



ABBEY OF GETHSEMANI  
TRAPPIST, KENTUCKY

Dec 15, 1960

Dear Graham Carey:

This letter is shamefully overdue. For months I have been hoping to sit down and write you something intelligible about all the fine things you sent me, and about Good Work. I have returned recently the Coomaraswamy offprints and the John Stevens Pamphlets. I assure you I made good use of them and took copious notes and I am certainl delighted to hear that Bollingen is bringing out the authentic papers of AKC. He is ~~unf~~ undoubtedly a very great thinker of our time and I am in whole hearted sympathy with him all down the line. I really must try to write an article about him one of these days. But I shall now wait until the publication of those volumes. And perhaps also I should get in contact with his wife, about some biographical information? Do you suggest this or would she not like it? If you think fit, I would like to have her address. Whatever the issue, I intend to pursue my studies of AKC to whom I owe very much and have owed very much for a long time. I can see no hope of health for western so called civilization except in an infusion of eastern spirituality and thought. I do not mean this, of course, on the level of esoteric meddling in unfamiliar philosophies but in a recovery of what is ours as Christians through a renewal of our spiritual view of life and of the universe. Christianity is after all oriental. And two modern Popes have said that we must be "semites" and take an "oriental view" of the Bible.

We are receiving Good Work and I hope that it is doing good and arousing interest in the right quarters here. We are presently renovating large sections of our old monastery building. I have a certain responsibility in this regard as I am on the committee which meets and is consulted in regard to the plans. I feel cramped by the fact that I cannot enter fully into discussions which are largely on a level of costs, time saving, etc. I try feebly to interpose from time to time something to do with the fittingness of the plan in regard to the spiritual life and the beauty of a house of God, but I feel that I do not really make anything articulate. There is always the danger of our modern monastery buildings looking like hotels or clubs or highschoools-- or much worse. The novitiate wing, in which I function, was done over six years ago and is passably simple and decent, a nice lighted airy place with a couple of really good pieces of sculpture in Bath stone, by Peter Watts, somewhat in the manner of Gill. Perhaps Good Work would some time like to consider these and other examples of the work of this young sculptor.

I have been very interested in the Shakers, I think I told you, and perhaps this interest will slowly mature into a study, accompanied by photographs.

You have probably not seen Disputed Questions. I am sending you a review copy: I think I can hazard this as it includes a couple of essays on Sacred Art. But in any case I want you to have a copy. I leave it to you to consider whether it merits a word of comment in your columns.

In closing, let me wish you every grace in this wonderful season and assure you that I will remember you and your Good Work in my prayers and Masses, as we prepare for the coming of the Lord. May Heenlighten our hearts and strengthen our hands to work for His glory and manifest the splendor of His truth.

Very cordially yours in Christ

*for Louis Newton*