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you by a later mail and separately, explaining the circumstances in which they were published.

How I wish, sometimes, that I could write good prose, since prose writers are in so much greater demand than poets nowadays. But then I suppose it is no use envying other people's talents; each of us must cultivate his own.

I have always deeply regretted the fact that Mother died before any of my work appeared in print. I think it would have pleased her very much to know I won through in the end in spite of all my initial disappointments. You were kind to say such nice things about her. I never realised that you had actually met her. She and I had a sense of humour in common much to our mutual enjoyment. We often laughed together till we cried.

In March last year I lost a brother of whom I was very fond. He was only thirty-nine years old when he died. Now there are just three of us left, myself my sister and another brother who is a professional soldier. I have been married for ten years, and have a son. My sister is also married and lives in Sweden. She has four children and knows aunt Elsie fairly well. My surviving brother who like myself has only one child, a son, did not marry until 1945, but he is the youngest in the family. I do not see him very often as he has an appointment abroad. I have never met aunt Elsie, and I only saw Frank once in his life.

I have never found out exactly how we are related to you, but I believe we had a common ancestor in one William Meighen, who went to Canada many years ago from Northern Ireland.

It is curious that one of my Christian names happens to be your surname. I nearly wrote under it, but thought it too difficult for Anglo-Saxons to pronounce!

At one time I seriously entertained the idea of coming out to Canada myself. However, as I have no business or administrative head between my shoulders, I considered it wiser to stay here after all; the tempo of life is so much slower this side, and thus more suitable to people with a taste for the past. When I made that decision, things in Britain were very different. Now, if I were in my twenties instead of my early forties, I would certainly come over.

My son's only five years old, so it's difficult to say, as yet, how he'll shape, but if he turns out to be less of a dreamer than I am, I may pack my grips even yet and make the trip, just to get the fresh air of freedom into his lungs, though I doubt if my poetry or my natural gift for speaking European languages would prove much of an asset on such a venture.

In Britain we think of Canada as a great trading nation with a tremendous future before her, were it not for that 'cloud' once no bigger than a hand, but now so broad and ominous on the political horizon' as Edmund Burke might say.

The late Bonar Law never made a speech in the House without quoting from his works. What would have happened to Charles James Fox, but for his secretary Burke's good counsel.

And so I end this lengthy missive, with seasonal greetings and my very warmest regards,

Very sincerely yours,

John

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