bad men with penal servitude or death. But what about the rulers?

Again, can a good man rule?

+

The city is a child of monasticism: starting in work and ending in culture. But without God the monastery soon loses even nature: and therefore destroys itself.

+

Here is the historical background of the relation between England

and Germany (a nineteenth-century affair): England was a colonising island-power, capable of governing the seas; Germany was a continental power capable of overrunning Europe — but thwarted by ~~the~~ English power. ~~drawn from the seas~~

The American epoch after 1945, in removing the capacity to govern the seas, from England, ~~therefore~~ removed Germany's greatest ~~political~~ enemy.

+

All America did, in this way, was re-open nineteenth-century international politics: she was now in England's place.

+

The prevention of a struggle between America and Germany for power in Europe falls to England and France, as Italy's first-born. ~~they have to turn it into a struggle for civilisation.~~

+

Again we return to the problem of power.

+

~~Note that~~ In Plato's commonwealth there are four distinct classes of citizen; but in More's ~~the~~ Utopia there are none — every man can support his own world. Is this the disappearance of power?

+

Strange, the English have always disappointed dreams. Erasmus asked so little of Henry VIII. Only a few days after his last departure from England there were riots against the presence of 'aliens'.

+

After the plagues brought on by the insects produced by our chemicals, and the diseases produced by our drugs, there may be the first real stage of Christendom.

+

Yet civilisation might only last for a second.

+

German music was my greatest comfort and strength.

+

'America' means Christianisation by ~~habit~~ behaviour. It cannot be done.

+

There is no knowledge without ~~belief~~ belief. The ridiculous idea that there could be 'reason' without 'faith', that these two could be distinct, reached its culmination in the nineteenth century.

Looking at the sky and finding laws shows the greatest faith

in the action of the sky.

Your so-called 'cold' reason is the faith of your fathers.

Knowledge not begins with ourselves. The truth puts us on the path to knowledge, not knowledge to truth. Truth is a state in ourselves.

The untruthful man instinctively knows this ~~the~~ in his distaste for the 'private'.

The activity of truth begins with the unfolding of our own story. Its result is called knowledge.

~~Therefore~~ No man unwilling to lay himself bare can tell or know or love the truth. (~~But I don't mean candor: this is social~~).

He will hate others to lay themselves bare. It will seem too heavy a demand on his sympathy: because he will be seeing his own unwanted self.

A man best lays himself bare in silence.

Christianity is all an intimate story of one man, a laying-bare: first Christ, then St. Augustine.

(Because they were 'Confessions' they were the basis of church-theology. Nothing short of that would have done.)

They ~~publish~~ favour my 'non-fiction' (as they call it) ~~but~~ over not my 'fiction' (as they call it). They are one and the same thing: my truth. ~~But the nineteenth century will not let you lay yourself bare for fear that it is laid bare itself.~~ [Then refusal to let/n.p. a man ~~another~~ lay himself bare is a fear that you will be ~~laid bare yourself~~ led to do the same ~~But 'mustn't be 'private'~~ for yourself.

Truth is the light we have inside us. Far from depending on other men, it ~~can be~~ is marred by them.

Truth comes from ~~solitude~~ offence. ~~Therefore~~ The untruthful love to congregate all the time, ~~and make a civic virtue out of it~~.

+

i.e./ (Truth is the only) Real congregation, ~~is truth~~ ~~This~~ it takes you closer to other men than anything else. [Hate the truth and all you can do is make nice faces at them]

+

For them ~~untruthful~~, truth is always ~~a~~ ~~cruel~~ harsh ~~dissection~~. 'It isn't so much what you say,' a cleric said to Dr Johnson, 'as your tone.' ~~'The~~ ~~and~~ 'It hurts people of ~~People were sometimes too~~ weak nerves,' ~~to stand it,~~ ~~to~~ Boswell added.

~~'Who are these~~ 'I know no such weak-nerved people,' Johnson replied.

(Their nerves ~~were~~ are strong enough for falsehood.)

+

~~In a gathering~~ Among untruthful people truth, ~~always sounds offensive~~. By being received as offensive, ~~it~~ often becomes so, and ~~it~~ loses its innocence, ~~and~~ therefore itself.

Truth can therefore be driven out of a man and turned to falsehood.

(But not for long, because the truth, once ~~[illegible]~~ found, is the most unquenchable passion ~~there is~~ we have.)

+

For ~~the~~ untruthful ~~man~~ people knowledge is an encyclopedia: here you have ~~[illegible]~~ the nineteenth century.

+

There are two schools of doctors: one believes that the body is bad until you mend it; the other that it is good until you mar it. The first produce a drug the moment you say you're ill; the second look into ~~your~~ the life you are leading.

Both are verdicts in the Christian argument: they concern ~~the doctrine of~~ original sin.

+

The 'objective truth' is one of a million interpretations; but we are only capable of one in a lifetime; it is so far from objective truth.

Saxon life at its root.

Strange, the English have always disappointed dreams. Erasmus asked so little of Henry VIII. Only a few days after his last departure from England there were riots against the presence of 'aliens'. And England could have had the brightest court in Europe.

There is no knowledge without belief. The ridiculous idea that there could be 'reason' without 'faith'---that these two could be distinct---reached its culmination in the nineteenth century.

Looking at the sky and finding laws shows the greatest faith in the performance of the sky. But we didn't always have it.

The so-called 'cold' reason is always the faith of your fathers.

~~Knowledge begins with ourselves.~~ The truth puts us on the path to knowledge, not knowledge to truth. Truth is a state in ourselves.

The untruthful man instinctively knows this in his distaste for the 'private'.

The activity of the truth begins with the unfolding of our own story. Its result is called knowledge, which may become 'objective', that is, shared by many.

~~No man unwilling to lay himself bare can tell or know or love the truth.~~ Christianity is all an intimate story of one man, a laying-bare: first Christ, then St. Augustine. (Because St. Augustine's work was Confessions they were the basis of church-theology. Nothing short of that would have done).

Truth is the light we have inside us. ~~We are born with a capacity for it.~~ We can never learn it. Far from depending on other men, it is marred by them.

Everything depends on remembering (P.67)

II LETTER FROM SIENA.

INSERT

Original sin changed its meaning under the reformers: in the Church it meant the natural fate by which men are condemned — sickness and death; but the reformers turned it into self-destiny, in each man, by sin.

Reformed original sin was thus a peculiar combination of predestination (men condemned by sin) and free will (they sin by their own choice). We, the products of reformed society, have exactly that feeling — of being both more imprisoned than those Europeans & more free.

LETTER FROM SIENA.

II

The middle class sprang from began in puritanism. The ~~small and~~ ordinary ~~middling~~ ~~traders and~~ merchants or shopkeepers of England in the 17 and 18 were the substance of the Puritan tradition: that is, they showed a desire to remake life by industry and thought, leaving as little as possible to Original Nature.

had worked ~~for his father~~ in the fields as a child; ~~that he was also a friar and a really decent man, unlike most of them~~; and good — so good! We insisted on his coming upstairs, and he sat with us at table on the terrace, with a glass of our wine in front of him. ~~We were strangely excited.~~ He had brought us a bag of pears, the first ones of the season, small and green, from his own trees. ~~And he promised us he would~~ One of the first questions was, were we catholics? No, 'But the same Christ', I said. I said this meant we were in — that we found ourselves in — a kind of 'historical situation'. History had cut us off from ~~the church~~ Rome in such a way that while ~~we both felt we were~~ we felt at home ~~when we walked~~ in the Church we ~~and~~ ~~you~~ couldn't belong. I described how the old churches in England, because they were now ~~protestant~~ reformed, were mostly empty for their services while the catholic buildings, which were often no more than improvised huts, were full. ~~And~~ He ~~said~~ told us he'd been reading a book of meditations by a Dutch ~~man~~ priest that afternoon which said that to try to bring the different churches together was 'an act of God'. In the ecumenical council in Rome, he said, they were discussing the possibility of the queen of England agreeing to the status of political head of state while acknowledging the pope as the head of Christianity (this would turn England into a republic in one neat stroke, and I can imagine the English doing it) ~~in their present state I can imagine them signing at the moment they will do anything that~~ anything ~~[illegible]~~ not ~~[illegible] doesn't require them~~ to think or stand alone). 'That would be wonderful,' he said, 'to bring all the churches together.' He looked at the wholemeal bread we were eating and asked in a curious way, 'Is that special bread?' We told him we had it baked for us, and ~~[illegible]~~ mixed it ourselves. 'Three no:' — he said, 'we, on the other hand, have a different habit: we eat white bread, We're used to it.' And there seemed no way, for him, of ever eating anything else. When we got to the dessert-stage we ~~gave him some [illegible]~~ asked him to join us, and ~~gave~~ offered him some peccorino cheese and one of his own pears: to my surprise,

a blaze of yellow light, and the ~~thick fir-tree~~ tall cypress outside, close to the path that leads down to the road, was like a ~~great~~ great black cone against the yellow of the haystack. ~~Livio~~ Paolo the shepherd ~~came~~ by with four sheep and tried to steer them into ~~the~~ our empty pig-house with a stick; they were too frightened ~~but~~ and one escaped, but returned from alarm at finding itself alone. He had to carry them in one by one, holding them by the scruff of the neck and ~~by~~ the rump. And here they stayed, in darkness, with hardly room to turn in, all night. I put a tin of water in, ~~the morning~~ and they drank thirstily, with ~~their~~ a long, noiseless, sucking motion. ~~Then~~ In the morning they were ~~picked up and~~ loaded on to a truck with other goats and sheep — ~~with the same treatment, except that a rear-leg was held as well; they were~~ thrown roughly in like sacks of grain. They are of tinned meat, being sick animals — so Paolo said ~~This isn't the season for slaughtering tumbs, so they will probably join other flocks.~~ ~~Tiziano~~ Gianni senses our concern about the sheep and laughs at us. The chicken he brought us last week is still walking about the courtyard, alive; our excuse is that we want it to lay eggs, but he says it's too young, & probably male. The other hens resent ~~it~~ the newcomer and ~~try to~~ take a peck at it now and then.

When we were settling down to a meal after ~~Livio's~~ Paolo's visit with the sheep ~~we were called by Gino~~ Gino, up to us called and the dog started barking mildly, madly outside. ~~And~~ When I went on to the balcony there was the priest below, standing at Gino's side. ~~His tiny car outside under the fir-tree~~ I went down at once. This was his first visit, and we hadn't met formally ~~him yet~~. He has the tiny cura to which this house belongs; ~~in the~~ his village is a kilometre ~~or so~~ away, a cluster of houses which are the colours of the earth, ancient-looking, on top of a hill. He saw ~~two~~ we were eating and said he wouldn't disturb us, but wait in the courtyard until we were ready — ~~he was in~~ there was no hurry. He spoke calmly and quietly, with timid glances of the eyes. He is a pale, thin man in his late forties, and moves in a ~~[illegible]~~ strangely pained way: ~~Dino~~ Sergio had told us the evening before that he was the son of a peasant and

a scrappy bathing-place called 'The Little Boat' where the ~~sand~~ beach had an extraordinary brilliance because of the white sand, making the sea bright as well. They've made a pleasant dark restaurant of wood, low and wide, so that it looks rather like the inside of a plantation-house, on wooden legs, with a balcony. The sun was misty and burned us quickly. And the usual storm came up inland, and reached us in the early afternoon, with a little rain. We hadn't been to the sea for some time and as we were strolling along the beach a young girl came up to us from a convent-group and said, ~~'As 'Come~~ 'Per penitenza siete di carnagione bianca,' — as a penance, you have white skins — then hurried back to the other girls with a giggle; and when we returned they were all saying their Ave Marias solemnly. ~~As A nice theological touch.~~

~~Time should be a joke and masquerade.~~

Suddenly, this afternoon, in the radio the grave and terrible ~~notes~~ tones of ~~theme~~ Beethoven. As if we'd not been serious before. A certain stern gaye.

The storm this afternoon brought more rain than usual and less lightning. The heat is all inside the house now. Outside, ~~everything~~ the air has freshened. The storm seems to move from place to place every day, in spots. First, while the sun is still strong, at lunch-time, there is the first distant rumble of thunder: we take in everything from the terrace — chairs, table-cloth, cushions; then the sun gets mistier and hottier, as the thunder draws nearer, in the course of what an hour; ~~then~~ and the storm breaks sluggishly, and cloud lie over the valley ~~#~~ until early evening, when sunlight returns for the last red glow of evening. The effect of the rain is to make a thick heat-mist the next day, which hangs in the valley and makes the village look like a shadow, burnished slightly by the sun.

When we came back from the sea ~~yesterday~~ today there was still sunlight here, and no rain had fallen. ~~There was~~ The courtyard was

61.

The problem of power is therefore insoluble. It is the problem of being alive. ~~(Is this what thought then to call it original sin?)~~

I can't see my way any longer...

I am looking for answers in time, and yet for the superseding of time...

+

But, if we could stop making the world a record of time —

+

~~Your~~ A town has to be in the country, to be alive. Once the separation takes places, from the country, it no longer has any thrill or glow. The culture has gone. It becomes a city. This is what I felt in Siena the other day: the walls of the narrow streets are dark with fumes now; the traffic has abolished the connection with the flat, still, waterless country outside. So there is no more authority. The light of the countryside has to flood the dark rooms and the cafés; it has to shine down into the courtyard of the Chigi academy. Hot and uninterrupted; its sounds and smells have to penetrate. But let go that authority of the timeless, and life quickly falls to pieces: the face loses its repose, the supply of divinity is cut off. You may get a bit of delight as a child, an adolescent. Time is a cruel master.

~~This is why~~ The town was the monastery enlarged. There was the thrill of thought in lighted cells, in the darker countryside.

For a moment, at dawn, the city acknowledges another authority. Then it succumbs to behaviour again.

+

Cities, being the plague-centres where ~~no~~ good food and light and air can no longer penetrate, will be evacuated quickly now.

+

Yesterday we drove to the sea through Volterra and found

everything for the ~~fat~~ children' and he gave ~~Pietro~~ Gianni another quick look, less kindly, perhaps, the time.

(Aren) He then returned to our first subject and said he was interested in what I'd said about our finding ourselves in an 'historical situation' ~~as far as the church went.~~ ~~Then~~ He gave us what seems ~~the~~ to be the official Italian version of Henry VIII: that the king had asked the pope for a divorce from Catherine. But of course the pope had it been able to grant it, ~~it having been a legal~~ as the marriage had been ~~legal~~ sanctified; and then, through 'patriotism', Henry had cut himself off from ~~the church of~~ Rome and declared himself spiritual head of England. ~~without higher spiritual obligations to Rome.~~

Only ten or so people came to his Sunday morning mass, he said, with the trace of a determined look, as if he'd long ago got used to the hurt this offered him: and he felt himself lucky to have those ten, he added. Even fewer came to his other church in the hills, where he holds mass two hours later.

Clearly, he can't understand it. He seems to try to, his head a little to one side. The Christian story is so clear to him: why should people want to offer it offence? It seems to him the story of respectability – touched with a certain simple grace.

He asked if we'd met the family up the hill, the couple we rarely see, with the daughter. Yes, we'd met them, but they were always sunk under work, I said, having eight hectares of land to ~~work~~ look after, ~~I said~~. He paused, as he nearly always did after a statement, as if it were entering his head slowly and ~~clearly~~ painfully and being noted down. 'Ah, yes', he said, 'they have a lot of work. Too much.' Then he added, 'Now they're religious people. They come to church. They're good. Very responsible!' Yet to me they seem less good than other people ~~would~~ have. I nodded non-committally: after all, how could I know? ~~But the daughter of those people has been the only one to tell us a lie: she told us they weren't leaving their house, perhaps afraid that we would want to rent it and get them out soon.~~ But my impression remains ~~that~~ they are withheld and have something suspicious ~~what them~~ in their nature, a most un-Italian sense of being morally a step beyond the others. And ~~But, again, I can't tell~~ their daughter has been the only person to tell us a lie here: perhaps she

he said calmly, 'I'll ~~slice to~~ try your bread – just a little slice.' I went and cut him two varieties – one baked at the village shop, and the other ~~in the~~ across the valley at ~~Guido~~ ? farm, where they use an outdoor oven. But he didn't like either. He said – what was obvious enough – that it tasted of the 'seed' of the wheat. It had happened in Italy, he said, that at one time they had all eaten a darker bread, and then after the war the Americans ~~the~~ had come with their 'pure white bread', and everyone had come to prefer it. That, again, seemed an irrevocable thing: the most powerful country in the world had set its seal on the rightness of the thing! ~~Of course, the Germans still ate dark bread.~~ ~~I told him that some doctors said that certain 'enzymes' or ferments were lacking in white bread which were essential to digestion, that the eating of any 'dead' food of that kind was a positive harm... But he shook his head almost imperceptibly.~~ By that time ~~Pietro~~ Gianni had joined us – with ~~and after~~ a polite nod and 'Buona sera, Reverendo!'. ~~He had sat down.~~ 'Yes,' ~~Pietro~~ Gianni said, 'I believe white bread is lacking in vitamins – theirs is delicious!' 'Our priest doesn't think so,' I said. 'No,' the priest replied, 'it's a question I habit – bread for us is white, and I don't think we could ever get used to the other.'

~~Pietro~~ Gianni was restless in his presence. The priest gave him a kindly but restrained smile whenever he spoke. ~~It was strange,~~ ~~Pietro~~ Gianni seemed to feel imprisoned. He got up from his chair frequently and looked over the balcony, it a cigarette. The church offered him no hope: had nothing to say about his life. It only offered him what had been tried: ~~and what had gone wrong: but I spoke~~ the stale and dreary. And the ~~the stale and~~ priest looked askance at him in his kindly way: '~~Pietro~~ Gianni is seen at church very little,' ~~he~~ the priest said with a smile, pale and quiet; 'I don't think he's been since a child –?', and he turned a questioning look at him. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni smiled charmingly and said nothing. I broke in with 'But he's religious!' ~~Pietro~~ Gianni is religious!' 'Oh, yes,' said the priest, doubtfully. ~~The important thing is~~ 'He's good. His mother's a fine woman. She's really religious, ~~woman, too~~. She's done

was afraid we wanted to take her house over, being foreigners, if we knew she was leaving; so she said they weren't leaving – they had it found a place. And this wasn't true. But, again, I can't tell.

~~We had to go into the village, so had the priest, in his little car: so we all said good bye in the courtyard.~~ We must come, he said, in the evening one day, to sample his wine and ~~taste~~ his fruit. And he would take us round some of the little churches, ~~some of~~ one of which went back nine hundred years. He had a fourteenth-century altar of wood in his own church, he said, which we must see.

We felt settled in a strange way by his visit: as if he'd brought us the first dream. He was the first person of leisure we'd spoken to after all in this countryside. ~~Even Pieter~~ This means book, a little thinking in the silence of the afternoon. Only the church has a dream ~~here~~ in Italy. It governs and administers the power to dream. And so, at this time when ~~everything has got cut from~~ the Church is cut off from ~~everyone~~ people, there is no dream: the land lies waiting and very still. Only the tiny church, and the pastor's house hugging it like a miniature villa, without that rather stern look of the farmhouse, is a possible starting-place for idylls, fancy. So we felt rested: it was like really belonging for the first time. Even if he comes to look on us as 'unreligious', we shall still belong, in that intimate category, looked askance at with kindly eyes, like Gianni.

Then, after he'd got into his car with the last good-bye, he pushed ~~opened~~ the door again and called out to me, 'Here!', ~~he said~~ in his slow way, as if waiting to be rebuffed: 'I've brought you something to read.' And he gave me three magazines, two of which dealt with the story of the new pope. Partly church-partly state-politics, ~~really~~ & all propaganda. ~~I haven't opened the~~ I flicked through them later, they're thin falsehoods & hypocrisies & smiled or scowled. Magazine put out by the state-party yet. These people ~~have~~ who've wrecked the Italian countryside. The landlords and the peasants are equally impoverished, while the cities are rich: yet ~~it~~ this is an agricultural country.

Are there, also, religious people? Well, they could be, but in that case so could all the peasants who would like to spit in their eyes. And did our priest vote for them? Yet he ~~knows~~ knows the details of the disaster. He's ~~was~~ the son of a peasant himself.

Also, he said, we must meet Pietro's padroni. They are good people, too, and most religious. I said I'd met the wife of the padrone once (a pleasant woman of unmistakable fascist background, with that disconcerting mixture of hauteur and provincial vulgarity). Pietro's padrone is certainly good to them. But I was perplexed. Perhaps it was the protestant in me. I couldn't see what he meant by religious, and I gazed after his car as he drove away. Yet he's religious himself, in my sense.

What can he offer ~~Pietro~~ Gianni? Well, His own goodness and frailty. ~~Well~~ Those are enough, in a way. What a mess the church is in. Drowning in a swamp to which it owes its life. Because those 'religious' people, the poor and the padroni alike, put their hands in their pockets for the church: and so do the monopolists, the heads of the state-party, with even more generosity...

He owes his life to those who are ~~[illegible]~~ really drowning his church: but this seems to be his fault, not theirs. Why does he call them religious? Why can't he be clear about that?

~~Because it depends on him~~

It isn't that people won't believe in God, they can't.

Only God can lead the way (a strange thing to say).

No man alive believes in God.

Another strike of the mezzadri. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni came in and told us about a big meeting there had been in Siena, addressed by a communist deputy. He gave one of his speeches. He said that it was right to work, and work hard, but to work hard when there wasn't a crust of bread at home was wrong. (He and anyone else in Tuscany has a good bit more than a

crust of bread – his home-made salami is the best I've tasted, but he mustn't be interrupted). Was it right, he asked me, that the man who cultivated the land and did all the work should give half his produce to someone who did nothing? ~~And when~~ I said that the mezzadro system he worked under didn't seem so bad, as his employer took none of the produce ~~whatsoever~~ and less than half of the proceeds from the cattle, but ~~as this~~ he only smiled at me conniving ~~slightly~~ and went on.) ~~'We communists', he said, had such a success at the last election because they were the only people who offered a prospect of stability for the land. This deputy at Siena had told them, with a lot of humour – he knew the province was a man who like the back of his hand – He said~~ The speaker at the meeting, he said, was ~~deputy in Siena~~ was a man molto in gamba, very capable, and knew as much about the rural situation as any peasant: he had told them all, with some humour, about the tired and overworked ox that started its journey in the Marche at a hundred and fifty lire a kilo and ended in Rome a thousand five hundred lire a kilo and ~~called~~ renamed 'veal'. 'Marvellous, ~~he me had said,~~ the transmigrations that took place nowadays!' he had said. And then there were the taxes and levies on the land that went into government coffers, ~~and~~ which were supposed to return to the land in the form of pensions and medical benefits and farm modernisation schemes; but at the end of this month the government would have to account for millions of lire from this fund which had been 'lost' by a certain Secretary-General! where had they been 'lost'? into whose pockets had they been 'lost'? had they been 'lost' into nice villas in the country with swimming pools and servants, ~~and~~ into various other 'land-modernisation' schemes that were private in nature, ~~and~~ so private that only a handfull of rich & unworthy people benefited from them? No wonder, Pietro Giunni said, that 'we communists' had such a success at the last election! ~~Was it right that a peasant should take, say, a basket of peaches to town and sell them at five lire a piece when they sold to the public for three or four times as much!~~ 'The church can't help us!' he said. 'I don't feel comfortable with the church!'

A wonderful humanity plays on Giannini's face as he talked sometimes, when he gazes into the distance. The light was almost finished on the terrace, and the whole valley lay still and shadowy. Luciano ~~Guido~~ who was passing on the road below called up to us, and we stood talking to him. He'd

been to a "reunione" in the village, he said, connected with ~~all these~~ the strikes. He has been ill recently with kidney-trouble and looks thinner, less like the 'brigand', ~~as they call him than before~~. He spoke in a tired and disgruntled way.

B

As Augustine said, grace ~~achieves~~ determines will, not vice versa: it ~~can~~ only goes to ~~be bestowed on~~ those who surrender to it with the maximum will. Therefore will isn't a negative force, but love (+) ~~and surrender~~ [will as ambitious driving force is hate.]

C

The ancient societies of England and France come from the predominance of the friars, the long scholastic tradition that was fragmentary elsewhere: here was the seed of their aristocracies.

When that was broken in England by Henry VIII it was a major shock to the country: ~~one of the stages~~ the first clear stage towards industries.

If the nature of England was ever determined by one man, that man was St. Augustine.

The proud man divides his life into fragments. Surrender argues continuity.

The sudden access of gravity and seriousness, bearing Beethoven for a moment, was due to the fact that any theme in Germany, any line of thought or continuity, comes from the heroic effort of one man, there being no form outside him but law. (no society)

An German art is lonely.

We shudder at the German as at an ~~enormous valley~~ a huge chasm, ~~with shattering colours~~, nearly nature itself; nearly heaven. ~~hell~~

The German is at the edge of madness at all times. He dare not lean back — into the vacuum.

~~The wind plays round a German, his only friend.~~

The German is an inspiration that derives not from before the Enlightenment only, not from before the Renaissance only, not from

These were all 'moral' people. Their approach to things was decidedly moral: you could see it in their eyes, each and any one of them, a hard light of moral conviction; you could see quest in their eyes, as you never see it in the Italian.

But they didn't seem to have grace — which I imagine brings ease and a certain air of surrender. St Augustine said that grace is a basis, not a reward. It produces the will. The will can never produce grace. And in these people's eyes — Anglo-Saxons, all of them — there was will: sometimes hard, sometimes deceptively gentle (in the priests).

I suppose that sort of will means living towards a reward of some kind. Therefore, it means dependence on time ⊙ ~~in time you will give you some thing get your reward But grace means penetrating time: being beyond it.~~ And you could see time in these men's faces: the unfolding of a moral pattern, an endeavour of some kind ~~a moving~~ moving all the time towards its end. They were looking and seeking so hard. ~~Most of them were Catholics, with some protestants: but~~

~~It made me think that religion without grace is~~

It was like religion with the grace missed out: a religion of behaviour. I mean by behaviour hope in the powers of time: if you run your nose against the wall whenever you see a woman, as a Pharisee sect used to, you are asking to be noticed; you are waiting for a reward in time. And all these people were asking to be noticed in some way: they

were performing duties, and pursuing behaviour, they were centering their hopes on what they created, not on what was created for them. They were re-forming life as they went along, with their driving will. There was not a scrap of surrender in any of them. Their motives and efforts all pursued out of their eyes, so much that they hardly seemed to see anything. They were the most self-involved people I'd ever seen. Never before, even with a gang of Bohemian riff-raff, had I seen such closed eyes. And 'God' had closed them. A strange thing. There was not the light of curiosity in one of them. And they were the 'intellectuals' of religion, ~~worthy of Catholicism~~.

But, what we create, even by ~~is only our little masquerade.~~ our bitterest reformations, ~~produce~~ is only another little masquerade. We shouldn't take our forms too seriously. Therefore the corrupt man often seems nearer the heart of things; he has a better rhythm than the moral one. His corruption has something timeless and natural about it.

~~The Reformers really~~

ation as a game; one would outdo the other and take his place over the crowd.

The most offensive and bestial party I've ever been to was one of Religious People, half of them 'priests' and 'monks'--- homosexuals, embittered communists converted to ritual, and plain black-hearted creatures with bullying doctrines all the more sure for having 'God' behind them.

I remember one of these 'monks' saying that Christ could never have 'don' what he did, been what he was, without the Roman empire as his 'vehicle'. A bunch of mongrel. In the darkest corner of the Vatican there are none like that, at least. To be doggedly corrupt you need a certain faith.

St. Augustine said, grace determines will, not vice-versa: grace goes to those who surrender to it. Will isn't a negative force, but 'love'.

Will as an ambitious driving force is hate.

The state of grace, St. Augustine said, is a basis, not a reward. It means centreing your hope on what is created, not on what we create. What we create is only our little masquerade: we shouldn't take our forms too seriously; therefore a corrupt man often seems nearer the heart of things, he has a better rhythm than the moral man.

Grace means penetrating time. Religion without grace is the religion of behaviour (Phariseeism, Methodism, America).

Behaviour means hope in the powers of time: if you run your nose against the wall whenever you see a woman, as some Pharisees did, you are asking to be noticed; that is, you are waiting for a reward, in time.

Everything depends on reminiscence.

+

Christianity is distinct by its endless flux and turmoil: always centreing round Christ's particular manner of refusing power.

+

We await the ~~end~~ abolition of time: that is, of progress, advance, retrogression, decadence, evolution etc.

~~Was this presupposed in Christ?~~

We must ~~sever~~ sever our hope from time.

+

'The ~~possibility of a~~ imminent civilisation' presupposes hope ~~attached to~~ in time.

+

St. Augustine was right: ~~there is a~~ the state of grace is a basis, not a reward. It means centreing your hope on what is created, not on what we create.

What we create is our masquerade: it should be pleasant, with masks and ~~dim~~ lights; if we find out how to play the mask again, after the wounds given by the reformers, ~~Methodists~~, we can ~~solve power perhaps~~ take the sting out of power, perhaps.

Christ only spoke also Empiriness. With whores he was gracious.

There was much mistake over original sin. Christ said 'ye are gods.' [God couldn't ~~creature~~ create originally dark creatures: if we brought the darkness on ourselves we can undo it.]

The gods are waiting for the curtain to be parted, to show themselves.

+

Grace means penetrating time. Religion without grace is the religion of behaviour — a public form (Phariseeism, Methodism, America).

Behaviour means hope in the powers of time. (If you run your nose against the wall whenever you see a woman, as some Pharisees, sects did, you are asking to be noticed; that is, you are waiting for a reward, in time)

The greatest folly of America ~~[illegible]~~ — the moral-society, as of Victorianism, was that power is ever a reward of righteousness.

~~as of Victorianism,~~

America — the land — ~~as opposed to Americanism~~ has no power by reason of its spirituality.

~~You will never grasp~~ America is a ~~until you see how a great~~ religious argument.

~~But~~ Not a divine one, and therefore suicidal: The dark version of Original Sin has its throne there; there the soul is locked in the body, the body is a sinner. Neo-Platonism, ~~[illegible]~~ never St. Augustine.

The American is haunted by the stink of life, for this reason. It is the utmost development of spirituality without divinity.

The neo-Platonists said you shed the senses and the body to arrive at the soul. (original sin, of the flesh) St. Augustine said the soul informed and interpreted the senses, and gave them meaning, and was by no means their prisoner. The soul, he said, tells the body about its own state (but the body is still the sinner)

~~After all~~, The Puritans, the Ranters, the Methodists, the Quakers started America. The American's slightly nasal accent of English ~~may~~ comes partly from the affectation called 'snuffling,' in the seventeenth century, which meant talking through your nose to denote religious enthusiasm.

This makes me doubt what I say about a possible struggle between America and Germany: the spiritual lot power slip through their fingers constantly, by what looks like folly or neglect.

The church always broke itself on behaviour (that is,

Remembering this makes me think of the words 'religion of behaviour'.

This was how American-the-moral-society, & our own Victorianism, came into being. This greatest folly was the belief that riches & power are all the reward of the righteousness. They are the reward of hard will.

If you try to re-make life from top to bottom you must ~~the~~ expect ~~[illegible]~~ a reward: & that reward can only be ~~for~~ in life. ~~[illegible]~~ ~~once religious depth has~~ gone. So you have spirituality becomes: like that of ~~the~~ certain Pharisees ~~[illegible]~~ who changed their clothes ~~life was [illegible]~~ & habits but not their lives.

Everything had to be re-made.

You expect to see your goodness ~~spirituality proved~~ set before you, ~~[illegible]~~ opaque & in time.

If you say that people are stained, and you free to remove the stain, ~~you get that effect~~ you get them to give to normal life. Power become a

reward.

power): for instance, St. Augustine, to answer the heresy of Pelagius, said that unbaptised children were condemned to everlasting death. (Back again into time.)

Only God provides the details. How can we know them? If we did, the way to the truth would be the same for every one of us. It could have an official stamp on it.

When we say God we must mean everything we can't know.

We can find the authority to behave-in-a-certain-way. But no behaviour itself can provide us with authority. This is the — perhaps necessary and continual — failure of a church.

Christ rejected behaviour ~~that~~ (the church). But a church had to be established in his name. Therefore the church is involved in a continual self-rejection.

The church has to be disbanded to where the roof of its temple is the sky and its priests all men. Yet I know this is wrong: ~~(heresy) because a story always has to be preserved~~ it wd. (only) be another religion of behaviour.

The disadvantage of the church is that it represents time. The priesthood is therefore for the ~~the fallible and~~ weak. This was the great victory of the reformation. But which of us isn't ~~fallible and~~ weak?

~~More properly,~~ If the hope for grace could be severed from time, there might be — hope.

I mean, grace is never in time. It never is an event. Really, it is a state of reminiscence. One might hope, so to speak, for grace twenty years ago...

We search for grace in depth, and not backward, ~~and~~ or forwards in time: Like ~~something~~ a source we can tap any time, under the earth.

But if we are always falling back into time (as we must in a world built to reflect time) this makes the hope for grace ~~a hope for~~ a reliance on the future.

↓

You see what I mean? You see why the word 'temporal' has come to mean 'worldly'?

↓

To be beyond time has come to be called 'other-worldly.' But this is only because we've ~~made~~ turned the world into time.

↓

Nearly everything you look at, from posters to the way trees are pruned, says, 'I belong to now and not a hundred years ago — not even to twenty years ago!'

There is a constant change of behaviour because authority has falsely been attributed to behaviour.

↓

The authority to behave has to be won.

It has to be built in each of ~~us~~ out of ~~from~~ reminiscence. Then behaviour can be play, masque, ~~no delight~~.

↓

Power is the endowment of behaviour with authority. We succumb to power when we accept its behaviour as what should or would be our own.

↓

Power ~~is~~ therefore the victory of time, ~~it must be the enemy of grace because the enemy of the timeless or eternal (that is, the~~ by making behaviour seem of everlasting importance.

↓

Power transcends behaviour when it is a light we recognise without behaviour: That is, a man who, doing ~~he would have to do~~ nothing, shows his power. (Buddha held up a flower in silence — that was his lecture for the day).

↓

But the moment he does something he is brought into time again.

that causes are within our grasp.

+

Whatever the German does, we have dreamed. (There were nightmares also).

+

The most offensive and bestial party I've ever been to was one of Religious People, half of them 'priests' and 'monks' — homosexuals, embittered communists converted to ritual, God, and plain black ~~fascist~~ hearted creatures with bullying doctrines all the more sure for having 'God' behind them.

I remember one of these 'monks' saying that Christ could never have done what he did — been what he was — without the Roman empire: it had been his 'vehicle'. A bunch of mongrel and swine. In the darkest corner of the Vatican there are none like that, at least.

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INSERT [B] St. Augustine.

~~Beware of the Anglo Saxon papist. Henry VIII was once an~~

+

At abut ten the other night, just after we'd gone to bed, I felt a tremor under the earth that last ten or twenty seconds: at first, half dozing, I had the illusion that we were still in Rome ~~again~~ and that this was the rumble of a lorry in the street below, shaking the whole palazzo. But then I realised ~~that~~ where we were; and there wasn't a sound outside. ~~and we were in the middle of the country.~~

The next evening I'd heard that at dawn the same morning there'd been an earthquake in Jugoslavia killing, so first reports said, about five thousand people; a ~~whole~~ hotel collapsed and ~~killed everyone~~ finished ~~inside~~. This was abut seven hours after I felt the tremor.

Later there were reports of earth-tremors along the Italian coast close to France.

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~~Dino~~ Sergio told us that ~~Guido~~ Luciano & his brother ~~and the two families~~ on the other side of the valley are ~~also~~ leaving with the families this summer to live in town. The old padrone — whom the two families call ~~crooked and~~ bad man, while ~~and whom~~ Dino

before the Christian conversion only, not from before the Roman empire only, but from the depths and darkness of European nature itself.

The Italian is our witness of health, the German our guarantor.

It is easy to see why the Germans, at the slightest chance, become a force.

The Germans dare to live our dreams.

~~Left~~ Left to the Germans we would be in tribes.

~~Hardly the first stages~~ Thank God, when we think of the Germans, for England, France, Italy; thank God, when we think of the English, for France, Germany, Italy; thank God etc.

← INSERT C





~~Hardly the first stages of this argument are over.~~ In the churchyard of St. Bartholomew's, behind Smithfields where heretics were burned, schoolboys used to go in for disputation as a game; one would outdo the other and take his place over the crowd. (i)

St. Augustine had more influence in Oxford, Aristotle in Paris. Germany! It was still in the ruins of the Roman empire.

Aristotle's world was formal; a static picture of something in flux. ~~The~~ French logic owes ~~itself~~ much to that; English empiricism much to ~~the~~ Augustinian influence.

We begin to see that we weren't born yesterday.

The invariable answer in England to 'The English are losing their power' is 'So much the better.' The religious argument approaches another turn.

The weakness of St. Thomas Aquinas was to the suggestion assume

~~says isn't~~ Calls him a '~~bad~~ nice old stick' — will be left with a large house and a podere of over ten hectares with no one to work it. He asked ~~Dino~~ Sergio deprivingly in town today, 'What ~~shall~~ can I do to keep them there? I haven't the money to employ workers by the day. Where can I find another family to live there? Why are they moving? I can't give them my blood!' And ~~Dino~~ Sergio's answer was: 'Town's ~~Ta~~ the fashion now!'

We spent an evening with the ~~two families~~ Luciano & his hosts but they said nothing about it. We talked ~~[illegible]~~ about the last war. Suddenly ~~Guido~~ Luciano burst out, 'The trouble with Mussolini was that there was only one of him. There ought to have been fifty thousand!' People need to be told, 'Do this, or backs to the wall! Backs to the wall! Then you'd see them fly!' And he flung his brother an resentful look. His brother, who is tall and thin and said to be 'nervous', that is, ~~sensitive and~~ irritable or sensitive, said in a mild way: 'Oh, you know, Mussolini made a big mistake getting mixed up with a German madman, and trying to create a world empire!' 'That's right!' his wife said. 'He ought to have put Italy in order first!'

~~Guido~~ Luciano is a communist now: ~~that is~~ only this seems to offer force and discipline. Much of the communism in Italy is fascist nostalgia: the transition is surprisingly easy. The peasants — at least a good number of them — got a deal out of fascism: the rest of the politics, until it came to war, passed over their heads; their anxieties in life are bread and sleep and a roof, not freedom. ~~Nearly every~~ The only criticism of Mussolini is that he ~~man I've spoken to~~ embroiled the country in war.

When they ~~go~~ leave, and if no one takes their place over, nearly the whole valley between here and the village, apart from the podere belonging to Altopasquale, will be abandoned soil, used for sheep grazing at best, if the shepherds did all decide to move as well, like ~~Lino~~ Paolo. For miles around the vineyards have begun to degenerate. There are almost no young people working on the land.

~~Guido~~ Luciano looks more and more discontented. When we ~~went~~ strolled over this ~~[illegible]~~ evening at dusk we found him lying on a grass bank ~~in the darkness~~ by the house, ~~[illegible]~~ silent, slumped there. 'Hullo,' he said softly. 'We've just eaten.

I'm taking the cool air! ~~He and his brother seem not to get on. Perhaps the brother wants to move, more than he.~~ I can't understand why they don't go to the padrone and make a deal with him: the padrone would agree to almost anything, to keep his land in ~~some~~ order. Luciano wd do it, I think, but his brother insists — keeping. This is the source of litter quarrels between them. ~~But the passion is the town — the town. They can't help themselves. And~~ Luciano's ~~the tall, thin~~ brother talks what industries, as if they will save everything: he asks, why can't factories be built all round the village? Why are there regulations limiting factories to the outskirts, just to preserve ~~in case they spoil~~ the village's ~~famous~~ panorama! Because of tourism, we say; because factories can be put anywhere; and because they're ugly, which the village panorama isn't. 'But', he goes on, 'I'd like to know something, and I've heard the point discussed in the village, in piazza: how is it that people can plant as many trees as they like? Pines, for instance? A whole forest of pines has been planted in recent years close to the village, and it hides half the ~~village~~ panorama! ~~from certain angles. How~~ To that allowed!' ~~Because, we say,~~ Pines and splendid panoramas aren't a contradiction, we say, but factories and panoramas are; pines can be cut down; ~~in any case; and they make better air, even better panoramas~~ and they don't pollute the air. 'And then', I add hotly, 'I speak as someone who comes from an one-industrialised country, ~~where~~ too much has been destroyed. I was born where there wasn't a tree ~~inside~~ in sight, where the sky was ~~nearly~~ always dark with smoke, ~~and~~ where people were supposed to live like machines!' But they simply gaze at me. They can't understand. Industries are painless for them. They mean ~~only one thing~~ 'il progresso.' Unlike the English labouring classes, who fought industry and smashed the machines, the Italian awaits it with excitement; naturally, as conditions are as good as they can be now, after a century of industrial struggle in England and America. Only certain people in the middle class see the danger-signal.

~~Dino~~ Sergio asked us to come and see his new flat again yesterday: this visit was in honour of ~~Amida~~ Caterina, who hadn't seen it yet. Now the walls

~~love~~ are finished and the doors ~~were~~ are screwed on; it was ready for her inspection. When you ask ~~her~~ Caterina what she feels about moving she never replies, only shrugs and makes a slight puzzled smile. We took along a bottle of spumante as a surprise for them and when they were looking through the rooms I opened it with an enormous pop which brought them hurrying into the kitchen. It was sticky + undrinkable muck made of gas and sugary water, ~~the~~ an Italian 'champagne' that ~~never was~~ had never been near a vineyard in its life. The ~~report~~ explosion was so ~~tragic~~ loud that nothing natural could have produced it: the pure profit on that bottle is probably ~~something like~~ five hundred percent, which ~~pa~~ pays for the nation-wide publicity to make it the poor man's idea of the right drink to celebrate with. Of course, it ~~doesn't~~ no more warms the heart than a laboratory experiment. ~~Annida~~ Caterina was doubtful all the time, peering about the place at the bright new taps and shining tiles and marble floors and light plastic shutters; and when ~~Dino~~ Sergio asked her at least to say a word — in his erect, laughing way, his head thrown back stiffly, ~~in a way that always~~ reminding ~~me strangely~~ one of ~~a~~ warrior or emperors in ancient times — she simply averted her head, still with the half-puzzled smile. And ~~we had~~ she wanted to inspect the other ~~four~~ three flats in the place, to see if they were better: she came to the conclusion that they were, though ~~Dino's~~ Sergio's rooms have the best view and the best air of all, and are on the ground floor. ~~And~~ Just before we left she found a tiny defect in the bathroom, which ~~Dino said~~ Sergio admiringly said he had passed his eye over a dozen times without seeing.

From one of the windows overlooking the valley he pointed out Altopasquale ~~where we live~~ far in the distance, ~~on the brow of a hill~~ shining red. And near by he pointed out a small fairly modern house: 'That belongs to a pilot,' he said. 'He's leaving the house and he's going to let all the land ~~go~~ see — 'His hand swept across half the ~~[illegible]~~ valley — 'go to waste. He doesn't care!'

~~Annida~~ Caterina seemed faintly distracted and sad on the way back. ~~We wonder what she will do in the new flat~~; the bathroom, she complained, is 'so small.' Yet she will hardly use it; rarely take a bath. ~~But~~ As figura it is small, perhaps she means; as ~~the~~ a modern toy, which is all it is for her. What will she do without her chickens? After we dropped her at her house we heard her calling them

...ply, for half an hour or more, as if to celebrate the return. She has
over a hundred chickens there. She cuts grass in the fields opposite our house
and walks by with a load on her shoulders every day. She was born and
brought up in Castel Vecchio, high and remote above the hills, and she
seems to share its remoteness. Perhaps she never discouraged Sergio from buying
the new place because she had no idea of any life but the one she had lived
now she sees, before her, a different world. Sergio and Renato are the
ones with the town-dream. But it means nothing for her to bring in
water on her shoulders, two cans of it hanging from a staff, and to build a fire of faggots for cooking. The
town-flats save work: but in truth they are only a dream. And she hasn't dreamed it
only Sergio and Renato have.

We promised our priest we would go to his Sunday morning
mass and did, with Gianni. The church is tiny, no bigger
than a barn, overlooking the hills that go toward the sea. The 15 wooden crucifix he'd told us
about hung over the altar, black and smooth like ebony. There were
six people, all women and girls, and nine with us; and there were
two boy-servers, sacristani, with white smocks showed untidily over
their ordinary clothes. Our priest looked even more like a monk than before. He
spoke softly and remotely, as he does in conversation; his face pale and
a little distraught. One of the boy-servers had the job of reading from a scrappy
pamphlet in his hand, describing in Italian every step in the Mass:
He says: 'The priest now says a
prayer of gratitude ... To your knees.... We will now say together ... Stand
up. The Pater Noster, on your knees. Stand up. The priest now offers
the bread and wine, which turns to the flesh of Christ. On your knees.' He read
it in a halting way, like a shopping list, and every time he made a mistake
he looked up and made a most delightful broad smile at one of the girls in the
congregation, as if he'd done it for her, to please. Sometimes
there was a long pause while the priest, half-bowed at the altar, turned
and whispered to him as to what he should read next, and

followed long seconds of page-turning and finger-licking and shrugging and sighing; then, in the shopping-list voice suddenly, 'Let us pray...' For an hour or more we were bobbing up and down like cooks.

There was no religion, ~~in the~~ except once, when the priest prayed silently. Perhaps this is because he's really a monk, in feeling, ~~naturally speaking.~~ He hasn't the easy power of communication that a priest needs. I saw for the first time that a priest mustn't be too meditative. ~~He isn't just a religious man.~~ I remember an old Lytton priest, ~~in England once~~, at a ~~midnight~~ Christmas mass in a tiny barn of a church in the Cotswolds, who opened his sermon with, 'I've given my leg a nasty bang again. I went right down the stairs this time, I didn't stop till to the bottom. Every time I move a pain shoots up my side,' and there was a murmur of sympathy from the congregation. He had a plump, red face and fine eyes. We were clustered together in that dark barn, cold from the snow outside. He had the glow of religion, which drew us all together.

~~This sermon was on the text.~~ Afterwards we walked round the ~~two~~ empty church with our priest and saw the vestry. He told us that the crucifix over the altar had come to the village in the last century, and ~~was bought~~ had been bought from Napoleonic troops by the local priest: no one knew where it came from originally. In the vestry we found another crucifix which he at once said was made of plaster and 'inartistic'. If anything it was nicer than the other one, and we found it was made of wood, only a thin layer of plaster ~~had been painted~~ had been laid on it to take the colours, ~~which otherwise are absorbed into wood.~~ He showed us his vestments, which were clean and surprisingly splendid; ~~for such a small parish~~ and there were magnificent brass candleholders. ~~And~~ He gave me more magazines — more of the church-propaganda and state-propaganda with ~~its~~ their veneer of sentiment and their fake-concern: in one, an attack on André Gide, as 'shameless'; a scurrilous paragraph on a man who calls himself a communist, yet has a chauffeur; and a ~~article 'diagnosis of dig~~ 'diagnosis of communism in Italy' which makes no mention of the agrarian problem. ~~Of course, it doesn't~~ wash any more. You can't persuade the people that someone who goes to church every week and votes for the state party has hardly qualified as a Christian. But

for an astonishing number of years it was swallowed: ~~so that there weren't the priests to cope with the new situation; only those got through who could guarantee that they never used their minds~~ and only those men became priests who could swallow it too, on the whole; so that now there aren't the men to cope with the new situation. Here, at last, you have the effect of the persecutions ~~that followed the reformation~~ of the so-called post-reformation. The Italian church couldn't resist enlightenment for ever: finally, a pope had to bring it; and now expediency calls for it.

He showed us an archway of red bricks outside, in the wall of his house: the relic of a mediaeval hotel, he said, from the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, when the little track we were standing on, now only used by oxen, was the road to Rome; probably, at that time, it went from monastery to monastery ~~and may have passed inland to Siena, to take the Emilian way.~~ The tiny village lay silent all round us. We paid a visit to his house and met his sister. There was a pleasant cool hall and a bare room with a television set at one end; no books or easy chairs, no sign of thinking, which is the best decoration a house can get; the kitchen, as always, was the centre of life, with an old chimney in which you could sit — 'There', he said, pointing to the inglenook with the slightest ripple of enthusiasm, 'is where I like to be most of all, in the winter.' And his sister affectionately dusted some chalk off his sleeve. We had the feeling that his mind lurks somewhere behind the darkness, undeveloped; not one idea has gone right through his life; not a habit nothing has been upset or challenged; he is an easier dupe of publicity radio or television or even pulp-magazines (if they have the religious slant) that you could find, much easier than the peasants round him. But this has left his goodness unimpaired. He is innocent and good — perhaps, soft & good. That has been his place in the family — the good man. Only he's numbed: something has been ~~kept out of~~ erased from his account of life.

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For the first time in many days it hasn't clouded over in the afternoon ~~and~~ or rumbled with thunder in the distance. The heat-mist (which put a harmful moss or fungus on some of the grapes) has disappeared and the

day is clear and still, with the first faint suggestion of autumn; the sunlight glitters like water. We can see right across the valley as far as the hills above Siena.

~~Animals will always talk to you if you address them properly.~~ The ox with ~~One of our oxen~~ has tuberculosis is still here and refuses to put on weight, in spite of bran and wholewheat and linseed added to her grass-diet. She has such a sensitive, wide-eyed air, and I've noticed she always gets her way in the end: She dislikes being alone and she dislikes being moved around, and all Gigi's efforts to sell her have failed. ~~Finally~~ It's more economic to try to mend her: so she stays. The other oxen are bought and sold, but she stays. She ~~never~~ eats little when she's alone. But the moment another ox enters the stall at her side she eats heartily again. I think she knows our sounds, too — the dog, the car, ~~and~~ the sound of ~~me lifting~~ the cans when I lift water from the well. She wants a real home. Luckily it isn't economic to sell her as meat. Now she has two other oxen with her: they do the work and she's a guest. This morning I went in and spoke to her, and she looked round in her wondering, slightful fretful way, the whites of her eyes showing. And she made me a sort of grunt, after I'd paid her a special compliment. Two nights ago we were away, and she didn't eat: but half-an-hour after we were back, in the afternoon, she ate a hearty meal. For the people who slap her back and put her under the yoke this kind of talk would be embarrassing. They don't want to see her as a living creature. When I told Gigi yesterday that the classical cure for tuberculosis was the open air and as much of it as possible, and that it was ridiculous to expect a creature kept in darkness night and day to mend, he shook his head quietly and said, 'Well, you see, it isn't our habit to keep them out of doors'. ~~Why~~ ~~But~~ the doesn't treat her as real. ~~didn't he tie the creature to a tree, in the shade? But no, that would~~ ~~even too many questions.~~ ~~People — all peoples, really — want to keep life~~

square and safe and uninvestigated. They did want to investigate their habits. If you begin to treat these beasts as living creatures you have to ask whether it's right not just to ~~kill them but~~ to decimate them in such appalling numbers. Yet that animal standing in her stall knows what is going on: when the truck comes to take her to the slaughtering yard, as one day it will presumably, she will know. And Gino, like all the people who look after animals, knows she knows. You can tell this from the way he scolds her. He scolds her for having diahorrea, and what could more be human and concerned than that? But people are frightened to open their minds to clear questions: but they will have to do it; the common people have to do it, now. Everything is waiting for them. They have to ask whether what they do is right and good. Of course they prefer the safe darkness: where other people decide for them. But these other people don't exist any more.

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~~Pietro~~ Gianni sat in the back of the car and gave me ~~little~~ another speech on whores this time. He said he hadn't touched one since his army days. There were three reasons against having a whore, ~~he said seriously, and went through them ca~~ he said: first, they cost money; secondly, you have to wear a contraceptive; and third they ~~didn't~~ don't give a damn for you.

He seems to be describing street-sex, where you pick a girl up on the street and she takes you home for a couple of thousand lire. This has taken the place of brothels, as in France. The brothel as a place to go and linger has ceased.

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~~The three of us~~ Gianni ~~was~~ stolled up the hill with us & the three of us ~~the other day and~~ sat ~~at~~ the side of the rocky path. ~~At~~ Round us there were sea-shells of every size, some of them barely fossilised, so that you could break them in your hand, just as if the sea had been there ~~yesterday~~ the day before. Yet the

Most place-names and personal names have been altered in this book to conform to the English libel laws which are so stringent that they protect people from the truth, ~~[illegible]~~ ~~much as from lies.~~ at least ~~quite~~ as much as they do protect them from lies.

NOTE.

Most place-names and personal names have been altered in this book to conform to the stringent English libel laws which seem to protect people from the truth quite as much as they protect them from lies.

NOTE.

Because of the ridiculous ~~and~~ ~~[illegible]~~ libel laws in England I have altered names of persons and places in this book so that ~~unfortunately~~ the reader ~~[illegible]~~ will be unable to ~~share~~ or verify my experiences in this

which succeed more in protecting people who fear the truth than the victims of lies

~~[illegible]~~ valley ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ Under these laws the truth can be libellous, so that ~~these laws~~ they succeed more in protecting people who fear the truth than the victims of lies.

... tend more to protect people who fear the truth ~~[illegible]~~ than the victims of lies.

Under these laws the

(certain where exactly this valley is, as if we were in the secret service)

Miss Margery Vosper

Many thanks for your letter of —. I'm very glad you will be trying *The Mechanical Law*. I've now revised *ESKIMO TRANCE* into a more secure setting and will let you know further what it is in September.

If you find my letters funny why don't you send our correspondence out with the play?

Yours sincerely,

Truth can be libellous, which means that they tend to protect people who fear truth rather than the victims of lies.

sea is now ~~about~~ over eighty kilometres away. At ~~Pietro~~ Gianni's house the earth is a flaming red, so remarkable at first sight that it makes you gasp, and ~~Pietro~~ he told us that this was due to the earth being burned by lava during the prehistoric eruptions ~~on this and many of the other hills~~; the earth in the valley is a pale yellow. Have seen the same flaming earth near Siena, but in the plains, so that lava must have flowed there too.

We talked about these things until we were giddy — the ice-age, the vast animals that stalked about, the volcanic eruptions, the earthquakes that threw up whole mountain ranges. It was a warm, sunny, ~~afternoon~~ and we gayed drowsily across the valley. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni said he'd seen lots of films on the subject. He jumped to his feet and showed us how a dterodactyl ~~[illegible]~~ looked as it disappeared slowly into a crack in the earth, ~~in one of these films.~~ 'Pauroso!' he cried, 'frightening!' His eyes seem blue when he talks like this, though they aren't: They seem to have the sea in them. He looks Etruscan, as I imagine the Etruscans. And, strangest of all, he has their slight smile on his face, naturally, ~~[illegible]~~ in repose. When you think of these dark, cold ages before the human creature, you see we're one people: the Etruscans were only yesterday.

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~~Gino~~ Gigi told me that he'd been called by the padrona to a sort of conference, and she had said that she couldn't continue the farm as ~~like~~ this, it is now, with him taking two thousand lire a day and producing so little for it ~~[illegible]~~ ~~being derived from the land~~. He on his side said that he couldn't manage the work alone and ~~from time to time~~ was obliged ~~would have~~ to employ other hands for the wheat, charrest, the vendemmia ~~[illegible]~~ help as he's been doing in the past. She was still angry at ~~is also annoyed at the~~ to having ~~thought of an~~ a sick ox: ~~having tuberculosis~~: he must sell her, she says. But instead he ~~has sold~~ sells one of the other one and — ~~since~~ it was pregnant & healthy men, & buys pregnant — has bought another two for little more than the same ~~[illegible]~~ price. ~~It has a quiet ox~~

The tiny podere here yields a modest amount of wine, oil, ~~grain~~ wheat, fruit and a few vegetables every year, but ~~barely~~ not enough ~~sell at the [illegible]~~ or even to be worth transporting to market to pay

the taxes in it; and certainly not enough to allow for improvements. Like most Italians, owners, she is reluctant to spend on improvements in any case. The sale of the oxen probably just covers [illegible] wages. She says she will stop cultivating the land and let it go to waste, like many else. Dozens of hectares around here. Gigi asked her if he might rent it in that case and work it himself, but she would then of it, as it would only bring her an annual sum of fifty thousand lire. She would rather let it go to waste than that. But he may bring her round. Or the abandoned is being so in this way, gradually: the peasants will return as owners — at least, this is my guess. Both owners and peasants seem to derive a strange malicious pleasure from abandoning the land, even though in the end they will miss both of them.

They're frightened to think. Nothing could be sillier than having a podere, which is hardly more than a large field devoted to a dozen different crops, fruits and vegetables, yet dependent on one man alone, without machinery; and two or three oxen which need a mountain of forage twice a day and leave the stalls perhaps half a dozen times a month for a few minutes. If the whole podere were turned over to wine, say, it could be worked by one man, and would yield far more. Working it out that the field could take about five thousand vines, planted in rows, and the field/podere would yield two million lire a year, even at the present low prices that genuine wine (as opposed to chemical wine) is fetching; and there would be found, enough to improve the land each year. Sprays could be bought, to replace individual copper-sulphate spraying, which takes a day or two for a podere this size. The stalls could be turned into cellars for the vats. Of course the multi-crop podere is designed to supply a family; perhaps this will return to this form as the peasants become the owners, or tenants.

But this is farmers' thinking: and the [illegible] are living

fallow

in town, on ~~their~~ percentages and fees & not thinking at all.

We asked ~~Dino~~ Sergio why ~~Luigi~~ Paolo didn't buy a decent piece of land at the present throw-away prices and work it himself instead of getting a shop in town and setting up as a butcher ~~(which he has just done)~~ in competition with half-a-doze other experienced men; and he said, 'He wouldn't like it. It's dirty work!'

But even the meat isn't available in the right quantities: the more the earth is abandoned, the fewer beasts there are for sale. So the butchers will feel it soon. And Paolo may digit back.

Apparently, ~~Guido~~ Luciano and his brother did go to their padrone with a proposition. This proposition, naturally, was that he should give them a higher percentage. But he threw up his hands and said that ~~at a ... it would mean ... if he did that he would be unable to~~ at present he could barely pay his taxes & ~~unable to~~ buy the fertilisers, the sprays, the copper-sulphate, keep ~~the~~ his machinery in repair, ~~and~~ mend their roofs; at a higher percentage, he would have to sell up everything, at once! But he agreed to buy them a tractor, which will halve their work in the summer and spare the overworked oxen: apparently, if you lay down thirty percent of the price of any improvement on the land, the ~~land~~ government will loan you the other seventy percent. So the state doesn't seem so sleepy after all. Perhaps the chaos is in the Italian people, all of them: an ancient and rather magnificent trait. Miseria will always come back.

We went to one of the big sea-resorts two days ago. No foreigners. The prices are too high for them, people say. They're going to Spain, Yugoslavia, Greece. There are Italians at these resorts now: for the first time in really vast numbers. But they won't pay the prices which have been prepared for the foreigners. So they will cease going. So there will be neither foreigners nor Italians. The beloved country always returns to its original state. The present ± for the Italian ± is eternity ±: this is the way he undoes himself.

Our civ. depends on the attainment of a real agriculture, that is, a real country-life. ~~the future of our civilisation depends.~~ The Anglo-Saxons ~~tried to~~ turned it the countryside into a ~~vast~~ factory: and the result is disease, degeneration of animal vigour and stock, the poisoning of the earth and, above all, the breeding of vast ~~f~~ city-populations detached from the realities of life. ~~(especially the realities of their own food and thus their own bodies) which grow out of food).~~ The answers have to be diff. from that: based on what men need, not on Puritan calculations of 'economy'.

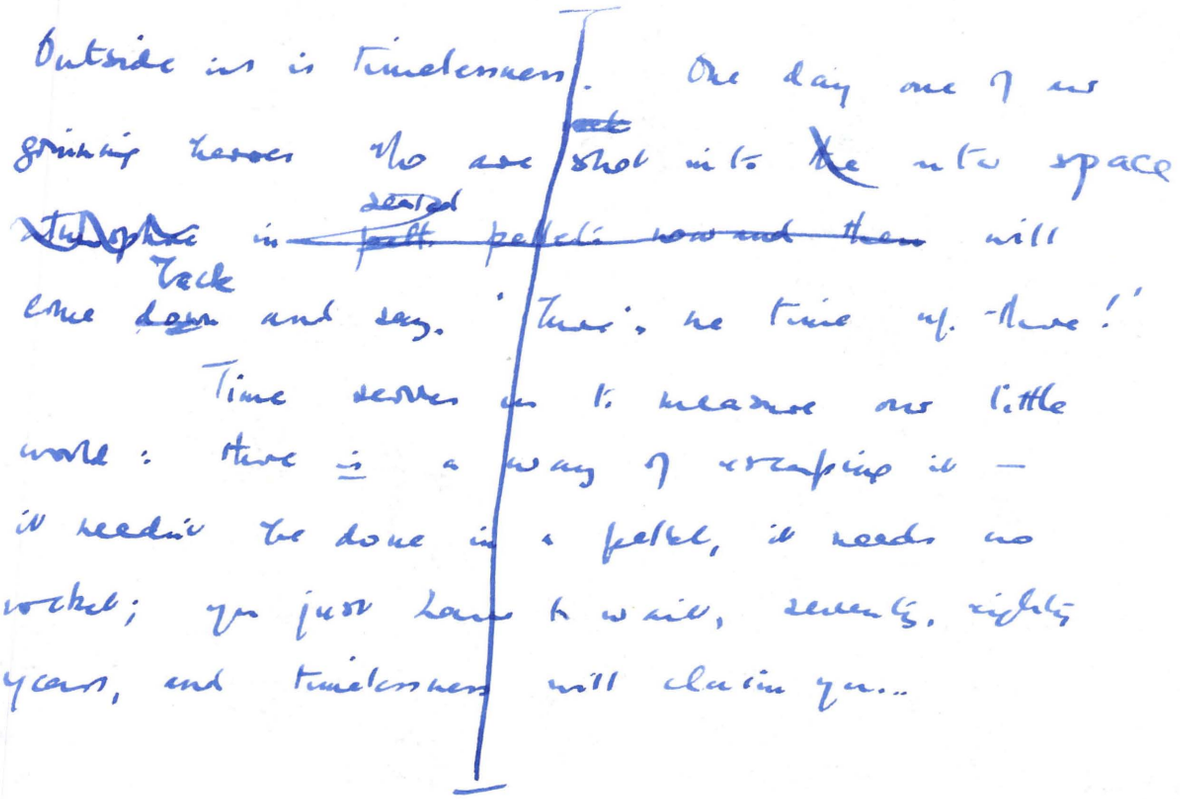
Europe — France and Germany and Italy — will supply the ~~new~~ answers. ~~They~~ These are dawning now.

Farming and markets ~~depend on~~ are our civilisation: they are the state of our kitchen.

The fattore ~~of this land~~ came yesterday on behalf of the owner and peeped into one of ~~the~~ our downstairs rooms. ~~that we're using~~ ~~Gino's~~ Gigi's quarters — which he only uses as his work-base — ~~are~~ ~~continuation~~ of are adjacent. The owner, he ~~told us~~ said, is negotiating with a peasant-family to take occupation in January, and to rent both the land and half the house. ~~for them.~~ ~~Gino~~ Gigi ~~also~~ will rent part of the land after all, and work in with them. We're doubtful if it will work out, and the fattore seems doubtful, too. It may be a political move on ~~the daughter's~~ her part to ~~make~~ goad us ~~feel threatened and~~ into ~~Appoint~~ ~~to~~ buying, but I doubt it is, ~~the house.~~ ~~But the politics get lost.~~ They are the last remaining power of her 'class,' for want of a better word. There's no money left, and little social recognition. But the ~~Florentine~~ Tuscan genius for politics remains, having been exercised for three or four centuries. They machinate and combine and fiddle; mostly, the peasants don't know what they're doing.

The wheat is all being brought in from the fields in sheafs and laid down where there is a flat, sandy space to form a massa.

Outside us is timelessness. One day one of our grinning heroes who are shot into ~~the~~ outer space ~~atmosphere~~ in ~~felt pellets now and then~~ sealed will come ~~down~~ back and say, 'There's no time up there!'



Time serves us to measure our little world: there is a way of escaping it — it needn't be done in a pellet, it needs no rocket; you just have to wait, seventy, eighty years, and timelessness will claim you...

We used to measure our lives (time) by the light, the movement of one day to the next, one season to the next. But now our lives are a ticking clock, lurching from minute to minute: measuring the tension into which we have fallen, a series of ~~fragments~~ moments that pass into each other in a continue dying ~~[illegible]~~ motion.

And ~~we~~ we fall into timelessness only in sleep, for an hour or so: the luxury in knowing it awakes alert is denied, I believe, to millions of us. I know it has been denied to me — a glimpse was vouchsafed me now & then

a great round pile with the wheat-ears pointed inwards. Then, in a week or ten days, the threshing machine will come and the grain will be threshed from the straw, which will be pounded into blocks and stacked. The fields are cleared in rotation, everyone helping the other from the neighbouring farms. They start soon after dawn; they eat together at tables of eight or ten or twelve people, and when darkness has fallen at night. The equivalent of our Harvest Home comes when the wheat is actually threshed: a long table is put in the barn and the cooking is special, with plenty of wine and Marsala. But I know it won't be a real celebration. Historically, there was never a squire present: there you have a principal difference between our development and the Italian. The squire never cast his magic on the table. So they worked — and played — like dogs: & think of themselves as dogs.

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— I've just thought of his farm —

The marvel of Germany is her immensity, and the gods still walk in her mountains. Her human marvel lies in those farms with their ancient spreading trees and long-roofed wooden houses and towering stacks and horses with massive, polished flanks.

Germany will never let us go too far towards the city.

+

(On two occasions Germans have saved my life — with these resources.)

+

Germans are gods, wood-gnomes, elfs, devils, nymphs, sirens, magicians. Politically we always stand by and let them build up their power because we're intoxicated with them.

+

I feel troubled. Words escape me. I can't settle to anything. When we get lost like this — seem to fall into space — how can we talk about civilisation as a sum of conscious acts? When we come back to the world it seems right. But we can't make civilisation out of time. Civilisation is always the impossible dream.

When we look back and say, 'They had a civilisation', we make them our dream.

Do I dream the Etruscans? But if they never existed they would be the same: in their name we're haunted by something; they're inside us. But we can't hope to clarify it, which means in some way to fix it.

Time develops — that must be its illusion for us: that we're moving all the time towards death. But life doesn't develop. Epochs don't develop from one to the other. An illusion. They simply have different lives. We yearn for what we have lost from a previous epoch, and call progress what we think we've gained. But there is only a turning and arguing of life, towards no end in time. We have an end, but it serves us now, in depth, so to speak; we keep it before us but only time gives us the illusion that we shall attain it, as if anything defined and limited can be attained; our disadvantage is, from that point of view, that we live at the edge of infinity; and falling it (into) as we do now and then, ~~so that we can hardly recollect who we are, or how~~ means we're preparing another change in ourselves. But these changes don't accumulate towards one definite end: that definite end, if it exists at all, is ourselves; we change in order to attain the dream of self which we hold before ourselves all the time; but the moment of attainment can never come. Otherwise change would cease and we would be fixed and limited; the end we go towards isn't in time; it doesn't await us at the end of the illusory corridor of time.

~~Civilisation is impossible.~~

For us to believe in God, God has to be a possibility in ourselves. It is only a matter of the possibility of God. The possibility has to be in ourselves. But He isn't. He can't be planted in us: for me ~~this is what I mean when I say that~~ St. Thomas Aquinas's error was to put the causes within our grasp. the suggestion that first causes are our comprehensible. We always depend — the given situation. Causes

 are always second. We are confined to them. ~~If it can never be planted in us, how can we ever have it?~~

We may put ourselves in a position to receive 'God': lay ourselves open to it. First we have to destroy ~~all~~ evidence of time.

Does the lake ~~under~~ near the ~~forest~~ woods show evidence of time? It shows time of day, time of season. So should we.

+

[This is strange language for me. I've always talked direct: in a flow. My thoughts are halting.] I feel like a man picking his way through mens.

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I remember prayers in childhood, pressed against my mother's stomach, my eyes closed: a prayer for the safety of our relatives and for 'soldiers and ~~sot~~ sailors, tinkers and tailors' (what an ancient ~~English~~ prayer that must be), followed by the Lord's prayer. It seemed that my mother found God by describing him to me in those moments. She wanted to make certain for me what was only a possibility for her.

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Yet, again, you're lost without the mediation of Christ, whether you like it or not. Study eastern philosophies, do ju-jitsu, embrace Islam: you will never get more than mentally beyond him.

+

Christ said we achieved God through intimacy. It had never been heard of before. For most of the Jews He was achieved socially – that is, through knowledge, behaviour, intelligence position. Only Moses had said it before (pray 'in secret'): but he had addressed a holy people. Christ addressed ~~a~~ all of us. Therefore she is a reminder, all the time, of our humble origin.

His life for the pagan, as for the Pharisee, was ~~a~~ 'subjective'. ~~monologue~~. It was only what one man thought. Yet his thought dominated an ~~whole~~ empire, and all empires to come, ~~because it objective~~ because it was the truth.

+

Knowledge never develops. Each epoch only synthesises

what it needs to use.

An progress is a 'rake', progress. You only hear of it where money is being made.

There is no hope: better not wait for it any more. ~~And then reality spread before us.~~

God, like civilisation, isn't in the future. It is now, if at any time. Looking for him in the past, hoping to achieve him in the future, is only our way of denying him. We are like people who look all over the house for what we can only see if we close our eyes. He is here and now, always.

To recapitulate: if you put him in the past or future you make your present barren, and drive Him away as fast as you look for him.

Looking for him is therefore a state of the most chronic doubt.

Very well, forget I said 'Him'. Call Him 'it'. There are dangers here: but cross the bridge when you come to it.

'It' is 'Him' unmediated. To translate 'it' into our intimacy — so that we ~~(the Passion)~~ become aware of a silent guide — is to make 'it' 'Him'. I mean by God 'the silent guide'. We would never be aware of this silent guide without Christ.

The sudden idea ~~[illegible]~~ that there is no silent guide ~~gives me~~ gives me a sickening sensation.

Now, a few seconds later, nothing could seem to me sillier than the last sentence. It shows the dangers of 'thinking', as that goes in the post-Aquinas world.

We are in the hand of a guide so strong that we give up everything to Him — we dispose our food to his engineering, we have no part in the beating of our hearts, ~~the poisons in our blood~~ our livers eliminate ~~are~~ poisons without our permission, we yield ourselves to his mercy in childbirth and he guides the blind child to the mother's breast;

and if we're wise we learn not to take a step in life without being given a sign.

And I say there is no guide!

+

The fierce, growled G-a-h-h-h-h! from a shepherd outside as he passes with his flock. A cry that goes right through ~~the~~ your stomach: ~~he must have~~ a pre-Aquinas ~~in~~ mind, there. Strange to think that Aquinas was born near Naples. But he did his work in Paris (Aristotle).

+

I mean, the glorification of form — the fact that we alone, of ~~unlike~~ all the beasts, can perceive ~~the~~ form — has been our undoing. We have been led to expect an understandable form: whereas, it is only given; we can't

Finally, you get in Duccio, the 'Greek', for example, so much form that there is no religion. They were right to call him the 'Greek': they meant the classical — that is, ~~the post-religious~~ the logical.

+

Classical means 'first-rate'. Our objective should not be the first-rate but the truth. The truth always smudges the performance.

+

Causes are always second — that is, within ~~not grasp~~ possibility. Hopeless to look for 'first'.

+

It turns out that the 'peasant and family' ~~who are~~ negotiating to come to this house is ~~Guido~~ Luciano himself. He was helping with the ~~piling~~ stacking of the wheat outside the gateway this morning and told us. ~~So I was wrong in thinking that he and not his brother wanted to go away: the opposite.~~ This explains ~~Guido's~~ his talking angrily to his brother: about the necessity of forty or fifty thousand Mussolini's: he felt his brother's back should be put to the wall. His brother is always talking about 'progress'.

2

The priest stopped me in the village this morning and gave me more literature, with a bag of fruit from his own trees, plums and pears. ~~I can tell what magazines he wants to give me and what he wants to read himself:~~ His goodness makes him press everything on me, but at the same time he gives the ~~wanted~~ magazines a wistful look, like a child at a sweetshop because he hasn't read them himself; and I accordingly

tell him to keep some of them. He had his book on theology with him and he'd found a passage in it which said exactly what I'd said about the 'schism' in England, when Henry sacked the monasteries. He stood fingering through the book, looking for it, but he can't find it. When we come to watch his television one evening he'll show me the passage. Tomorrow is the feast of the village-saint, with a sung mass and lots of flowers everywhere, and he recommends us to go. I'm sure he feels we're ripe for Rome: that is, we're civic people in his eyes.

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Gianni sat on our terrace last night in the darkness while we cooked a chicken for him. He and Lorenzo, with Renato and three others, are going to the sea tomorrow (the saint's feast-day) and have hired a car and driver. He and Lorenzo fuss like old women: should they take a small suitcase, how are they going to get all the 'luggage' into the car, what about plates and knives and forks? will they need salt? should they take wine? It makes it seem exciting, like a trip in childhood, & this talk makes the kitchen glow fabulously. They are to leave at half-past six in the morning. The chicken is roasted in silver paper — the most succulent way, a wetter than Duns is the only gas-oven in the valley, less trouble than lighting a wood-fire one at Altapasquale, where they all still busy stacking the wheat.

+

I was walking up the hill with the dog soon after half past six this morning, I strolled up the hill, + they still had it gone. There were festive sounds from below: Gianni calling, Renato asking something urgently. Those little journeys long ago, were the most exciting of all, fifty or sixty miles took you to another life and you felt strange. They were real. These seem to me the most realistic journeys, too: the magic was in them, as it is in the real world. At last the car-doors slammed and there was a great collective shout — the day seemed all space and sunlight, with that special gleaming magic of adventure — and they drove off. Ciao!

+

Yet Erasmus said there was no one more unassuming and courteous than Henry VIII.

The first touch of autumn, in the ~~midst~~ middle of the heat: thoughts of music, ~~glowing lights~~, chilly courtyards with the sound of traffic outside, snow in Salzburg, ~~and~~ glowing lights in the windows of ~~inside~~ the Mirabella palace ~~the return to history~~.

+

~~I know I could go to the house~~ A letter from in New England ~~and~~ We must come, settle down ~~at once~~ For a time: I would know where everything was — the piano in the parlour, ~~downstairs~~, the television in an upstairs bedroom so that you can watch it lying in bed. I know the garden, the black tulips, the house as ricketty as a shell in the wind. ~~And I could set myself to work as if I'd never known another place.~~

What would the trouble be? That there is only one England. I mean, all Americans are expatriates, ~~especially in their own country~~

+

~~It that~~ America — the marvellous, ~~of~~ and heretical, dream: that we could make our lives all over again by the act of moving two thousand miles... Some hope, the Puritans had!

+

I know it would be more England than England is. There the unreality would start.

+

America was our attempt at a civilisation in time. It lies here now ~~like~~ a proof of its impossibility, like the ~~[illegible]~~ ruins of Babylon.

Was that why I seemed to recognise the waters of Babylon? ~~and~~ recognised the thwarted attempt to grasp time?

+

By the waters of Babylon I sat down and wept.

+

At the arch of Tesiphon, ~~sticking~~ towering out of the desert like a vast, blinding rock, I thought everything was beyond my powers: Nuri the surgeon said 'I'll climb to the top of that arch!', and pointed to the jagged point gleaming in the desert sun. He started off along a path. But I wouldn't go. I can't stand heights. Soon, wiping his face with a dazzling white handkerchief, he was at the top of the arch, standing

among the bricks, a tiny figure. We waved to each other — the man for whom life was possible, and the man for whom it wasn't. Life was already made for me: I explored it breathlessly, tremulously; nowhere did I play a part. Only slowly, in a matter of five or ten ~~or fifteen~~ years, did I learn the peculiar nature of surrender that action entails.

~~I notice~~ The English, ~~lack intimacy in their public dealings. They~~ can't bring their intimacy into play. ~~I see it in their letters.~~ The 'personal tone' wavelly confuses and distresses them, not because they're afraid of it or even dislike it, but because ~~they~~ they've ~~have~~ lost the form for ~~replying to it.~~ ~~Their intimacy has accumulated like a volcano inside them. While outside them lies a vast labyrinth of formulae and that is, they're a nation in darkness. Only the older generations have a command of the intimate tone.~~

The older generations threw in their lot with the Americans (that is, with non-conformism) and this broke the young. It gave promise of power in place of intimacy (struggle) but there was ~~no power.~~

This offended others (who considered it a lack of intimacy) and the result was that the English are surrounded.

Intimacy only has a public form when people are decided as to what they want.

~~Their intimacy accumulates like a volcano in each of them. Intimacy plus~~ They have so long taken it for granted that civilisation is a matter of power that they ceased to try to make it. The will to civilisation in the other countries of Europe will engulf the ~~paper alliances of the~~ so-called "Atlantic".

The Atlantic seems barren to me: ~~this is the sound of its name from a~~ a silent ~~[illegible]~~ stretch of water between two factories, the no-man's-land of a Utopia ~~dreamer~~. Compare the Pacific — a sea of islands,

strolled up the rocky path and there were festive sounds from below: Gianni calling, Renato asking something urgently; I also heard Caterina, as if she were standing by her door watching them go off. At last the car-doors slammed and there was a great collective shout---the day seemed all space and sunlight, with that special gleaming magic of adventure---and they drove off. Ciao!

The first touch of autumn, in the midst of the heat: thoughts of music, chilly courtyards with the sound of traffic outside, snow in Salzburg, glowing lights in the windows of the Mirabella palace. Why do I think of Salzburg so much? Perhaps as a town that escaped the reformation and the counter-reformation, and evolved naturally.

A letter from New England---we must come, settle down for a time. I would know where everything was, from the descriptions: the piano in the parlour, the television in an upstairs room so that you can watch it lying in bed. I know the garden, the black tulips, the house as ricketty as a shell in the wind. America---a marvellous, heretical dream: that we could make our lives all over again by the act of moving two thousand miles... Some hope, the Puritans had! And 'New' England. How can you make a new England? A new dream? How do you make new what was never tangible and never fixed, what was the light in men's eyes?

The English gave up everything to the Americans, including their own dreams, because they swallowed (perhaps, invented) the 19 idea that civilisation is power.

INSERT.

Gianni gave us a speech about women: Tuscan women were much 'easier' than those in the south, he said. You could get friendly with a Tuscan woman: if she liked you she made it easy for you; you might be together for three months or so, and part without once 'going to her house', that is, getting engaged to her. In that time she might have let you be intimate with you. But if she did you warned all your friends not to think of her as a possible wife: you said, 'I've been with her. And for her to go with me she must have been with plenty of other men, too.' You will tell your friends about her in any case, because whenever you have sex you boast about it afterwards, you expose the woman involved. More, if the woman has permitted intimacy this rules out even marriage between you and her: intimacy before betrothal is the death of a woman's reputation.

So the pagan takes what he can and then spits on what he's taken. And I suppose paganism was useful to the counter-reformation: it married original sin to pagan lust, and blacked intiacy two times over.

I listen with mild and even cheerful disgust., ~~Like hearing prisoners talk.~~ ~~One sees~~ how even our sex is a Christian act, even our illicit sex. It ~~comes from~~ freedom, ~~and from~~ seeing the ~~light~~ divine spark in someone else. ~~Sex has been blackened by t for the Italian~~ secret of sex, though not of passion. ~~I listen with mild and even cheerful disgust.~~ I'm used

~~to this prisoner's talk.~~

how much 'easier' Tuscan women than those in the south. You could get friendly with a Tuscan woman; if she liked you she made it easy for you; you might be together for three months or so, and part without once 'going to her house', that is, getting engaged to her. In that time she might have let you be intimate with you. But if she did you ~~then~~ warned all your friends not to think of her as a possible wife; you said say, 'I've been with that one. And she's been with other people, too.' ~~And, in any case~~. Whenever you have sex you boast about it afterwards ~~to your friends~~ and expose the woman involved. ~~Also, if~~ More, if the woman ~~allows you to be intimate with you~~ permits intimacy, that rules out marriage even ~~with~~ for with you: intimacy before ~~official~~ betrothal ~~means~~ is the ~~end~~ death of a woman's reputation.

Here you get the Italian's rooted hatred of sex, and his unforgiving condemnation of the female. Here is the pagan and slave, who takes what he can and then spits on what he takes. No wonder, more the further south you go, ~~the more [illegible]~~ hatred flashes from a woman's eyes when she ~~is given~~ gets a sexual look.

Pietro talked about whether a ~~f~~ bitch-dog must be on heat to receive a male and be fertilised: he prefixed this by saying, 'Forgive me, this is dirty talk —!

The loss of sex cripples Italian ~~[illegible]~~ life. Yet there is something in nature that supports it.

+

Or perhaps, as Stendhal says, passion disappeared from the Italians in the sixteenth century.

They were made slaves again: and the story of the apple and the serpent now supported pagan lust.

+

Three women stood by the cross. They never betrayed him.

+

He always had something gentle to say to the women, if you remember: except once, to his mother. She was trying to organise

tropical mists, sunsets and becalmed waters. Yet there are islands in the Atlantic, no less.

+

The Atlantic held that civilisation ~~was a fact~~ could be pounded out of iron. But civilisation is a dream. On this choice ~~hinges~~ hangs all the future history of our century. The English have given up everything to American power because they have so long swallowed the 19 idea that civilisation is power.

Civilisation is the outer form of our intimacy. We never really attain to it: the moment we do it is formula.

+

In what we call (afterwards) a civilisation there was always a struggle for form which we take afterwards for form itself, though it was never achieved. We take ancient Greece as meaning logic & form, but it was a handfull of great men addressing barbarians.

Utopia, in naming the requirements of civilisation - its furniture - ~~this form, is a denial of the above, is illusory for~~ achieves only the dreamless moral society, not civ. at all.

I can remember concerts, plays, at the old county homes in England, ~~their~~ the lawns ~~preserved~~, gleaming and bright, people strolling under the trees, ~~in the~~ on long summer evenings; the sound of birds; picnics at the edge of ~~the~~ ~~a new Glydaebourne~~ woods. ~~Behave~~ ~~return of civilisation to that lovely island.~~ The dream, side by side with the smoky Utopia.

~~But the moment you specify something it becomes Utopia.~~

+

~~Pietro~~ Gianni & his mother ~~has been~~ were ~~selling chickens with his mother. They~~ go to market early ~~on Saturday~~ this morning, to sell their chickens: ~~at about half past six, and~~ in an hour or so they'd ~~have~~ sold forty or more ~~so chickens~~. ~~He told us~~ They never have difficulty in selling ~~because~~ their birds because people know they ~~are~~ aren't broiler-fowl, are properly fed, on their own grain and maize, and not given the so-called 'miscela' - mix - which is turned out by the feed-companies. Also his birds wander whether they want to and are only brought in at night. ~~And~~ Gianni never sells them younger than three months. The birds from the elevamenti, or the broiler houses, ~~in the other hands~~ are ~~fed~~ fed under lamps night and day, and are sold after about forty days from birth: ~~the result is that~~ their meat is tasteless and without fibre, and ~~harmful~~ ~~really~~ to us because it is ~~really~~ 'sick'. Gianni calls it

In the evening, sitting on the terrace again, he gave us a speech ~~talked~~ about women:

him, make him ethical.

Women know best the secret of surrender: therefore they often understand soonest.

You must not look for strength in women.

A quintet came from Siena and gave a concert in the courtyard of the museum, by the stone stairs that Dante often climbed. Behind the quintet, under ~~the~~ bright lights, there was a mural that reminded ~~me~~ us of ~~the~~ Bartolo di Fredi: ~~in the cathedral~~: a Madonna, with the same half-closed, gentle eyes. They played ~~some~~ Shostakovitch, which we thought was going to be a little piece of factory-work but ~~it~~ wasn't at all; sometimes it was like children wailing in the distance; a most frightful misery ~~underneath~~ in it; a kind of dumb appeal, ~~as well~~ intimate and also compassionate. Also like a clown who has been made to perform and perform again — make them laugh! He says his lines ~~as if~~ being whipped. And like the bear I saw being tortured in Kurdistan once by tribesmen: whimpering, with that same haunted appeal.

~~Christ will not.~~

it made a kind of dumb appeal, like children wailing in the distance; there was a hurt ~~gentle~~ misery in it, intimate — compassionate. ~~Like a clown made to perform again & again: make them laugh!~~ Like the bear I saw being teased by tribesmen in Kurdistan: whimpering, with the same haunted appeal.

ب

3.

More thunderstorms, with heavy rain: but at dawn now. The other night we watched a cloud hanging over the ~~Pistoian~~ Sienese hills, under the full moon, with lightning flashing silently inside it like a storm scene in a play. The valley with ~~the~~ its endless groves, the olive trees and single vines like shadows, look haunted and in a peculiar way ravished. We could even see the village in the ~~distance~~ lightning, perched on its hill like a piece of carved rock, ~~[illegible]~~ gaunt and unbending.

In the dead of the night the valley is so still that it seems the most unbelievable madness ever to ~~believe~~ suppose we could master ~~it~~ it in any way. ~~it could belong to us~~

Yesterday our priest took us to the tiny hill-village of ~~Sciciano~~ (Colciano?) where there are only two small families and one or two shepherds left. It was ~~a~~ stormy ~~day~~ and the wind swept across the muddy path under the church. The road to the village rises up steeply between wheatfields and cypresses. The biggest house there lies abandoned, its windows shuttered and barred; not long ago it had fifteen people ~~in it~~ inside. We could see right across the valley south of Siena, with small hill-towns here and there; Don Amigo ~~our priest~~ pointed out the towering jagged ruin that sticks out of the earth close to the road to Volterra, and told us that in the middle ages it had been a ~~military~~ look-out post commanding the ~~two~~ whole valley, ~~between Volterra and San Gimignano~~, when there were endless wars between those ~~two towns~~ Volterra or San Gimignano.

We were to meet the priest of Colciano and he came out, calm and smiling, as soon as he heard the car. He looked like a peasant, but one advanced to ownership: shrewd, thoughtful, erect, ~~and~~ determined, with no spare flesh on his cheeks, ~~but~~ and nothing worn away by ~~with~~ care, either. Don Amigo looks frail and unhealthy beside him, a ~~[illegible]~~ bag of bone and sinew. ~~While the other stood erect and firm-looking~~ The church-house

was the only one in good repair, and we peeped into a pleasant-looking study — actually his office — as we passed. First we had to see the church, which was bare apart from an altar-piece — a triptych with ~~the~~ a ~~familiar~~ Madonna and child in the centre, ~~with~~ and St. Michael killing the dragon and St. Peter with his key, ~~either~~ each side — ~~painted~~ recently in ~~an~~ a copy ~~imitation~~ of a fifteenth-century piece in Siena. And the walls were painted (cement underneath) in imitation of the black and white stones of the Florentine and Sienese cathedrals. The priest complained in a voice hardly more than a whisper that the rain came in from the bell-tower, and showed us three streams of damp down the wall. The wind was so strong, he said, that there was no way of stopping the rain penetrating. But He didn't seem much interested in the church, and waited outside for us while we looked at it ~~after he'd pointed everything out~~. It was aching to talk to us on politics, ~~other subjects~~, and the moment we were ~~in~~ in the open air again he pointed to the abandoned house nearby and said, still in his whisper, 'There were four families there not alone two years ago!' He added more loudly: 'They're all going away. And why? Economic? No!' His face became sharp and fierce. 'Psychological! It's all psychological! They want the town, they want the industries — they think they do, at least!' Our priest nodded palely, seeming to only half-listen. 'Soon there'll be a crisis!' the other man said; 'And God only knows if we'll pass it safely! Not in our country only, I believe — but everywhere!' Take meat, he went on: the production is going down swiftly, the stalls are lying empty; with the land not being worked to full capacity there isn't the forage to feed the animals, even if there is the labour to look after them. So ~~in the villages nearby~~ the butchers' shops are ~~were~~ open only four days a week now, in some places! ~~when the crisis~~ soon ~~came~~ it might only be two days, then one, then —! But there could be such plenty that it made one go green in the face just thinking of it! ~~Instead of everybody leaving the land, piecemeal, why wasn't here a programme that joined the land together in some way~~: Eg. for instance, the valley

below produced a hundred thousand quintales of wine instead of a thousand or ten thousand, the wine would be sold more cheaply at market, in bulk, even perhaps for half the price it was being sold at now, because the work expenses ~~being~~ ~~streamlined~~ would be ~~was~~ incomparably less than that required for a dozen or more separate poderi. With low prices we could make the countryside habitable again! Our Don Amingo replied in a soft voice something about people drifting into the towns because they found life more 'amusing' there, and at once the other man said with his sharp look, touched with the slightest of grim smiles: 'No, no! You haven't understood! Let me explain. There is no cinema here? Agreed?' Yes, our ~~the other~~ priest agreed obediently. 'Well, then, we put a cinema here! ~~there!~~ But at fifty lire a seat, not a hundred or two hundred as it is in the town! The result is that not only the people in this village come to our the cinema, but people come from the town as well, because it's half price!' Our priest nodded: yes, he understood the analogy. 'Now, then,' the other man went on, 'put your fields under a programme and you cut your prices automatically! Cut your prices and you sell more of your goods!' To which Don Amingo nodded, palely, ~~and then~~ shivering a little ~~from~~ in the wind, 'Let's go inside, shall we?' And the other man led the way, ~~as~~ ~~and we walked behind him~~ ~~into~~ to his house, ~~with him~~ (still buried in his theme) his head down, the room he led us to was cool and silent, with lace curtains ~~draped~~ over the window and a heavy velveteen cloth on the table; ~~and~~ here was a large straight-backed armchair covered with bright cushions at the head of the table, ~~clearly~~ for the bishop if he ever came. And he offered it to my wife with a little bow.

As soon as we were ~~inside~~ seated he began again, ~~saying~~, 'Everything comes from the earth – there's nothing you can mention that doesn't involve the earth at some stage in its production – so if you abandon the earth you abandon your life!' His eyes glanced, sometimes blindly and sometimes piercingly, at the room. Outside, the wind howled as it might on a winter's day. And our priest sat weekly by the table, rather rigid, gaying across at his

friend – whose soul he fears for, perhaps. And then the other man launched into the famous affair of the 'lost' agricultural fund #4: five hundred miliards lire (what three hundred million pounds) collected in taxes from the countryside cannot be traced! 'Perhaps a fifth part might be recovered, but the rest has disappeared – some say into the ~~responsible~~ secretary general's ~~minister's~~ pocket, ~~others~~ some say into various government departments which happened to be ~~were~~ in debt, ~~others~~ some say into new industrial schemes from which certain ministers profited!' Don Amingo deprecated this, raising his fragile, bony hand for a moment: 'Is that quite certain?' he said. 'Yes!' the other priest shouted fiercely, at once, his voice ringing across the room in a strange ~~kind of~~ scream, quite different from the whisper he which he'd ~~talked to us~~ used at first. 'It is! Quite certain! The ~~minister~~ department can't account for five hundred miliard lire! And they call it a government! Robbers! Ladri! Ladri!' And he pounded the table. 'They should be brought to law!' he went on. 'There should be the ~~most~~ ~~serious~~ severest penalty for stealing from the government funds – which means ~~is the~~ stealing from the people!' Our priest's lips quivered a little at this: 'Oh, dear,' he murmured, 'mistakes are bound to happen. Of course, there are scandals. They happen in every country!' 'You're simple!' the other man cried. 'Tu sei troppo semplice! Mistakes aren't bound to happen. Not mistakes involving milliards of lire! But they will happen if they're not punished!' ~~'I still don't think that's a ...~~ The maximum penalty! That's what it needs!' 'I suppose,' our priest answered to this, his lips still quivering slightly, 'people should be killed, like they are in Russia. We don't want that!' 'But it isn't only in Russia people are punished for that sort of crime! It's England, France, everywhere in the civilised world – the maximum penalty for stealing from the people!' Don Amingo turned to us with a little smile – 'My friend has rather strong opinions!

This is because he works on the land himself! Apparently, the ~~It turned out that the other~~ priest has a large podere ~~belonging to the church, of course~~ – which he helps work himself. ~~There are~~ of sixty or seventy hectares, ~~in all,~~ and he has followed his own doctrine thoroughly by putting the land under a programme. ~~The result is, according to other people, that he makes piles of money~~ INSERTA

~~not only~~ ~~but keeps his workers.~~ The peasants joke about him, ~~and~~ they respect him in a gingerly and distant way. I think Don Amigo is more their idea of a priest – a clearly good man, ~~and~~ rather ineffectual. Last year a peasant called on the Colciano priest and asked him to come to market and select a good calf for him: this is the sort of respect he enjoys. And Dino tells us that he likes his women: 'Watch your wife when he's about – no woman is safe with that prelate!' he says with a laugh.

I told him about our own poderi, that it would soon be abandoned like all the others; ~~if peasants weren't found to work it~~ or with luck it might be rented for a pulling sum every year. Wouldn't it be best to turn it ~~all~~ over to one crop, I asked – say, wine? And his reply was, with a mysterious and rather excited smile, that it was all a question of money, and the people who owned land invariably had no money or else were unwilling to put it back into the land. You needed money to change the crop in that way, he said, because you needed time. If you wanted to turn it over to oil, for instance, you had to wait twenty years for a good yield. And wine would take at least five. The reason why all these poderi have a bit of everything, he said, is because they were designed to provide all the basic needs of life for both peasants and owners: in fact, he added, although the mezzadria system is psychologically unpopular at the moment (because the peasant has the impression that he gives ~~of~~ half his produce to an idler), it is the best agricultural system ever devised, for fairness and efficiency. The actual dividend reaped from this system by a good landowner is about six or seven percent of the produce, after taxes, equipment, fertilisers, new plants, repairs have been paid for: about

the same percentage ~~which anybody gets~~ as their capital. He himself, he went on, paid out eighteen thousand lire a day in wages, to eight or nine workers: he had no mezzadri. With large poderi, producing massive supplies, the mezzadria system wasn't possible, he said. But the country might return to it, he said. After all, people had left the land in massive numbers ~~for the towns~~ twice ~~in Italian history~~ before in Italian history — once in Roman times and once in the middle ages; and both times they had come back. When he couldn't understand was that young people should actually want to give up the marvel of a healthy body! 'How marvellous,' he said, his rather narrow eyes shining,' to be out there under the sun, with things growing all round you! What could be better than that!' He quoted two brothers he knew — one worked in the valley below, and the other in a factory in the nearby town: and when you compared their faces, he said, it was like comparing a piece of chalk with a plump, ripe fruit! And in the end that would all be paid for, in disease, and poor human stock. Food supplies would deteriorate, in quantity and in quality, as the unhealthy factory-produce replaced the natural one. The countryside had to be made exciting, he said, and unfortunately a government of robbers and liars was incompetent to do anything except line its own pockets. Don Amingo then turned to us and, quoting the name of a high government official, said, 'Now there's a good man. A real Christian, with some excellent ideas!' at which the other priest nodded ironically, with a little twinkle in his eye, and said with a laugh, 'The biggest liar of all!'

As we got into Don Amingo's tiny car ~~to go back~~ again he watched us calmly, his arms folded, a slight satisfied smile on his lips. ~~Who was~~ the better priest? If we were in trouble would Don Amingo save us? He lives under the thumb of a shrewish sister. ~~He gets a puppy-dog from Pietro and then complains that his sister shouts at it brutally and so he will have to give it back. Could he stand alone? One can never tell.~~ He gets a puppy-dog from Pietro and then has to give it back to him because the sister disapproves would the other man give better

He is so diff from our meek Dr Amigo.

~~guidance, though keeping close to the fields?~~ ~~At~~ ~~In that~~ ~~moment~~ ~~when~~ that he When he talked about how marvellous it was to have the sun above one, he gave me a sense of religion, or God at least. whereas our man makes it a dim spiritual affair. But the peasants talk better of our man than they do of the other. INSERT (A) ~~But they never~~ have go ~~to church~~. Perhaps they really dislike the other man because he makes the church real: and seems to suggest that God is actually possible, ~~and~~ not a ~~an~~ ~~acceptable~~ mild concept.

We have a priest about the government, they close the stable door when the horses have ~~flown~~ bolted.

On the way back our priest murmured, 'Yes, it's true what he says. The government have a plan for the country now, but it's too late. We needed it long ago. Now everybody has left. You see, there are no amusements in the country. ~~They can't have~~ No television, cinemas — often ~~they have~~ no electricity.' And he added sadly, 'Even for country priests it's boring. There really isn't enough for us to do, you see!'

~~Insert (A) from P. 89.~~

~~It~~ The same evening, a long argument with ~~Pietro~~ Gianni. The night was stormy and rather cold. It began by his asking a question. He'd been talking to one of the peasants ~~sometimes~~ employed ~~a day or two~~ by ~~Gina~~ Gigi, who ~~[illegible]~~ claimed that the white smoke ~~that comes~~ from the chimney at St. Peter's, when a new pope has been elected, means that God has made his choice. ~~at the time of the election~~ ~~of the pope becomes white miraculously~~. At first we didn't understand him and ~~Pietro~~ Gianni repeated ~~[illegible]~~ ~~through~~ the stages of the argument carefully: 'First, when a pope dies a new pope ~~was~~ is elected. Right?' 'Yes.' 'Well, then, cardinals ~~came~~ come to Rome to elect him.' 'Yes.' 'And when they voted their papers ~~were~~ are put in a stove and burned: if the smoke outside, ~~that~~ which can ~~could~~ be seen from St. Peter's Square, ~~was~~ is black, ~~it means that~~ this means the election ~~wasn't~~ has been successful, in other words, that the cardinals ~~hadn't~~ haven't agreed on who should be pope. Correct?' 'Yes.' 'Very well, then, did Christ do the selecting or the cardinals?' And he stopped. Here we were ~~completely~~ puzzled again. He tried ~~again~~ once more. 'Who exactly elects the pope?' he asked. 'The cardinals,' we said. 'Yes, but suppose three cardinals nominate one man, five another, ten ~~[illegible]~~ another — what happens then?' 'Well,' we said, 'no pope ~~was~~ is elected: ~~it means~~ they couldn't agree among themselves. And they ~~had~~ have to

agree before the new pope ~~could~~ can be made! 'So the pope is made by the cardinals?' Pietro asked. 'Why, yes, of course!' ~~this was what we'd just said~~! 'And not by God!' he went on. 'But how by God!' we asked. ~~We were still far from understanding.~~ 'Put it another way,' he said: 'how ~~was~~ does the black smoke ~~made~~ come?' 'By paper,' we answered, 'the election paper.' 'And the white smoke?' ~~the same: by other election papers.~~ 'By straw, to show the election was successful!' ~~'So~~ 'So what makes ~~made~~ the difference between the black and white smoke is? Different materials — like ~~sorts of paper~~ ~~So a~~ different kinds of paper?' ~~we deliberately put in when the new pope had been elected?~~ 'Yes.' 'Ah!' Pietro said, 'To see, I was right! I argued with ~~this~~ that man for an hour this morning. I didn't say I knew he was wrong, I just said I thought he was ~~wrong~~ that I couldn't believe him? And it seems ~~he~~ I was right. ~~Now~~ 'Consider,' he said that when God came across the name he wanted for the pope he turned the black smoke into white miraculously, and then everybody ~~knew~~ understood what pope he wanted.' ~~Apparently~~, The peasant had got very heated about it, he said, and told him that there was absolutely no doubt of the matter — his father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather before him had all said the same: and no question of the face had ever entered his head before, until ~~Pietro~~ Gianni uttered his doubt.

We then, somehow, got on to politics. He said that the agreement just made by America, Russia and England not to have any more atomic tests was a great step forward. I said that it wasn't a step at all: it was ~~first~~ a hurried agreement to try to stop Europe (really, Germany) making a stock of bombs and thus threatening the division of world-power between America and Russia; ~~secondly, it~~ that is, it was ~~was an~~ a desperate attempt to freeze the present balance and prolong the political power inherent in possessing bombs. ~~More than this, it~~ Also, it only put a paper what facts had already accomplished: namely, that both America and Russia had more bombs than they needed, and that further production of them was wasteful and meaningless; and, secondly, that further atomic tests were equally useless, since no quicker or more effective system of blowing

most areas of the earth
~~of the entire world (and perhaps worlds besides)~~ could be devised. Therefore,
nothing was lost militarily or politically by either side in the agreement;
and they could gained by ~~the Russian publicity~~ ~~all not the war~~ ~~that told them not~~
being called saviours, ~~all over the world~~, in an Orwellian publicity as ever
existed under Nazism. Both the men who had reached their agreement
had been responsible only a year before for atomic explosions ~~which caused~~ more than they now said
that explosions caused unknown damage to crops, atmosphere, ~~and human~~ ~~pigs~~
unpredictable damage perhaps for generations to come. ~~and~~ children. ~~Gradily~~ ~~had~~ ruined their
political advantage then to stop the tests and their humanity ~~which is~~ now much publicised,
was then absent. Gianni ~~Pietro~~ ~~said to him~~ said to him that my disarmament was (and, to
which I said, this was no disarmament; that if anything it simply confirmed
the possession of the armaments in the hands of two powers, exclusively ~~and~~ I added that
in fact there would be no disarmament, and this would be quite understood between the
two powers. But Pietro Gianni insisted on using the word disarmament, and we (or
to a kind of deadlock. I ~~told~~ called him ~~to see~~ a dupe of publicity ~~the world~~
people, and ~~forgot~~ reminded him that we of these saviours of mankind had only a ~~last~~ few years existed
~~no~~ 21 bombs of the most dangerous air-polluting kind in 21 successive
days simply as an act of propaganda. I said that disarmament of atomic
weapons would begin as soon as missiles were ready for war-use: at this
Gianni Pietro ~~let~~ let me a yell and a laugh, and cried, 'Surely you don't believe that
missiles are for military use!' I asked him what he thought they were for
and he said, 'To destroy and the planet!'

Then he was going he said, 'At least, with these atomic tests
we, our weather will improve,' and I said, 'Don't be so sure the bad weather
is caused by missiles, and will get worse.'

Moreover, I said, + there are few ~~few~~ they needed to carry out, the underground
few, + this would continue so that in fact it was no agreement at all. Presumably,
when the underground tests were no longer
needed, we should be told
This makes me believe even more than the decision to
with the common people, to awaken from the publicity. what untold damage they had
done, too.

+

The storms have gone and the weather is clear and sparkling
as it usually is ~~a month or more later~~ much later in the year. There are supposed to have been earth-
tremors in Tuscany, the Romagna and Emilia, but we felt nothing. Somebody
told me that we the sea he watched three separate storms from a hill,
close to each other, like clouds with dozens of fireworks inside them.

+

The last few days have been full of threshing, like a strange noisy beast ~~the sound of~~ ~~like a strange noisy beast~~ ~~like a strange noisy beast~~ ~~like a strange noisy beast

~~is poor because of the continual wet and cold.~~

~~Pietro~~ Gianni complains what the 'heavy' meal in the evening time twice a day ~~time is the~~ a special meal at midday consists of chicken and pasta, with steak n veal ~~is served twice a day~~; ~~and he~~ can't stand so much meat, he says. 'Stanco, stanco!' ~~The~~ He's tired. ~~And~~ He throws himself down ~~on the bed~~ on one of the divans & promptly falls ~~he fell~~ asleep, ~~where he was~~, like a child. ~~sitting~~ ~~It is so restful that the visits~~ ~~every time~~ a drawing of Pietro when he gets in from the ~~from the~~ courtyard with a restless anguish ~~restless~~ ~~with a restless~~ Every hour or so ~~while~~ he ~~the~~ with a restlessness that is nearly anguish ~~anguish~~ his mother calls him 'Vagabondo' and whenever he speaks to her says ~~the answer~~ angrily: 'Che 'Madonna cake! Che vuoi, ~~!~~ più!' 'What the devil do you want now?' Last week he told us ~~told us~~ triumphantly that he'd found a job driving a truck to Florence and back for several days, and that we wouldn't be seeing him. He had to leave ~~before lunch~~ the next day. ~~next day~~ But at half-past six the following morning he was in the courtyard again ~~yard~~ - the truck had 'broken down'. ~~It had.~~ When would it be ready? I asked him Sunday. ~~On Sunday that turned to Monday, the day after that~~ Monday. Sometimes he goes for hours to Lucca in the valley, talking, sitting. I walked with him to Acl'Capasquale yesterday and, going down the path to the road, in the blinding sunlight, he held my hand up under his - ~~we~~ before walking ~~held up~~ ~~my arm and put his hand under mine~~ like a king and queen ~~like a king~~ in a Tudor play, and ~~we walked along in a~~ ~~We did the~~ ~~walk like this~~; roaring with laughter. His imagination is quick, subtle; ~~and~~ he has a sense of drama. Sometimes our conversations are fiercely hilarious, so wild and fantastic, that we seem to have rehearsed it beforehand, ~~to strike off a certain~~ and yet, We imitate indignation, anger, stupidity, ~~and~~ ~~while~~ talking complete nonsense.

INSERT C

The Sumerians and the Babylonians believed that we came on the earth to serve the gods and get them their food. What do we serve?

+

Our monarchy, and thus our aristocracy, and thus our society,

came to us through France.

'Our literature came to us through France. Caxton printed only two books, Chaucer, and Gower, that were not translations from the French' (Dr. Johnson).

+

Yesterday figured through a book of pictures – the terrifying atrocities of the Germans in the last war. I have seen all this in every German face, even in those who suffered bitterly from the atrocities.

+

The collapse of American power in Europe will mean first and foremost the moral collapse of western Germany and the moral resurgence of eastern Germany. Then (on will see what riches unattended by forethought bring.

+

The Russians pillaged and starved the east of Germany; the Americans took an ~~equally~~ terrible revenge on the west by buying its soul.

+

Nearly every day is dull again, with thin, light falls of rain. There isn't thunder any more, but the land broods under the thick sky. We went to the sea yesterday and along the narrow strip of the coast there was bright sunlight all the time. Now there is the annual fuss of ferragosto: August 15th is called the feast of the Assumption, but the time belongs to the people, to their paganism; it brings out a strange, ancient restlessness. Best to be in the cities at this time, as they are empty and silent.

+

The unbeliever always takes a very solemn attitude towards religion. Half the Reformers believed in nothing: they only hated imagination.

+

The atomic agreement says there will no longer be experiments in the stratosphere, the air or the water: only under the earth (where Russia and America need them). Will there be fewer earthquakes?

+

Have the atomic experiments left us with terrible diseases,

Some reading on the Reformation: Henry VIII's divorce

→ 'The more hospitals the worse,' Fish said.

The Reformers were against vestments, 'dainty singing', candles.

+

Money, too, is ~~always~~ against imagination.

+

Germans have the difficulty in childhood of not being able to identify themselves with others. ~~After doing something wild they say, 'What have I done?'~~ 'This is the work of years for them.

+

A German can wake up after the squandering of six million marks, the massacre of six million people, and ~~say~~ ask with a moving simplicity, 'What have I done?' (He said it so often in childhood)

+

America is the climax of Reform: hence the spirituality.

+

One of the Reformers in Henry VIII's time advocated that the priests be stripped naked, whipped in the market-places and ~~'Hes wed'~~ then (~~as a punishment~~) 'wed'. As the final punishment — intimacy! *

~~All Reform begins with horror of sex~~ intimacy.

+

The Reformers were against praying for the dead.

+

Never trust a spiritual man: a man should throb with clear desires.

+

Tuve is the first crisp touch of autumn: it makes us think of Rome - the glow of lights in the early morning. When it rises the sun shows bright red trees in the wood above us: they have turned quite suddenly in the last few weeks. Yet this should be the hottest time of the year.

Yesterday we sat ~~on the top~~ on a hill nearby and watched threshing going on in a courtyard below, the same machine that came to us a week ~~recently~~ ago. People fed the chute with sheaves in the same unresting

now in their first years of incubation? No one can say 'no' to this question.

INSERT C Continued

More reading: (abt the Reformers)

Henry VIII's first act was to seize the hospitals, and having thrown out the poor give them to rich men. That was the end of hospitality.

Utopia doesn't mean ideal society, but society run on principles.

The French never had their Reformation. Perhaps ~~hence, they had~~ they saw you could easily tear the heart out of a country, whatever you gained.

The English Reformation swept away God and substituted money. ~~After his death, Henry VIII left only that to be served, every man was now alone with his conscience~~ It took the endowments and hospitals away from corrupt priests and gave them to corrupt laymen.

After that you couldn't throw yourself on any man's mercy: the chill, friendless streets of Newcastle, London, Ohio... Each man was alone with his conscience.

The Greek Orthodox Church is more intelligent, nearer to Christ. But it has been dispersed. In Russia it has lost thirty thousand churches. There are bitter problems here: again of power.

Money is the hard currency needed when the invisible currency ~~of spirit~~ has gone.

Protestants and money-makers needed each other and leaned on each other, in both England and Germany: it was like an evil love-affair.

Supplication for the Beggars, a book of reform by Simon Fish, advocating the confiscation of church property, got to Henry VIII through the rich men round him.

'Progress' comes from Judah: the belief that God had called Israel as the redeemer of the world, and was unfolding His plan of salvation slowly.

We inherited this through Christ.

We inherited so much that was in contradiction to him.

Sumer, then Babylon, then Israel had their versions of ~~beliefs about~~ the creation of the earth, the Flood; stories of ~~a covenant of laws received through from a god~~ immaculate birth, paradise, resurrection, & original sin ~~[illegible]~~

The Babylonian Adapa was a man like ~~the~~ Adam, the first creature: he ~~was the son of the god of wisdom, and~~ broke the wing of the South wind in anger, and was ordered before the high god, who offered him immortal life; but Adapa took his own father's advice and refused. He remained mortal.

The Sumerians believed ~~said~~ that the gods had created six types of human creature, out of clay: and a seventh that was weak in mind and body.

The ~~[illegible]~~ sense of an original sin gathered ~~[illegible]~~ with time.

We find St. John's Apocalypse unpalatable because while it is in the New Testament it belongs in spirit to the Old. We have to have a literal story. ~~[Examine]~~

The Old Testament is the story of the unfolding of God's plan for Judah: from the creation to the fall.

The four evangelists (the New Testament) wrote the story of Christ in this tradition, ~~as a mark of their authority, to show that Christ was a fulfilment of Old Testament prophecies and to show that Christ was a fulfilment of Hebrew prophecy gave the Passion full historical authority,~~ and tried to give the Passion full historical authority by showing that it fulfilled Hebrew prophecies. Hence, the suggestion of immaculate birth (in Matthew), Gabriel's appearance to Mary to tell her of the birth of the Messiah (in Luke); as well as the resurrection of Christ (in various versions).

The Old Testament ~~flavour~~ tone surrounds the life of Christ but hardly touches ~~its~~ the actual events ~~in~~ of the gospels: it concerns mostly ~~the birth~~ events

way, as if hurried by the sound of the machine. It suddenly seemed grotesque to us that all the young should choose the bad air of factories, and the deafening hammer of machines, to this extraordinary landscape of plains and hills, under a sparkling ~~cloudless~~ sky.

It was like an English sun, being clear and cool, and the hills had the breathlessly exciting look of English downs, with farms hugged round with trees far below.

The ~~threshing~~ machine went on pounding with its strange hoarse cough, while the women hurried to and fro from the house: one could see their excitement, the unusual way they hurried. The stack was almost finished; the straw was piled into a neat stack the size of a barn. Then the machine ~~will~~ slowly died down, ~~and~~ the cables and chutes were dismantled, ~~and~~ the tractor with the ~~whose~~ engine that had worked the ~~chutes~~ cables was ~~the~~ drawn away. The meal would now be ready in the dark house, and instead of a glowing, memorable supper, that the children would always remember with awe, they would all eat in silence, or with grunts, smacking their lips and reaching for bread, ~~without an excuse me,~~ and when the last mouthful was down and the cigarettes were lit, that would be the end, and they would ~~all~~ rise and go. ~~There is no dream in Italy.~~

+

We could easily believe that Christ was illegitimate, that Mary made a mistake before marriage. But we must believe so much that seems to have been made up by men. What a pity that Christ couldn't have come out of intimacy, a real act of love between a man to believe it. The immaculate conception is difficult to grasp: we have to close our minds to a woman. In himself, he ~~had so much of that~~ was all intimacy. And in nearly everything he breathed. Yet we are seeking forward with our minds. The rending of the veil of the temple after Christ's death, the earthquake, the opening of the graves, the resurrection, his appearing again to the women, to the disciples: they ~~are~~ all stand in the way.

Forgiveness. ~~But we must stay in the grip of~~ We have to choose between him or original sin.

The four ~~gospels~~ evangelists disagree about all these things. But About Christ ~~[illegible]~~ they never disagree.

before the birth and at the time of Christ's death (the darkness over the whole land for three hours, the rocks being rent by an earthquake).

I think Bach's St. Matthew's Passion is the most complete recapitulation of the Passion that we have, but it has perfect understanding in every detail.

I always feel a pause of disbelief at the rending of the veil of the temple, the opening of the graves: and the music is properly operatic, scenic there.

The need to Reform comes from these contradictions.

Christ was our first release from original sin. Yet we inherited the story of Adam (that is, original sin) through him.

Yet The Reformers were the children of the doctrine of original sin; they were really good Catholics pressing doctrines home to their logical and ugly consequences.

Original sin is the sin of intimacy.

~~Christ said, 'Ye are gods'~~

The description of the crucifixion as prophesied and ordained and chosen by God, in the terms of the old Testament, gradually robbed it of achievement for us. We ceased to see what the Orthodox call Christ the Victor.

Christ has been called 'the second Adam', who reversed the error in Adam's fall. But By being he was quickly described as 'the son of God', and of immaculate birth; by being withdrawn from men, Christ's his achievement for them was robbed of its reversed human marvel.

These two thousand years were Christ's slow victory over Judah, and his vindication of Judah as the redeemer.

The resurrection is a great light which the Orthodox have kept in its first blaying moment, and which we have lost.

St. Augustine wrote, in treating original sin, that unbaptized babies are consigned to the everlasting flames of hell. Heaven, hell, purgatory — how do we know? No one knows. God is the sum of all we cannot know

Through the Gospels we inherited the Old Testament; through Constantine, Judah. First the doctrine, then the society.

Our dog is pregnant and we find the cause is Livio's hunter, which broke its chain when she was on heat some weeks ago. But he denied it at the time. With a clear, wondering face he said, 'No, no! My dog's been on the chain all night!' Dino calls him a 'birbante' — wretch, with a laugh.

~~Today is clear again, like October, with sharp winds.~~ Last night, while the sky over us was perfectly clear and the crickets throbbed calmly, there were continual flashes from the direction of the coast, so bright that they lit up the roadway as if it was full moon. When they ceased for a moment the darkness seemed uncannily dense. There wasn't a sound of thunder, not the slightest distant rumble. It was like continuous fireworks along the whole length of the coast. Neither of us had seen anything like it. We were walking back from Sergio's house, and the path was lighted for us the whole way. At the same time, on the other side of the clear sky overhead, there was a storm over Florence, a single dark cloud perched in the air and flashing intermittently.

It was clear that the sea-storm was drawing inland fast, but it took nearly two hours to reach us. The silent flashes became brighter, so that we could see the wooded slope outside our bedroom window under a continuous silver light. Then the crickets stopped, suddenly, just a moment before the soft rain came. There was the first rumble of thunder, but it seemed muffled, as if high in the air, behind clouds: and this was the nature of the flashes, too — they were 'summer lightning', diffused and glowing. There were no sharp crashes, no crackling or reverberating ~~so that the whole house shook~~ as in the other storms recently. The rumbles got nearer and nearer, until they were almost

In Rome I thought what the first years of Xianity, ~~early Xianity,~~
looking up a few of my books. Constantine ...

INSERT

The sense of being more punctilious than the people, more righteous, ~~more suffering, more~~ ~~than~~ more hardworking and more responsible enlightened — that is, at the intimate superior sense ~~feelings~~, that ~~ties~~ lies at the root of the moral society — is basically self-disgust, and goes hand in hand with the feeling that we are less than the people, being looked down on etc.

The feeling people have that there is something similar between the modern American & the modern Russian comes from the fact that both belong to the extreme moral society, the one with a mainly Puritan root, the other with a mainly German one (Hegel, Marx). Both are gripped in a moral system that saps the intimate energies as fast as it tries to use them.

overhead, with the flashes going on irrespective of them, and then they passed inland. There was suddenly an avalanche of rain, the windows swung open, the wind whistled, doors banged. As suddenly it was calm again. The rumbling was no longer heard, and at the moment when everything was safe ~~again~~ the crickets began to chirp again.

+

~~Hapley~~ Reading after Constantine When the Emperor Constantine was suddenly converted to Christ on his way through France in 312, ~~the new Christian empire came into being.~~ ~~He became the first vicar of Rome, he gave the Roman empire to~~ ~~the Roman empire was ended.~~ to speak. But he saw the dangers: twelve years later he moved the capital of the empire to Constantinople, named after him; Rome, he said, was too much stained by paganism. The attempt to make a moral society was there from the beginning.

+

The Sumerians said that God decreed the Flood because men made too much noise: a nice touch.

+

Byzantium was an attempt to create the new Christian society ~~empire~~ against a background of conversion and not of paganism: ~~hence Constantine's shift to Constantinople~~ Orthodox religion has kept this quality ever since. But it succumbed first to Islam and in our day to Marxism. communism.

+

But Constantine took his paganism with him: the emperor at Byzantium was the 'vice-regent' of God, really ~~and clearly led to the~~ the first pope. ~~But did this save Christendom? We turned made Christian society, which had to repeat Judas.~~

+

Byzantium was another attempt at civilisation. Was Rome's strength that it wasn't?

Start

+

Again: a civilisation is always in time.

+

The first complete Reformed society was Victorian England. Hardly a trace of intimacy was left, after over 300 years of protestantism. The buildings, roads, even the churches had the same bustling but hollow public look.

But Society can never have a moral end.

+

Societies serving a moral end (Victorian England, America, communism) always collapse through failure of (individual) energy.

INSERT

RUSSIA/AMERICA

+

Energy is always individual.

Was the Etruscan glory that the moral end lay in themselves, not outside, in time?

+

Christ's mission was not for time but for the creature (individual). It was not to castigate intimacy but absolve it.

↓

Christ was our rescue from time: and we relapsed into it through paganism, and a kind of new Judah.

↓

Judah meant the ~~religious~~ moral society.

+

The Moral ~~Religious~~ society (like Judah) is only possible in the clan, the family, the tribe. Thrown open, it ~~becomes~~ has to be Reformed, as we are

↓

But there was no other way: ~~the other way~~ an alternative was Byzantium, ~~[illegible]~~, an attempt at civilisation; the great schism between the churches is only a statement of the ~~poses the~~ contradiction (between Christ and ~~we are inherited~~ the story of the Fall)

↓

The Reformed society, or the society with a moral end, is not an attempt at civilisation. The ~~latter~~ Civilisation is a kind of gala, to celebrate. The former is the embodiment of an idea, and the detronement of intimacy.

↓

An attempt at civilisation is an attempt to enthrone intimacy (for all time). Both attempts (at enthronement or detronement) are doomed to fail.

↓

The power of Judah was the moral end that lay in each of the children, natural and inherited; the failure (or victory through Christ) was to the extent that she began to serve a collective moral end, against continual invasion. (whichever you look at it)

↓

A collective moral end is an end in time: it awaits the unfolding of the future. — this could become the possession of anybody, which Christ made it.

↓

It then ~~became~~ becomes the possession of anyone: which Christ ~~made it~~.

↓

We are the moral God's end, in ourselves.

↓

Christ was saying

The marvel lies in ourselves. ~~There is so little to do.~~ Well, this was understood by the Humanists, & captured – with pagan overtones – in the Renascence.

After that

The strength of Italy stopped: is that she is Unreformed: this is why millions flock to her every year.

She wasn't Reformed. She was kept as she was – which is partly her strength today – the reason why millions flock to her, because she is un-Reformed.

~~Both~~ Unreformed and Reformed societies lie in the same decadence.

The renascence was a throwback to paganism. Only Michelangelo won through.

When in 800 Leo III suddenly put the imperial crown on Charlemagne's head, in the church of St. John the Lateran, he made the church the title-giving power. Charlemagne was annoyed but he couldn't go back on it.

~~Unlike the Greeks, the first Roman Christians used not the~~ The Christians in Rome, unlike those in Greece, used not the pagan temples for worship but the basilicas, that is, the ancient lawcourts. These were rectangular buildings with two columns of ~~or~~ pillars and a semicircular apse: and these became the form of our churches. Christ became the new Law.

Monasteries came into being after Constantine's conversion: that is, now that the persecution of Christians ceased, ~~the martyrdom became the organised austerities &~~ organised austerities replaced martyrdom. These were the most intimate efforts at reform: self-reform.

~~Two or three days in Rome: we took Pietro with us.~~

A man can achieve nothing unless he withdraws.

Perhaps

I mean by the attempt at civilisation the attempt to baptise society. Rome only baptised men. ~~Perhaps~~ That was her strength.

More slight earth-tremors, near Foggia.

~~We had~~ We took Gianni to Rome for two or three days ~~[illegible]~~ We started at ~~[illegible]~~ soon after dawn, in clear weather. The valley was ~~[illegible]~~ just

waking up, and the sunlight stole through the bushes and trees at a low angle. Only that morning had he decided to come with us. He had spent all day before trying to decide: his mother said, 'Go! What's the problem?' but he couldn't make up his mind. When he went to sleep he decided, 'If I wake up at the right time tomorrow I'll go — if not, fate doesn't want me to!' He woke at the stroke of five, and jumped out with a cry, 'I'm going!' He put on a white shirt and his best winter suit, which serves for summer as well; and he left the house without a scrap of luggage, not even a razor. I heard his long whistle as he came down the path and jumped up too. We got everything together quickly, a suitcase, two fiaschi of wine, some fruit and cheese for the journey, and drove off a few minutes after Gigi arrived to open the stall. At the sea the sky was clear and hot, and long files of traffic were going north, after the ferragosto holiday. Gianni sang and joked, and played with the dog until he was bored, then fell asleep quietly, his brow without a line, his lips in the slightest of Etruscan smiles, as if gaying at something pleasant with his eyes closed. The sea was an astonishing colour, a flashing emerald, and the surf was brilliant like white petals that suddenly appeared and rolled into the sea again. I wondered how Gianni would seem to us in Rome: the city puts everything so plainly.

Gradually the fresh northern light gave way to the deep, intimate Roman glow that is always like the reflection of an enormous copper gong in the sky. At Santa Marinella, an hour from Rome, I foolishly suggested that we should eat at a restaurant instead of diving in and arriving home hungry. We chose a tiny trattoria on a square just off the road, with an awning that made its wooden tables and chairs seem inviting for a moment. When we glanced inside we knew what was coming: there was an air of dirt and cunning, enough to stop one eating for a twelvemonth,

~~[illegible]~~ The traffic roared by on the road, which cut straight through the resort, blackening and cracking the red surface that used to look pretty, five or so years ago. The shopkeepers complain if there's a threat to divert traffic off the central roads, so we are all held up to ransom to the money-mad: how little has changed since the before the war; the trouble with that society was supposed to be that it was laisser-faire, but if this isn't laisser-faire I'd like to know what is. We sat down at an outside table, having committed ourselves to eating before we really knew what was happening. ~~taken the atmosphere in.~~ On the other side of the main road we could see a pleasant, clean restaurant with white table-cloths and a blue awning ~~that made everything look cool and intimate~~. It would have cost more, and the food ~~may~~ might have been no better; but at least they'd made a ~~little~~ effort to ~~[illegible]~~ help our need to dream...

The boy came and we put in our order. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni had to have his plate of sphaghetti, and we chose salad, which ~~at one time meant a~~ ~~some~~ even a year ago in Italy still meant a bowl of tomatoes and lettuce and chopped basil and mint, ~~but now means to~~ and is now half of a tomato neatly sliced, sitting unsteadily on a faded leaf. We got our half-tomato, and ~~Pietro's~~ Gianni's sphagetti al sugo — ~~apparently~~ a 'meat' sauce — arrived. His plate looked inviting and he made a satisfied grunt as he dug in with his fork and spoon to mix it: but disillusion ~~awaited and~~ came the sauce turned to a watery mixture in which there were bits of broiled tomatoes but no meat whatsoever; ~~at least~~ there was one tiny ~~ball of~~ meat-ball, the size of a farthing, looking as if it had been put there ~~with~~ as an ironical gesture. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni said, 'I could do better myself! I'm just throw a few tomatoes in a pan!' He tried his wine — we had ordered a quartino, to see what hell's brew they'd produce — and made a face. ~~It was~~ The usual chemical stuff, he said: the colour of piss, ~~a dark yellow~~, with a strong peppery taste and the rather anaesthetic ~~sensation~~ touch of pure alcohol. I took a sip, then went round the back of the place and spat it out on the road: even then the taste clung to my mouth.

As it was a sea-resort we chose fish, and saw the fish

before it was cooked. It looked fresh enough, and was probably not more than two or three days old. ~~And~~ We had it grilled, so that as little was done to it as possible. ~~There wasn't the tiniest item of food about which one could be sure:~~ The oil for the salad was clear and light like the ~~fake olive oil that comes from~~ is said to ~~be made~~ come on massive scale, from machine-oil waste and animal fats, going through an elaborate system of refinement. Only the tomato, perhaps, was unadulterated, and ~~we~~ here was only ~~got~~ half of that. ~~each.~~ The fish when it came tasted all right, ~~if not delicious~~ but the scales had been scraped perfunctorily, and I wondered while I ate it whether ~~it had~~ the thing had been soaked in some mysterious preserving chemical, which would account for the strange mixture of sensations it produced, half-way between being not quite fresh and being quite too fresh to be natural; ~~and~~ perhaps it was the rank oil ~~that~~ they'd almost certainly ~~had~~ poured over it. I often wonder whether ~~all~~ these tricks and guises that the shops and restaurants go in for now, getting their supplies cheap from wholesale firms (everything from fake-butter to cheese made from bonemeal) is really cheaper than producing real food yourself. ~~For everything~~ There is a ~~cheap way~~ cheap trick you can play on almost any food-item: a powder to make your ice-cream out of, without milk or eggs; ~~a firm to supply wine at a third of the little less wholesale price;~~ a bleach to make the bread look white; spaghetti made with everything but flour, fettucine chemically coloured, fake-wine, fake-oil, fake-butter, fake mineral water — an endless repertoire that covers nearly every known food, and ~~rendering it either positively harmful or at best null. But foods are~~ rarely null: ~~we have to provide~~ our digestive organs with some of the means to digest ~~them~~ with, and if this dresses come in ~~with the food as it dresses, for instance, with most of the white bread people eat, for instance, the effect is of work done for nothing; and the liver has to cope, robbed of its proper resources, of the chemical poisons that come in, too.~~ with the food the effect isn't null at all.

Pietro Grassi drank the wine, ate the spaghetti and even told the boy that the fish was good, though he told us who the boy had gone that it had made him feel sick. The

bread that had gone on with it was hard and dry. And we paid more than we would have done for three-course meal at the best restaurant in Siena. The owner came out — looking the part, his skin parched and sallow from over-drinking, his eyes evil and dull — and asked us if the dog under our table ate meat; when we told him yes he lugged out a thin uncooked cutlet, apparently too rotten even for a customer, and threw it on the ground in front of her, seeing he wouldn't go near the dog. 'Are you afraid?' Cristiani asked him with a smile, 'Yes! Yes!' the man said in his husky wine-voice, 'I've never had faith in dogs or cats, for that matter! I never go near them. Yet?' he went on, starting to return to his dark, slovenly kitchen, 'I know they're better than human beings. Cristiani son tutti cattivi!' — all human creatures are bad! Well, A bad man's philosophy!

A family — grandmother, mother and two girls — came and sat at the next table: but they only drank 'lemonade' — that is, saccharine plus chemical colouring and flavouring. The place began to fill up. Three Germans came: one of them, a young woman, practised her neat Italian on the waiter, enunciating every word with a clarity that denied the spirit of the language; and after she'd put in her professional order she added, 'E vino' — a rash thing to ask for in Italy nowadays, without specifying what kind of wine you want. The couple with her looked perplexed. The man, thin and tall, jigged his knee up and down nervously: he was so clearly in a foreign world — 'la bella Italia'. La bella Italia would give him a nice headache after lunch and perhaps a stomach-ache, too: but he would put it down to 'too much oil' in Italian cooking, perhaps.

The millions of tourists have made almost any speculation along the Mediterranean coast profitable: and now that the tourists are dwindling, the madness

and the mess — as always — are left over for the Italians. They have the money and the cars now, they can imitate the foreigners, they can even go to their splendid resorts: but, as always, it's too late. ~~In the last few years~~ The last Italian simplicity has collapsed.

~~As the foreigners did was bring the modern world:~~ ~~So that there~~ is there is the same now the ~~as much~~ publicity-food and publicity-comfort, coloured nicely and with the right finish, as there is everywhere else; only in Italy it is more dangerous, because ~~the~~ the Reformed conscience is lacking; Italians ~~people~~ don't mind poisoning each other, on the whole. So you hear stories going round the shops — 'Butter has been withdrawn round here — a family died'; 'There ~~aren't~~ won't be any more of that tinned meat till next week — it was a bad batch — some people are supposed to have died.' When ~~Livio~~ Paolo brings down his sick sheep, to be picked up for slaughtering, he always says, 'These are for tinned meat.' Boiling renders them harmless, ~~they~~ he says. And ~~they~~ he buys the tins ~~themselves~~ himself, for sauce on his pasta. The publicity makes it seem all right. Everybody else is doing it. They do it abroad. It's quicker. And there is something magical in the factory. It transforms, sterilises. It means "progresso", the ~~key~~ word on the lips of every peasant. Yet he will tell you himself that "il progresso" means ~~the~~ a fake and often ~~sometimes~~ ~~even~~ poisonous product, dressed up to glitter: he sees it happen, as the citizen doesn't. But he buys it just the same. That is the power of publicity.

And he pays more than he can afford: ~~he strikes and clamours for higher wages — to pay the cost of a worthless product~~ he has to pay for the publicity of false products — the television programmes and newspaper advertisements — while producing ~~the~~ real products himself! He clamours for higher wages in order to ~~do it~~ buy the false products. The publicists get richer and richer. They ~~can~~ put more and more money into the hands of the politicians who won't investigate matters too closely.

And we all supposed to have advanced beyond the middle ages!) Gianni says with a smile. In the middle ages people were duped by every peddler and charlatan who came their way. But they weren't in a permanent state of mesmerisation.

INSERT A

Gianni asks, could he write a book without a university-education? Who would correct it for him? Would he be able to sell it? Or could he paint pictures? Suppose he became a sculptor? Would he have to go to art-school? These things mean only making money for him. The Italian imagination wastes and fritters every moment enough powers to captivate the world, a whole continent! It is Italy's splendour and pain.

Suddenly five goats appear outside under the shade of the old cypress, brought down by one of the shepherds. Two of them are pure white. They stamp their pretty, obstinate feet. They frown through their hair and make their mildly petulant bleat. They are so pleased to meet each other – it seems some of them are strangers. They sniff each other pleasantly and the latest comer makes his 'How do you do?' to the others one by one; afterwards he does a charming mock-battle with them in turn; they spring up on their hind legs, half-turning in the air, and come down with a deep thud on their front paws and clap their horns together. Then they look at each other intimately as if to say, 'It's good to be here, isn't it!'

After we'd eaten our foul fish-meal at Santa Marinella we walked across the square, which was more deserted now in the noon-heat, and took a coffee at a bar. A child served us, his face mild and dreamy; and he produced one of the best coffees I've ever had. We smacked our lips afterwards and said simultaneously, 'That was worth all the money we've given to that villain across the road!'

We reached Rome in an hour and found our home cool and silent, behind closed shutters; also it seemed remarkably clean and neat after our farmhouse. Gianni looked round in a mild way; his first thought was to take off his jacket and hang it carefully in the wardrobe.

~~There is~~ the luxury of running, and even hot water; a lavatory which flushed, electric light which ~~comes~~ came on at a flick, and a telephone. It ~~all~~ ~~feels~~ felt like a pleasant game: something infinitely subtle, the fruit of long, intimate dreams over the centuries. ~~which have led us to these things~~

~~The terrace looks clean, too, with~~ the straw mats ~~without~~ over our terrace, shading it against the strong sun, were intact; ~~and~~ ~~all the plant~~ we'd massed all our potted plants ~~massed~~ at one end so that our neighbour ~~can~~ could water them from the terrace. But watering was hardly ~~necessary~~ needed this year: it rained avalanches a few days before we came, and the mud from the pots ~~is~~ was spattered everywhere. I put ~~Pietro~~ Gianni in my room, and we had an hour's rest, but the ~~unfamiliar~~ raising sound of the traffic below ~~with continual horns~~ kept me awake. The bed seemed marvellously soft; it was wonderful to be home, where ~~we'd planted~~ everything ~~ourselves, over the years.~~ was ours. I ~~layed~~ lay on the divan in the big room, picking books out of the shelves; then I made tea, joked with ~~Pietro~~ Gianni. He was quietly surprised at the number of books I had, especially in my own room, along three walls: he said, 'They must be worth a lot of money. How much, do you think?' And he made me calculate how much ~~the books had~~ they'd been worth ~~when~~ at the time of buying. ~~They were bought~~ He couldn't believe they were almost worthless now. They were commodities for him ~~the~~

In the evening we had a light meal, with the wine we'd bought from the ~~house~~ country. It seemed to clean our stomachs, and we smacked our lips. 'Never again!' we said. 'We'll never eat out again!' We took ~~Gino's~~ Grigi's wine down in long, swift draughts.

The dusk came early, a reminder of autumn. There was none of the usual heat: even with the carpet down the main room was cool. But the air was much heavier than in Tuscany: the Roman air slows and eases, ~~which makes the autumn and spring the pleasantest time of years~~ it exerts a heavy but strangely comforting pressure. And the light was quite different: the immense copper glow was behind everything. This was now Rome's best month in the year; ~~now~~ ~~because~~ the city ~~was~~ is deserted more or less; ~~and the streets weren't choked with cars~~: below, in our own street, there were even parking spaces. At its loveliest time, in September and October, the city will be stricken again: no more walking in the streets; the air will be thick with the stench of petrol and diesel-fumes; two traffic-jams

101. The man at the wood-shop in the corner said to me, 'It's finished now — Rome's finished. 10 years ago we thought we were hard up, but we were much better off, if we'd but known it!' Everybody is 'for himself'; and of course, in a city crammed with cars, that weakness of the Italian psychology

a day;

When it was dark we went to our trattoria and found the old faces. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni was introduced, and I was surprised to see how well he fitted in. It had been the same in the afternoon: he had met everyone with the same easy and curious equality, — the portiera, the woman at the latteria ~~and the~~ ~~corner~~ who always gives ~~us~~ the dog ~~half~~ cheese and biscuits, Sergio at the wineshop. Italian ~~usually~~ invariably meets Italian with a subdued snarl, but I notice they ~~seem to~~ respect ~~Pietro~~ Gianni at once: perhaps it is ~~the openness of his face~~ due to a certain northern cleanliness in his face; and he speaks loudly and clearly, with the touch of rhetoric which they ~~understand~~ ~~admire~~ admire. He and the owner of the trattoria, Giorgio, began talking about Rome. One thing I notice is that he has less gravity than the Romans. Everything is a bit of a joke for him (outside the hard labour of the fields) and he makes a slight smile when he advances any argument, as if it were a jest: but partly this is his clear and swift imagination, which skirts and flies over what other people have to grind their way slowly through. And, even so, I could see how he was adapting himself to Rome, in the dark courtyard of the trattoria, as we sat on the wooden table drinking Giorgio's red wine. 'The more I know about Rome the greater she seems!' Giorgio said, his sleepy, half-closed eyes flickering doubtfully. 'In ancient times anybody who wanted to come to Rome could — all they had to do was to pay the tribute, then they were free! Rome has always embraced people — taken them in — even enemies — even the people who've sacked and mined the city — she has converted them — changed them!' ~~They~~ He talked about Romulus and Remus, the first Etruscan kings, the emperors. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni said something about the wolf that mothered Romulus and Remus, and Giorgio shook his head and said, 'No — you don't want to believe these films!' He waved his hand in a deprecating way. 'It is possible that Romulus and Remus were brought up by a shepherd, to whom they'd been abandoned by their parents.' Giorgio gets all his information from the comic-strip magazines; this makes him feel superior to the films. He sits hunched over a table by the door of the trattoria

reading them nearly all day, except Tuesdays, when he goes to his father's house in the country and lies down to read them, holding them above him, in the same position for hours, while his wife gets the food ready. Anyway, the comic strips ~~they seem to~~ have filled him with a great sense of Rome, and a quite accurate one.

The seriousness in Gianni ~~Pietro~~ grew while we were in Rome. He punned and joked and played the fool ~~danced about~~ even more than he does at home, ~~in the country~~, but there was a new form in him. ~~Rome offers the only form that in Italy~~ I could see him using his eyes everywhere, and learning fast. I couldn't put my finger on it — ~~but~~ he was in the midst of a vast, glowing civilization for the first time, spell-bound; ~~daggled by the twinkling~~ lights; ~~and~~ it seemed to captivate him so much that it exhausted his nerves; he slept for hours, in the afternoon as well, slumped on the bed ~~in my room~~ like a soldier after a battle. And he was quietly helpful — with the washing-up, the shopping. I was aware again of Rome's stupendous presence, her power over people, through him. ~~that was part of the pleasantness of our return — we were serious again for a few days, the rest of Italy lies like a desert round her.~~

CONT, P. 102.

Insert A+

A young pig has arrived in the courtyard, his new home. He buries his head in the straw and won't look up for anyone: the journey in the truck, and the fact that he was castrated a little while before, have stricken and terrified him. He buries his head in a delicate and sorrowing way.

We daren't think what the animal-consciousness because it is ~~too~~ close to our own. We are frightened to think where the frontier exactly lies. With every bite of meat we swallow our consciences, as never before. There are things most of us wouldn't be witnesses of: the cruelties ~~cruelties~~ not so much of the death as the breeding. One day all this will be rationalised and made bearable to our scruples.

All young things — dogs, children — gravitate towards Gianni ~~Pietro~~. He tricks them, tickles them, jokes, laughs. Pablo's ~~Livio's~~ little niece weeps bitterly if anyone says, 'Gianni's ~~Pietro's~~ naughty!'

INSERT

NOTES FROM SIENA.

In the podere below the road you can feel the past, how the vines and the bamboo-stalks in ~~its tiny valley~~ the gully, and the mossy boulders standing in clover and grass, and the rough yellow paths that wind down from the house, used to lie there in exactly the same way, only included in people's lives, with the heat drenching everything, the sunlight golden and terracotta on the palazzo of Altapasquale, (for ~~and~~ centuries and centuries.) It only lies there like a reminder now, unowned, though still, in a desultory way, cultivated: like the garden belonging to an ancient ruin. It captivates you all the time, with every step you takes, ~~tagging me into the ancient~~ and has a different story to tell at each different time of the day — golden and sparkling and bright in the morning, mellow and still in the afternoon, cool and ~~even~~ secretive in the evening, with special silent messages from ages ago when the same one-bladed plough cut through the soil.

I can remember the same sensation ten years ago in the country near Rome, when the heat gripped the earth and vines in a silent and timeless power that one thought could never end. Little traffic came along the road then. The wine was real: I remember drinking real 'rasca', shaded by trees, at a wooden table close to the road. And on Sundays the countryside all around ~~came together~~ spirit lay in one unity: there was the sound of bells, and the heard people's voices; everything ~~seemed~~ way to be joined together mysteriously, ~~in one stillness~~, across miles of vineyard and orchard, in one stillness. But now there are bits and pieces of experience, ~~disposed and disjointed~~, and the earth lies there wondering what the next stage will be.

It makes me think that in ten or 20 years' time England

could be the ~~sanest~~ sanest country in Europe, if she chose, through having had the industrial madness 2 centuries ago, and knowing just what to avoid.

It must have been fired frantically
to have been so wide of the target

I noticed for the first time today that there are marks of schrapnel in our indoor staircase, which is made of stone — little chips on every step. I examined them and think that a machine-gun must have fired from the top landing — the chips all point to that. I remember one of my signallers coming from this village pale & trembling. He said there had been hand-to-hand fighting, Germans in one room, English in another. He stumbled into a courtyard & found 3 German playing cards — dead, almost unmarked. I can remember the farmhouses so clearly: the drawers pulled out — photographs, trinkets, spread all over the floor. I used to look through the photographs with fascination. There wd. be broken glass, upturned chairs, perhaps a broken cot. Somewhere near here, in a farmhouse, I remember dozing in a baby's

cor, my booted legs dangling over the end, before a battle was due to begin. ~~How hushed one is when one thinks of these things. What did it have to do with us?~~ Death painted the country wild, ~~vivid~~ colours. ~~Ze~~ They were her true colours, perhaps. ~~Perhaps Heurnal~~

There was a great gash in the roof and a chill wind blew through. I had a sickening sensation of fear in my stomach, so ~~permanent~~ usual now that I ~~wasn't~~ was hardly aware of it.

When an Italian shoots he takes revenge on ~~his~~ a ~~an~~ lifelong sense of being ineffectual. Fascism was that on a bigger scale.

+

I read about the Carthusians of the London Charterhouse who stood firm against Henry VIII; they were hung, quickly cut down and then disembowelled alive. While they were waiting for their turn to come they gave sermons to the crowd, advising loyalty to the king in all that was not against the honour of the church.

Bishop Fischer was ~~hung~~ beheaded and his body flung 'contemptuously', according to the King's orders, into a pit.

Henry VIII was a god for his people — even for the people he executed. We cannot imagine the degree of faith that made those brutalities possible. We English can never bring England to life again until we requite that suffering.

A

Industries — that is, the violent disinhistance of the ~~English~~ people from the land, and ~~their~~ their savage ~~exploitation~~ use, ~~of even~~ with their children too, in pits and mills — came naturally out of those events, as ~~the~~ German behaviour this century came naturally from Luther's violence. ~~The Germans have twice requited, this century, for their problems can only cease when they take account of this.~~

+

Pietro Gianni has disappeared for a few days. The explanation is that he ~~has~~ ~~found~~ got a job the truck at last ~~driving~~ he's driving a truckload of furniture to Sicily, with a spare driver. If he likes it he'll stay; ~~Angelo~~ Alberto his brother says. But I doubt if he will. Those are hard, gruelling hours leaning over a wheel, in the southern heat. But he will like the new faces, towns, the freedom.

He slipped away without saying anything. He says nothing about what he isn't proud of: a most Italian trait.

+

Our portiera ~~in Rome~~ told us that she bought a bottle of milk which even her stray cats wouldn't touch. After a day it became ~~a~~ green, almost transparent, ~~liquid~~ with a fatty layer at the top, like grey wax. I've noticed this waxy deposit in the Roman milk, ~~in Rome~~, too: sometimes it pours out with the milk in a long stream ~~that is~~ thicker than the liquid but not quite

the hunting season has started:

We were woken up ~~again~~ at dawn by the 'hunters'. ~~There is~~ nothing more ridiculous in Italy than these pale town-creatures ~~who~~ stumping about ~~in the countryside~~ ~~with~~ in rubber boots outside with yapping half-breed dogs. They're supposed to be teaching the dogs to point. But God knows how that can be done with mongrels, and in woods so thick that you can hardly walk through them, let alone sight a quarry. And they keep to the edge of the ~~wood~~ woods, near our house, ~~perhaps because~~ they're afraid of the hob-goblins, perhaps: ~~also~~, and they seems ~~I know the Italian hunter well enough to realise that what he~~ to wants ~~even~~ more than ~~a~~ prey, ~~is~~ an audience. They loves to stride along a tarred road with a gun slung over their shoulders, their boots — turned down at the ankle — making a solemn thudding noise. They pays twelve thousand lire a year for ~~his~~ their licence and is lucky to bag ~~one~~ a hare. In the Roman countryside he seems to be less ambitious — he shoots all the small birds he can see. For weeks now they have been preparing ~~[illegible]~~ 'capanne', calins, in the woods, to sit waiting for their prey when the shooting season begins: or perhaps they use them to eat and sleep in. The first Sunday ~~of the shooting season is~~ will be a pandemonium from dawn onwards, Gianni says. ~~The woods (not the middle, of the woods, which extend for twenty kilometres or so, because they might lose their way)~~ The woods ring with shots, while every creature remains safely under cover. ~~And~~ But even these ~~capanne~~ are safely near the road, though the woods ~~extend~~ are twenty or thirty kilometres deep. I think they like to keep our house in sight, to feel easy. They make extraordinary noises to their dogs, who join in the fame and squeal and yap professionally as if they were really doing something: ~~to~~ ~~fact~~ like their masters, they're just enjoying a run, after being cooped up all week. This 'hunting' has an undertone of fascism, and an inclination to both invariably ~~often~~ occurs in the same man. I've never met an Italian who could resist handling a fire-arm: ~~if it came within reach~~ it makes a bang (a great recommendation), it can ~~could~~ kill ~~somebody else~~ without risk ~~to self~~ or effort, ~~the slightest damage to you~~, and it endows ~~gives~~ a war-like and masculine appearance; the little women cover in the background, and the atmosphere is pregnant with danger and menace.

~~So~~ thick brown as to be solid – ~~rather~~ like ~~very thick~~ mucous, thoroughly disgusting.

INSERT → p.105

When we got back from Rome I walked ~~Pietro~~ Gianni up the hill to his ~~home~~ house, where we ~~find~~ found his mother and ~~Angelo~~ Alberto cutting forage in one of the barns. His mother was wrapped in a man's winter-jacket, though it was hot. She'd suffered, she told us, with hardly a glance at ~~Pietro~~ Gianni. All the way up he said, 'I wonder what she'll have to say? You'll have to tell her everything. I won't say a word!' Only when we were there did it transpire that, from their point of view, he'd come to Rome to look for a job: but in Rome he'd only let his imagination bask – he ~~didn't~~ hadn't mention a job once, except to say that you couldn't have a job in a place where you had no parenti, no home to go to. Only upstairs, in their kitchen, where ~~Pietro and I went for~~ we drank a glass of wine together, did his mother give him a long, silent, fierce and yet humourous gaze of welcome. 'You've got thinner!' she cried. 'Yes,' he told her, seizing on the possibility of sympathy, 'they eat so differently in Rome – they don't start the meal with minestrone as we do, therefore I got fat!' I told them how he had turned the telescope on the Pincio towards St. Peter's and picked up a blonde girl ~~with a wine~~ instead, ~~at which~~ and they laughed politely. ~~Pietro~~ Gianni sat dandling ~~Lino's~~ Paolo's niece on his knee, cooing at her and pointing out the various dogs and cats that came in and out. Then he took me across their fields and cut small marrows, beans, beet, tomatoes ~~for me~~ to take home. And his mother put two eggs into my hand. 'He's a birbante!' she shouted, flinging a glance at him. 'A wretch! He does nothing! I've suffered today – going to town, on foot, to get my pension! He's bad – everybody says it, even the cat!' ~~Angelo~~ Alberto stood gaying across at her with his head lowered, smiling: 'The doctor gave her some pills today,' he said; 'it's the stomach.' I told her, 'No, ~~Pietro's~~ Gianni's good – he's been good in Rome – you've a good, clever son!' At which she burst out, 'That only means he's turned you into a birbante as well!' At which everybody laughed. 'Why don't you take him?'

she asked. 'If you like him so much — employ him, take him into your home as a son!' 'He's too old!' I said, laughing. 'He's twenty-three!' 'What difference does it make? He's got good arms! You can get plenty of work out of him, if you like him so much! I don't want him!' And she and ~~Angel~~ Alberto went quickly back to their work in the barn, he turning the wheel while she fed the chute with bundles of ~~forage~~ grass. ~~like so many of the peasants~~ They never pause, like most of the peasants with large poderi: ~~[illegible]~~ they have no lives, ~~really~~ no homes. When I left, ~~[illegible]~~ Gianni was sitting on a curling-looking ~~[illegible]~~ in front of him, very still, and ~~empted out~~. He said quietly, 'Ciao!'

Next day he asked

The Reformers dragged religious problems out of the church into life. But, before that, the church had been all life. Only when it ceased to be did the Reformers have something to destroy, and a necessity for their existence.

Thomas More's weakness, causing the puzzlement that has followed him down the centuries, was that he assumed secular power: he did so from youth onwards, as a judge.

The background to the Reformation lay far back in the Middle ages: in the (11), when a commercial class came into being, in the towns, which were sep. psycho + physically from the domains.

The towns (the rich) broke the ~~church~~ domain (the church). They did it by trade, by cutting across ~~coming~~ the domains, ~~[illegible]~~ by roads, sea-routes. Hitherto each domain had been a law + country (!) itself: its excess grain, for instance, was thrown away, even if a dearth existed in a domain + a few miles away. ~~The towns [illegible]~~

There lay the two poles of the contradiction.

The towns (law, civilisation, art) were in time; the domains (peasants, knights, priests) were in God, the timeless.

That was a repetition of ~~the~~ pagan form: power on the one hand and dumb, timeless slavery on the other. ~~And in the middle ages power [illegible] more and more to the towns: in those who could administer it. While the land, as in Roman pagan times, always threatened to become a desert.~~

It occurred to me that

For two thousands years Christianity has been struggling with paganism: that is, to escape time.

Time is the restless pagan.

In the middle ages time only existed in the towns: it is necessary for the calculation of rents, rates, taxes etc. ~~sewage clearance~~,

It is freedom. How can the unimaginative think they have freedom? Perhaps they don't.

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The sound of Armida singing: a snatch of an old song. Seven o'clock in the morning. It makes everything still and spacious.

These things will promote nothing in themselves. They are only to free us from the mess that brought us into being and that hinders us from being what it seemed to promise us.

Henry VIII cut off art and quality from the people, and turned them into privilege. The abbeys became private seats.

There are so few comedians today, they say. Laughter and freedom go together.

Last week, on a dark, stormy day, we had two visits 'to see the house.' I was sure, because of the note of strangeness in both of them, that they were a kind of retaliation for my having sent the schoolmaster away two months ago. Everyone is gathering for the end of the holidays, and a crowd of friends and relatives surrounded our parlours for a few days. I noticed the daughter in a group of friends. I had the impression that the crowd made them feel sage: two parties were sent us, one the first a group of three men in a car with a Roman number, then, in the afternoon, the parlours' son with a friend. It spoke apparently he wanted to show the house. The three Romans strolled into the courtyard and while I was standing on the balcony and gave me no greeting, only slight, half-afraid smiles. I asked them if they wanted to see the peasant, to which they said doubtfully 'Yes': and I told them he was at the top of the hill, helping with the grain. They then walked further into the courtyard talking among themselves, and the two younger men paid the house a few theatrical compliments — 'E bellino! E molto bellino!' As it happened, they were looking (as remote as the house from anything they would call bellino) at a filthy corrugated-iron roof. They strolled out of the courtyard and had a theatrical conference among themselves before they got into the car. It could, of course, be intended to upset me to buy the house.

In the afternoon the son came in a smart sports car, and he was more closely in a defensive mood. His first question was the same, more or less, as that of the schoolmaster: he pointed to the dog and said, 'Is this yours?' But being rather debonair and altogether

fast, that you can feel it worse every day! Will it come to a head soon? How will it burst?

+

Each country will have its benevolent absolute ruler, to get ~~things~~ the mess cleared up before too late. Only single minds will be able to deal with the problem: ~~the collective have dead, vacant~~ only they will be free of the taint of collective publicity, by having to stand ~~stood~~ alone.

In England it will be through a prime minister much like ~~the first~~ the first there we was, ~~in England~~, Walpole. Instead of a king to cajole and placate, he will have the press and the Commons. And instead of laissez-faire it will be faire ou mourir.

These rulers won't fight each other because they will have the same problems: nationalism belonged to an earlier ~~the~~ struggle ~~against paganism~~.

+

Today began light and cold, with a thin mist veiling the earth. Then there were the usual clouds, with the sun appearing now and then. Some of the clouds were black and fierce-looking. There was no growing heat, as usually on an August day. The invigorating chill remained. Sometimes one feel it is a summer scirocco, because of a warm stillness; then it seems November. Now thunder is rumbling in the distance, and a storm seems to be drawing near.

+

There are roads to be built, the cities to be cleared of traffic, the air to be purified, agriculture to be put on its feet, the insect- and animal-world to be restored, doctors brought into being who can heal; a thousand thing await the 'politicians', who are dabbling lazily in nineteenth-century dreams.

+

A doctor needs as grave a ~~sense of~~ vocation, and as long an apprenticeship, as a priest. The 'doctor' of the present-day needs to be stripped of his title and relegated to his proper function, that of the higher male-nurse.

+

I only changed my body when someone showed me: 'You have a doctor inside you, working all the time. Find out what he advises: he's working in the liver, the blood, the nerves.'

+

prevalence in Italy and Germany.

+

Rhetoric may lead a man to eat what he dislikes, and enjoy it more.

+

The peasants who live near the dentist of P — talk about his riding before breakfast with a certain puzzlement. They say, 'Yes, he does it for ~~enjoyment~~ amusement!' They can't really understand why he doesn't go by car.

+

If he put on a uniform, with shining black boots, and had a retinue of attendants, they would understand it: it would be rhetorical, a fine figura.

+

~~I noticed in England~~ The next day ~~When we were in Rome we~~ went to a vineyard near the sea: ~~It was~~ a strange day — the sparkling, bright yellow wet sunlight ~~[illegible]~~ you find in England and the north of France, but almost never seen in Italy. Nearly half the grapes had been lost, at the beginning of their maturity: a hailstorm had stripped them off the branches, or frozen them black; the water had cascaded down from the sky and torn great ~~new~~ ruts in the earth, dividing the hills with new streams that cut right through the plants; no one, even old men of ninety-five, could remember such a thing, or remember having heard of such a thing. We went to a tiny one-roomed house near by which we'd been thinking of renting: the earth from the vineyard all round it had swept across its courtyard so that the cobbles were now invisible, and had flooded the rooms, which ~~were~~ now had floors of mud. The wind had been terrific. The olive trees had suffered nearly as much. Nonetheless the fruit ~~had not~~ has ripened properly this year: the peaches were still hard, and they were falling off the trees before their time. The sight was amazing: having seen these same vineyards in the spring, we couldn't believe it was now summer; the air, and the damp, troubled earth, furrowed in places like the sea, ~~with the olive pressure of water~~ belonged to a hard winter's day, and ~~seemed~~ even then to a land far from the Mediterranean ~~all the stranger for the warm sunlight~~.

This must have happened at ~~that~~ the same time as our strange storm recently ~~and~~ the tornado on the coast. Then To Insert P. 96 etc.

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I thought suddenly yesterday: Life is cascading down so

foresaw what would happen. This seems to be acknowledged by the padroni and the peasants alike. ~~Only he had a plan~~ → Italy's ~~greatest~~ modern tragedy ~~this century was~~ ~~is that the fascists were the only men who knew what should be done~~ Only the fascists knew what should be done. The collapse of fascism struck down an energetic, intelligent, unpleasant class of men. You can see them sitting about the squares of small towns today — ~~fallen in hard times~~ men with nearly distinguished faces. In this town they are a group of ten or twenty families: idle, ~~penniless~~ malevolent, embittered — semi-intellectuals, semi-artists, semi-gentlemen; their world collapsed suddenly. I know at once when one of them walks into this courtyard. The atmosphere changes to danger, alarm, the possibility of violence. But being Italian they ~~draw back in~~ are retrieved by an ancient grace, compassion.

Reform is against the Italian genius. An attempts at it end in evil.

+

Fascism was the Italian taste for rhetoric translated into politics. An Italian life outside Rome is rhetorical: there are no pleasures, no enjoyments, only rhetorical attitudes. This gives foreigners the mistaken impression that Italy is sentimental; it is the least sentimental country in Christendom.

+

'Foreigner' and 'fashionable' are interchangeable in Italy. Foreigners are the signori who bless places by their presence. They can turn the hated countryside, and hated antique houses, into delectable places just by living in them ⊙ ~~there~~ ~~the Italian will then take it into his head to do the same~~ → Our presence here has produced a rash of enquiries for land, 'to build a villa on' ⊙, ~~in perfect contradiction of the trend towards the town~~, The enquiries wait serious. They are rhetorical. But so would the villa be, if it were built. ~~Any furniture in Ital~~ Its rooms would be showpieces. ~~There are no homes in Italy.~~

+

Only Rome is unrhetorical.

+

Rhetoric is provincial: the fear of vulgarity. Hence its

of ~~seventeen or eighteen~~ sixteen or seventeen he should be free to return to schoolwork, or stay in his profession. The period between eleven and ~~eighteen~~ sixteen ~~are~~ is invariably one of torture for a child; ~~because it is one of adventure and wondering, when~~ he is just beginning to learn about the world, his senses are eager, and it is wrong to stuff him in a room all day. Everything he needs for the university can be learned in two years. I remember I learned nothing ~~betw~~ at the time of puberty. Continuous education produces a stunted and ignorant creature: his senses aren't properly alive.

Even then, a child's ~~should work more than~~ (working day should never be) (more than a) the morning, as in Germany.

The padrone of the house up the hill also maintained that peasants were freer than workers: they could take a rest when they felt like it, choose the particular work they were going to do each day, take a day or so off if they felt ill, go to the fields ~~arrive~~ a little later or a little earlier in the morning; no one stood over them with a schedule. But the peasants in the room wouldn't have it. They didn't feel free and that was that.

Guido brought the yeast over for our bread last night and told me that ~~he'd made~~ the agreement ~~with our padrone to~~ for him to take over ~~occupy~~ the lower rooms of this house in January was now fixed, and he would rent the land from our padrone. (This seems to prove that the recent house-viewers were false). All the produce of the land will be his. She will be getting the tiny sum of fifty thousand lire a year from him, about thirty pounds — for a podere of three or four hectares. He also said that his brother is leaving the land altogether and will be a builder's mate: he will earn three thousand lire a day instead of two thousand as a labourer on daily hire. He could do ~~his himself~~ the same, Guido said, but he was too old to start a new trade, unlike his brother.

We then had a chat about food, in the darkness of the courtyard. He said he would put three or four of the people who adulterated food 'up against the wall' (a favourite image of Guido's, but he is the mildest man on earth), and then we would see if food-adulteration continued! He said that most of the manufacturers laughed at the fines imposed: their profits were such that they could afford them. At one time, he said, he used to buy his wine in town, and always wondered why he felt bad: ~~the day he decided to get his wine straight from the peasants his~~ he had cramps in his stomach — which stopped soon after he decided to get his wine straight from the

peasants.

+

We had an evening with the art-restorer and his wife, and there also the talk was about food. They told us they were obliged to eat in restaurants, because church-restoration took them all over ~~the country~~ Tuscany; and felt vaguely unwell all the time. Nothing was safe from adulteration: the oil, cheese, wine, meat, even the bread. They had made a cheese-dish one day with some friends, and when it was heated the cheese became a kind of rubber which could be stretched like elastic and rolled into a ball, and was quite indigestible. Before the war, grated cheese was a pleasant part of minestrone, but now if you put a spoonful of cheese into your soup ~~[illegible]~~ you saw it become rubbery at once, and stick to the spoon. What this was doing to children and babies, who needed real food to form their organs, God alone knew.

They called this whole process of false foods part of 'Americanisation.' Like many people brought up ~~[illegible]~~ in Italy ~~and~~ or Germany under fascism, which created a wall of ignorance round the countries, they believe that America brought modernity to Europe after the last war.

+

The cry everywhere, among peasants and middle-class people alike, is, 'What an epoch! What 'progress'!'

+

The hunting season started ~~[illegible]~~ this morning, and all day there have been motor-cycles and cars outside the house. At dawn the woods reverberated with dull thuds and thumps. At about midday the hunters began to retire, with hares, pheasants, rabbits hanging from their belts or guns. ~~The garage man told me yesterday that there were seventeen hundred people in the local countryside shooting~~ Dino's brother caught a hare soon after dawn: the first day of the season is apparently always the best. They can only be shot along paths, as they are too easily lost in shrubbery.

As for the pheasants, the dogs pick up their scent and follow them: the pheasant believes she is being followed by the eye, and thinks it enough to wriggle under leaves and bracken, and lie there quietly. But the dog picks up ~~[illegible]~~ her scent and stands stock-still, close to where she lies. The hunter then cries 'Go!' or throws a stone, the pheasant flies up in panic, and you shoot.

Byzantium

& in fact the Church was never a unity.

The church was divided from the very beginning always by the same thing: the tendency towards making a civilisation on the one hand, in Christ, and making a moral society – a clean sweep – on the other. The first schism of the church was due to it. The Crusaders appalled by the Byzantines by their ferocity, when they attacked Constantinople in the 13th: they behaved like vandals & barbarians, they tore the altars to pieces and smashed the ikons, ~~to bearing a cross as their up~~ with the same vigour – and the same sense of redeeming the world, in Christ – as the ~~Refo~~ Reformers under Henry VIII ~~smashed~~ sacked the abbeys, and the Roundheads under Cromwell tore up all the copper ~~and~~ gravestones in the churches a hundred years later. ~~and the Lutherans in Germany~~ There was the same moral crusade, from the beginning, ~~breaking Christendom to pieces each time~~ reforming life & reforming it again, in an endless series of revolutions that look like a permanent sore in Christendom, that can never stop running.

She added quickly, 'Are you afraid he'll seduce your wife?' 'No!' said. 'Well, then, take him in!

When we say Christ, God, the philistine thinks 'Old-fashioned'.

Philistine means infidel.

The philistine thinks religion a moral affair: piety.

The philistine embraces art nowadays — it is a social and money-making proposition, in the closed society.

Art is decoration for him — a means of edifying & stimulating & exciting & entertaining & teaching & enjoying.

Art and religion meet in their nakedness.

Sergio told me about the factory in the village where wine is manufactured. I've passed there several times, and it all looks remarkably clean, without the lingering sticky smell of wine. Demijohns and fiasche are lined up in endless rows, like spotless soldiers. It is all done under the supervision of a chemist, Sergio said. The firm stocks all real wine, or at least all good wine. It will buy up any wine that has gone sour — even if it is almost vinegar — for low prices; also the cheap, low-grade (8°) wine that is grown in the fields round Milan. This is boosted chemically, and brought up to the alcohol-content needed — twelve, thirteen or even fourteen degrees. Gas is added, to make it seem lively and enjoyable. And some tasteless colouring, since much of the content is water. This wine does not go only all over Italy, Sergio says, but all over the world, as far as America. The man who owns it started as a peasant, and now has millions.

I remember passing a huge advertisement for this wine — 'Chianti' — on the outskirts of Rome when we came there last.

Sergio promises he will take me into the factory: he knows the workers; nearly everything is done mechanically. 'Wine goes in one end,' he says with a smile, 'and red wine comes out of the other.'

The Italian is rarely a philistine; almost never an artist.

A child should be educated up to the age of eleven or so, and should then be offered the chance of other work for a few years, — farming, sailoring etc. A whole list of fascinating apprenticeships could be offered him; and his health would benefit. Some slight tuition could be maintained in those years. Then at about the age

more sympathetic than the schoolmaster he couldn't bring it off, and made an inconsequential laugh as I invited him, with his friend, into the house. I showed them all the rooms, even the bedroom, and it seemed to me that he had been expecting someone disconsolate, because he gradually softened; at the end, when he shook hands to go, he apologised for the disturbance. His friend looked bewildered and tortured, and only spoke to repeat the apology at the end. The last thing he seemed to want was view a house.

The enemy the son had come to find didn't materialise: I felt this would be the source of another of the bitter quarrels that are supposed to rage between him and his sister — who like her mother goes in for a kind of trivial macchiavellianism.

His face when he came into the house — I glimpsed his profile — had a smooth and dangerous look. I found myself thanking God that the son had no power, that fascism was long since dead. This is my first experience of the Tuscans, but the first thing I learned about them was that you must never seem to slight their pride. After this his face became itself again, still smooth but no longer dangerous.

Don Amigo brought two priests from the English College in Rome. We sat on the terrace drinking tea and talking half in English and half in Italian. I notice how freer they are than he. His being a priest is something natural — it springs from his born goodness. They seem the children of protestantism: deliberate and conscious. They joke about some of the saints, find his comic-strip church magazine amusing.

Protestantism was born with St. Paul: 'Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage.' X

The wine in this little valley is some of the finest in Tuscany: I'm sure this is partly because they let the vines grow singly, as trees, and don't clip and train them too much. The plums are finished now, and there remain the last of the peaches, the figs, and the hard pears in the autumn: the earth has been replonghed for next year's grain, and the next big item of work is the vendemmia, the grape-harvest, in October.

X To The Galatians

started in England in the Thirties, as an inevitable climax of industrialism.

The first Sunday of September: the 'hunting' season is on us. All day there have been motorcycles and cars outside the house. At dawn the woods began to reverberate with thuds and thumps, from various sizes of cartridge. And at about noon they began to retire, with hares, pheasants, rabbits hanging from their belts. Sergio's brother caught a hare soon after dawn: the first day of the season is the best. He described how a dog follows the pheasant's scent: the oheasant believes she is being followed by the eye, and thinks it enough to wriggle under leaves and bracken, and lie there quietly. But the dog stands stock-still, close to where she lies, waiting for the hunter's signal to leap forward; the pheasant flies up in panic and you shoot.

Don Amigo, our priest, brought along two ordinands from the English College in Rome. We sat on the terrace drinking tea and talking half in English and half in Italian. Don Amigo cautiously left his tea---he wasn't used to it, he said; Protestants, tea and wholemeal bread are a strange and violent world for him. We all laughed at the gingerly way he put the cup aside. At noon he stood us all up and said the angelus, reading from his prayer-book. I noticed how freer the English seemed than he. They really seem the children of Protestantism. They joke about some of the saints, with mild impatience, and actually seem to be thinking about their religion. Don Amigo seems never to have thought in his life, only to have accepted and followed. You can see their consciences are alive.

Well, Protestantism was part of the Church. It sprang from

St. Paul---from Christ. ('Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage': St.Paul to the Galatians.) But it didn't make us free. Something went wrong.

The Humanists looked back to ancient Rome Greece & because those civilisations had concentrated everything on what men had done — alone as it were in the universe, without God. Greece & Rome for the Humanists were like 2 marvellous exercises in prowess: they had exploited men's gifts ~~fully~~ to the full. * ~~And these gifts had lain dormant in the middle age.~~ Inevitably, this Humanism led to reform. Christ also seemed to have offered freedom — to make a world in his image: ~~a man~~ the Christian cd. choose his own life. Humanism & trade and travel & flourishing towns all came at the 7th. It was like a terrific discussion going on. States were, as Burkhardt says, 'works of art.' This was what produced the slow revolt in the Church ~~of the 2 centuries~~ that culminated in

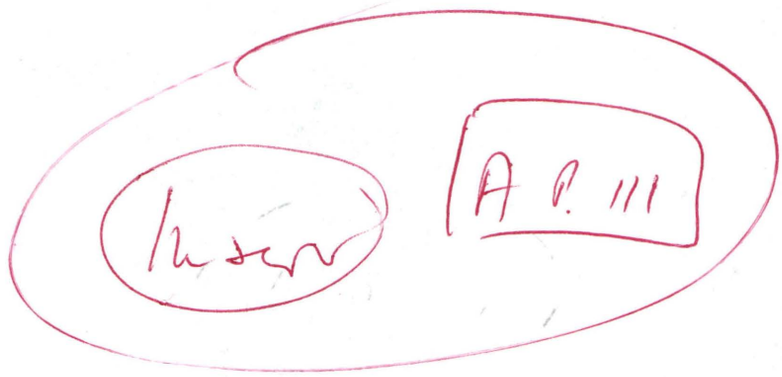
St. Paul---from Christ. ('Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage': St.Paul to the Galatians.) But it didn't make us free. Something went wrong.

the Reformation. after 2 centuries of discussion.

The Humanists were believers in poetry, which meant at that time what we wd. call letters or scholarship: ~~Greece & Rome helped them bring it back — against the hard core of philistinism & jobbery in the Church.~~

and Greece & Rome were the models. ~~[illegible]~~ But it was always in the context of ~~[illegible]~~ achieving a better Christianity.

Insert A P. III



The climax of moral self-torture (the anguish of past crimes and future good-resolution) was ~~perhaps~~ reached in the ~~later~~ eighteenth century, when it had infected the thinkers & even the upper classes. Dr. Johnson argued that the present was never a happy state for any human being; asked if a man wasn't sometimes happy in the present moment he said, 'Never, but when he is drunk!' They were talking about Pope's line, 'Man never is, but always to be blest!' Johnson tortured himself with resolutions, & his failure to achieve them. 'Hell is paved with good intentions' was his phrase.

And this was the result of Protestantism.

~~The fall of~~ Adam fell because of something later he did: and this concept of an original sin made it seem continually that he must again do something, or undo what he did, to get back into grace.

(7) Yet each ~~murderous~~ violent step brought the doctrine ('be not entangled in the yoke of bondage') nearer to fulfilment.

~~And so we arrive at ourselves: pure contemplation.~~

A man who uses power morally (coolly) commits a sort of suicide.

For Power is never ~~moral or~~ spiritual. Its origin is always an intimate desire for domination. We can't change life, or other people. We can change ourselves: and leave the rest to powers beyond us. INSERT p. 111

After two bright, sparkling days – the first two of September – the weather collapsed again and there was heavy rain, with black clouds and alternate stuffy heat and freshness: in those bright days I could feel the weather coming, in a peculiar nervous expectation, like an electrical throbbing inside; when the first massive clouds came the air seemed to go stock-still, and the pressure was enormous, with sudden shafts of burning and blinding sunlight. There was a brief storm, then the light rain you get in the mountains, in autumn or early spring, so that there is a light, mournful dripping from the leaves, and mist drifts through the branches. Yet the heat hasn't gone. We decided to go to the sea this morning, but turned back before Volterra, because it rained. There were long misty clouds across the whole barren range of salt-hills before Volterra. We found a tiny lake at the foot of a hill that stuck out of the earth like an ant-heap: it was clearly the spent mouth of a volcano. We walked to a house nearby and the ~~and the ant-hill was one of the tall jets of lava that~~ peasant told us there was a rough path down, which would make heavy walking in the rain. He pointed out a palazzo ~~[illegible]~~ hugged round with farmhouses just above the lake, and said that it was now abandoned. Neat cypresses were growing in front of it. We sat down in his kitchen until the rain stopped: he said that of three hundred peasants who used to live in the area, ~~less~~ fewer than thirty remained. At one time the podere up the road had forty-five or fifty head of cattle, but now there was hardly more than three: yet the demand for meat went up every day... He himself owned his own land – conto diretto: but there was little to be made out of it; you needed to put money into the land before you took it out, and this he couldn't do. With tractors, copper-sulphate sprays, mechanical sewers and pumps, he could make a fine living and work less.

Suddenly, in the middle of the night, a fierce wind started up — again doors and windows slammed, and there was a booming noise down the chimney. It must have been three or four o'clock, quite dark. Then, after what twenty minutes, it stopped as suddenly as it had started, and the night was still and warm again, with heavy clouds. We are wondering if there was a kind of tornado on the coast again.

+

Somebody has said it: 'This weather is due to a twenty-year circle.' Last year it was an eleven-year cycle, the year before that a fifteen-year circle: torrential rains in the summer, floods, tornadoes, biting cold in August... When will people wake up! But they'll do anything not to pierce the publicity and find out who the men are they elect to power and enslave themselves to. Have we a guarantee that our bodies aren't being influenced invisibly, that ~~not only the earth is not being~~ not only the weather but the earth is being wrecked and the air polluted for generations, and children maimed in a way we don't yet ~~to~~ understand know? Have they given us this guarantee? They tell us now that the atomic ~~bombs are~~ experiments were harmful to the earth, the air, our bodies, because their interests no longer require the experiments. Yet for years they denied it. We can keep our fingers crossed. Millions of people all over the world must — hope for the best! and ~~this~~ that isn't slavery? Perhaps this is the worst darkness we've ever fallen into; we no more choose our own lives than the lowest Roman slaves.

It

But we are choosing: ~~perhaps~~ we're choosing ~~in the most fearful way~~ for future generations.

+

Again, it is all morally justified! The men who authorise experiments, study & produce them we are very moral men! You see, if we weren't mine the earth, the air & all future life, why, there would be a war. It creates it creates a balance of power. Sel.

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We got a load of shot in the bedroom-window yesterday afternoon, but luckily the shutters were closed and it only splintered the wood slightly. I rushed to the window and shouted down various curses — 'Vagabondi! Ma che fanno lì? Vuoi ammazzarci?' etc. etc. Then I realised they couldn't hear a thing I was saying because they were sitting in motor cycles and their engines were still running. There were three of them. I dashed down to the road and pinned on to one, a pale, surly-looking fellow: 'D'ay.

plunged into a sort of recital which lasted an hour, as darkness grew. We leaned over the balcony, ~~talking~~ looking down at the courtyard, and then went on the terrace. I happened to say that he shouldn't do his work for more than a year — it was bad for me: always sitting crouched up, in the smell of petrol-fumes, hardly sleeping, with snatched meals. He disagreed. No! me got enough exercise unloading and loading every few hundred kilometres. And then there were the stops. Three or four minutes he said: 'I want to eat like you do! As that filth they serve in the restaurants now, especially in the south — the meat! You ought to see it! God knows what animals it represents. The body gets nothing natural nowadays. One of the drivers can't work any more because he has stomach-trouble, and his nerves are bad!' He then went on to say how bad truck-driving was for the health. Now one could see the difference between a truck-driver and a peasant just by looking at them. He seemed not to know he'd contradicted himself: the one speech was quite distinct from the other. He then went on to a speech about 'youth'. 'Youth today isn't satisfied with a piece of bread and a bar of chocolate on it, as it used to be! We can't be so easily satisfied, like our mothers and fathers.' I asked him, supposing the government increased earnings on the land by a thousand a day, would he go back to the land? Yes, he said: because that would then represent a future for him. I described the wonderful farms in Germany — their huge elm-trees and oaks, the massive horses and the rich houses made of wood; ~~the [illegible] got [illegible]~~ the families with sometimes ten and eleven children, the sense you got of a terrific thriving land-tradition: because they owned the land themselves! 'Ah, yes!' he said. 'The same in Russia, too!' The dreams of Russia as the land of happy peasant-owners is ~~still intact~~ prevalent among Italians ~~people from the Thirties (when fascism cut them off from it)~~ ~~[illegible]~~ as it used to be among us in the Thirties. When I said he was wrong he only shook his head, like a man refusing to open his eyes in the morning.

The work seems to coarsen him. I often wonder what he'd be like ten years' time. I see him looking back on these years with a sort of

conventional wistfulness — 'Ah, do you remember that time we went to Rome? the jokes we used to have!': from inside his chosen prison. ~~But we can [illegible]~~

Then, on the other hand, he seems to imaginative; a moment later, that too seems a communal inheritance in him, never to be used individualistically.

We are such protestants, such children of Reform, that we ~~want~~ wait to see a man turn his life upside-down with his gifts.

But the Italian is still sane enough to use ~~his gifts~~ them intimately.

+

Twenty minutes or so after he left the house that evening we walked up the hill with the dog, for a breath of air before bed. The dog barked suddenly at a turn in the earth, and I saw a figure standing in the field above our house, ~~just~~ near the path and half-hidden by bushes. We walked on and the dog said nothing more. I noticed that the figure was wearing light fawn trousers. Then I saw that he was walking behind us, about thirty yards back. We turned at the brow of the hill as usual, and began to walk down again: and in the moonlight I saw him leap off the path into the darkness of the bushes, waiting for us to pass him. We did so: the dog hardly sniffed in his direction, which was strange. Then when we were past he leapt down on to the path and continued his walk up the hill: I was sure it was Pietro; his same walk — and those were the trousers he'd been wearing.

He might have been squatting in the field — and our suddenly coming along confused him. But there is always this mystery, in Italy. Everyone is a stranger and alone in himself: even from his mother, his wife. We pass each other in the night, in eternity. Perhaps that's right.

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The (Spanish?) Post-Reformation flung the Italians back to paganism; ~~as far as it could~~ in fact, it stripped them of their faith.

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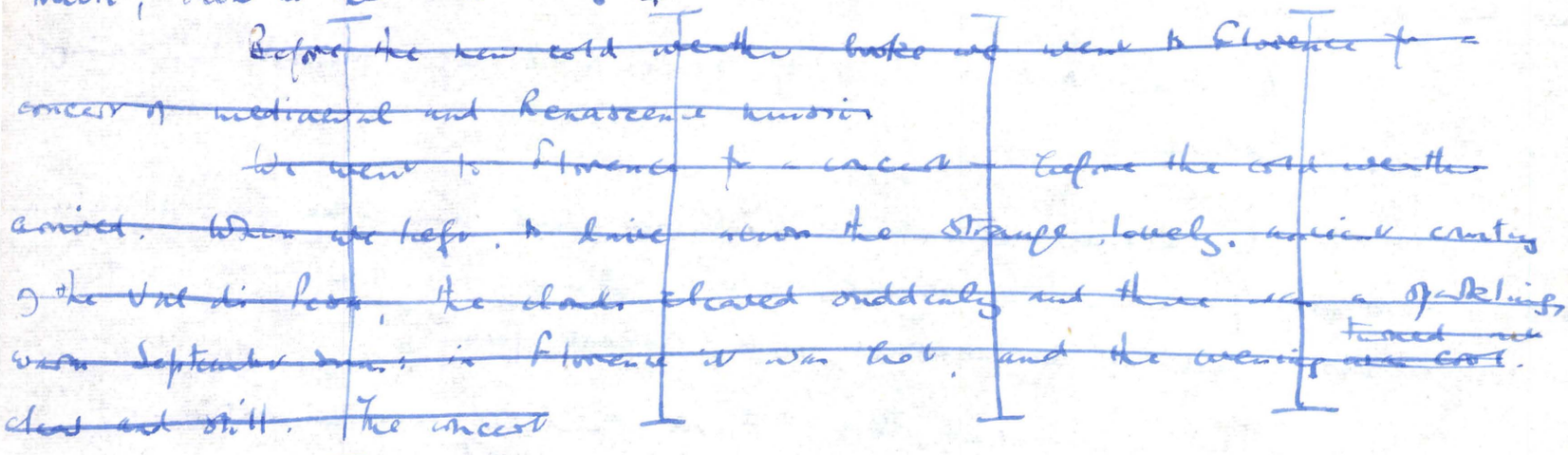
Violent inner hatred of other people is self-disgust.

+

The weather has suddenly become cold, though only the first week of September, and the rain pours down steadily, with low, grey skies and

drifting mists. Everything looks gloomy and barren, as I've rarely seen Italy. The weather changes rapidly – one never knows what the next part of the day will bring. You can't tell from the sky any more. A still clear night with the stars massed across the sky can cloud over ominously in an hour or so, and then give way to a storm. There are supposed to have been floods in Trieste, snow in the Alto-Adige. +



~~Before the new cold weather broke we went to Florence for a concert of mediaeval and Renascence music.~~

~~We went to Florence for a concert – before the cold weather arrived. When we left, to drive across the strange, lovely, ancient country of the Val di Pesa, the clouds cleared suddenly and there was a sparkling, warm September sun; in Florence it was hot, and the evening turned out clear and still. The concert~~

Italy gives way completely to the weather: interiors are bare, waiting for the sun to fill them; sunlight is part of the Italian character, necessary like water; in the rain, everything waits – the trees, houses, people. It is dark and still all day, with the slow rain. Last night in the village there was market, and the rain seemed to bring hilarity: ~~it makes all the possibility of it seems to offer intimacy,~~ it offers intimacy, and above all no work. ~~But no pay either~~ The hired workers like Dino aren't paid. That brings a holiday feeling. He told me yesterday that last winter, when there was so much snow, rain and frost, everybody ran up bills at the shops: they 'planted nails', as the Italians sail – 'piantanno chiodi'. Some, he said, were good enough to honour their bills when they were earning again in the spring; others took their custom to other shops.

Angelino came down yesterday wrapped in a brown raincoat, with water dripping from his nose, and asked if we could take his mother into town. We said yes, we'd wait for her. But the rain began pouring down even more heavily, like an avalanche, and she didn't appear. He told me that Pietro was in Sardinia, with another load of furniture. It was better his way, he said: who could buy Pietro shoes and clothes, and keep him in cigarettes? He himself could work the land and make enough for them to live on, but no money to

'put aside'. Now Pietro could look after his own wardrobe. This is what money means for the peasant, something to be put aside, not ~~the~~ a ~~basic~~ necessity: ~~As~~ it means lights, cities, dandyism for him, not food and shelter.

+

We have been given no recommendations for living in a bare universe. The Jews were in a family. But that, and everything else, ~~[illegible]~~ has been destroyed in us.

+

We want to know how to speak to God. Christ had enough just showing us the way.

+

The nervous alarm and confusion, and fear, that you sometimes see in a Jewish person is the result of being flung into the barest and coldest universe, out of the warmest and closest family.

+

That is, Abraham, Moses, Aaron, had no recommendations for the man who ceased to be a Jew — who fell into the ~~universe~~ void.

+

Therefore, even while he marvels at the crucifixions of Gozzoli, and Giotto, and Masolino, a bitter pill of resentment against Christ may remain.

+

I heard of a man in New York ~~an American~~ who threatens to throw a fit if his daughter walks out with a Gentile. He knows where her best safety and warmth lie. ~~He~~ He buries ~~in~~ his head in the family, But like the ostrich the rest of him is showing.

+

A religion that cannot forgive is damned.

+

A concert in Florence — mediaeval and renaissance music, on the original instruments: flutes, cymbals, viola da gamba, lutes, castonets, hand-drums. Quiet, subtle music — fingers lightly and delicately tapped. It was like returning to music — to the real quality of music, at the edge of silence; so that the rhythms of the outer silence, which we never hear in the day, are opened to us. German music opens a construction, on the whole: a man's stupendous construction on the outer rhythm: an ordered and basically certain world, which the German construct wherever they go; which they need and must at all costs make, even out of silence and ~~chaos~~ inactivity. Their world has no

Reformers.

St. Augustine, to answer the heresy of Pelagius, said that unbaptised children who died were naturally condemned to everlasting hellfire. (The doctrine of original sin). But how did he know? Who told him?

When we say God we must mean everything we can't know.

We can find the authority to behave-in-a-certain-way: but no behaviour itself can provide us with authority, even baptism. Baptism may take place without water, without the movement of a hand. This is the---perhaps neccessary---failure of a church.

Christ rejected behaviour in everything he said: except as a safeguard for the weak; and we are all weak at times.

INSERTS

NOTES FROM SIENA

Dissection of animals, and their use in experimental diseases, is wicked and thoroughly useless. More could be achieved by observing live animals, and ourselves. But the men who dissect are incapable of observing. Their observing powers are usually blunted, by being dragooned early in life by formulae. Most of them are only fit to be functionaries, as even most doctors most. ~~As the leading positions of thought and our lives — power, thought, education — are in the hands of functionaries who have fulfilled the right credentials which are act of thought will reno~~ They are not fit to heal, ~~as sure~~ and in fact they don't heal: unknown diseases increase every day, and the debt of ignorance piles up and has to be paid by millions of innocent creatures.

Professor Magnus' famous discovery in 1924 that 'central control' in animals of all kinds takes place in the complex of muscles where head joins neck, was made seventeen years earlier by the Australian K. M. Alexander, who ~~observed~~ had no qualifications and simply observed himself, alive. ~~and observed himself~~ ~~The first spent years cutting up animals to find out, the second simply observed himself & others, & came to intelligent conclusions. The first — being the traditional 'scientist' — dealt in death; the second life.~~ ~~Naturally~~, Magnus ~~was acclaimed~~ spent years cutting up animals to find out.

While 'science' is the study of immobility and death ~~we shall fall further into the grip of immobility and death with it must bring about the opposite of what it proposes to~~

it must... 'Scientists' repres. ~~the~~ a ruling class whose tyranny we must break. We are enslaved to them in our simplest reflexes,

1.

~~which have swallowed the (a) [illegible] that in ourselves, our bodies and thoughts, lies no authority.~~

which have been told not to assert themselves.

The road outside is a

Science can never give us life until it studies it: that is, allows itself to depend on the lively intuitions of one man. ~~Its basic premises, even the mechanical (4 ones) come from that nothing else, after all, in any case.~~ Its basic premises all spring from that, in any case.

While it studies death, 'science' will give death.

It shouldn't be difficult for us to understand how the Nazi concentration camps were possible, when there are men all over the world giving ~~captured~~ healthy animals diseases, tainting them with cancers, torturing them to observe the results, removing their brains, livers, kidneys, while they ~~are alive~~ live. Their excuse is moral: it is for the health of mankind. That was the Nazi excuse, too.

Pavlov's idiotic ~~and~~ experiments found their proper home in the Nazi & communist concentration camps.

Again, there is no more relentless cruelty than that ~~[illegible]~~ performed for ~~morality.~~ moral ends.

INSERT

NOTES FROM SIENA.

Under the publicity-sign "Peace" the 'politicians' and 'scientists', ~~& in the most ghastly~~ a kind of unsavoury marriage ~~& history~~ are conducting a war not only on the earth, the soil and livestock and the air, but on ~~ourselves~~ us, on our bones and glands, and not only on ~~ourselves~~ us, but on our children, and not only on our born children, but on those in the womb, and on those for generations to come. ~~Peace~~ There is no peace. It hasn't existed since 1945. ~~since that time~~ The war has been invisible, & continuous, since 1945 from second to second, the most [universal and] insidious, & universal war ever to have been conducted by ~~criminals in leading positions.~~

~~These criminals have of course an expert command of moral vocabulary~~

NOTES FROM SIENA

(Humanism)

INSERT

Books (the humanists) come from letters: these were circulated among friends. They came to be printed for convenience — several students could see them at the same time.

As soon as books lose the direct, intimate and accidental tone of letters they are finished ~~the display of culture~~. When I come across a superbly produced book ~~with~~ its printing perfect, the paper smooth + polished, I feel like ~~crack~~ putting it back: I don't want to read a monument.

Insert

III

America is the climax of the false reformation. Hence, the affinity with German ideas: ~~X~~ progress, moral justification (American from the reward of righteousness), youth.

America the climax of the false reformation, in the belief that life can be started all over again, on a new footing.

TENSION

Insert

1. Tension = original sin.
2. German tension. (progress etc.)
3. Christ the present; we must live in the present.
4. America the climax of the false reformati

Our nervous or unnatural concept of the present as moving along a belt of time with the past increasing behind it and the future decreasing in front, is, ~~due~~ ~~an act of Christian thought~~, but due to the concept of original sin that was slowly forced on us: the past becomes the area of sin, especially original sin, and the future is potential grace.

5. The impossibility of the moral revolution.

The people in either country had as little to do with it as they ever do with revolutions, especially the ones in their name. But in this case it involved their most intimate affiliations. Few knew the questions involved. Almost no one had any thought of leaving the Church, that is, disrupting life at the basis.

But the Reformation took its platform in original sin. The rhythm round Luther was one of tension, not intimacy. It wasn't enough for him to be, or believe. Erasmus warned him that his violence would disrupt the globe.

Erasmus wanted a clear and simple account of Christ from the texts themselves, unencumbered by the 'barbarities' of mediaeval syllogism, philosophy and mumbo-jumbo. Christ simply was; this was enough for him. Whatever he did, he did to himself. His rhythm wasn't one of tension: he was always in stillness, in present time. And this is what the false Reformation has made us forget. But this stillness is always there, in the gospels: he always moves in the present; he points only to the present. He points to what people are in themselves, now. He moves in his own timeless present. His predictions of the future---of that fact that he would be crucified and would return to men as a 'comfort'---were his own destiny: they advised no particular behaviour for others.

His rhythm can't be pointed out or proved: it lies in the gospels like a special silence, a presence. It is the only proof of his existence we have.

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it lies inside us, built into our lives, blood, heart – which work like streams, growing things, sunlight, according to no schedule, ~~and without apparent~~

We always imagine we sprang from nothing long ago. But we spring from nothing all the time, every moment.

A bad act is that done by a bad man. It is not an act in itself.

I know the pigeon didn't blame me, or fear me, for what I did to his ~~wife~~ mate. He understood.

In knowing that we belong to the timeless, and that everything valid springs from it, we loosen our ~~hold~~ grip on ~~life~~ things: we are less in the shadow of power, even of tyranny.

Christ pointed to this, and here he was neither Jewish nor Greek.

Morality must be social and administrative law, an agreement made between men: ~~not power, that is~~ not principles of conduct sustained in abstraction, held over life, every situation. We have encrusted ourselves with laws, until ~~we have~~ the resources of our real life powers, that lie beyond, have dried up, for want of exercise.

The world inside us (which is the only way to the real world outside, beyond men) awaits us: we can bring it into being in a hundred different ways – breathing, eating, fasting, even simply lying on a bed; we can let it be; and then its being will show us what government we are actually under, which isn't a government of men (that is, mind). It means, as the Eastern says, letting yourself float ~~[illegible]~~ in endless space,

without a grip on anything: the only new grip comes from that.

Confucius talks about the ethical and human, Zen the absolute, in Buddhism. The religion had no prophet. But Christ offered an apparently new life, and the absolute, together. Yet he didn't specify, like Confucius (or Mohammedan) what should or shouldn't be done, in daily life. So we were left with a gap: we got pagan society, with Judah put on top. We were given morality and logic. But Christ evaded both. He wasn't relative. It was magnificent — what he didn't talk about. His parables were always towards the timeless, not men.

We have to make that (the timeless) our spring: after the long religious discipline, like a 2000 year initiation.

And yet this won't be civilisation. Society won't change. Ethics will have its diff.: this is why it has to exist. We must look for no results, except what will flow from the timeless source.

One act could be exchanged for a million others. It doesn't much matter what the act itself is. There is no decreed behaviour. Behaviour is the particular folly chosen or fallen into out of a million varieties.

We withdraw from behaviour. And thereby inherit the behaviour most proper and right for us. But this has nothing to do with good relations between men, or convenience, or "happiness."

Happiness is never seeking happiness. It may happen in a second: and in that second the present comes alive.

LETTER FROM SIENA

Music

The Austrians were close to the Italians, and derived from them. ~~We~~ Between the operatic style of Mozart and, ~~these~~ that of ~~[illegible]~~ Cimarosa, there are remarkable similarities. We overlook this because of the massive German Tradition that hides the scene. ~~Hadyn~~ We hear much less of Hadyn than ~~we~~ we wd. expect of the a ~~music that was~~ ~~work that~~ man whose work was the basis of ~~everything~~ all we know in modern music: he has been squashed in favour of a supposedly Exquisite and Lofty Mozart, a Gothic Bach, and a ~~Romantic~~ Great Beethoven. The result is the falsification of the Austrian tradition entirely, and the subordination of Schubert ? ~~of~~ Hadyn, the real Mozart, for lack of German characteristics, (or played as if they had them, which is the same) In fact, the German tradition is the one that fades into air if you touch it: Beethoven only kept his sanity (that is, form) through Vienna — through living and learning and ? suffering there — and Bach was first & foremost wrote before a Christian. Germany came into being. The other Germans

keep this feet on the earth,

— Schumann Brahms — made desperate attempts to ~~to fly from the apparent to keep the music~~ the most diffe thing for a German to do; ~~attain freedom~~ ~~& form~~; in Wagner, everything has gone overboard, into pure abstraction. And so-called atonal and concrete music is only the end — the dead-end — of that line. Schumann went mad — & ~~[illegible]~~ Brahms won through because he ~~went to school~~ in Schubert

But even Beethoven evades the monumental and . . . who you know him.

Our nervous and unnatural concept of the present as moving along a belt of time with the past increasing behind it and the future decreasing in front, is much due to Christian thought, especially early Christian thought: the past is the area of sin, especially original sin, and the future is potential grace.

+

The quiet mediaeval music, that was almost silence: almost a kiss, a glance... ~~The Germans have taken music to the madness of abstraction.~~ We have no intimacy, therefore no music.

+

You escape time by laying yourself bare.

+

It looks as if we won't be going back to Castel Vecchio, after all to see those ruins. First the priest told us that there were vipers. That was in the warm weather. Now the hunting season has started, and there is danger of getting your head shot apart from the cold and wet. Also we heard that there aren't Etruscan tombs there: only the ruins of mediaeval castle which can be as well seen from the hills round it as from the spot itself. But next year perhaps, when the sun is blazing again — if it ever blazes in Italy again — we shall go there, and find a confirmation of something, a dream...

+

We call our pig Giacomo. He lives most of the day in darkness, just able to turn round. Gino lets him out, to roam in the field below the road, for perhaps an hour. At the end of this wealthful life, in four or five months time, he will have his throat cut and be bled to death.

+

Some snatches of quite strong sunlight today: but there is none of the usual fresh calm of September. The air is weak and damp. Mist drifts across the hills north of Siena. I walked down into the vineyard just now and the grapes are still far behind: they should all be a deep, dark colour now, but there are still white ones; if there is good sunlight for the rest of September some wine might come out of it, of what ten degrees alcohol. But otherwise it will be watery and hopeless for storing. Dino has found us some wine which can be put down, of thirteen and a half degrees: it will keep four or five years. On the whole the peasants don't like matured wine. They call it sweet, too heavy. They like the young wine which is still vivacious and sparkling.

+

Pietro appeared briefly again, with a brand-new wristwatch. He has been to Calabria, ~~not Sardinia~~. He already talks about our days together when we 'joked' as in the deep past. He looks matter-of-fact; makes no speech. He mended our electric light, and we gave him some vin santo, a peach and a piece of bread, as he hadn't eaten since the evening before. To keep himself awake for night-driving he'd drunk seventeen coffees all told, he said. Their grain at home has already been threshed, and we ~~have~~ missed their harvest-supper. He said with a laugh, 'It wouldn't have been any good without me!'

+

The weather seems to be settling into winter, although it is only the second week of September. We are already in winter clothes. A certain grim nullity begins to settle into people, as if what chosen they have, which is really very little, is going into hibernation. Only Dino keeps his bright smile. His whole face is a smile, always, not just his mouth. He is one of those few creatures who were ~~was~~ made for their ~~his~~ work, and for whom work was made.

+

If you give up trying — that is, pushing in space and time — you will get beyond space and time to the present.

+

The church has collapsed: it has entered its most important function, that of witness.

+

Judah (law), the Greeks ancients (logic form) and the middle ages (faith) have brought us this far, in argument with their dark other-selves, ~~[illegible]~~ ritual paganism and 'barbarism'.

+

The humanists used to say 'barbarous' or 'Gothic'.

+

Today Giacomo was so happy to be let out of his dungeon that he ran full tilt along the road outside and Gino had to chase after him. He then did the same across the field. He has a witty turn of mind. The other day he ran into the cattlehouse to inspect it, and then when he was chased out climbed up the steps to our entrance, snigging everything gladly; he got a kick in the side of the face for that, which made him squeal ~~[illegible]~~. On the whole ~~the~~ pigs locally are allowed to wander at the edge of the woods, in the charge of a little girls with sticks, like sheep. The result of our confinement and our feeding is that our pig can hardly support himself on his back legs.

+

LUTHER

Luther's struggle was not a lonely martyrdom. It always had the support of power, ~~that of the middle class who revolted against the sale of~~ both that of the princes, who expected big gains from the confiscation of church property, and the people in their wretchedness, hoping for respite against the brutality of the nobles, and it was really a revolt against the papacy, with little religious conviction except in the feelings of Luther himself and a few of those he influenced. When he was called before the Diet at Worms in 1521 was cheered to the doors by great crowds, and he came out as free as he went in. The emperor Charles V was powerless against him — he had his hands tied in a war against Francis I and couldn't afford to provoke a religious struggle in Germany; and the church — certainly the pope and his council — was listless and passive, and the Luther felt strong enough to burn the papal bull condemning his heresies when he got it. Luther's ardour was thoroughly German — ~~it went hand in hand with the power it got behind it~~ ~~the little denunciation that expects a cheer at the end:~~ it grew violent, in its first stages, by the blank refusal of interest, and

violent, just its later stages. By the Lute power ~~that~~ it came to ~~support it~~ provoke. Where in Germany Luther wasn't supported by the prince or the middle-classes, he had no effect whatsoever.

Luther had nothing of the renascence in him, no humanism, though the humanists were the first to acclaim him. ~~His attacks on the free will separ~~ He belonged to the middle ages, though to the heretics of the middle ages.

~~Lutheran indignation~~

The Lutherans were indignant ~~against~~ towards the weak and ineffectual papacy, and docile towards the German princes. ~~When~~ The peasants were stirred ~~by~~ to revolt ~~against the inhumanity of their lords~~ by Lutheran indignation, and their revolution quickly became a terror — ~~the~~ burning & pillaging. They asked for their own land, but they remained Christian: it wasn't a revolt against the Church so much as against their bullying owners. And the princes, when they were powerful enough, smashed them to pieces ~~with absolute pitiless without the slightest pity a~~ pitilessly.

~~The Humanists blamed this was on Luther.~~

~~And Luther blamed it on the peasants.~~

Luther ~~not only~~ supported this, ~~princes, but raised~~ and ~~was~~ put himself under the protection of the princes. It was a German story — repeated a 1000 times

since, in every German 'rebel' who begins (like Brecht, the dramatist, in our o[illegible] times) as a champion of the people and ends condoning their bloodshed.

The Humanists blamed Luther for this Peasant War, and he blamed the peasants. ~~He thus~~ n.p. He thus brought Humanism (and Italy) to a more terrible and sudden end than it wd have had naturally, under the counter-reformation, and he produced the Germany we know, where the status quo consists of an unchallenged power on the one hand and a docile people on the other, mitigated by sudden terrifying revolutions.

The Counter-Reformation was conducted by the Spanish. Only Spain had remained outside the renascence — thoroughly mediaeval in its scholasticism. ~~Luther was instrumental~~ A ~~new~~ new middle age was now imposed, at a time when all the advantages of mediaeval society were ~~dead~~ absent, because ~~its~~ mediaeval society was dead.

~~He thought about~~ he consolidated serfdom in Germany at a time when it was dead anywhere else

NOTES FROM SIENA

Ai

INSERT

Christ pointed forward across the years - 2000 of them - ~~to when, as it were, the Church would either away,~~ beyond Judah and beyond the pagan, but he didn't point in time: it is only that he extends to more and more people, which gives us the impression of his ideas moving or developing in time; ideas; he always pointed forward - for a few, for one, for several, here and there, at every moment since his mission. His pointing forward wasn't in ~~isn't in time, that is~~, power or civilisation, but in timelessness, that is, truth.

~~(?)~~

~~(Spirit)~~

~~Lutheran~~ He ~~& his followers~~
The ~~Germans~~ only had to

2(a)

The Germans only had to embrace Erasmus, & admire him, to bring ~~the whole of~~ Humanism ~~down in ruins,~~ together with Erasmus himself - ~~the first humanist of 16 Humanism~~ down in ruins.

You escape time by laying yourself bare - like a floating motion; you let yourself float wherever the outer time wants to take you.

As a climax of a
struggle that had been conducted
since the beginning of Christendom
only there is no evidence
of social struggle.

To tell the truth, few Germans see anything in the ~~French~~ literatures of France and England except what can, like Shakespeare, be falsified into a monument (and then, naturally, claimed as German) ~~and part of the national destiny~~. There is a weight of personal and intimate quality in our work, the fruit of the long discussions of humanism, which offends the unguarded German taste. It is why editions ...

History, too, ~~has become~~ became a German preserve, simply by the insistence of these great, vis & simple people.

Germans were the authors of the ridiculous view of the Italian Renaissance as 'achieving harmony at last'; there is always the sense of a moving belt of time, ~~the~~ a destiny that governs every creative and every epoch, so that our individual efforts are no more than efforts to achieve this abstract ideal. And, of course, Germany was the home of ~~a~~ idealism in philosophy, so strong that it cancelled ~~so strong that it~~ ...creative never the authority, but basically perhaps the peasant... whom the knight of the 16 felt he could cut down or mock or defile as less than one of his trees.

Bach is a 'great step forward'! ...

not the actuality: today you find the children's
love idealism all over the world – every book, picture, play
is a little mark on 'development' some kind, the rise
& fall of something, the progress of something – Literature,
Knowledge, Civilisation.

It is why German editions of books, even first editions, are the best produced in the world, with none of the rough touch of those first letters of the Humanists, and in ~~gr~~ direct contrast to French books with their paper covers & uncut leaves. Everything must be turned into power, that is, a destiny higher than the human being. It ~~isn't difficult to see that this kind of~~ is all thinking ~~comes~~ derived from a concept of the despised human being.*

And it is rare to find a German (outside the Catholic provinces) for whom religion is more than an exalted code of ~~[illegible]~~ respectability; ~~for~~ under Lutheranism this is what it became — Christianity became the code of obedience to princes.

(or perhaps even, by historical influence, inside)

who is basically the gauche & ridiculous peasant who, showing his intimacy, shows his backside.

Deep Thoughts, for which German was better adapted. And of course there were the frequent political destinies, and even, finally, a racial destiny.

Really, Germany came into being through Luther: before, it had simply been the German lands, autonomously administered, of a vast empire; through Luther these discovered an identity separate from both the empire and the Church. It was the beginning of their national destiny.

And the Germans were the authors of that fatal view of civilisation as something slowly unfolding, a 'process' and therefore by inference a 'progress'. America since the last war has been dominated by this to an extraordinary extent, just as the previous moral society, Victorianism, was: the idea of a moral ~~national~~ destiny finally rewarded by world-power was accepted ~~naturally~~ by millions of people, so deeply that they couldn't visualise ~~that~~ others ~~didn't~~ not sharing it. A sense of youth and a quiet ethical superiority to other peoples went hand in hand with this. Nazi Germany was youthful too, with a sense of ethical superiority unencumbered by human sympathies.

It is rare to find a German who can stand before the humble works of the middle ages or the early renascence and exchange his intimacy for that of the work: he is always in the presence of Art, or a Movement of art, or a School, or Beauty, or a destiny of some kind ~~or another~~ which makes the painter, in this his single effort, ~~it is rare~~ slightly pathetic and irrelevant. And to tell the truth, few Germans can see anything in the literatures of France and England, except what can ~~(like Shakespeare or Stendhal)~~ be monumentalised, and ~~that is~~ stripped of its intimacy. The rough and occasional and intimate flavour of our work seem for them alien to the public statement, that is, the statement from authority. It is why the

~~as if human creatures had had nothing to do with it~~

German editions of books, even first editions, are the most superbly produced in the world, with ~~like perfect machine-goods; they have~~ none of the rough touch of those first letters of the Humanists, ~~just as the writing in them cannot have the same direct and intimate tone of discussion~~ → Everything – from the most intimate and personal act – must be turned into power, that is, ~~a expression of~~ a destiny 'higher' than the human being. It is all thinking derived from a concept of the despised human ~~creature~~ being.

I sometimes wonder what educated German would say to Shakespeare's work if they knew it as it was really was: if they could see not heroic lines or monumental lines, or chiselled lines, nothing rhetorical at all, but ~~sweetness and~~ a certain accidental quality always ~~and~~ throughout, a fluency so intimate that it argues a love or knowledge of England in every line; no drama, nothing that unfolds in tension or ~~hope~~ (this is how he is invariably performed in the German stage). The drama is all in depth, in the present, not hanging on future development all the time. I think they might ~~not~~ despise it, many of them, in their ~~high discernment~~ grand & monumental expectations.

even first editions, are some of the finest in the world: they have none of the rough touch of those first letters of the Humanists, and they are in direct contrast to French books with their paper covers and uncut leaves, meant to be browsed over and marked and put in the pocket and laid on a café table. Everything in the German canon must be turned into power, that is, a destiny 'higher' than the human creature. It is all thinking derived from a concept of a despised human being.

History, too, became a preserve of destiny, through the clamour of this great and vigorous and simple people in universities and books and wars. They were the authors of the ridiculous view of the Italian Renascence as 'achieiving harmony at last', the climax of a struggle that had been going on since the beginning of Christendom, though there is no evidence of such a struggle. There is always this sense of a moving belt of time, a destiny that governs every creature and every epoch, so that our individual efforts are no more than efforts to achieve an abstract ideal. In no case is the creature in himself the seat and authority of life. Basically, in his intimacy, he resembles the peasant, gauche and ridiculous, who if he is fool enough to show his intimacy shows his backside. The man who lays his heart bare to the German is invariably despised, so long as he has no power.

And of course Germany was the home of idealism in philosophy: the skeleton of the creed, so to speak. Today you find the children of this analysis all over the world, wherever there is a little education; in fact, it has become one of the great platforms of education. Every book, picture, event, is a little mark on a 'development' of some kind, the rise or fall of something, a progress---of Literature, Knowledge, Civilisation. I remember thinking like this myself

In Filippo Lippi's blonde Madonna and child which we saw at Certaldo last week there is ~~the~~ a world of difference from the rapt dark face of the Byzantine and mediaeval ~~Madonna~~ panels. She has slightly whispy hair, an open, clear gaze. It is the clear light of Greece pouring on to Christianity: ~~that is~~ the renascence.

But the look only lasted a moment.

+

Erasmus's expectation of a ~~golden age — Renascentia~~ new age only lasted a moment: Luther broke on the world.

+

(6) Erasmus wanted a clear and simple account of Christ, from the texts themselves, unencumbered by the 'barbarities' of mediaeval syllogism, philosophy, ~~office~~ unfelt ritual.

+

Now that the rain has let up for a little the hunters are out again at dawn, prowling round the house, calling to their dogs. They seem to be finding ~~nothing~~ no game now: hardly a shot rings out. We recognised one of the noisiest of them this ~~meaning~~ morning — a carpenter from the village: he is a thin, pale, brusque man; I got my desk from him, for very little, but his sly glances made me feel I was paying a lot. At the top of the hill we saw a little gathering of hunters in their usual gear, standing alert like commanders, next to their wagons. They remind me of photographs of fascist officers from the last war, standing at the edge of woods before an attack. Walking towards San Donato last Sunday ~~a youth~~ we saw a youth standing in the field below the path with a rifle, only a few feet away: a child was standing on the path itself throwing stones into the trees, to make the birds fly up. The youth let fly two shots as we passed, just to make an impression. That piece of figura cost him two hundred lire which he could barely afford, being a peasant.

The wet weather produces a certain surliness in people: we were standing in San Donato talking to the shepherd's family, a group of 8 or so, beg in the road, and a hunter stopped with a faintly abashed smile and said to me, 'This road is public, you know.' I smiled back and said, 'You've plenty of room.' Then we all shrugged and went on talking.

+

Fascism was a revenge on la mamma.

+

~~Yesterday evening I went with Dino to look over the wine-~~

~~actory.~~ Being is rhythm. Disturb a man's rhythm and he cannot

~~have his proper bestyr~~

+

'Exercise', 'sport' all build up tension because they come out of tension. Our sporty people are rarely healthy.

Tension is trying hard.

+

The monumental work of art, [the ideal of] the masterpiece, ~~the~~ late Greek and Roman art, the baroque are all products of tension: being haunted by time.

+

Art is a glimpse.

+

German music developed in tension until every scrap of intimacy was gone, and there remained pure power, that is abstraction.

+

The Germans are the authors of a civilisation that slowly unfolds as a 'process' and therefore by inference as 'progress'; of Art and Beauty as a monument of perfection at which particular works aim, ~~which~~ either succeeding or failing in their target; ~~of history as movement, of life as a deliberate construction, that is, power~~ of Italy as movements of art, or archaeology, or museum.

+

~~I have never been with~~ It is rare to find a German who ~~could~~ can stand before the humble works of the middle ages or the early renascence ~~and~~ as a creature in himself, exchanging his intimacy with that of the work, perhaps for the first or last time in his life: he is always in the presence of Art, or a Movement of art, or a School, or Beauty, or Splendour, or some powerful construction that makes the work one of a stranger to itself ~~+ to the human creature. And yet its whole story is one of intimacy.~~ something else for him.

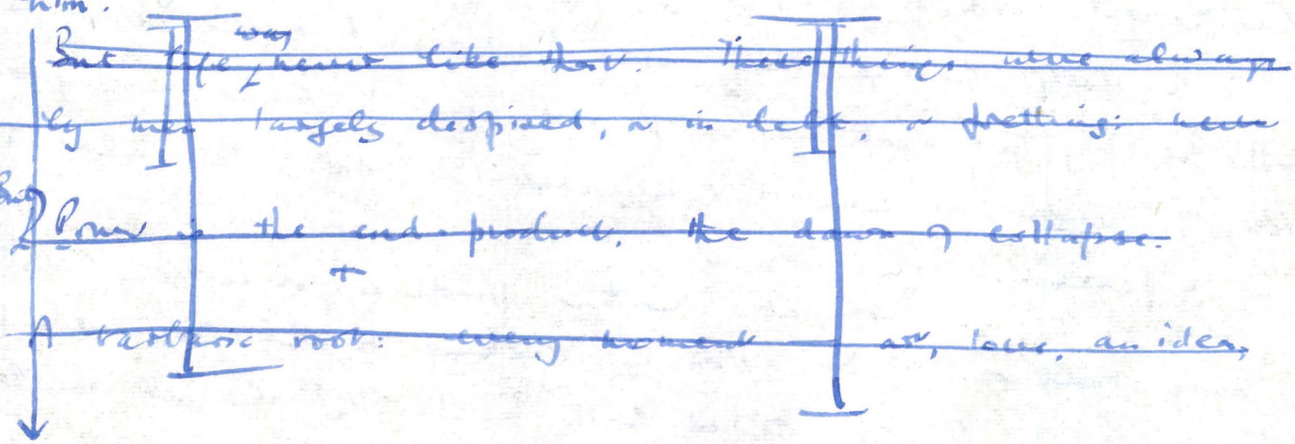
+ to him.

~~But life was never like that. These things were always made in private, by men largely despised, or in debt, or fretting: never in power~~

~~But Power is the end-product, the dawn of collapse.~~

+

~~A barbaric root: every moment — art, love, an idea,~~



To tell the truth, Germans see little in French or English art, or writing ~~literature~~ or music, except what can (like Shakespeare) be monumentalised, that is, stripped of intimacy.

I shall never forget a performance of 'Othello' in Hamburg: it was more thorough, deliberate and complete than I'd ever seen, more so even than the work itself. ~~Shakespeare~~ Shakespeare might have ~~been~~ written it ~~if he'd been the son of the~~ had he

There is rapt stillness in these early paintings. The people in them aren't moving towards ~~them~~ or away from, all the time. They are, in themselves.

Christ's rhythm – his personal rhythm – is what we've forgotten and, through the fatal sting of the Fall, twisted into moral tension. For he wasn't a teacher: much less a reformer even. What he advised was for himself. He gave up his own life, not others.

happen to save us---to save a few? Will there be cases of contamination---men like lepers---panic ain and around the camps--- attempted suicides? Will governmental denials then engage the anger of the people? Or is it too late? How could the atomic material be destroyed if we wanted to do it? Is burying it enough? One way or another we shall wake up, and find that we've been in the grip of two war-sysyetms which have engulfed the whole world by the device of keeping tension with each other, under the mischievous pretence of preserving peace while in fact there has been, and there is still going on, the most deadly and complete war ever conducted on living things.

NOTES FROM SIENA

III

INSERT

I'm beginning to like Paolo. He has fought hard for his life. And he no longer takes us for puppets. He beams at us and cries out, 'It's cold! Winter's here already!'; then gayes at us wistfully with his shining red face and sharp ~~[illegible]~~ nose and long, penetrating Etruscan eyes.) ~~He may be beginning to see that 'the other side' isn't so hard; that it is one of its surprising initiations, to soften ~~[illegible]~~ ~~yourself~~ you.~~

He seems to be making a belated attempt to soften his heart.

Now he's made money, he feels he can even afford to soften his heart, like the signori...

get lost in the woods! And they made faces and laughed.

Was Paolo's brother THERE

NOTES FROM SIENA.

INSERT

III

~~I can~~

I ~~feel~~ Think I could look endlessly only at the 14th Sienese school — Lorenzetti, Paolo di Giovanni, Duccio, Bartolo di Fredi. Their intimacy is complete — unbroken. ~~You can't cast a mystical spell without th~~

The moment the classical enters, in the next century, you get falsity, and the conditions for ~~centuries of~~ upheaval. There are poses, dramatic strokes, spectacle. The creature begins to write against

~~The Renascence was a kind throwback to paganism by way of being a revolt against Judah. (original sin).~~

the accusation of original sin, to insist on this godliness. Botticelli was the climax of this deliberate assertion of the godly human body. It went too far — like a throwback to paganism: but perhaps it had to.

get lost in the woods! And they made faces and laughed.
Was Paolo's brother THERE

But original sin won through. The reformers saw

to that. ~~They had centuries of fear to pl~~ ~~After that~~ The church ~~was~~ became paralysed with fear from that time — it dared not write a line of poetry more, ~~so to speak,~~ not sanction one good stroke of paint: So much so that Luther himself was appalled. The Church became the enemy of 'letters', and the philistine stronghold we know it to be today.

of the burgermeister, ~~with~~ enjoying frequent banquets in his honour: his work would carefully have avoided 'banality', ~~that pit fall of the provincial~~ & his plays wd. have been superbly printed, as little like the first rough 'letters' of the Humanists as possible.

A century and a half ago the Germans, including Goethe, came to ~~Rome~~ Italy and didn't trouble to look at the Giottos and Masaccios and Francescos. Now these artists have been ~~roped in to accepted taste, but with precisely the same downright exclusiveness~~ ~~catal~~ catalogued ~~and roped~~ into the area of accepted German taste but ~~which~~ with exactly the same exclusiveness ~~and certainty~~ as before. ~~When only the pagan was accepted~~ ~~When taste only accepted the pagan.~~

+

Germany has an ancient tribal root: every moment — art, love, an idea — seems to offer the possibility of the clatter of power.

Every gathering is for the attack — of the celebration of victory — of the march.

+

In the tribe the creature remains alone: only a dream unites him to others. Power haunts and terrifies him. He must always be its friend — for ~~survival~~ survival.

+

The smallest snack taken in German company is a mighty, vigorous, glowing dream.

+

They only had to embrace Erasmus, and admire him, always in the one-stimulated German way, [and they bring brought] the whole of humanism down in ruins, together with Erasmus himself, in a few years.

+

The German arrives at intimacy — that is, self-identification with others — after the bitter struggles of a lifetime.

+

Hölderlin [and others] went mad because no one round them him saw anything but power in life.

+

You cannot lay yourself bare before power: you are constrained to prepare your defences, for dear survival.

+

Never try to be your idea of yourself: in confusion as to where 'you' lie, wait.

+

Power will always force you into an idea of yourself.

+

Seeking and trying plunges us further and further into time. Life

unfolds better than ever we can unfold it.

+

The apparent quest in Christianity (+ grace) has taken us further and further into time and timeless power.

+

Christ's rhythm is what we've forgotten. It is always there, in the gospels: the present. He is always in the present. He points only to the present. He moves in this non timeless present. His predictions of the future — his crucifixion death and the aftermath — came from being dragged into Judah's time, that is, power. Salvation was forced on him by his birth. He had no other way than, by his death, to pass into power.

His rhythm can't be pointed out or proved: it lies in the gospels like a special silence, a presence. It is the only proof of his existence we have.

+

We have ended up with constructions of power, but no power in ourselves.

+

Power in us lies in where we are at present. Anything that draws us out of the present — by hope for future fulfilment or regret for the past (the same thing) — draws power out of us.

+

The present is outside time. Considering the past or the future locks living the present into time, but clothes it.

+

When I think of the past without any wish to alter one of its details, it is in the present. That is, 'the past' is not then time, but experience ~~not~~ timeless.

+

Feeling that the past is dead, the present fleeting and the future alive is like saying that, the sum, two eggs plus two eggs equals four eggs', is the eggs themselves. We cannot live a method of division.

+

Everything depends on our altering our rhythm: no more quests, trying, seeking. Then the present live-and-now will come alive again. And the world will not move upward from ourselves: instead of from abstract power, in & ourselves as its victims.

+

(But if you go East without Christ you will be a drunk, or a, self-indulgent; ~~self-defeating~~) and your idea was to melt self).

+

Insert.

Actually the mania for factory-work is based on illusion, to a great extent. The wages aren't really so very high. They are higher than peasants' wages, because the worker has to buy everything from shops, while the peasant buys only his hard goods from shops, or sometimes not even these. But worker's wages seem incomparably higher because the young factory-worker returns home to a farmhouse in the evening, and pays no rent, and in fact doesn't yet need the shops. So industry is still to a great extent living on the land. And the moment the land collapsed, if it ever did, there wd. be an immediate collapse of industry like a pack of plastic cards, and the land would receive everyone back in a rush. England became industrialised ~~[illegible]~~ 150 years ago at economic necessities, one of them the wars against Napoleon; you can't industrialise a splendid agricultural paradise for a psychological wage, or get away with it. ~~There is no [illegible] need for~~ Italy is crucifying herself on other people's moral crosses at the moment, and the period of the moral society is already passed.

full story behind that necessity? We hear what atomic material being dumped by the English & Americans in the Atlantic — of fish being contaminated — the fish entering us as food —? Can the stories be multiplied? The men who work in these plants — from the top to the bottom — are silent men. What Faustian contract have they signed? When will the break come — ~~then~~ will Einstein's prediction come true, that the price for not having destroyed every atomic weapon at the beginning wd. be the destruction of all life? Will it be allowed to digt to that? Has it already digted to that — while the mass of the people amuse their last years gazing at television? ~~with~~ or will something drastic happen to save us — or to save, at least, a few? How will it happen? Will there be cases of contamination — men with their skin falling off, like lepers — panic in and around the atomic camps — men committing suicide? ~~How~~ Will the governmental denials then engage the ~~wrath~~ anger of the people? Or is it too late? How can the atomic material be destroyed? Is burying it enough? One way or another we shall wake up — and find that ~~these twelve years since the war~~ we have been in the grip of 2 war-systems which have engulfed the world by the simple device of keeping tension with each other, under the mischievous pretence of preserving peace while in fact there has been, & still is, perhaps the most deadly & complete war ever conducted

CONTAMINATION

INSERT

Are we contaminated? Will ~~malformed~~ there be more and more malformed babies? Are terrible plagues in wait for us — working invisibly at present? We hear of an explosion at a 'most secret atom-plant' — the column of smoke that rose from it was seen for miles around: did it injure, kill, contaminate no one? What happened to the contaminated? What lies behind the government denials? An secret! — the future of our lives on this planet ~~I will~~ wrapped in secrecy! We elect [these] men to power top positions — and at once they're in the grip of security policy. ~~It's for our security~~ The higher you go, the more enslaved they are. You will find them. When you reach the president of the United States you find a man as gagged and bound and restricted as ever a man was outside a concentration camp: only he ~~himself~~ would be able to tell the full truth of what I am writing. For under his titular control is the biggest stock of atomic material in the world.

But the secrecy can't be maintained. By making an agreement what experiments the 2 sides showed that it was necessary: they needn't have done, they could have shown as politically expedient (the truth of the matter), but their publicity got the better of them; they preferred the story of moral necessity. Then what is the

The clouds don't seem — quite right, when they come. I've never seen this light in Italy before. I've seen it in England, Germany: but here, ~~within in my memory,~~ → rain has always been accompanied by a ~~thickly~~ heavily-misted sky, rather blinding because of the sun behind it; I don't remember these separate, dark, heaving clouds, day after day, producing a sunlight — when it breaks through — that belongs to the north, thin and sparkling and enormously spacious; the Italian sun, from north to south, has a deeper quality — it has always been a massive glow before, close to the earth. Even in Rome I noticed that the sun was watery; not at all the relentless Roman sun of August.

What is happening to us? Are our bodies being influenced? ~~People complain of headaches,~~ When the papers say we are being exposed increasingly to radiation, what does this mean? Sometimes the storms here are so overpowering — with avalanches of rain that never been known in Italy before — that you think, each time, that the end of the world is coming. And the unnatural heat, when it comes suddenly, feels — how can I say it? — atomic: something that grips and haunts the nerves.

The oceans regulate...

→ Are we contaminated...

NOTES FROM SIENA

The oceans regulate the temperature of the world: they absorb & redistribute heat according to the needs of different areas, equalising one zone with another. If there weren't this equalisation there would be terrible winds, sudden changes of heat and cold, violent storms...

Are the oceans being interfered with? (We are like children with no questions).

Notes from Siena

The moral revolution comes from original sin, and tries to supersede it. The sense of being superior to others is the sense of being dirty in oneself. To be free of this is to feel at once equality with the lowest creatures.

Germans hate each other so bitterly since the war because they recognise in each other what they cannot bear to see in themselves.

Freedom from self-disgust is the freedom to see one's own

Index

II

XII

If you couple Christ 'Ye are gods' (that is, You have the power to create your lives) with the conviction of original sin (that is, You are stained in your ~~soul~~ intimacy), you ~~have not only an unworkable contradiction but the desire to re-create produce the desire~~ produce, from an unworkable contradiction, the desire, ~~to create life, that is~~ to create a new life that will be free of Christ: that is, Reform.

Hence, the endless disturbances of Xian life: the industries that ~~can~~ that, so to speak, clean up natural life, or create abstract conditions in which intimacy (undivided of Reform – England) languishes. (Industries started in the land

America is the climax of the determination to re-create life.

I watch the pigeons outside: the two ~~children~~ equals are dark and soft-weathered, and are fed by the parents until they have a breast full of food. They are then ready to fly. They pester their mother to tip them food a bit more, pecking at her neck. But she refuses. And they are constrained to fly, and then to begin picking of their own accord, in the fields.

What would happen if they

tied to re-create their lives? Could they improve on that routine which they 'know' without knowledge? What could they do but interfere with it? abandon their children? contradict their own impulses? — until they ~~were formless~~ as we are? addressing each other in a familiar mode while really being strangers as never before? nervous anchorless? torn from the form they were born with — that is, formless we were given no less decidedly than the pigeons? ~~[illegible]~~ The attempt to re-create life ends in suicide & madness. Wait, so we shall see.

they were born with, ~~and~~ but unable to provide ~~[illegible]~~ another? ~~with their little minds and claws?~~

German ideas engulfed 2 continents — America and the Russian countries; moral progress & historical materialism are the same doctrine in the end. Living Hegel becomes living hell.

think this belongs to a vigorous barbaric and tribal past: the world is always alive to clatter – there is always a show of power, an imminent attack, a celebration, plunder. The German stands before Giotto, as he stood before Roman statuary a century ago, and finds it Terrific and Splendid ~~and Superb – something more stimulated than life itself; and unquestionably Art.~~

+

A bare and cold universe is a good start. We only need to let ourselves fall into it.

+

The best certainty is ~~to feel~~ no foothold.

+

Just as we and the other creatures are on different levels of space (size), so we are on different levels of time. We can never pierce beyond our own time.

+

Objective means valid for our tiny experience, as if a grain of sand discovered itself.

+

We make such a business about where we are ~~moving~~ going to, that there is no point in ~~moving~~ going: it means we are nothing here and now.

+

Christ also pointed East. INSERT $\boxed{A1}$

+

We know nothing but the present: a solution, dénouement, climax is the crowning of a state, not the end of a movement in time.

+

~~Horror~~ of the personal and private is an effort to keep the thought on the level of concepts: that is, short of religion, that is, self change.

+

Concepts ~~in themselves~~ are dead: we need to know the life of which they are the makeshift ~~endlessly changing~~ signposts.

+

The present isn't here and now, that is, a particle of time: it is $\boxed{\text{consciousness}}$, our $\boxed{\text{state of}}$ being. 'Future' and 'past' are simply arguments about our $\boxed{\text{state of}}$ being: therefore largely moral.

+

evolution, nothing left open for discussion, no real surrender to the infinite. Only Brahms, perhaps, took a real step away from that. Therefore when he is played like Beethoven (that is, as the dramatic unfolding of a definite and certain theme) he is meaningless, and we cannot see how his instrumental work connects with his symphonic. Haydn, Mozart, Schubert – the Austrians – always left something open: in both, the marvellous outer silence is suddenly heard, without it making us feel, as it would in Beethoven, that this is a marvellous construction, a legend told at night. Furtwängler's great touch with Beethoven was perhaps due to his unfolding him like an awful and stupendous legend, ~~told~~ in breathless dramatic steps. But Schubert defies the same treatment (which Furtwängler was careful not to give him): man's time has to be forgotten; development and progress have to be put aside. When Schubert's Great symphony is played for development and progress it is a hopeless, rushed mess: not only that, but vulgar and repetitive, as many of the critics found it at the time. ~~So, in fact, is all Mozart: but the German~~ This is why Schubert was despised in his day (by the German taste), and still is secretly. The same is true of Mozart: but the Germans have hoisted him up as a monument and spiritualised him, as they must anything they respect. The result is that we can't find our way in his work: the occasional pieces, written to order and sometimes unwillingly, ~~and~~ to be played before strolling and gossiping audiences of courtiers and noblemen, are all mixed up with the other work, under the same ~~of~~ ponderous and ordered style, even while it makes him, according to tradition, light and aery and spiritual. Mozart is much closer to the Italians – to the early music written for an occasion that was also intimate – than that: in the German ~~to the Germans,~~ tradition he is stripped ~~despite appearances:~~ of intimacy, and becomes as cool and ordered as mountain-tops; the German occasion is never intimate, it is always a demonstration of formality and power, ~~in which people cut figures. The German is always strangely at the edge of organisation: the world is always alert to organise~~ itself, just as the past, for him, is already organised and grouped into its movements. He has ordered the world for us – Italy, ancient Rome, the renascence: his histories have established a world too deliberate – too lacking in intimacy, which thrives on chance and forgetfulness – to be true. Sometimes I

bird ready for cooking at the market costs ninety lire. ~~As~~ Even for the hares and pheasants ~~killed~~ shot, the money spent on ~~killing~~ shooting them far outweighs the bag. ~~It is a simple~~

~~It~~ It makes the woods seem barbaric and gloomy, especially in this weather. There is a particular clowning trio, with dogs, who call to each other dramatically, and choose the earliest hours: shopkeepers, perhaps.

There are two thousand 'hunters' from the village alone this year. As people get richer that number will go up. They will make the countryside a dangerous place. A law will have to be made. Sometimes it seems that the ~~Italian~~ people are crying out to be ~~dictated to~~ policed and dragooned again. It makes them feel safe.

+

The Italian is our first self, our genius. He shows us how much we fear responsibility.

+

La caccia – another item in the Italian rhetoric.

+

When the Italian sees the foreign tourist he thinks: 'He's on holiday! He has money to throw away!' That is, he himself would never dream of cutting a figure as a tourist abroad unless he were rich. Foreign travel is the highest-grade, rich man's rhetoric.

Insert?

+

The Italian was always enslaved – by the church, by signori, by occupying armies. Now he enslaves himself.

+

He will not widen his imagination, out of fear.

+

If I want to keep an Italian friend, I'm always careful to let him down now and then. It makes him feel in equal company.

+

He hates the ~~feeling~~ sense of a blueprint of obligations and honour hanging over a friendship. Like the Dew – perhaps like all really ancient peoples – he likes an escape-hatch from future time.

+

Pietro came back on Sunday, looking pale and tired after a week on the road. I asked him to come back in the evening and tell me about Sicily – the people he'd met while travelling: some little stories – racconti! He took surprised at this, and came dutifully: he at once

you fire just then?' I said. 'Fire!' He looked — despite the gun slung over his shoulder — as if he'd never fired in his life. The other two looked more sun-burnt and homely, so — as they shut their engines off — I shouted over to them, 'Did you fire?' 'Yes, they did fire, and — madonna la troia! — they couldn't find the bird. The younger of them searched among the bushes: he began searching underneath our windows. I realized he needed telling: 'You fired into our bedroom window, do you know that?' 'What?' He gaped — his eyes still blazing with the chase. 'Impossible!' he said. 'I fired up there — towards that tree!', pointing at our bedroom-window — which was behind the tree. 'Exactly!' I said. 'It's dangerous. You've made a hole that big in our window!' And I improvised a hole with my fingers. 'Impossible.' The older, homely-looking one joined in. 'It couldn't have done that! It must have been something else!' 'No', I said, 'you fired into our window!' The search went on: you could see, from the young man's eyes, that he would fire at anything, blindly. He kicked among the bushes. 'I know it's wounded!' he said. 'What was it?' I asked. 'A pheasant?' 'Oh, no! it was just a bird!' 'Ah,' the older one said in a conversational way, 'so you're living here, are you?' 'Oh, yes,' I answered with a smile, 'It's — quiet!' 'Yes, it must be quiet!' He was being chatty to get me off the subject — since firing on a road, and towards a house, are two punishable offences, which he knew and the young one didn't. They then drove off with a 'Good evening', having shown me their dangerous-looking cartridges to prove how harmless they were.

Apparently, hordes of 'hunters' have been going to the field — keep into the woods — where the pheasants are known to feed. And they shoot them sitting. Why they call it la caccia and not il tiro — shooting — don't know.

We have watched them stalking all over this hill for the last few days — singly or in pairs, with and without dogs. They will suddenly fire a shot outside the house at dawn. The hysteria of the first day seems to have abated. Dino tells me that it costs a hundred lire for a cartridge — and a

120.

old Catholic acid, 'rossofenico' (?) sulphuric acid. In the corridor between the tall cement vats there were sacks of citric acid, used presumably to give sharpness to the taste. I noticed that the hosepipe feeding the platform with wine didn't go directly from vats to bottles, but passed through the wall to a half-hidden tank outside, access to which could only be reached from the roof, where the proprietor himself lives. I asked, was this to cool the wine before it went into the bottles, but the answer was vague — no, no, it was only another tank: they were going to remove it soon and incorporate it with the others. But since the other vats are huge cement affairs, this is unlikely. I thought that perhaps the chemical mixing was done in this outside tank, from above, so that neither the workers nor 'inspectors' (Dino told me that the place was well 'protected' from inspection, by bribes) should see what was going on. When Dino cried — not a request from the workers — 'Now show me how you make wine from water!', the man showed not the slightest shame and only looked roguish and proud, and nodded quickly, with an emphatic 'Sì sì, sì sì!' — yes, it's done! wine is made from water! But today he couldn't show it to us. He winked on Sunday, when none of the others was working; and he gave us a confidential glance. Apparently, he drinks the stuff himself: he offered me some of his vernaccia, and I took a tiny sip, which was quite unpleasant at all; and he downed the rest in greedy gulps. He limps, and his joints seem to give him trouble. He told us that they produce over a thousand litres a day, and two truckloads a week go south, to Rome and Caserta. Also he sends his machine consignments abroad, even as far as America. He showed us two of the filtering the wine and proudly said proudly, 'They cost six million each.' The work of constructing the facility in 'modern' lines, not of virtually bare, cost him sixty million. The concern was worth twice as much. And he had started as a peasant! Dino said with a sneer. 'Yes,' the old rogue said, limping up the stairs like a character in Dickens, 'I'm worth a lot of money!'

+

(1) The first Erasmus heard from Luther was a reminder (Luther was then an unknown friar) that he paid too little attention to original sin; and should read St. Augustine.

+

(2) It is usually said that Luther's propositions against indulgences, posted up in 1517, were the first act of the Reformation, but in fact they brought it down in ruins. Humanism was the real reformation, and it had existed for ~~a century~~ two centuries or more. Reform of the Church was its endless theme of discussion, and its hope. 2(a)

(3) The condemnation of Luther at Louvain university in 1519 meant that Erasmus the humanist, who was teaching there, had to go. He, too, was by inference a 'reformer'. He had, sooner or later to declare ~~[illegible]~~ for or against Luther; and he recoiled from Luther's violence. It forced him to declare against.

In 1520 Luther was declared a heretic. (4) INSERT 'LUTHER'.

(1) If you attack the cult of your power (or behaviour) ~~(behaviour)~~ you identify yourself with it. Thus, the martyr Luther became the rich man's protagonist. The Reformation was carried out both in England and Germany by authority, and in both cases on behalf of ~~the same rich class~~ ~~a small group of nobles~~ a small group of rich & powerful men.

(2) If the cult of your attack is behaviour, & not falsehood, you have to replace it with different behaviour, not truth ~~nothing is solved~~.

(5) But Christ simply was: and this is enough.

(4) The rhythm round Luther was that of power, that is, tension: not intimacy. It wasn't enough for him to be, & believe. Erasmus warned him that his violence would disrupt the whole globe.

I believe Germany is Luther.

(3a) ~~Power is a flight from intimacy~~; The Reformation took its platform in original sin; power was therefore its natural friend. For the will to do is the will to power.

And

Numberless Germans formed ~~up~~ up triumphantly & bravely behind Luther against the emperor, and Germany was born.

(3) If you rail against magnates you are in danger of wanting to be one yourself. So The Reformation started by attacking church magnates and ended by establishing lay ones.

To I try to give up seeing life as development (from place to place, age to age), and ~~motionless~~ know it as motionless ... I thought of our coming from Rome to here as a movement towards something, that is, as a development of my life: and now I

Insert

NOTES FROM SIENA

The Italian Renaissance was the real reformation — its source all over Europe. And the baroque, ~~was~~ they the reaction from the false reformation, ~~put an end to humanism~~ Counter-Reformation. Sent the renaissance down in ruins.

Saw some sickening post-Renaissance paintings in Cataldo today: craven, posturing, loud-mouthed; the mediocre are painting now. An figura: ~~not a breath of real thought or feeling is allowed any more~~; anything but sincere could lead to heresy. Here you see Spanish influences.

We have to pay close attention to all these things: but not of pleasure, without the slightest guest.

How to go to the lavatory: don't try, they say, don't force — you damage the bowels. If you don't breathe properly — if you breathe quickly & tensely — your body doesn't get enough oxygen, your diaphragm doesn't massage your bowels in a regular movement as it shd. do, etc. etc. ~~and one disfunction leads to another. Breathing is essential to standing, digesting, thinking etc. etc the act of standing properly. I was taught to sit, stand, walk badly, first at school then in the army. I was taught 'to stand up straight,' my books taught to sprawl over them because I was tired & bored, crumpling up my body. By the age of seventeen I had massive varicose veins on my leg, thing~~

Gradually, in the last 10 years, I've looked into every part of my life, and tried to disrobe myself ~~so to speak~~, of education. My early childhood supported me in this: because, being brought up by poor people, I was in harmony. But later the world made its onslaught — educated me to cover my face with fixed to expressions to hide ~~the~~ my real feeling, to walk in a rigid, ashamed way, to stand, sit, breathe, eat badly. I've tried to unlearn all these things. Only ~~a few weeks ago~~ ~~recently~~ last year I learned how to stand properly — from a book. A book had to tell me. In a few weeks my spine had straightened, I seemed to have given my upper body space at last. The more we hurry about a city, ~~the more~~ the impression is forced on our bodies — hide yourself, crumple yourself up, hurry, hurry. We are swept whether we like it or not, into ~~time~~ false time. The Italians are hurrying to do the same now — to break their ~~wonderful~~ inherited soundness of nerves in a way they don't understand yet ~~but which we, esp. the Anglo-Saxons,~~ ed ~~tell them about~~. There are even books on ~~going to~~

Our livers, kidneys, heart, glands, cells do their invisible work in the stillness of present time: only when we chase time do we disorder them; our breathing becomes tense, our circulation changes, one by one ~~the~~ our organs are flung into alarm and ~~disorderly~~ disharmony.

+

Attention to our food, our sleep, our habits: but out of desire and pleasure, that is, without the slightest quest.

+

Even going to the lavatory has to be retaught: ~~to many people~~ it has become straining (quest), with consequent bowel-disorders.

+

We can tell our bodies nothing new.

+

Religion is realised when there are no longer external signs of it.

+

The mind should work as easily and naturally as anything else in nature: when it asks for sleep it should be given it. Concentration is the accepting of this.

+

With the hardest deadline this should be observed: if we you have the nerve.

+

We are only free when we cease fixing our mind on things, and things on our mind: wonder begins.

+

The other day, in the stormy weather, I drove into the courtyard and ran over one of the pigeons. My tyre pinioned one of her wings down as she was trying to fly away, and drew her under it. The other pigeon, her mate, flew away quickly and with an unusual rushing movement which I noticed. We got out of the car and went upstairs as usual, and it was only a few minutes later that I looked out of the balcony window and saw the pigeon sunk into the mud, quite still. I suddenly realised with horror what I had done. The mate was in the nest, and could see his rear feathers moving. I went down and scooped the animal into a piece of newspaper: Gino would want to see it. There was a scratch ~~mark~~ on her body — I realised by her darker markings that she was the female. I climbed up to the nest later and saw there were two tiny,

fourteen ~~squabs~~ squabs, sitting huddled close together, looking rather like baby starlings. I would have the male would look after them. The following morning he was missing from the nest, and didn't ~~return all day~~ appear in the courtyard. I thought he'd gone off to find another home, but Dino said this was impossible — the ♀ was not ~~finding~~ getting food for the young. And later I found him sitting placidly in the nest one ~~morning~~ afternoon. He didn't even stir when I looked in. It seemed to me that the thought this male had flown away for a time — she'd flown into the earth under the wheels of the car — and he had to wait. He knew there'd been an accident. He was alarmed at the time: and the sound of the engine seemed to terrify him, by association. But he accepted everything. It made me feel gloomy and rotten for two days. I shall try to find him another female. I sometimes go approach the female & the other couple, but the male walks firmly in front of him, and he turns back again.

Dino took me to the ~~wine-factory~~ wine-factory. In the entrance there were hundreds of *fiaschi* of red and white wine, lined up like painted soldiers. Further inside there were girls standing at a moving belt: they were tired, pale and silent; it was towards the end of the day. A printed schedule on the wall gave the closing-time as six o'clock, but it was now nearly seven. These girls were pasting red and golden label on to the bottles as they jerked past. Among them was one young man, the 'chemist' as I find out later. He looked rather undistinguished, as well he might; and he gave me a quick, wondering glance — a dark, thick-set, pleasant youth. The *fiaschi* were emerging from a ~~round~~ circulating platform, ~~which~~ where they were filled mechanically: and here an old man was sitting, thin and tight-faced, with sharp but strangely naked and lifeless eyes; also very pale. He leaned on a stick, as he took cleaned bottles off the belt and fixed them under the taps. I took him for a peasant, but Dino said, 'The wine!' He began showing us round, while the girls watched in a listless way, like condemned prisoners. There were massive ~~rubber~~ hose-pipes coming from the cement vats, which filled the circulating taps. 'So clean!' the owner said, and Dino echoed him: 'Clean, clean!' He pointed to the little office belonging to the chemist, where the quantities of chemicals to be mixed were probably determined: I looked in and saw small bottles of pure alcohol (apparently the alcohol-content of each wine is determined chemically),

begin to think of the move back to Rome in the same way. But the reality is a landscape ~~which is still~~ where, and Rome is the place, and this town is another, and they remain there in stillness, like distant lighted cities seen from a hill, at night.

This is how we haunt ourselves, and pluck ourselves from the present.

If I am not moving towards, I am more fully.

The present is a flowing stillness: it never disappears; we are in it all the time. Our senses at once come alive. The world settles down all around us. It isn't the stillness of things, but of that from which things come (like a room, it's still and safe all round us.)

At once we shed the haunting questions, 'What will the future bring?', 'What has the past stolen?' The past and future are our mind working.

We draw nearer to the world by ~~abstracting time: so rather, by~~ ceasing to identify it with time. ~~Time is the mind.~~

As the philosophers say, we can't perceive space and time.

The habits of the weather have changed, but they are still strong. The air is now balmy and warm, the best temperature for the grapes. But the clouds gather in the afternoon and a rain-storm breaks suddenly in the evening. Then there is a serene, starry sky, with hardly a breeze, and the grillos echo across the fields.

At the very first light the hunters begin climbing into the wood with their dogs. In the immense stillness of dawn their voices sound dry, petty and unenchanted. When I hear them I think, 'Haven't they anything charming to keep them at home!' The village seems castrated. The men gaze before them like their own castrated oxen.

(4) Answering Erasmus's ~~tractate~~ treatise on free will, Luther wrote that God had always hated men, even before he created them. He was too much closer to the church than Erasmus, who (like Christ) had little to say about original sin.

(5) The reformation of Erasmus, which was broken by those of Luther,

was ~~more~~ deeper and drastic, and revolutionary, than Luther's, because it argued that men were free and good.

+

Then Luther forced the church ~~has rested~~ to rest its power squarely on guilt, either in ~~Protestation~~ a Reformed Faith or in Rome or in Counter-Reformation.

+

Guilt is the preference of time to the present. divided from Rome

+

It is the claiming of power: the power to have created a permanent (bad) situation.

+

Remorse is sorrow, ~~and~~ the endeavour to mend: ~~the~~ guilt is the claiming of a ~~certain~~ moral destiny. 'I am guilty' takes the same position as 'I am free of all stain'.

+

'I' am not a separate destiny; but neither am 'I' a collective one. 'I' am not a destiny at all. 'I' am.

+

Destiny implies development, unfolding.

+

Guilt and freedom were incompatible. Luther brought into being the persecution of humanism and bonae literae (what the priests called 'poetry') and the terror of the post-reformation, which castrated [debased] the Italians into [a mental new] slavery, precisely because he sounded the theme of guilt, or rather the verdict, 'guilty'. INSERT A

+

I am guilty only for men.

+

Guilt means 'having committed a crime', but it has come to mean 'the destiny to committ crimes'.

+

'Christ' has never been quite elegant. The sophisticated have always had trouble with the name. Erasmus talks about the humanists who preferred the phrase ~~like~~ Jupiter optimus maximus to Jesus Christus redemptor mundi.

+

Jesus Christ, the redeemer of the world.

+

The church was flung back into a sort of permanent mediaevalism by the 'reformation'. That is, thinking was no longer done inside.

+

The sicherheit of the German — his curious downright and undoubting mode of speech, which is quite unadapted for discussion — comes

from the reformer who felt he was guided by the holy spirit, its instrument.

+

Germany is a heady dream of power.

+

And Erasmus said, 'I'm a man. What can I know about the choices of the holy spirit?'

+

As another absolute mystical dream, nazism, turned us into destroyers, the 'reformation' turned the church into a destroyer. Rome became Luther.

+

Erasmus saw men leaving their 'reformed' Mass with faces full of wrath and violence.

+

History quickened. All things changed. ~~Movements, abstract markets, machines, moral revolutions everywhere.~~ Intimacy was broken once and for all.

+

The moral revolution always destroys, overtly like the French revolution & nazism, or in the processes of time like England's industrial revolution.

+

Erasmus noticed that there were no fewer drunkards, rich men or fornicators among the 'reformed.'

+

We went to Lucca for the festa of the Santo Volto, when crucifixes and banners and even tall altar-pieces are brought from churches all over the town's province — from Pisa, Massa Marittima, Viareggio. We arrived ~~after dark,~~ when the candles were already alight — hundreds upon hundreds of tiny tapers framing the windows and the porches and the arches and even the roof-tops, in a twinkling mass that made the town look like the most exquisite wedding-cake ever made. The traffic was barred, and waiting crowds, with that special, intimate Lucchese humour, surged through the narrow streets. We parked the car on top of the massive wall that ~~surrounds the town and~~ has preserved the town's intimacy for centuries, and will renew it when traffic is barred for good and all. The wonderful overladen shops and busy cafés ~~and~~ glowed on either side; the ~~late~~ ~~renaissance~~ town theatre, a quiet, clean, sedate building from the late baroque period, renaissance [c. 18?], looked like a miniature palace under its candlelight,

standing alone behind a square that seemed made of cockaded soldiers to parade in. And, in fact, the French laws had great influence here (CHECK). S. Michele had great flaming tapers behind its tiers of pillars and arches, so that it seemed to float and roll in flame with a strange, wild movement. ~~And the little church~~ We passed the little church of S. Frediano, so thumped and modest, lying under one arc-lamp, neglected by the feste, and watching humbly and a little gloweringly the cafés were full. People were crowded at the windows and balconies. The bake-shops were selling ring-shaped sweet loaves, with currants in them. In the square before the cathedral there were stalls for doughnuts and toys and sweets. The procession was forming up in different parts of the town. The night was clear and warm, and luckily we were in our summer clothes again. People were sweeping into the town from all the gates, converging. Then the ordinary lights went out. We stood in front of the doughnut stall, on a raised step, and the arms surrounded the electric lights behind our heads. The procession began. There was the sound of a band. The hum of voices grew louder. The crowd surged. There were children in arms, old men, ~~young~~ strong young women, boys close together, priests. And the first massive crucifix came slowly again, above people's heads, borne like a treasure, swaying slightly, high in the air, clasped in the arms of a single man, making him kneel with the effort, while two others stood close to him in case the cross fell, and also to relieve him after a few yards. And he makes a strange slow dance with his cross, so that it turns in the air, slowly and slightly. Here you have the joy of religion. The Christ was black, jet black, and shining, and they had draped a golden robe round his middle, with a tassle dangling down, so that he seemed to sway and dance in the air, clothed delicately and thoughtfully. Then came banners, and smaller crosses, and men in black cloaks with painted hoods, and thick candles held high above on sticks, and then the band. And again a

friendship. Like the Jews---perhaps like all ancient peoples---he wants an escape-hatch from future time.

I thought just now, 'How many people my wife and I have driven away in the last few years, by offering only intimacy.'

Gradually, in the last ten years, I've looked into every part of my life, and tried to disrobe myself of education. My early childhood supported me in this: because, being brought up by poor people, I was allowed my natural harmony. The poor everywhere live in present time. But later on the world made its onslaught: it made me cover my face with fixed expressions to hide my real feelings, to walk in a rigid, ashamed way, to stand, sit, breathe, as if there were no leisure in the world, and no glory in my own body.

Only last year I learned how to stand properly---from a book. A book had to tell me. I learned that what was natural to me was ---unnatural. The more we hurry about a city the impression seems to be forced on our bodies---'Hide yourself, crumple yourself up, hurry, hurry.' We are swept further and further into time.

There are even books on going to the lavatory now: don't try, they say, don't force---you damage the bowels. If you don't breathe properly---if you breathe quickly and tensely---your body doesn't get enough oxygen, your diaphragm can't massage your bowels gently and regularly as it should, etc, etc.

But there is one condition to learning: to give up trying.

on breathing, standing, going to the lavatory.

massive crucifix, this time with sprays of gold leaf pouring out from its arms in great globes, swaying and tinkling as it moved along, like a shower of light in the darkness, swathing its patient and broken Christ in colour. I have never seen anything where the sheer joy and victory of the crucifixion was contained so much: where it was celebrated wildly and gladly. Here you have the mediaeval — a certain frenzy of worship that is also delicate and compassionate and intimate, as the procession sweeps along, and one raucous band follows the other, and there are monks, priests, servers, men dressed as mediaeval soldiers with long hair, making their faces look real and dark and virile as ours can never be under our ridiculous half-shaved heads; and suddenly, as one of the last great crosses passed, swaying above its bearer like a tower, there was a burst of light and smoke and shattering noise from one of the roofs, and people let off fireworks and smoke-tins simultaneously. There was clapping, cheering. As each cross passed people clapped triumphantly. The crowd was thick and hot. Bells rang out. One band clashed with the other. Here was the frenzy and wildness of faith, with nothing pagan, nothing destructive or egotistic as paganism must be, but delicate and loud and joyful, with masses of colour and light: the kind of worship that, to its shame and disgrace, the Church put out all over Italy, in safety-first.

+

~~You could see how the Church had stood still for one four centuries; and therefore gone back.~~

After the procession we went to a little restaurant and ate excellently: there was even wholemeal bread, the first time we've seen it in Italy; and real wine. Those vast walls round the city have protected its sanity.

+

~~At home again,~~ We took Caterina to a 'fair.' It was above Castel Vecchio, looking straight across the immense, wooded valley, with its

rim of clean, rolling fields. We could see where we had walked in the first heat of the summer, trying to find the ruins; but from where we stood the ruins were invisible, hugged inside one of the deep valleys. We walked up to where the fair should have been. There was the usual chiasso of an Italian gathering – voices raised, bells, cries, hooting horns, whistles, laughter. At one time this fair was famous in the whole countryside: hundreds of horses were for sale, filling an immense field; there were ~~oxen~~ calves, pigs, every sort and size of animal from pigeons to oxen. There were merry-go-rounds, roasting booths; there was music and dancing, and the peasants wore their costumes. Avenues formed themselves between the trees and the booths and waiting cattle. Men got drunk and sang at the top of their voices. Even 10 years ago that was so. And when we got to the top of the hill there were four or five booths, selling sweets, toys and oddments like bootlaces and pocket-knives. There was an air of self-conscious desolation over everything. We looked for cattle, horses, sheep: nothing. Armida shrugged and laughed – 'How things have changed!' There was a table and a bench when a few men sat drinking white wine in a perplexed and vacant way. There was rubbish on the ground, people seemed dressed in a slovenly way. It was like being in an aimless mob. Yuttles looked round them in a gawping, heavy way, not knowing what to do. We looked into the woods – nothing. How strange – for people to come from all over the countryside to buy a bag of sweets which they wouldn't walk two metres for. One young woman stood desolately in traditional costume, ~~[illegible]~~ her white cloak gleaming proudly, her hood close round her head. And later, after we'd gone, we saw her walking across the fields with her husband and two children, on the way home. A shepherd had scrubbed himself and his 2 children clean, and they also were walking back with the same air of desolation, the children clutching plastic pistols. Nothing is destroyed so fast and with so little regret as in Italy. They're used to it. We laughed, shook our heads at each other, and went back home. 'Better to stay at home ironing!' Armida said.

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INSERT

NOTES FROM SIENA

Don Amido gave me an Italian New Testament and I was struck by the rhythm and simplicity of the language: it was almost identical with the language of the King James version; you would think one word had been exchanged for its exact ~~opposite~~ equivalent. It didn't seem like real Italian. It had exactly the same rhythm and tone ~~and, as I say, even words~~ as the English. At once it was clear to me that we belonged to the same civilisation and that the idea of 'foreign' languages inside our civilisation had grown up only in the last four or five hundred years. Italian has changed: really it has been abolished as a language; it defies being learned because it has an infinite number of different and often tortuous rhythms, suitable for different classes and different attitudes — rather like a distracted person who can settle to nothing, through having been forbidden to concentrate ~~at an early age~~ on anything. The language shows the mark of the Counter-Reformation as the people do. There are words no dictionary ~~will~~ would tell you about — even if ~~and~~ adequate dictionaries existed: ~~but~~ Italian has been locked in a ~~kind of~~ desert for so long, quite separated from the rest of its family in Europe, ~~that it has become a~~ ~~[illegible]~~ formless pool of words and dialects through which ~~people, especially~~ writers flounder to find (or invent) a rhythm of their own. There ~~seems to be~~ is really no authentic language; and the ~~language~~ constructions unlike ~~that~~ those of the Italian Bible — seems to have no decided rhythm, as French and English ones do. The other day Guido's family asked us to write a letter for them to some Swiss people who had sent them photographs: a simple letter of thanks. It was strange to write in someone else's language — while those who had grown up in it looked over my shoulder like foreigners. But in Italian almost anything goes: I don't mean that breaches of grammar are allowed, but that ~~the~~ a foreign or strange use of the language isn't as strange to

Italian ears as it would be to the French or English ~~[illegible]~~ in a similar situation. I have found that Italians who correct you in language always have an attitude of some kind: usually an attitude of pride, sometimes a mild nationalism. They would like you to believe that a fixed and authentic national language existed, but it doesn't. ~~We have the strange experience~~

Quoto New Testament: John.

John 7.11.
Ora i Giudei lo cercavano alla festa e dicevano: Lui dov'è?
E tra la gente era un gran mororare di lui. Gli uni dicevano: 'E buono' altri: 'No; anzi travia il popolo'. Nessuno però ne parlava in palese per paura de' Guidei.
Ma già nel mezzo della festa Gesù salì nel tempio a insegnare.
E i Giudei ne stupivano, dicendo: Come mai costui sa di lettere senza aver mai studiato?
Gesù prese a dir loro:
n.p. La mia dottrina non e mia, ma di chi mi ha mandato. Chi vuol far la volontà di lui, conoscerà dalla dottrina se è da Dio, o
n.p. s'io parlo da me. Chi parla da sè, cerca la propria gloria; ma chi cerca la gloria di colui che lo ha mandato, egli è verace, e non c'è in lui inguistizia. Mosè non vi diede la Legge?
n.p. Eppure nessuno di voi osserva la Legge. Perchè cercate d'uccidermi?
Rispose la gente:
Tu sei indemoniato. Chi cerca d'ucciderti?
Gesù replicò loro:
Una cosa sola ho fatto, e tutti ne siete stupiti.
Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?
And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.
Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.
Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.
And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?
Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.
If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of my self.
He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.
Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?
The people answered and said, Thous hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?
Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

NOTES FROM SIENA.

INSERT

A note on the beginning of the Gospels given me by Fr Amedo:
'The faithful, who for at least a quarter of an hour read the books of the Holy Scripture with veneration and as sacred writing, may gain with contrite heart the partial indulgence of three years!' So the church fell into time.

INSERT

NOTES FROM SIENA

~~Today,~~

This morning, Sunday – the day of peace everywhere outside Italy – a convoy of cars, small trucks and motorcycles came and parked themselves immediately outside our gate, long before first light, at about half-past or five. It sounded like an invasion. Voices were raised as if it was noon. Dogs were unleashed, rifles were slung on the shoulder, they strolled under our window on the way to the woods. I'm sure they would all set up camp and shoot and shout immediately under our window if hares and pheasants were to be found there. I doubt if one of them would even give us a thought, even while knowing we were there: ~~that wouldn't~~ This isn't be selfishness or boorishness; our presence simply wouldn't be connected with the shooting. To 'disturb' ~~someone~~ in Italy – disturbare – doesn't mean ~~all~~ to violate ~~their~~ someone's peace but to 'put them out' in some way. In Italy, ~~you can't violate someone's peace because~~ violating someone's peace is impossible, because basically no one is thought to have any: the idea of an inner peace in people ~~simply~~ doesn't exist ~~and~~ (as a fact it doesn't exist), ~~and~~ therefore it can never be held sacred. ~~The endless motorcycle-cum-trucks that pass along in the dead of night early morning with their silencers trimmed~~ ~~This is why machines, guns, radios and Televisions are~~ Cars, guns, televisions, radios ~~all~~ become sources of noise and nuisance in Italian hands, for this reason. ~~They are never used 'with conscience' because~~

~~I believe that the church took away not only the idea~~ of inner peace, and of it being sacred, but inner peace itself. It broke the interior monologue as you find it broken in political prisoners. It taught the Italian that he was little better than a dog, and

conscience in our sense is missing. People simply do not have it: compassion, fellow-feeling, timidity, fear of the law, prudence, take its place. ~~[illegible]~~ The more I live in Italy the more I feel ~~than this wasn't always so, and~~ that it was the Counter-Reformation that took it away. The Church abolished ~~not only~~ ~~simply~~ both not only the idea of inner peace, and the sense of its being sacred in ~~the~~ people, ~~but~~ and has ~~the~~ inner peace itself. It broke the interior monologue as you find it broken sometimes in political prisoners. The Italian no longer had any right to choose for himself — even between right and wrong: this is the sense of life I get from our priest, Don Amigo; given the power, he would close my mind, and all my books, without a moment's thought. He is rigid and stern, and even perhaps relentless in a Lutheran way, under his mildness.

Italy had peace once: I mean, in people — something than sound nerves, which they have now. You can hear it in Italian music from the fourteenth or thirteenth century — an extraordinary silence — like another rhythm we have never been allowed to hear in our own broken and shattered lives. Only Schubert perhaps, in the north, captures that stillness.

The Italian was taught by the Church that he was a dog: and it was natural that he should ~~extend the identity to others as well. For the Italian a human creature is a dog: but since he's one as well, and belongs to an ancient race, and is filled with Christian mercy, he is less aggressive than many for whom men are gods.~~ see other men as dogs as well.

This is the sound in their voices in the morning as they tramp across to the woods calling their ~~dogs~~ hounds: ~~it is~~ a dry, barren, dusty sound — unenchanted by a moment's enlightenment or whim or real choice; the sound of a man expelled by the gods.

+ + + +

Insert – Last page.

LETTER FROM SIENA

III

The worst flood in Italy since the war. Broken dyke dam (PIRAGO)

A landslide in the artificial ~~dyke~~ lake of Vaiont, in the province of Belluno. Thousands dead. An earth-tremor was recorded in Trieste at the same time. ~~A vast mass of water and mud was~~ A wave of mud and water a hundred metres, so people say, swept through Longarone. ~~displaced at Longarone, and~~ Villages, trees, roads, fields have been uprooted and flung in the air, and the whole area, for kilometre after kilometre along the PIAVE, is silent and devastated, without a sign of life.

~~Some people say that the earth tremor was the cause of the flood, others the effect.~~

The lake broke through the mountains on all sides.

CHECK WITH MAP.

PIRAGO
PROV. di BELLUNO
CORTINA D'AMPEZZO
LAGO DI VAIONT.

The landslide broke the dyke which presumably ~~on the lake, presumably~~ is over the lake.

Dyke bursts in the gorge of VAIONT.

check

1889-1959 (70)

~~Dykes~~ Dams burst 1889 (Pennsylvania), 1895 (VOSGES), 1928 (Massachusetts) 1923 (1933?) Brescia. 1959 (Spain) 1959 (France) 1960 (Brazil) 1961 (Russia) 1961 (Korea) 1963 (Bogotá Colombia) ~~1963 (Belluno)~~ (Italy)

4 in 40 years. 7 in the last 4 years.

INSERT

NOTES FROM SIENA.

I saw ~~Dino~~ Sergio this morning on his way into the village, ~~stiff~~ erect and stern-looking on his motorcycle. He didn't see me. He was wearing a jacket and the effect of this was to make him look like an English country-gentleman: lined, ruddy, with fine eyes. I was astonished to see the resemblance – for a passing moment. The optimism in his face makes it quite different from the others, as it makes him a different person. His mouth bears the ancient optimism of the Italian, as it was alive in the Etruscans: then ~~in most others~~ it was crushed by the Church. There is something uncrushed in him, not the usual Italian grimness and surrender. He is a great dreamer. He goes to town every moment he can – to dream. I've seen him standing in the square, strolling along, his face always uplifted in its stern and rigid way. 'He's mad for the town!' Armida says. This is why he's moving there – to complete the dream. He can't bear to stay at home a moment more than necessary: he could be in town. He is one of the people from whom order, sanity and peace could come, in Italy: but ~~as I says~~ the Church smashed too much; only one or two get through – these are the real great men of Italy.

Of all the dangerous follies committed by the Church, to strip the Italian of his conscience was the worst. Even that was too much of a freedom.

Pietro is off again, this time to Rome. We were away in Lucca when he called last. We talk about him, wonder if he will become 'blunted'. +

With the return of the warm weather, there are thunderstorms again and sudden flashes of lightning. At Lucca, after a clear evening, a wind started up in the middle of the night — the familiar little tornado — and died as suddenly as it had started.

The swifts were flocking up in the cities outside the town this morning, for the emigration, presumably to Africa. They were side by side along two parallel wires as far as we could see, stretching far down into the valley, like hundreds of little soldiers. Then they flew off, south, in one great mass, as if by a silent signal.

+ He no longer crouches up the steps to see us, We are all in another phase.

We Italians are irreligious and
corrupt above others, because the Church
and her representatives set us the
worst example – Machiavelli.

If you look back to what we call happiness in your life — it might be, to adolescence — you will find there was no time.

+

If you are sure of being created, the itch of time is removed.

+

The pagan is a marvellous animal awoken to consciousness: he has not yet put two and two together.

+

One might say that the first clear gestures towards Christ were by Socrates, Plato. ~~Greek influence in Israel was strong [?]~~

INSERT

+

Not only are we unable only able to know more than second causes, but our sight, our little hands, are geared to a tiny portion of the universe, that is, of space and time. How do our 'scientists' probe ~~a universe~~ spaces which they cannot see, and know nothing about? [Besides, who said that causes were the agencies of the objective world, because they are the agencies of our perception?]

+

When Christianity is achieved, scientists will come into being for the first time.

+

The weather is cold and dark again. I heard that on the night of the strange continuous lightning recently a tornado occurred on the coast and rooted up numberless trees at ~~Viareggio~~ Viareggio, tore motor-boats out of the sea and flung them on to roofs. It could be seen approaching inland like a vast cloud stretching down to sea-level. I remember that the moment the storm reached us there was a sudden fierce wind, then, after it had passed, perfect quiet again.

+

A postcard from Pietro saying he was sorry to have missed us before he left. From Messina.

+

His absence makes the rocky path leading up the hill seem fixed and barren. Imagination touches things like a wand. Imagination is freedom. How can the unimaginative think they have freedom? Perhaps they never do.

+

The sound of Armida singing: a snatch of an old song. Seven o'clock in the morning. It makes everything more still and spacious. Then she calls to her chickens. The whole valley lies under a shallow mist, with

piercing, warm sunshine after the tramontana last night. For a moment there isn't the sound of an engine: the valley lies in its own quiet – a few birds sing chiefly. There is the metallic, ~~regular~~ sound of a spade from across Ultrapasquale, turning the earth new.

+

The exciting sound of cantering hoofs on the road outside: it is the dentist from Poggibonsi on his white horse; the rider early breakfast every morning, then goes to work. The hoofs sound busy, passionate, absorbed in their own pace.

Before the war anything like was on horseback or horsedrawn. Every podere had a horse or two, and Dino told me that the road outside was always clattering with hoofs and wooden wheels.

+

Corsido's farm on the other side of the valley looks fine and idyllic in the early-morning sunshine, with the mists drifting by, under its great chestnut-trees. It stands on a kind of island, with a sheer drop to the fields. But there isn't an idyll there. It isn't Austria or France. No gentleman has blessed the countryside.

+

Rome is Italy's only authentic civilization: that is, not imposed by foreigners.

+

We met the padrone of the house up the hill, who works in Florence. He made a brilliant attack on the state of things, in a loud, ringing voice, his eyes popping out of his head. He said he'd watched a Television programme about the problem of how to feed the increasing populations of the world: apparently, there were great possibilities – millions of acres of land remain uncultivated in the earth – marshland, tropical bush, desert – and at very expense it could be reclaimed by machines and ploughed. Then he struck his hand on the table violently – 'We sit and watch this wonderful, and outside –' he turned towards the window – 'there are thousands of acres of our land lying idle – we have the richest land and the richest climate in the world, and we go to tropical countries 3000 miles away to get our food! What idiocy! And there's no one to do anything about it!'

+

He added that only Mussolini dared to tackle the problem, and

'Man never is, but always to be blest.'

Pope.

n.b.) The most opposite to the German, in all things, is the French. The French immigration in America have been the least, and the French influence in America the least. ~~This is why~~ The thorn in the side of ~~the American is~~ since the war American politics has been the French.

Brahms achieved the most astonishing feat — tenderness. (Quote Stuckenschmidt on the German). Schumann went mad.

But since he is nearly always played as a 'German', that is, in development and progression and unfolding of themes, he is ~~never~~ rarely heard; and his instrumental music is apparently unconnected with his symphonic. I have heard one recording (by Kubelik) which I thought came near to the Brahms that actually was thought.

The (empirical) English - Puritan tradition in America gave way (conceptual) to the German Reform with ~~increasing power and~~ expansion, and increasing German immigration in the 19 (check).

INSERT.

LETTER FROM SIENA.

If you behave easily and naturally with a German, allowing your moods to follow each other in their own way, from playfulness to silence, he will invariably put you down as a formless provincial (what he thinks of himself).

Like the Sicilian, he lives naturally with his fist clenched, in tension. Only the Jews softened and rounded German manners: and the Germans took a terrible revenge on them.

The hero of Mann's 'Death in Venice' says that he would like to live like this - holding his hand limply and no longer like that, the clenching his fist tightly. The result of him living 'limply' (what for us is 'naturally') was disaster: disease and death, after a false and half-mad infatuation. ~~with a boy~~ (perhaps)

To keep himself sane, the German always has to adopt a form and rigidly maintain it, unless he achieves his goal through stupendous lonely efforts - Brahms, Beethoven. Thomas Mann had to rigidly maintain a civic life, excising what he called 'banality' from his work. ~~he talked about the sickness of the 'artist', the pit of madness into which he might without fall, but he meant the German~~ by means of rational control, or 'irony'.

inherent in Christianity; its 'contradiction'.

+

Failure to resolve this contradiction at last means the end of us.

+

The Reformers rebelled against the Vicar of Christ in the name of Christ; as Christ rebelled against the High Priest in the name of Moses.

+

(1)(a) When that doctrine is achieved — with no one 'entangled in the yoke of bondage', but choosing his life by conscience — we have the first chance to be free of time. [1(b) follows here p. 110.] ~~No more progress, power. But there will always be power.~~

+

The diff between Italy/Germany? & others.

INSERT

+

Germans have done America untold damage. They have turned the American ethical superiority — which used to be a quiet Puritan sense of a superior social order, which the English shared — into something abstract, Lutheran and torch-bearing. As in nazism, the emphasis in the America we know is on 'youth' and 'national destiny'; ~~Lowadays, not to say purity~~. a sort of spiritual empire.

+

Because of the lack of an aristocracy, ideas and life have always been unhealthily distant from each other in Germany.

She has no society and never can have.

+

Society means the continual leavening ~~changing~~ of life by ideas.

+

Hence, Italians and Germans often discover 'freedom' in America for the first time: that is, they have their first glimpse of a society.

+

Only the Austrians, French, English could carry a society abroad (empire) and be imitated. Italians and Germans would be absorbed at once.

+

Coming from a society means that you have a form of behaviour ready for ~~the greatest~~ an infinite variety of unfamiliar ideas.

+

Italy and Germany flourished before Christ: as

At about eleven last night, after we were in bed, a motor-cycle stopped outside the courtyard and we heard a hunter walk slowly by our bedroom-window in his heavy rubber boots. Soon after that we heard a shot ring out at the edge of the woods, followed by another some minutes later. There was a bright moon. This is forbidden — to shoot at night: you can have your licence taken away, and be put in prison. At night shooting is especially easy because the hares come out to feed, and are unguarded. At the time the road was being patrolled by keepers.

Yesterday evening there was the atmosphere of the zero-hour. I realise that what most people are after is something large to eat. The hares are enormous, like small dogs. Pietro, the moment we catch a hare or rabbit in our headlights at night, shouts: 'Drive fast! Fast! Kill it!' An animal means, almost by definition, that which is to be killed: except dogs, which are necessary for the killing.

+

Time doesn't haunt Rome.

+

If you penetrate into the woods and stay there, and sleep there, the desire to kill melts in you completely. Another ~~[illegible]~~ time takes over.

+

(2) Before the Humanists ~~in~~ (the fifteenth-century) only a very few people — these nearly all priests — had ideas and talked about them. We have so little sense of our history that we lose sight of the slow materialisation of Christian doctrine that has come about since the end of the Roman empire. Everyone of us is a talker now. +

(3) The Humanists ended learning as a mystique — that is, as the spiritual power of one man over another. ~~that is, namely, moral power.~~ But they brought into being the moral use of power, ~~no power used morally~~, to achieve something new ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ +

This development has given us the illusion of 'progress.' The association between ~~worldly pow~~ the power we have (money, position, intelligence) and morality is not a necessary one; but it became so. Christ seemed to have promised freedom to make a world in his image, & this was what produced the slow revolt in the Church that culminated in the Reformation, after 2 centuries of discussion. But the idea wasn't the creation of a new Judah, ~~but of millions of disciples~~ perhaps is worse. Society now is no better than it ever was, and ~~probably was~~ +

Judah means ethically superior society. +

She had to release this title to the rest of mankind — through Christ — because ethics can always be imitated. +

Christ gave Judah to the world — with the High Priest and the Good, though he rebelled against the former: hence the rebellion

pagan (classical) or barbarian (tribal). England, France, Austria developed from the conversion itself: their aristocracies ~~were~~ have the ~~embodiment~~ practice of Christian chivalry.

+

An attempt at civilisation means the attempt to embody religion: ~~the Christian attempt went~~ Europe developed from i) chivalry to ii) landed aristocracy to iii) society.

+

Italy and Germany have never made this attempt communally: ~~national scale~~ hence, industries have never meant life-anguish for them, as in England, France, America. They mean simply a practical method of production.

For Industries were a painful revolution against intimacy.

+

By intimacy all things return: time is defeated.

+

There was always power in Rome: but it was intimate. Its effects were from one man to another, is greed, hot anger; never a cool design. Is this why she isn't haunted by time?

+

→ 1(b) Real Time is a healer, ~~after all.~~ ~~It~~ Only is men's time ~~that~~ haunts.

+

~~Do I mean power? or power as ethical claim~~ (4) I remember a phrase I read once, ~~a short time ago~~, that there was no more ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ ~~unsparing~~ cruelty creature than ~~that~~ the man who thinks himself ~~it~~ morally justified.

They always did think it morally justified – the nazis in their camps, the mass-bombers, the planners of Hiroshima...

+

~~I'm coming to see that what I mean by power is 'power morally justified'.~~

+

No concrete power is morally justified. Its origin always lies in the hot and intimate dreams of a single creature.

+

(5) ~~That~~ Was this how Rome survived?

+

She didn't invade, menace, plunder out of moral just-

gration, but because she wanted the land, the money, the position.

She plundered little: She quietly ~~sucked~~ took the fruits.

Rome has always been a consumer, never a producer. A producer exploits would have been more dangerous and less effective.

We can free ourselves from time if we can free ourselves from moral power.

Thomas More's ambiguity was ~~[illegible]~~ that he tried to ~~[illegible]~~ administer power morally, as a judge. ~~[illegible]~~ Here lay the frontier between the middle ages and our time.

[That is, he ~~[illegible]~~ tried to administer Christ in time; he didn't leave it to the timeless, except at the end of his life, when he no longer argued or appealed. A certain pryzzlement has followed him down the centuries for this reason. His life was the frontier between the middle ages & our time.

(6) After the middle ages moral power in our sense came into being. It was the cancer in all Reform ~~indeed~~. Reform ~~is by definition~~ means trying to change spiritual life by ~~moral~~ concrete power. But these are ~~[illegible]~~ two the sides of a false coin.

They started by finding too much ceremony in the Church, and ended by abolishing the Church. It was like finding a bad apple and abolishing ~~all~~ apples. But all Reform must have this effect.

No Reform produces happiness: nothing that doesn't spring from intimacy can. Only through intimacy (the endless present) is time abolished.

~~Yet they were right: and, I believe, nearer to Christ.~~

That is why the great men of Reform – More, Erasmus, Luther – had to withdraw suddenly from what they had provoked. They saw that the baby was being thrown out with the bath-water. Christ was being crucified further & fresh into time: ~~that~~ is, being turned into power, behaviour.

And it is why Henry VIII looked hopefully to More as a reformer, and ended by beheading him.

Henry VIII was the first to use moral power on a grand scale. The result was a bitter and murderous carnage. He destroyed anything that was beautiful in England, helped by his chancellor Cromwell.

Another Cromwell took it a stage further a century later and desecrated what little had been left in the churches.

~~Last pages~~

~~INSERT~~

~~NOTES FROM SIENA~~

Went down into the podere and tasted the grapes. I tried Gianni's suggestion – biting them straight off the tree without using my hands: they are so fresh that they almost burn the throat. Every tree tastes different, and every part of a tree: sometimes like a different fruit. Comparing the tastes, I found the highest ones the best, which proves what a very old man once told me in northern Tuscany, that the best way of growing them is in the form of a ceiling, across wires, training them overhead all the time: he told me that his wine was undisputedly the best in the district, and that it ~~will~~ would keep five or ten years without spoiling.

One of our vines, with white grapes, stands alone and has grown as tall as a fruit tree, supporting itself on a pear-tree close by. The grapes are for eating, swollen and juicy.

Many of the grapes aren't ripe yet: and some of the vines have been blighted, so that their grapes are in shrivelled clusters, like dried raisins.

The weather suddenly became normal for early autumn, with radiant, warm sunlight and a cool breeze. Everyone ubbed their ~~heads~~ hands: it would push the wine up to ~~eleven~~ ten or ~~twelve~~ eleven degrees Chaps. The podere below lay in its hot, still basin, as if basking. The flies came back, as in July. I killed our second scorpion.

Gianni came back, looking him and in some way liberated; also very serious; he had found a new footing. He drank a glass of wine with us and described the long journeys south to Caserta, and north to Bergamo, where it was cold. 'Tiring?' I asked. 'No, not tiring at all! But – it's too much.' He said he would come to Rome again with us: look for a job. His face is clear and slim. He comes to us on his way home always straight from the depot. Nothing in him is blunted: if anything, the reverse. People don't change.

The golden weather ceased suddenly, the sky darkened and then unloaded such an enormous quantity of water that we well was full in a few minutes and a cascading river had formed on one side of the rocky path, making the hill look like Austria. It poured down relentlessly and everyone said, 'Now – now the rain's finished.'

But then the glowing autumn weather came back again, and remained even longer. And at this moment, after five or six splendid days that were like the perfect autumn of a different year from the one we have had, and therefore ~~strangely~~ strangely mystical and unreal, it has begun to rain again, gently at first, then more powerfully: so that now the whole roof is thundering with its force.
