

12-1
5478 S. Ellis Ave.,
Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

January 8, 1938.

Dear Dr. DeKoninck,

I have no doubt that my name will fail to stir any recollection in you as to who I am, but perhaps certain circumstances will serve as a reminder. I am the young man who stayed at your apartment one August night with Fr. Bellperch. I'm sure you will recall the glorious walk on the promenade that you, and the young lady named Jean McCall, Fr. Bellperch, and I had, as well as the delightful time we had sipping bear later. If anything further is needed as a reminder I might suggest the horrible story I told about Napoleon finding the weather "Blücher and Blücher" at Waterloo. Need anything more be added after that?

I have just written the Chateau Frontenac for some kind of employment this coming summer. You may recall that while we were in Quebec we talked the possibility over of coming there this summer and, if possible, taking some philosophy at Laval University. Fr. Bellperch is quite anxious to come there this summer if he can. I would like to come to Quebec for a number of reasons besides the principal one of getting some philosophy, some of which are, to get a command of the French language, and to enjoy the scenic beauties in and around Quebec.

In writing to the Chateau Frontenac, I mentioned you as a possible reference for me. Should you be consulted concerning it I trust you won't think it too presumptuous on my part. I don't know whether anything will come of the letter to the Chateau, but I'm exploring the possibilities anyway.

Should you by chance know of a more likely agency for employment in Quebec during the summer I would appreciate very much knowing it if you have the opportunity and occasion to write. I am banking on the large tourist trade Quebec has in the summertime as a means for there being employment available.

Let me thank you again for the fine time you showed us last summer in Quebec. If we are able to get to Quebec again this summer perhaps we will be able to repeat it a few times. The best of the New Year's greetings to you.

Yours very sincerely,

John T. Oesterle

John T. Oesterle

September 2, 1938.

Dear Charles,

Just a line or two, written hurriedly. The pere and I arrived safely in Detroit yesterday after a somewhat languid trip which, in part, took us through the Adirondacks and to Rochester. We stayed at some friends of the father on the Canadian side of Lake Erie for a couple of days which further delayed (pleasantly) our arrival in Detroit.. I am leaving tomorrow for Grand Rapids for a couple of days.

I would appreciate it if you would drop me a line at the enclosed G.R. address informing me when it is the best time for me to arrive back in Quebec. As you know, the catalog was not off print when I left and consequently I am in some doubt just when I should be back there. You may have mailed me a catalog and if so, I will be able to get that information for myself when I arrive in G.R. At present, I assume that the 21st or the 22nd of September are the most likely dates.

I hope you and Zoe (Baboushka, Malouka), Frank and Monsieur l'Abbe Parent had a splendid trip wherever you went. It was still raining the day the pere and I pulled out of Quebec, but from then on until now the weather has been fairly decent, so I have hopes that your trip boasted of some good weather.

Forgive the brevity of this letter, as well as the ingrown second intentions and mixed metaphors. I am looking forward to seeing all of you again and to launching formally on the course of studies.

As ever,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jack", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Grand Rapids, Mich.

Sept. 14, 1938.

Prof. Chas. DeKoninck (plus degrees)
23 rue St-Jean,
Quebec, P.Q.
Canada.

Dear Alfonse,

What I think was a letter arrived from you in the mail this morning. Although I have not deciphered it so far, tamen, youb will understand that I was so delighted at actually getting a letter from you that I really do not mind if its intelligibility is on ~~xxx~~ the level of prime matter, for your rating as a letter correspondent is on a par with your humor.

But, all Flemishness aside, (it is really hard for me at/ a moment like this to recall that Beethoven was Flemish), I was really glad to hear from you. Monsieur l' Abbe Parent to date has only sent me an outline of courses in philosophy which I was glad to get, but your letter was the first indication of when the courses began. In dem grund, Charlikins, I am in something of a hole, at present - comprenez-vous? I had an impacted wisdom tooth out about a week ago, and the repercussions from it are simply tremendous. My jaw swelled up in proportion as my vitality descended, and I have found my stay in G.R. rather miserable as a result. I have not been able to finish the translation for Adler and consequently will have to drag it back to Quebec.

All of which brings me to: I think I will arrive in Quebec on the afternoon of the 20th rather than any earlier time, although secundum ram, I would ~~rather~~ rather arrive a couple days previous. But transportation arrangements will work out more satisfactorily for me that way - it will be only a day later than you suggested - and I think and hope I will be all over my wisdom tooth experience by then. If I will be able to see you sometime on the 20th, probably in the evening, perhaps the matter of courses and any other pertinent business can be handled satisfactorily then. You very likely will know the best courses for me to take but I will have a rough outline of a schedule to confer with you.

Your suggestion for a thesis interests me verymuch. I am quite in favor of it. My own reaction on the subject has been to do something in the way of aesthetic or poetic experience in relation to St. Thomas, a piece of work that has been more or less necessarily neglected. I am inclined to think, though, that this could wait until I have a much more fundamental education in the tradition - of which your excellent suggestion by way of a thesis would be quite apropos. My general course of action upon arriving will be this: work constantly at French; follow the courses as I am able at the beginning - recompense for what I will miss at first by supplementary reading; work steadily at John of St. Thomas; and finally turn my attention, when the tools of learning have been polished somewhat, to the thesis. My only worry is French, but that once being taken care of, I expect to profit by all that Laval offers. . . Will discuss this with you further to see if you

think that general course of procedure is wise.

I am having my trunk freighted up from G.R. and it will probably arrive a day or so before I do. If you think of it, will you inform Fr. Parent that it will be arriving so that he can arrange to have the freight men deposit it in a convenient place when it comes to the Maison? I will appreciate that a lot.

I am writing to Adler today and will emphasize the matter of the booking agent outfit. I have not heard from him since leaving Quebec. I am sure you can plan on St. John's for some lectures.

Your Gaspé trip sounded like a real success and I am glad it went off so well, especially because it rained and did not rain - (alas! how widespread is the influence of Hegel). Please give my very best to Zoe - tell her about my swollen jaw and maybe I will get a little well earned sympathy! - and hug those sweet rascals of yours for me. I am also grateful to Fr. Parent for sending me the outline of courses in philosophy and will probably get the full program which he promised shortly.

Will be seeing you soon. Was the apartment all right when you returned? It should have been: I burnt two of my precious fingers testing that dam electric stove of yours at which Fr. Bellperch just laughed and laughed. And he thinks Flemish humor is bad!!!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jack", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then loops back under the name.

Grand Rapids, Michigan.
Furniture Capitol of America.
Gateway to the Nation's Playground.
More Dutch than Amsterdam; more dam too.
The City of Beautiful Homes.
Substantial generation forbidden after 9 p.m.
Etc.

June 12, 1939.

Dear Zoe (also Chas.),

On this the most beautiful month of the year and on this the most beautiful day, glorying as it does in the mist of great tradition and honor, rich in culture and tradition, and natal source of genius (incidentally, it is my birthday), I pause from the labors of reading scattered passages in John of St. Thomas and of eating some of my own cooking, to write a letter (Dots imply nuance).

I survived the train ride very well; and why not? I had a beautiful fish inside of me that scaled me up from any bass moods. The night was kind of dreadful, though. I must have gotten on the wrong pool train for Toronto, because every kind of person I could not like also got on, and there is nothing quite so nauseating as 1) trying to sleep with your foot lost in somebody's immense lap across from you; 2) listening to wild, burped cries from undisciplined youngsters who don't give a dam for anyone, least of all their wild-eyed parents; 3) listening to discordant snores; 4) finally falling into a morbid snooze on your neck thus giving rise to marvelous nightmares wherein war, the end of the world, and split infinitives all burst forth at once; 5) and then a dull, grey dawn sifts in thru the uncleaned windows, and you come slowly back to this vale of tears and see the most wretched, non-human expressions in the half-awake pusses of your fellow-men whom you could not possibly like, all brought to a wicked climax as you gaze in the bathroom mirror (if you can get in) and discover that your early morning expression is by far the worst of the lot.

Life must go on and so I saw Rev. R. J. Bellperch, S. J. later the same day restlessly occupied with three things at once: 26) correcting examination papers; 37) moodily deliberating about his forthcoming retreat; 210) trying to stave off living at the Jesuit House in Quebec this summer. The latter point seems to depend upon his rhetoric and the way the provincial feels the morning a letter arrives. But we had a few good talks and one steak dinner, but I was unable to become as ~~animalish~~ animalish as on several other notable occasions, due partly to the condition of the cow, and also ~~due~~ to the fact that Fr. B. is unable to become really vulgar and vegetative, the sine qua non condition for whole-hearted and whole-stomached eating.

I find I miss Quebec and Godeleva, and Dominic, and Arthur, and Tom, and Zoe, and ping pong, and mountains, and French; and morning-after hangovers and therefore even Chas. I now live in a world of privations, summed up by saying non-irregular living. But soon I shall return to Quebec and be a happy contradiction again, enjoying the fullness of life, uttering superb absurdities, and becoming, in dem Grund, non-American. Meanwhile, wash your ears, and I will write again when I have fully sobered up.

Yours non-falsely and non-insincerely,

Non-Clarence.

June 29, 1939.

Dear Zoe and Chas,

Just a few scattered lines to let you know I am subsisting in a fashion and to acknowledge receipt of the length communications I received under your name of recent date which, knowing De Koninck mode of letter writing, was most gratifying and certainly surprising. They almost extended from the classification of a p. s. to postal card length. But anyway Zoe's intention was good.

But this is no time for good-natured jibes (for they are good-natured jibes, Chas). Despite the extreme uncertainty and mess that things are in at present, I wish to say that somehow, someway, the rev. fr. Bellperch and I will arrive in Quebec before the 10th, most likely the 8th or 9th. The "uncertainty and mess" in previous sentence refers to the fact that at present we do not know how we shall get there; we only know that we shall get there. We know only the quia, alas. Not the via, alack. (That's neat, Chas).

It may be in Ruddigore (the persevering Buick that keeps on existing just for the heck of it) or it may be that we shall ride up with a U. of D. professor in his car. This latter course would leave us without a car in Quebec. The father and I have been corresponding at some length on these alternatives, and the details are as intricate as Doctor Subtilis, (Dear Zoe: Chas. may think he knows what I mean by that, but he's ~~more~~ wrong, 'cause I don't myself; I put it in 'cause it sounds pretty). The most devastating fact at the moment is that Fr. Bellperch has to stay at the Jesuit house in Quebec, and this news is as darkening as the Jesuit cassack, (Dear Chas: that was an analogy). (Dear Zoe: I wish you would tell M. l'Abbe Parent to cease holding a room for Fr. B. at the Maison, on account of a body can't be in two places at once; maybe M. l'Abbe Larue should be told - he's reserving it).

I have ~~just~~ led something of a morbid existence here in G. R. (furniture capitol of the world) and, among other things, have lost five of those pounds I so delicately built up at different midnights. I have lost my newly-acquired sassiness; I am almost polite again; and I neither drink nor swear (much). Life is sinking into prime matter once more. (Dear Chas: how are you? I hope Zoe is feeling fine).

I did outline John of St. Thomas on substantial generation for Adler, and I have read certain parts of J.S.T. on logic. This whole semantics question is going to be so broad I don't know where to start. But I am seeing more and more of its ~~morbid~~ importance. (Dear Chas: Do you know the Korzybaki book "Science and Sanity" published by the International Non-Aristotelian Press? Terribly important on this subject and a savage attack, so I ~~if~~ understand, on Aristotelian logic. But a very expensive and hard-to-get book. Stuart Chase's "Tyranny of Words" is something of a popularization of it).

Miss Lincoln should be there by the time we arrive. The Schwartzes arrive in the middle of July. It will be a fast and vicious month: (Dear Zoe: poor Chas! Dear Chas: poor Zoe!!) Poor Fr. Bellperch, too! And poor me! (altho no one will admit it). Everything's poor. A bas le poor! But there must be a cure for the poor. Sure! It's Quebec and its lure and its belle jour. (Dear Chas: that's poetry; who're you to abjure?)

(Dear Zoe: Toujours, your monsieur,

Jean. (not a boor)

Grand Rapids, Mich.

August 22, 1939.

Dear Chas,

Fr. B. and I arrived back in Quebec from the Gaspé trip a week ago today - Tuesday afternoon, the 15th. For various reasons too numerous and involved to mention, we decided to leave immediately for the return trip to ~~Grand~~ Detroit. So within an hour of our arrival in Quebec we pulled out in Ruddigore. The point to this is that I packed so fast that I was sure I was committing several serious blunders of omission, and one of these now stares me very blankly in the face, scilicet, I forgot to bring along the list of books I was planning on locating while in the U. S. - that list we compiled from the Stebbing book.

Perhaps the reason I forgot to bring it along was that I had already written to a publishing company and made the unwarranted assumption that it would be able to supply me with almost all of those books. Upon returning to Grand Rapids Sunday, I found a letter from this company telling me that it only had two of them available. Consequently, at the moment I find myself sans the list and sans any immediate way of getting them.

In these strained circumstances, I turn to rue 23 St. Jean, and if you can find it in your heart to do so, I wish you would copy off that list again and mail it to me. If you know of any place I can order them directly, I would appreciate knowing that as well, as so far ~~xxx~~ I have been rebuffed in trying to get them. There are, however, two books which I am ordering today, and these can be stricken off the list. These two are: Whitehead's "Introduction to Mathematics," and Pearson's "The Grammar of Science."

Here is another possibility. If you have the facilities and convenience there at Quebec, you might order the books directly yourself, and have them mailed to Quebec in care of yourself. The advantage here would be that I shall not have to lug the books back with me from the states. The disadvantage may be that this is a more expensive way of getting the books inasmuch as there might be a duty charge on such books entering Canada. You know the situation well enough to judge that. In the event that this is feasible and that you can order them conveniently, I can cover fifty dollars worth of books for the present. I urge this second possibility because of its convenience, if it involves no great increase in expense. But if this cannot be done for one reason or another, at least send me a duplicate list and any suggestions you have to offer by way of securing them.

Meanwhile, I shall do further work in John of St. Thomas, as well as secure whatever book is available at the local library here for casual reference, altho the library facilities here are not very good. I do not see much point in trying to cast any detailed outline of this work at the present stage; on the contrary, the development of this work seems to depend almost exclusively on the content of the books that are to be secured, and this can only be gauged as we get into the work. The difficulty will be in restricting rather than in enlarging the work.

I shall write again a little later. Give my best to Zoe, and I shall see that she gets some mail, as also the petite quartette. I stopped in twice at the Perce post office, but no note. You must have become tangled in Ste. Anne-des-Monts.

Jack

Rapides, Grand, Michigan.

January 6, 1940.

Dear Zoe and Chas,

1) Happy New Year and Happy decade to everyone

2) Especially Godeleva.

3) I expect to be back in Quebec either Wednesday or Thursday of next week.

87) How are you?

12) I returned to Detroit during the past week for overnight and called your brother's house, whose wife answered and said that your sister (tsk, what a melange) had wrapped up all those dirty papers into one bundle, all of which means I shall undoubtedly bring the smear back with me when I come.

5) And so now I guess I can ask you to do me a brief favor. Will you please write a short and succinct letter of recommendation of me to: Dr. Paul F. Voelker, President, Grand Rapids College, 215 Sheldon Ave. S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan. The situation is: I have applied for a teaching position there for next fall. Authorities there are at least interested. It is rather a curious place to consider teaching inasmuch as it is an outgrowth of a technical school and an applied science college, and hence, if anything is anti-intellectual and anti-philosophical to the core. But if a decent offer should be forthcoming, it might be a good challenge to take up. They insist on 'knowledge for use' exclusively etc. I don't know at present whether it will amount to anything serious or not, but if Chas. will drop them a sweet note and mention casually philosophy of science, it might be a fruitful drop if anything further is to come. (Dear Zoe: if Chas. is in a good mood, ask him if he can send it right away, as I promised references quickly; it need be only five or six lines, delivered in the De Koninck idiom, and preferably in non-Flemish).

64) Gave a talk on "Philosophy and College Life" at assembly at Catholic Junior College here yesterday. No lemons thrown.

0). Not a number.

¹¹/₁₂) I have resumes of ten articles or so on general prob. of semantics and a copy of each for Chas. Not very fruitful, but good index of current thought on the problem.

*) I'm hungry for some good ice cream. (Don't tell Chas.)

zzz) Amer. Cath. Philosophy slated to meet at Detroit next Christmas-time. Fr. Bellperch is local chairman. Adler to present a clinic of students reading original texts as proof that it can be done to satisfy manual mongers. Dr. and Mrs. De Koninck of Quebec are expected.

() Auf wiedersehen, 10

January 12 1940
January 12 1940
January 12 1940

Dr. Paul F. Voelker
President
Grand Rapids College
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Dear Sir:

I am informed that John Verterle has applied for a teaching position at Grand Rapids College.

As his professor of scientific methodology and philosophy of science for the last two years, and as director of his thesis on aesthetics, I can assure you of his exceptional intellectual ability and scientific integrity. I am confident that he is destined to become an authority in his field.

A hard worker, communicative, and judging from open discussions in which he has taken part, he should be an able teacher.

Respectfully yours,

Charles De Koninck Ph.D.
Docteur de la Faculté de Philosophie

September 14, 1940.

Dear Zoe and Chas,

Even at this late date I can only send you a brief note. Aquinas College starts registration Monday; I have to see a sister this afternoon in regard to the ~~rhmo~~ rhetoric course I am to teach; there is a faculty meeting at 10:15 tomorrow, and I am trying to get a little more teaching work through another university here in the city. Mad scrambles, jumbles, etc.

I am getting over my Quebec lonesomeness. As you may recall that last Friday, I was half-lit by the time I left your maison and I spent my last few minutes in Quebec sitting on the train in a delightful stupor. I would have become almost sentimental about leaving Quebec at such a moment, except that I had a couple violent hiccoughs which ruined the mood and took me sadly to crossword puzzles. I did not get over this state of affairs until I choked a fish dinner down me some time later. Alas, the world/ is everything which is the case.

I will tell you more about the courses (introduction to philosophy and rhetoric) when I know more about them myself and when they are actually in progress (commencing next week). I have secured a dollar edition of A. E. Taylor's translation of the First Book of the Metaphysics of Aristotle which is to be the only text. I am going to start out at least by making the class read and discuss Aristotle himself, and as we progress through the first book (by reading and lecture) I hope we shall obtain a philosophical introduction to philosophy. Nobody at the college quite knows what is going to happen in this course. This especially includes me. The second part of the course is Philosophy and Theology, with the class reading again a part of the first question in the Summa. Th. The third part (if I get to it) will be Philosophy and Science, although I do not see how I will have much time for it (one semester course, two hours a week). And I suspect it is wise if I approach Philosophy and Science delicately, let alone dialectically. . . As for the rhetoric course, I plan to start with two or three lectures on the liberal arts, basing this on Q. 5, Art. 1, of St. Thomas' commentary on De Trinitate. Part of that text will be mimeographed and handed to the students. I have already outlined this, and I may have to use a sales talk when I see Sister Aquin, the English head, this afternoon. What happens from there on in rhetoric, as far as I am concerned, is anyone's guess, hope and dream.

I had a couple nice write-ups in the daily papers, somewhat on the note of local boy returns home. I am enclosing one of them for your pleasure, although you understand how I have had to dominate my modesty . . . I have often mused how much more striking my cross-eyed picture would have been. That one had form; this one has matter. They understand the doctorate situation; this announcement appeared as I was returning from Quebec.

(over)

I am also enclosing a page from a letter written by the secretary of the graduate school at the University of Detroit. I cannot make a great deal out of it, but the situation seems to be that the accredited rating of Laval permits only partial evaluation of credits in a transfer from it to another institution, Canadian or American. This may mean either that Laval computes credits differently than other institutions, or that there is an actual deflation of Laval credits. It undoubtedly also applies to under graduate work, so your interest may only be indirect. I am sending it on only in the event you think it worth while investigating, or having someone else look into the matter.

I am having slight touches of hay fever and asthma and my chest emits peculiar sounds. I would like to be examined for selective draft right now. I think I could easily convince them I am in a continual draft.

Tell the Schwartzes I hope to hear from them soon if nothing more than their address so I can communicate with them. If nothing happens I shall write c/o you. Has the elevator story been equaled by now?

More when I am less asthmatic and more energetic,

Jacob.

I would give a great, great deal to hear any young De Koninck say:

"Est-ce que vous allez jouer avec nous ce soir?"

Tell them I play with them in my imagination.

Zoe will be disgusted to know that I had a pitifully small pan of popcorn the other night. (Reason: I got my brother to make it for me). I did not even get one wild dream out of it.

I do not know whether I have mentioned it or not, but Grand Rapids is the furniture capital of America.

After waiting the customary polite four weeks' interval for an answer to this letter, I may write another.

I have not had a good steak since the night before I left Quebec.

November 23, 1940

Dear Mme. De Koninck:

I have been instructed by the Detroit representative of Mr. Jacob Z. Oesterle (director and promoter of Eat-More-Popcorn-Week) to forward you a touching manuscript entitled "Bet It's a Boy" by Betty Bacon Blunt. This manuscript will reach you under separate cover with the added good and sympathetic wishes of Mrs. Thomas S. Pendergast (sister of Jake and your mutual comforter at the present time).

You will undoubtedly find this booklet refreshing during current passage of time. The more obvious quips will also amuse your husband; for his full amusement, I suggest you elucidate the more subtle points. This may also afford him very much needed examples for his recent bogged-down analysis of humor.

Mrs. Pendergast's first offspring is raising hell with this typewriter as I write this letter, which will explain typographical difficulties and various lesions of thought. Mrs. Pendergast's second offspring continues to raise potential hell (Mrs. P now refers to herself as a "corporation" that functions only by rising vote), and by next month at this time it should be an actual son-of-a-gun.

You understand, Mme. De Koninck, I am sure, the delicacy of my position in forwarding this booklet to you and I am also sure you will overlook the extreme modesty of Jake who, unable to bring himself to the point of actually sending you the quip, nevertheless is morally certain that you will - to drop into the colloquial - get a 'bang' out of it.

Mr. Jake Oesterle has also requested me to ask you to retain this booklet for future use. He blushed painfully, as he told me this, but he thought, in a dismally vague sort of way, that he himself might at some future date need this relishing bit of counsel and bright cheer. (Jake, by this time, was in a state of confusion, from which he still is having difficulty extricating himself).

May I, in turn, Mme. De Koninck, salute you in all good faith and borrow a bit of the atmosphere of old Quebec by murmuring "au revoir" and stuff?

EAT MORE POPCORN FOR HEALTH AND VITAMIN D,

Yours solicitously,

Oswald G. D. Gabbertank, V.V.



November 13, 1954

Madame John Oesterle,
915 North Notre Dame Avenue,
South Bend 17,
Indiana.

Dear Jean,

I appreciate very much your ability to bring most anything within the reach of the common man's intellect, but that is not the reason why this sub-common guy is writing to you at the present time.

Recently I had to write all over again a study of which I had presented an abstract at the N.-D. symposium on the Immaculate Conception, this summer. I did it in a great hurry, sending it right off last week to Father Edward O'Connor, C.S.C., at the University, Box 407 (I think he's in the Religion Department). I don't know whether they will be able to use it for the volume they intend to publish; if they can, then you come in sequenti modo. Having just glanced at my carbon copy, I noticed, oculo separato necnon frigido, that some changes in style and punctuation, especially from p. 53 on, are imperative. If they (specifically Fr. O'Connor) have decided to publish my paper (107 pages!), then they could either return to me pp. 53-107, or they could pass them on to you, and I would send you my revised carbon copy from which you, personally, as a kind of acte de charité, could transfer the changes over on to the original.

In consequence whereof, duo : (a) would you please call Father O'Connor, to know his intention; (b) advise me whether I should send you my carbon copy or not.

I wish I had a year off. Just a year off.

Affectionately

Jawaharlal Nehru

January 18, 1941.

Dear Zoe and Charles,

The Sixteenth Annual Meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association at Detroit, ~~from~~ Dec. 30-31, 1940, was more or less a tremendous colligatio. Among the notables present: John A. Oesterle, late of Laval; among the notables absent: Chas. D. De Koninck, still of Laval. Mr. Oesterle's valuable talent was confined to two short radio addresses preceding the convention, in one of which he made a dam fool of himself by asking whether there was any use in having philosophical conventions, and having started out with a question, Mr. O's keen, calculating mind dribbled on to question after question, leaving the invisible audience in almost as great suspense as Mr. O. (effect of rigorous Laval training). Mr. O. then dropped into a welcome silence the rest of the convention, except to draft a letter to Fr. Hart, sec. of the convention, pleading for the problem of meaning as the subject for next year's subject for the convention. (This was shelved for the subject of Metaphysics and Order). Mr. O's letter was occasioned by the hearing of the ~~xxx~~ opening morning session of learned historical peckings on liberty secundum St. Thomas vs. liberty secundum Avicenna; liberty secundum Duns Scotus; liberty secundum Kant. It was difficult for the unscholarly Mr. O. to see how any profitable and fruitful discussion could come from that, and judging from the discussion that followed, others must have thought so. Briefly, it was learnedly awful.

The general subject for the convention was The Problem of Liberty. The undertone subject of the convention was Adler's Problem of Species. Muller-Thym's 'article' in the Schoolman had set things off at a dizzy pace, and this was countered by the sudden appearance of the January Thomist at strategic places around the convention wherein appeared an article by M. Maritain. Adler confined himself to his hotel room during the convention, except for his appearance to lead the reading of the Metaphysics, and felt pretty low the first half of the convention. It is now quite apparent that the Muller-Thym article was the product of a conspiracy of Torontoites to nail unscholarly Adler to the wall (the Toronto bunch has never forgiven Adler for his ughistorical treatment of history in the Commonweal last year). This probably also explains the non-appearance of Fr. Phelan, who was supposed to read a paper on Liberty and Personality. The upshot of this was (and Adler told me this himself) that on the last day Muller-Thym came up to Adler's room and with "tears in his eyes" apologized for the article, indicating that it was not entirely a product of his own initiative.

Adler is wondering these days if he knows what a problem is. He thought he was stating a problem in the Problem of Species. According to his critics, he has tried to state a demonstrable conclusion, for which they have attacked him on logical and epistemological grounds; Adler thinks it is a problem in Philosophy of Nature.

Adler was over in Grand Rapids Saturday, January 11, ostensibly to give a lecture on "How To Read A Book" for the local Ladies Literary Club. We sandwiched him in at Aquinas College for a talk on democracy (based on his paper, Demonstration of Democracy). The week previous, I went over with the students the important points on his paper so that when he arrived I was able to tell him the points that caused the most difficulty with us. These points included the one on natural slavery; the distinctions of three common goods, each progressively cumulative, rather than the traditional one common good; and Adler's point that the common good is only an intermediate end to man's two last ends: his temporal happiness, and his eternal happiness. I had gone into Aristotle and St. Thomas (in the Politics - thank heavens for the Laval edition of the commentary) as much as I could in the brief time, and gave that to the students as far as possible, and so left them wide open on the problem. (Also me). Adler's lecture to us was magnificent, and some of the audience was thus informed enough to see that unless the points cited above were established, Adler's thesis that democracy is the best form of government and the only good state could not be established. If I tried to go into this by letter, I would be writing pages, but I must say I was very much impressed by what Adler had to say on all those points. I am not yet ready to agree that the two propositions: man by nature is a political animal, and some men by nature are slaves, are contradictories, but I am impressed to the extent that I can see difficulties if they are not contradictory (Adler, of course, maintains flatly that Aristotle & St. Thomas are in error here). I am also bothered at present by the relation of this problem to the Problem of the Fall and whether man can be considered only naturally. . . Adler's arguments for distinguishing grades of common good were especially effective (the common good must also distinguish how people live in the political community, etc.). As I understand his argument on the common good being only an intermediate end (i. e., the good state is only an intermediate end), it rests upon recognizing that the state is not a substance, but only an accident, and consequently the part-whole argument for the higher end of the state does not hold if the state is not a substance. I take this to mean that the common good, or the state, is a higher good but only an accidental higher good, and that man's own substantial good remains his last end, temporally and eternally, enriched, no doubt, through the common good. There are difficulties here, all right, but at the moment I can't see how to get around admitting that the state is not a substance, and how that admission has to affect the part-whole

I tell you this because I may be giving a course in political philosophy in the summer school here, and I am hoping that at some time you can suggest how to approach and handle such a course. Perhaps the wisest thing at this stage would be to give more of a survey course (Aristotle, St. Thomas, Hobbes, James Stuart Mill, Marx, Nietzsche, etc.) and only indicate these issues as problems to be faced in political philosophy. I am temperamentally disposed to establish democracy on philosophical grounds, but I want to proceed cautiously.

(over)

Finally, there is the matter of my thesis on the problem of meaning. I have not done a lick of work on it since last summer (so many irrelevant incidents take up so much time). But I must begin to get busy on it soon. I want very much to come back to Quebec this summer, but if I do teach in the summer school this would mean that I could not come up there before the first week in August. Of course, I could come any time after the first week in August, or even the first part of September. I know this time may not be as convenient for you as earlier in the summer (for example in June, which would be impossible for me if I teach in summer school, which I will do, if I can, for financial reasons), but after all there is a period of six or seven weeks to choose from during August and September, and it seems to me that some time therein would work. I think I would be able to stay fairly long if desirable.

I am going to write you again a little later in regard to the thesis itself. I am thinking of the possibility of revising and working it for publication, say in the Thomist. If this should be done, then I suggest two main parts, to be published in successive issues of the Thomist. The first part would comprise more or less what is done at present - getting at the problem thru modern writers. The second part would be more doctrinal, getting what can be got from the tradition on the fundamental points and then going on to show there are some real issues to be met in terms of signification in the current philosophical problems (for example, I think it might be indicated that some of the attacks on Adler's Prob. of Species arise precisely out of problems of meaning, i. e., many 'neo-scholastics' are as a matter of fact slaves to words, so that many philosophical arguments "do turn on words only" - - and this of course justifies a semantic attack on them.) And I still think something could be done in distinguishing kinds of signification by way of indicating the difference between philosophy and science.

If you have definite points to suggest that you think should be developed in the thesis, I would appreciate very much knowing them. I am going to try and write more about the scope of the thesis when I have more time. I am afraid I shall have difficulty getting to some of the sources or books I may want. And dammit! my time will be so scatterry and limited.

I shall also have to face the possibility that I may be drafted into the army. As far as I can tell now, my number won't come up ~~until~~ before next summer, and I don't know whether I am subject to exemption or deferment or not. We'll most likely be in the dam war by then anyhow. With such alternatives as these, I'd like to try and plan it so that I could mail you the thesis eventually in the event I am unable to come to Quebec for one reason or another. I've got to settle the doctorate this year.

. . . All for now. I shall be thinking a lot of Zoe from now thru March (Edythe had hers Dec. 18th: an eight pound and a half girl). I received Thomas' delightful letter and will send cards to all soon. I hope I make Quebec next summer!

L.

This time I am going to answer your letter because I want to prevent you from burning your fingers, and remind you of what I consider the most important thing, we expect you to have learned at Laval, namely that you should know when you know something about something and when not. What you tell me in your letter shows that you have a false slant on the whole problem of society, mainly because you do not realize what principles underlie it. For instance, when you want to determine what is the common good of society, you must not forget that the common good is first of all a good, that 'good' is 'quod omnia appetunt'; that 'bonum habet rationem finis', that 'causa finalis est vera causa', that 'finis est prima causarum'. And when we speak of the common good, how do we take the term 'common'? Is it a mere 'colligatio'? And is common then the good of the colligatio, that is, identified with that of the elements considered absolutely? Then the first cause (finis) of the common good is the individual good as individual. And such seems to be the case when we consider society as a means for obtaining this good, such as when we say that a man cannot obtain or maintain food, shelter, protection, learning, moral virtues, without the aid of society. In this case, however, we are merely considering the individual as to what forces him into society namely the deficiencies of his nature: nakedness, insufficiency of natural food, lack of instinct, of inborn habitus, the contrariety between sense and reason etc.. But this is not the common good which is a first principle as common good: it is at best but a material imitation of it, although I admit that the necessity of many things required in society can be derived from it, such as order, freedom etc... And this is the common good which may be identified with that of the parts: it is not the common good which is qualitatively distinct from that of the parts, a distinction which rises from a distinct form: which is a principle, both prior and posterior to the individuals: in one respect we may compare it to the 'forma-finis' of nature: and this seems to be the 'bonum humanum': and just as the 'forma-finis' is no longer 'finis' once it is realized, in like manner the good properly acquired by the cardinal virtues is but a means toward an ultimate end, which is the common good 'simpliciter'. Thus we have a certain hierarchy. But it should be noted that the first is but materially common. And what we call free men relative to this good, relates merely to freedom from the indigency which is ours by nature for the reasons stated above. But this merely forms a man for the pursuit of the common good proper which is pursued by free men. And this is the human count part of the common good of the species which we find in lower things, that is the good which by nature animals love more than themselves, and for which they sacrifice their life. Now the common good proper of society we do not pursue by natural inclination, for we are not in this respect a natural part of society but a political part, that is free, and enjoying 'aliqua potentia contradictoria'. The good pursued on this level is the good of the community as more divine. And this is the good which is better than us and for which a man as a man as man should lay down his life. Read here Ia q.60 a.5. Read also the Opusculum de Regno (de Regimine principum) book IV chap. I to IV incl. So you see that the principle 'man is by nature a political animal' should not be taken too simplistically. It may be understood as meaning: 1o that man is by nature forced into society in so far as nature does not provide him with his natural needs and in this respect society is a means; 2o that man by his nature, nature now being taken for what is expressed by the definition, or by what follows necessarily from the definition, such as risible, grammarian, Ford-making biped, etc...: in like manner man is by nature capable of political life, just as by nature he is capable of metaphysical wisdom. 3o the good that man is by nature ordered to (nature still taken for what is defined), is a good which can be achieved only in political life. The principle does not

mean:) that political life proceeds from man's nature (principium et causa motus etc.) as from its proper cause, such that political society would be the end of his natural inclination as an animal; b) nor does it mean that man has a natural inclination in his will for the common good of society similar to that of the brutes for their species (this man has too, but not as a political animal); c) nor does it mean that man is by nature ready-made for society, or that nature itself shapes him for political life.— From this you may see that Aristotle and S. Thomas are not contradicting themselves when they maintain on the one hand that man is by nature a political animal, and on the other hand that some men by nature are servants. For nature is taken here in two different meanings, just as when we say that man is a metaphysical animal and that by nature most men are unmetaphysical. What does the supernatural order add to this? That there is no master and servant. Why? Because of the grace of Christ; because relative to this grace, and not by nature, we are equal: 'Spiritus flat ubi vult'; nor is this equality an active principle, but a mere disposition; neither is the equality an end: the mystical body of Christ is hierarchica

Let me remind you (for the so-manieth time) that only two substances are an end proper: natural substance in so far as it is the end of generation (but so soon as the substance is attained the operation becomes the end in man: Now the operation is an accident, and not our substance, and it is through an accidental operation that we attain our ultimate end, beatitude, which consists in contemplation, which is an intellectual operation, which is an accident, which is conditioned by grace, which is a supernatural entity, and all supernatural entities are accidental, God could not create a being supernatural by substance, a.s.o. So that if natural substance can be an end, it is only in so far and as long as it is not, and this is the finality which is proper to beings generable and corruptible whose natural end 'preexistit potentia tantum' and of which I spoke to you over a period of one year many times a week and with great emphasis. The other substance which is an end is God. There is no other. Just as in the case of natural substance finality is due to pure potency, for generation is possible because of the potentiality of matter, God is such an end because he is pure act. Let us take advantage of the glorious accidents by which we can achieve this, and turn our eyes away from the humanist obsession to glorify our own substance as that which should be appropriated by ourselves, for ourselves, as Marx has so explicitly stated. And do not be misled by the ambiguous term substance, as in the expressions 'intellectus noster secundum substantiam suam, societas politica secundum substantiam suam, bonum universi secundum substantiam etc.': for all this is constitute of accidents. Do not forget that the good of the universe which is its greatest inherent good, and which we call 'forma universi' consists in its order which is established by relations which are predicamental accidents. To require it to be substantial in the strict sense would be to demand that the universe be God. Note, however, that substance proper remains the first and the last principle of the order of the universe, and that the good which is in the order of the universe as in its inherent form derives this good from the first extrinsic principle of the universe. Is it possible that you conceive the good of an accident as distinguished from the good of the substance as if the one were 'bonum per accidens', and the other 'bonum per se'? Here we may boldly say that the good of the accident is a 'bonum secundum substantiam'. In other words, do some reading on the distinction between 'ens per accidens' and 'ens per se'.

Chambers
Berkonia
Chap.
P.O.
P.O.
P.O.

can be seen of DeKor when writing you
I was so intent (er) that, in re-
day (it was the first about the
the 5th of my granddaddy's death which
I neglected to write to you about
about which I wrote to you about
of my granddaddy's birth
side, incidentally, which I did not
above either's side; the
granddaddy's side I did advert
lines 2-3 above.

it is curious to find, that the more
less gross, really is about something, the
matter, I make myself clear. (I want to
in past that I am writing this on a date
which, so far as I know, is not an anniversary
any particular date, although I think I should
point out, were I to pursue parental lines
far enough, I would find that this
anniversary of some of my granddaddy's
death is the day that was back when
I was born, and I am inclined to think, if I am to
inclined to think, if I am to think of my
presence in exercised act, etc.)

Incidentally, it is more difficult to
you, in the matter I am employing for
the paper. The paper appears to fold back
easily, so easily that it wraps around the roller
of the machine with an affection that would
rather of the opinion that the paper is
property of this paper is basically unrelated

to the matter I thought I meant by "paramour," but
this is a textual matter that can be solved only
by scholars 200-300 years after my death.

What I have to say can be put in the
manner of a post-script to my previous communique.
I would have said it in the previous communique
except that, gazing at the paper so steadily moved
me in a fashion that I would find indelicate to
transmit on my paper other than this. Strange:
I find myself in similar circumstances at this
very moment, but whether this movement stems
(I speak metaphorically) from a material cause,
namely the paper again, or from a final cause,
namely the one to whom I am writing, I prefer not
to disclose.

I hasten, therefore, to my post-script.
Mrs. Mallory and Faith are to have dinner with
you while you are here, but they can be
here only during the period March 9-10. We
plan dinner with those two and you at our house
on Sunday evening March 9 or Tuesday evening
March 10. Mrs. Egan and Arshult wish the same,
but Mr. Egan will not be here until March 10 on-
wards. Shall we plan dinner with them and you
about March 9 or 10? And would you still have
a rip-roaring gussle and feasting affair
just then?

Comments on the first part of the
letter would not be wise. I am moved
strongly to continue writing to you about a
lot of things even now, but cannot do so. I am
moved even more strongly to write to you
Mother and, which I refuse to mention.

Love, Harry
P.S. I have a letter

February 8, 1941.

Dear Charles,

I am very grateful to you for having taken as much time as you did in writing to me. An opening remark in your letter suggests that I have presumed to know something when I have not. Your letter clearly shows that I have not realized the principles involved in the problem of society. I do not think, however, that I pretended to know the matter; I thought the context of my letter indicated sufficiently that I was having some difficulties, not that I was resolving them. But my immediate concern is to try briefly to see whether I have benefited from what you have been good enough to write me.

The first point is on the common good. I am aware of the error of taking the common good as a mere 'colligatio'. But I did not fully appreciate that this would be the strict consequence of considering society as a means (intermediate end) to the individual good. I take it that the 'common good' can be considered in this way, but that then the common good is only something like a material necessity for the perfection of the individual good. It is what I suppose can be called the 'material' common good, which can be ordered to the proper good of the individual, just as that in turn must be ordered to the common good in its proper sense (as in Sum. Th., II-II, Q. 47, A. 10, ad 2). The real common good, then, must be formally distinct from the parts which are ordered to it; if this were not so, the good could not be 'common' in any proper sense. So that what we arrive at ultimately is not the perfection of the individual good by social means (although this is one perfection), nor even the good "acquired by the cardinal virtues" (although a greater perfection), but the common good ultimately and absolutely, the good of the multitude of political parts; and that is the hierarchy, which can only suppose the good first of the parts before the good of the whole properly can be reached. I suppose the failure to appreciate the true significance of the common good - the really sufficient and complete political life of which we are the political parts - might be due to accidental circumstances of our time. For example, I knew, in a sense, the real significance of the common good based, as it only can be, on hierarchy, but I think I wavered on the full understanding of it because of a particular modern situation in regard to the relation of the individual and the state. This, of course, simply means a failure to realize the principles. Once the full understanding of the hierarchy of the common good is realized, in the light of that there is no problem as such of the individual and the state; that problem could arise only through the initial failure to understand the basic principles. In the light of the common good as the ultimate perfection (causa finalis) of the political man, the relation of the political man to the common good as the part to the whole is thoroughly natural - presupposing, as it does, the proper good of the political man first in order to realize the good that can be properly common to and distinct from each proper good. Any

alteration of this means political disorder. And even here, if one supposes that the good of the political man is 'engulfed' or 'submerged' in the state (the terminology of which indicates already misapprehension of the proper common good), it must be noted that the full hierarchy is "quod sicut bonum multitudinis est majus quam bonum unius qui est de multitudine; ita est minus quam bonum extrinsecum, ad quod multitudo ordinatur . . ." (Sum. Th., II-II, Q. 39, A. 2, ad 2).

In regard to the point on natural servitude, as I said in my letter, I never could see that there was a contradiction in either Aristotle or St. Thomas on this point. The only way it could be established is by using 'nature' the same way in both propositions, which you show clearly in your letter cannot be done. Besides, this seems clear enough in Aristotle and St. Thomas themselves; they are quite explicit on the point of the difference between a natural 'servus' and a brute animal, and that the natural 'servus' is not meant as though there had to be another 'species' between man and brute. 1254 b 21: "For he is by nature a slave who is capable of belonging to another . . . and who participates in reason so far as to apprehend it but not to possess it; for the animals other than man are subservient not to reason, by apprehending it, but to feelings." What I did find difficult to understand, and in a sense do yet, is the way the relation of the master and servus is explained there. The servus is considered as an article of property, as a thing possessed by a possessor in the sense that he is said not only to be of the master, but to belong wholly to the master, ". . . servus non solum est servus domini, sed est simpliciter illius . . ." (1254 a 9 sq.) There is no difficulty in seeing the natural servitude of some men precisely as Aristotle & St. Thomas explain it. But does that justify the sense of complete ownership? Or of the comparison of master and slave sicut homo ad bestias vel anima ad corpus? I mean, there is no question of the natural inequality there, but must that involve that kind of relationship between the two? I understand there must be something ruling and something ruled in any kind of multitude (aliquid principans et aliquid subjectum); perhaps my difficulty here is in failing to understand that this kind of inequality involves that kind of relationship.

Perhaps the one sentence of yours which told me most is the sentence "Let us take advantage of the glorious accidents by which we can achieve this, and turn our eyes away from the humanist obsession to glorify our own substance as that which should be appropriated by ourselves." It is of course evident that, among other things, I have been misled by the ambiguous term 'substance', whereas only a moment's careful reflection would have told me that there are only two substances which can properly be ends, and the sense in which they are ends. This again I can see results departing from basic principles and viewing a posterior problem without them. From the substantializing of the state by Plato or Hegel, one is apt to conclude that the only other position is the conception of the state in the sense of Hobbes or Rousseau as a colligatio of individuals (the counterpart of taking the common good only materially). I suppose it has been in order to avoid either of these extremes that the state is sometimes referred to as a 'moral substance', meaning generally by that what you

point out in your letter in speaking of the good of the accident as a 'bonum secundum substantiam', recognizing by that an order within predicamental accidents, which is 'secundum substantiam'.

I can see how throughout your letter you could not avoid a tone of irritation. The irritation properly arises from my having been so slack in the recognition of the proper principles - even granting a hurriedly and carelessly written letter. This defect on my part can be explained only by utter inability or lack of proper reflection; I hope and think it is the latter. Your letter has done me immeasurable good in making me realize what I thought I had understood before, the necessity of real rigor in intellectual discipline. The real benefit I hope to gain from your letter is the constant reminder and recognition of that discipline.

But I cannot avoid remarking that in a couple instances you seem to have administered excessive slaps, particularly in your closing paragraph - so much so, I wonder if something is involved of which I do not know. There seems to me to be an uncalled for judgment on the way I treat letters that are written to me. I have never adopted the practice of having copies made of letters addressed to me. I have, as is the common practice, quoted occasionally from letters written to me, but I shall make sure that I do not do this in your case. And I shall make it a point not to involve you in such a way as to imply any responsibility on your part. In regard to the thesis, I thought it was your idea originally to suggest writing it eventually for some such publication as the Thomist. I also thought it was clear from the context of the letter that submission of the thesis again was presupposed - the possible trip to Quebec next summer was somewhat unintelligible otherwise. But I assure you again that I shall not burst into print with it unless there has been acceptance by you, as well as any suggestion, such as the above, in regard to its publication.

I hope very much that all is going well with Zoe at this time, and with all of you.

As ever,

Jack

I suppose that as usual my humor is too subtle for your sense.
No slaps - have you forgotten so soon the unwelcome familiarity you forced upon me.
There is nothing behind anything. I was merely thinking of all the people who had read a letter I wrote to Adler intended for Adler.
As "Thomist" concerned, I was afraid you might write directly, which you could before this.

Used to taking people as unscrupulous, I commit the error of thinking they are.

January 18, 1941.

Mr. Osterle,
708 Madison Ave. S.E.
Grand Rapids, Mich. U.S.

Dear Jack,

No excessive slaps because no slaps. Have you forgotten the uncouth familiarity you are wont to force upon people? Perhaps the oblivion and the precipitation derive from a same principle. I do not exclude the possibility that taking people so little seriously, I presume unrightly they have the same feelings. Or could it be that I overestimated the subject to whom my humor, too subtle perhaps, was addressed? The uncalled for judgment you refer to in the last paragraph was not a judgment on my part, but a mere enunciation (do you remember the difference?) based on my knowledge of so many people who have read a letter I wrote to Adler intended for Adler.

As far as the Thomist is concerned, I was afraid you might write directly. This possibility was based on two things:

(a) we have no actual jurisdiction over what you do not publish as a dissertation for a degree;

(b) I had to account for the possibility that in appreciative surroundings you may have acquired excessive confidence.

All is well here.

Hurriedly,

per

Charles De Koninck

February 23, 1941.

Dear Charles,

I fear that you did overestimate the subject to whom your humor, too subtle perhaps, was addressed. Imagine missing De Koninck humor! I must be becoming stinkingly insensible in Grand Rapids. Perhaps it is just as well I did not see any humor in it, as I think it did me a lot of good to read it the way I did. In addition, it made me a little peeved to realize I lost sight of some important principles, and I daresay such an experience is worth while. The only way I can see how I mistook the tone of your letter was in further mistaking that I thought you may have mistaken the tone of my original letter (I do not expect this to be clear). My original letter was written in one of those unfortunate periods of giddiness that occasionally overcomes me by way of relief from the ordinary run of things. There are times, although I am beginning to think they should be suppressed, when a person wants to feel and act non-ordinary. I thought in your reply you did not discount this non-ordinary element. Instead, it appears that you did anyway, and that I missed the boat again by the way I read your letter (further material for the problem of meaning). Anyway, apart and aside from all this, and judging on a couple other experiences I have had of recent date, I am beginning to suspect that flippancy is too frequently a boomerang. My enjoyment of the flip is frequently not tempered by the recognition that it may flip into a flap and end up a flop.

This semester is going to be a hell-raiser. In connection with an extension program at the college, I am driving over to Saginaw (120 miles) every Monday to give an intro. to phil. course. In the regular curriculum, I am giving a course in logic and also two courses in freshman English which I am gradually changing into a trivium course. I have, too, a course in logic in the evening school. Add to this two voluntary courses, one with a group of students reading a part of Aristotle's Politics, and another with a group of sisters reading St. Thomas' De Regimine Principum, and the week is pretty full. We are celebrating March 7 here: the talk is to be given by Dr. Francis E. McMahon of Univ. of Notre Dame on the general subject of St. Thomas and democracy, which will include a period of questioning and discussion.

I am going to write you about the thesis later. I took a look at it yesterday and it looks better than it did ~~last~~ to me last August. I hope I can put some time on it during this semester, though it is difficult to work on something like that when there are many small distractions around. I might have to let it go until after summer school (if I teach in it). But then I could devote myself entirely to it. Then I could either come up to Quebec with it or else mail it. Would as late as the 1st of September be too inconvenient for you for me to make a trip up there? Maybe I could make it by the middle of August. If every possibility fails, I'll mail it and then come up some time if it should be necessary.

One thing about that Adler letter. It is true that a great many people read that letter which certainly should not have happened, and which I admit is an abuse of your privacy. But before an act of judgment does fall on the enunciatio, I would like to point out: 1) I did have a copy of that letter - how I got it, I admit I do not remember now; 2) the copy I had was never seen by anyone but me.

How is Zoe? She should be pretty well along in that book I mailed her. I hope all continues well with her. Give my best to Thomas, Arthur, Dominic, & Godeleva (slight spelling difficulty here). Also to the Schwartzes. I guess I owe them a letter.

As always,



In reference to humor, do you consider the following a good example?

There were five bakers all in one block. Business was scarce and of course competition tough. Consequently, baker #1 erected a sign which read: "Best bread in the town." Baker #2 looked at that sign and put up his own: "Best bread in the state." Baker #3 took a look at both of them and then put up: "Best bread in the country." Baker #4 pondered over all of them and finally came out with: "Best bread in the world."

This left Baker #5. He didn't know what to do. But finally he too put out a sign. It read: "Best bread in this block."

March 30, 1941.
Dominica de Passione

Dear Charles,

Thanks very much for the parcel which arrived yesterday containing methodologie notes, mimeographs etc. I was very anxious to get them and I shall certainly look them over carefully when I get time. Will you also give my thanks to M. l'abbe Parent who was probably the one to go through the actual physical labor of mailing them? I am also enclosing three Canadian dollars which I had left over from last summer, and which may cover the cost of publication and postage. To be sure I have covered the cost, I am also enclosing one Quebec R'y Light and Power Co. ticket which I discovered one day in my pocket book. It says "bon pour un passage" so Zoe can dally into lower town on it some day. Grand Rapids has no lower town (the whole city is respectable), nor does it understand "bon pour un passage" otherwise I would have used it here. Note that it is also fare # 398495 which I should say is quite singular. Suppose it had been # 398496; perhaps in that state of affairs I could not have sent it - perhaps it would not even have been verifiable. And so on.

If you have any time in the near future I wish you would comment briefly on the proposed course I plan to give in the summer session here. It is to be known as the philosophy of political thought. My plan is as follows. The text will be Aristotle's Politics which will include the class reading and discussion of Books I, part of II, III, and part of VII. As we read, discuss, and I hope then understand the Politics, I plan to insert mimeograph excerpts from other great political writings. For example, in Book II, I plan to mimeograph the relevant part of Plato's Republic on communism which Aristotle attacks, thus allowing for comparative reading. Another definite excerpt will be in Book I of St. Thomas' De Regimine Principum; chapter one and chapters 14 and 15. I shall also want to include, though as yet I do not know what definite parts, Machiavelli's Prince, Hobbes' Leviathan, Rousseau's Social Contract, Mill's Of Representative Government, and perhaps more of others. I may end up (if I have his permission) with Adler's paper on the demonstration of democracy, not expressly for the purpose of exhibiting it as a demonstration of democracy, since I think it is inadequate at least in its present form for that, but because it reviews in good summary the outstanding issues in political thought which have been seen in the reading of the classics, and because it is an attempt to sharpen those issues in the light of the contemporary political situation. Another teacher (Thomas Neill of St. Louis University) is offering a companion course in contemporary political thought, so my course need not include the contemporary situation explicitly. I realize quite fully I am not well prepared in this field, but I think this is a good opportunity to start to become so. This is partly why I have adopted the above procedure, which will be to try and see with the students

the contributions of the great writings in political philosophy; the teacher in this case, as probably he should be in all cases, is equally a learner. What I would like to know from you, if you have time, is how you regard such a proposed course, and what you would suggest by way of mimeograph excerpts of other writings to go along with the parts indicated in Aristotle's Politics. I think this procedure has the additional advantage of attempting to encourage serious and critical reading and class ~~in~~ discussion. . . . I shall also be teaching a course in logic during the summer session (June 24 to ~~August~~ the first week in August). I have been teaching two courses in logic this semester and am using Sister Miriam Joseph's of Holy Cross, Indiana, text 'Everyday Logic' which is an integral part of her Trivium text - the Adler point on the unity of the liberal arts etc. If I were to comment on this the letter would get unduly long, so I shall save it for another time or perhaps when I next see you. It has not, of course, the rigor of John of St. Thomas, and misses or ignores many of the points made by JST, but at the same time it is a favorable and right trend away from the current slop of scholastic texts, and it does lead to ready application of 'logical thinking' not only in all scholastic courses but in 'everyday' experience.

In regard to the thesis again, the situation seems to be as follows. I do not see how I can do any concentrated work on it until directly after summer school. The pressure of ordinary teaching duties always seems to be heavy. ~~this summer~~ But I think between now and end of summer school I plan to do whatever further reading and checking is required. I expect to expand the material taken from the contemporary writers (e. g., such as Abraham's "Theory of Meaning") and perhaps add any more that seems to bear directly on this point of meaning and meaninglessness. Don't you think it would be wise to confine the thesis to that one point? but make that point fully and completely? It is easy to get into other points, especially points in logic, but I think making one point and making it well is a better job. This point is to show what has been missed or ignored or confused in the contemporary analysis of meaning - centering in particular on the principle of verifiability. If this is to be done, then I should say the thesis as a whole falls into two natural divisions. The first includes two subordinate parts: review and summary of the appropriate current writings. This will include most of all that is there at present, but expansion of Abraham, Ewing, and especially Urban's 'Language and Reality'. To this I shall certainly add Russell's new 'An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth' which I am now reading, especially chap. 13 where he discusses the significance of sentences. He does not, by the way, confuse significance and truth as many of the others do. But he does think that sentences can be meaningless, e. g., 'the law of contradiction is yellow', 'God is one' (Meaningless in a strict sense), and 'Quadruplicity drinks procrastination,' etc. All this I think can be refuted; one point, for example, would be to show that significance is prior to syntax, not posterior to it, i.e., you can't determine significance in terms of syntax. There is also a difference between what is absurd and

S . . .

what is really meaningless. (By the way, is not Russell's and others' insistence upon hierarchies of language basically another way of regarding impositions and intentions?). He is certainly gloriously vague and snotty at times but I think it is important to recognize that he finally (and probably reluctantly) discards metaphysical agnosticism, attacks some positivists as over-linguistic, and admits there must be universals or 'all-ness' independently of enumeration. The only point I would use him for would be on the significance of sentences.

T

The second part of this first division would be largely what is now there in the form of a dialectical attack on these contributions, ordered (though not explicitly subdivided into numbered questions as at present) in terms of general questions such as 'Is verification the principle of meaning?', 'Does the proposition alone have sense?' etc. To this will certainly be added a general question on whether words or sentences can ever be meaningless. I think it must be shown that words whether separately or in sentences must presuppose meaning or significance, that 'quadruplicity drinks procrastination' is not meaningless, but rather absurd. This is important because for some there is no essential difference between this and any metaphysical proposition, although the latter is usually rejected on the basis of pure dogmatic empiricism (as Ewing even humorously points out). I do not see how any sensible or mental sign (word or concept) can be regarded as meaningless because of its complete dependence upon significance or meaning.

The second division would be to show what is old in the current problem of meaning. This I think should be, as it is somewhat now, largely a commentary on John of St. Thomas because he presents so well the crux of the issue in terms of significatio, suppositio, and verificatio. When these distinctions are set forth, and particularly when verification is seen to depend upon significatio and not conversely, then the problem of meaning will be seen in its right ordering. After this, any other important allied points can be considered anew, for example the modern notion of 'meaningless' as understood in terms of indeterminate significatio, or the indeterminate symbol; perhaps something on the 'operational concept'; perhaps a closing section which will merely suggest that distinctions in kinds of significatio reflect distinctions in kinds of knowledge, and that the larger dimension of this problem must be in terms of the relation of philosophy and science. These latter points could only be suggested because they would go way beyond the extent of the thesis in its present form. The basic point on significatio, suppositio, and verificatio is in itself enough and is antecedent to the rest.

How does this strike you? I hope at the end of summer school to be able to sit down and write it out in this form (dabbling at it between now and then). I still hope it will be possible to come up myself to Quebec with it somewhere from the middle of August to the 1st of Sept. I cannot at all be sure about coming up, much as I want to. For one thing, I may be facing the draft board just about that time, nor could I go to Canada without their permission. At any event, I expect to be able to mail it some where during that time.

J

How is Zoe
now and what
have you?

Chapman

April 10, 1941.

Dear Sir,

Being in bad humor, I am in a perfect need to write you a letter. Your last of March 30 is more provoking than anything you have so far sent me. Who could object to your reading Aristotle's Politics? Read it, discuss it or any other damn thing you like, but remember that the first thing is to understand them. However please lay off Plato, until you have learned more about dialectic. If you can not resist the temptation, and if you still are what I have always known you to be you won't do read what Saint Thomas has to say about Plato's so-called communism 'in de regno' Book IV, chap. 4, *Habita igitur necessitate*, to which I refer in a previous letter. May be your guts is admirable, (*mirabile dicitur illud ejus causa igneratur*) but I hope you don't burn your fingers. My knowledge of politics approaches zero.

I can well understand that you have no time to think about your thesis. I still think that you should most carefully and most thoroughly labor through the whole of John of Saint Thomas' Logic. Did I say thoroughly? I did. Judging from your excellent suggestions on pages two and three of your last letter you could then do an excellent job. You ask me "how does this strike you". Respondet dicentem quod sic. Let me add however that if you come after the Summer courses with the intention to work, you shall be most unwelcome. This time no one is going to stop me from taking a vacation.

Parent tells me the bills you sent me just about cover the expenses. If perchance two cents are left or three he will confide them to me as a compensation for the ice cream you shoveled down under the pretext of accompanying Smetelkin, to say nothing of the Popcorn. I still think you are a sissy. Nor can I figure out why I am answering your letter.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de mes sentiments suspects.

April 12, 1941.

Dear Mr. De Koninck,

Allow me to say, Mr. De Koninck, that you are the world's worst, lousiest, and most unsympathetic letter correspondent. But since you don't give a damn, why waste words on this.

I am sending under separate cover a copy of our summer session bulletin for you to sneer at.

I guess there is nothing more to say about the proposed course in political philosophy except that I should not be giving it; this is the one point of agreement between us. But I am taking you quite seriously about Plato in the Republic and may omit it entirely. Too much is getting in the six weeks course anyway. Is it not also understood that this is a course designed to ~~raise~~ raise questions rather than answer or settle them? Kin I raise questions?

Since I have been cordially invited not to come to Quebec this summer, I am looking backward to not enjoying a sweltering August pounding out the thesis. And I shall do all I can to sit on JST's logic as thoroughly and adequately as I can. I take this to mean that if this is done, the thesis will be satisfactory in its proposed outline, and where JST will occupy the second and major division of the thesis. I take it also that mailing the thesis in will be satisfactory and that this will suffice if it is not too awful. May I take this opportunity of not inviting you to come to Grand Rapids since you wouldn't anyway? It makes me feel better anyhow.

Adler wrote for any suggestion I might have in regard to his seminars at Quebec this summer. My suggestions, which are invaluable only to myself, were to wind the seminars around the two general topics of liberal arts and the species problem; his April Thomist article could be assigned in advance so that the listeners would be familiar with the general drift and terminology. In all seriousness I hope that you and he will plan leisure and solitude for yourselves in your study during a major time of his visit there; this will be the real profitable part of the venture.

I ignore the usual insults about popcorn and ice cream since the matter is too abstruse to explain to you. I suppose you wrote that in your usual condition, namely, full of beef and beer.

And you ignored most of my letter, as expected. I particularly wanted to know about Zoe and what gender the new De Koninck is. Mebbe Zoe will write me about it; it would be nice to get something bordering on the sweet from Quebec. I expect no answer to this letter, and if one, a nasty one. Note my gantlemanly, serene, and aloof manner throughout. Nehmen Sie, bitte, meine schlechteste Begrüssung. (You may use the dictionary for this).

John Arthur Oesterle

April 15, 1941.

Mr. John Oesterle,
706 Madison Ave. S. E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan
U.S.A.

Dear Sir,

The gender is feminine, and the name is
Marie-Charlotte.

In haste,

Kasschrift: Ich habe es ohne Wörterbuch auch verstanden.
Sahen Sie aber auch im Wörterbuch für: schlecht
Ich bin überzeugt dass schlechtste ist statt
schlechte.

October 5, 1941.

Dear Charles,

The thesis seems to be finished. I worked on most of it during August up north at a cottage we have about 75 miles from here. I did not finish it there because I was not sure about the concluding part. So I had to sandwich this in with the opening of the present semester, a not very happy combination.

What I want to find out now is if I should mail it directly to you. As soon as I hear from you that this is all right, or whether to mail it to someone else in Quebec, I shall bundle it up and put it in some kind of box for protection and ship it on. I shall also send an explanatory letter with it in case the thesis itself misses fire. I suppose then the next step will be the going over of it by you and whoever else is on the committee which will likely result in suggestions, revisions, or corrections and, if acceptable on the whole, a decision as to whether all of it or some part of it is to be published, and where and how. As far as I am concerned myself, there is no particular hurry on the submission to and judgment of the committee, but there is some pressure on me here to get the doctorate matter settled as soon as possible. I shall wait for advice from you on this which likely cannot be determined until after you have had a chance to examine the thesis. At the moment I only wait for word from you to send the thesis on.

We had here yesterday a conference of the Michigan Catholic Press Association. Among those who attended and took part were Janet, Bob Heywood, Gene Patrick, of Chicago, and Mary Louise Tully of the Ladies of the Grail in Doddsville, Illinois. Msgr. Hillenbrand also gave one of the principal addresses. It was very successful, binding up as it did, the rising liturgical movement with journalism. Janet and the others told me about your trip to Chicago in connection with the celebration of the university. If I had known you were dashing into the States that way I might have driven over in Boethius (name of the car I now have - a consoling, 1935 Ford), or even have met you in Detroit. We might have even arranged for a little lecture for you here in Grand Rapids en route. But I see you are as indifferent as ever about revealing your plans and communication, so what the hell.

And tell all those little De Konincks je voudrais jouer ce soir, but that I have to learn about ethics instead, since I appear to be teaching it. (Dear Zoe: I still love popcorn and have been experimenting making it with cocoanut oil: yum, yum, yum - goody).
Dear Charles: avec mes sentiments toujours something,

As always,

Jack

October 9, 1941.

Mr. John Oesterle,
706, Madison Avenue, S.E.
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Dear Jack,

Overlooking your snooty remarks I shall go on to tell you of my humble efforts in your behalf. As you may have heard from Janet I was at St. Paul, St. Thomas' College and the Seminary, for a few days last week. It seems that my transit there will give a recommended Laval graduate quite a chance at St. Thomas' College. Having no choice, I recommended you. But, putting aside the wisecracks, I really think that this will be an excellent place to work at. They're actually trying to do something, and they would give you a free hand. And I am sure it would better your financial position. You may have good reasons for preferring Grand Rapids. I now leave the whole thing entirely in your hands. I expect Father Hammang or Father O'Donnell to write you about this.

As to the thesis, I too advise you to get it out as soon as you can, at least in part. Send it up, and Dionne and I will go through it carefully. It may take a few weeks, — you know how things go around here. If I did not stop at Grand Rapids, it was not because of indifference. Up to the very last day, I was not certain of going because of possible passport difficulties. I would very gladly have stopped to see you whatever you may think of this.

The children still talk about you. You'll have to come and see them soon to refresh their memory. Popcorn is practically out.

I guess this is enough.

Monro

December 16, 1941.

Dear Charles,

I have meant to write you for a long time, but so many things have kept crowding it out. Even now this will be only a note.

First, I suppose you received the thesis in good shape, which I mailed nearly two months ago. Very likely you have not had much opportunity to look it over very thoroughly, but I would appreciate it if you would let me know that you received it all right. If you have reached any general decision regarding it I would like to know that also.

I received the letter of M. l'abbe Parent recently regarding the proposal to photostat (or some kind of business) the rest of John of St. Thomas. I hope this goes through, as it will be the only access most of us will have to the rest of the Cursus Theologicus.

I would also like to know from you if there is anything I can do in regard to the possibility of my going to St. Thomas' college next year. I have not heard anything from them directly, although I appreciate that the usual time for this occurring is in February or March. Still, if there is anything tactful I can do now by way of letting them know I would be anxious to come, I want to do it. You might have a suggestion here in view of having seen them yourself. I had a letter from Adler about two weeks ago in which he mentioned having been in St. Paul and confirmed that the possibility was very strong; Adler added a recommendation for me.

My location here is good as far as it goes, but it will never go very far. There are certain advantages and the college has been especially good in letting me develop the philosophy courses pretty much my own way. But the field of operation is bound to be limited.

Of course the present war situation may change everything; it may be enough to change considerably any plans the St. Thomas College may have. And I have no guarantee as far as I am concerned either. My rating in the draft list does not imply any immediate call, but there is no telling what will occur in the span of a year or two. After the treacherous attack of Japan, anything can happen.

Give my very best to the whole family. I miss all of you enormously. So much so that I won't even mention popcorn (which might affront one of you). Or shredded wheat, (which ought to affront everybody). Or that I left Quebec still the pingpong champion (I was just gallant that one time with Zoe). What in blazes has happened to everyone in Quebec - are you under a rigid censorship? Only Tommy, bless his heart, has any decency. But a salute to the princess Marie Charlotte (?). To you, sir, a deft pooh -

It seems to come down to this. Will it be possible for me in any way to give assurance to the authorities here, within a month or so, that the doctorate is satisfactorily settled? If not, then of course that is that. If so, then several things can happen. At least a goodly part of the thesis can be published in some form. Even if all of it should be published in substantially the present form, perhaps more could be added later, if this was deemed necessary. In any case, whether some of it needs further work, or more could be added to it, this could be finished off at a later time so long as the minimum requirements are met. This is, I admit, purely an argument from expediency, but one must face this in the practical circumstances of teaching where the unfortunate liason has been drawn so tightly between the doctorate degree and teaching ability.

In regard to the matter of shaping up any rough spots in the thesis, or of altering it, or of adding to it, perhaps it would be possible for me to come to Quebec either in early June or in August (although this would not solve the immediate problem). This possibility of my coming must remain quite scanty because of the war situation (I am not sure, for instance, I would even be allowed to leave the country), but if I can I would certainly like to come to Quebec again. I'd come, if I can, say in June, just to see all of you and jouer avec les enfants. And if you were respectable, I'd introduce you to Boethius (my 1935 Fordor Ford), and maybe you and Zoe and perhaps one or two others and I could drive off somewhere for a jaunt to get away briefly from the sad turmoil (if the tires on the car are still inflated and if the government hasn't interested me in the manual art of military defense). This may be worth considering - this injection of the racy motif into the theme.

I'd give my shirt to know if there is anything I can do about the St. Thomas position. After your reprimand about approaching the matter philosophically, I can only tweedle my thumbs and look as vacant as usual. I have already agreed to teach at the summer session here, which I do not think matters either way. But in a month or so I may be confronted with a contract for next year and since my parents depend measurably upon me I can't get too gay about it. Do you advise me to do anything unphilosophical about the matter? I realize it may be hard to buzz this thing up, but if there is a chance I do not want to let it zoop sickeningly down the drain.

Tell the sweet Zoe it was good to have tangible evidence that she persists, and that I may get around to answer her note (and I mean 'note') soon. I'd write the faithful Tommy right now if the French didn't reduce me to shambles and if it didn't burden my ability to count; (I can now make up to vingt-neuf without noticeable slips). So you see, I dwell on the possibility of seeing all of you again. Speaking of ships, which I wasn't and which has no connection either fore or aft, whatever has happened to de Monleon? Give my best to M. l'abbé Parent who, I still think, does the heavy work around the university. I am enclosing, for your amusement, copies of two tests I gave this week. The ethics is based on Adler's Dialectic of Morals plus material from I-II of the Summa, largely as outlined by Gilson in his book on thomistic moral philosophy.

Beep-beep, and forget not the urgency involved in this epistle,

Ethics. Semester Examination.
January, 1942.

1. Briefly discuss what the Dialectic of Morals seeks to accomplish, to what extent you think it successful, and whether and how it will aid you in moral problems.
2. Does the initial admission of the fact of preference involve the admission of free will? Explain either way you answer.
3. Mr. X maintains all preferences are in terms of pleasure. How would you chat with Mr. X?
4. If it can be admitted that all men want to live as well as possible, and if you can indicate that that means something real, can it be shown:
 - a) what sort of desirable things are necessary?
 - b) whether objects of desire should be wanted in a certain order?
5. Mr. X claims that eternal law, and even natural law, means nothing to him and that the only kind of law he can understand is the laws men proclaim, which are their own justification. How can you help Mr. X out?
6. Mr. X is also curious to know what living virtuously means, and he would like to see this illustrated by one of the cardinal virtues. Give him a hand here.
7. Mr. X claims that since he acknowledges no religion he never commits a sin (or acts immorally). Clarify Mr. X's difficulty here, and perhaps even indicate some ways in which Mr. X could and probably has sinned.
8. You have been studying, presumably, how and why to be good. How much will this determine your actual life? (How ethical will choices make you?)
9. Explain, perhaps with an original example, how even on the level of pleasure, a moral principle can be formulated and also violated.
10. Mr. X considers himself religious - in fact, a Catholic - but he charges that religion doesn't mean much to him nor does he see why he should perform the religious acts he does. Something, presumably is wrong here. Say something?

- six questions, sufficiently answered, makes a nice test.
- eight questions, adequately answered, may be an exceptional test.
- question 1 must be answered.

Semester Test, Philosophy 61
January 22, 1942

1. Explain in what way Plato's dialogue Theaetetus is an introduction to philosophy. With what problem is it concerned and how is the problem developed and solved? Contrast Plato's dialogue with the way Aristotle proceeds in the opening chapters of the Metaphysics.
2. The problem of Being and Becoming, which principally occupied the pre-socratic philosophers, can also be understood as the problem of Permanence and Change. Some of the pre-socratic philosophers thought Being and Becoming were contradictory. Who were they? Argue out the position of one of them.
3. Some of the pre-socratic philosophers thought Being and Becoming were not contradictory. Who were they? Argue out the position of one of them.
4. The Sophists maintained that everything was a matter of opinion and all knowledge was relative. What dilemma or difficulty would the Sophist be in if one were to ask: Is what you say true?
5. If someone were to ask you what philosophy is all about and why you are taking it, what would you have to say?
6. What does it mean to say all men desire to know, and is it so?
7. How can you show there is such knowledge as theology, that it is different from philosophy, and in what way they are related?

Take any six questions.

December 20, 1941.

Dear Jack,

I have just sent a word to Father Hamman asking him to get down to brass tacks. We must get you out of that situation. For the love of Pete don't go telling them, even tactfully, that you would be anxious to go there. In short, don't go acting like a Philosopher. Ham should act immediately and I'll let you know as soon as I get an answer.

I still haven't got down to read your thesis seriously for the simple reason that for the last month I have reached the limit of exhaustion. But I'll be going through it carefully now that for several weeks I'll have to abandon all serious work.

If I stay here it is because I insist on leaving some space for Elderklots.

January 24, 1942.

Dear Charles,

It appears that something will have to be settled about my thesis rather shortly. The authorities at the college are on my neck for some decision, for the reason that in a month or so we must begin to prepare our catalog for next year, and they want to know if they can remove the "cand." from in front of the Ph. D. Most people think it means some new species of Ph. D. anyway, such as "candid" doctor of philosophy. I can appreciate the college's point of view in the matter since, for purely pedagogical reasons (which is practically all Americans understand by a Ph. D), it helps the appearance of the teaching faculty in relation to the public and especially to any board of examiners who may crunch along.

I can also appreciate, judging from your note just before Christmas, that you may be so completely snowed under with work that you simply have not had time to examine it the way you want. Then, too, since someone like M. l'abbe Dionne may be working with you on it, there will be the difficulty of dealing with matter written in English. Still, something ought to be able to be figured out which will satisfy all sides.

I cannot suggest anything particular myself until I know the general decision you arrive at. While I am quite aware that the thesis may suffer in certain respects, I do think it is a rounded piece of work with respect to what it tries to show which, wisely I think, I have carefully limited. I should say that at least it shows in several ways the misconceptions involved in the current formulation of the problem of meaning, and I think it locates where the problem ultimately belongs and perhaps even suggests how it ultimately can be analyzed. And, whatever its weaknesses, that compares favorably with most theses I have read!

You said in your October letter, and you also said several times to me while I was still in Quebec, that getting in at least a part of it, or, I suppose, publishing at least a part of it, satisfies the minimum requirements as far as the thesis itself is concerned. Could not at least something like this be done temporarily? For example, the end of Section III in the thesis has, in a way, an ending to the problem, and if Section IV should need further amplification or alteration, as sometimes it occurs to me it might need, perhaps the thesis could be issued in an abbreviated form. At the same time, I think there is some quite good stuff in Section IV.

January 30, 1942.

Dear Jack,

You can give your superiors all assurances that you will have your PH. D. for the next session and that therefore you may have it printed in your next bulletin, or programme or whatever you call it. I have begun to go over your thesis with Dionne and we should be finished in about two weeks.

I understand the situation. I have also written a couple of urgent letters to St. Paul and hope they do something about it soon. It would really be a good place for you to be at. Whether the war will change the situation or not, I do not know.

Of course, if you must come to visit us, you will be welcome, I suppose. If I am not home, Mrs. De Koninck will likely be there to meet you. I must warn you however that room-rates and restaurant fares (not to speak of ice cream) have gone up alarmingly in Quebec.

In haste,

P.S. The formal answer to the difficulty you mentioned about the absolute priority of the common good in a letter dated January 18th 1941, ("The state is not a substance, but only an accident, etc."), is to be found in Ia, q.5, a.1, ad 1.

69 Ransom Ave., N.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Dear Charles,

Thanks for the assurances, given on January 30, that I will have the Ph. D. by the next session. Now, as a matter of routine (and at the added insistence of same authorities), can you specify just when the alteration in me will be completed? They would like to make some such announcement as the following: Jacob Zacaharius Oesterlius, candidatus for ph., at Lavalensis, has received word that his thesis has been accepted by the facultatis. He has (or will) been formally conferred with the additional appendage on . . . The thesisus will (will not; may not be owing to shortage of used paper) be reluctantly published . . . Etc.

In brief, the matter is this. When actually do I get the degree? (Is this done only at certain times, such as in June?) Is anything to be done about publishing part or all of it now, and is that necessary before the degree is actually conferred, or can that occur some time after. Do I owe anybody any money? Does anybody owe me any money?

If you can answer definitely any of the above items, except the last two, I would appreciate your doing so directly to the dean of our college, as well as to me. (How can I show anyone the sort of letter you send me?) The dean is: Sister M. Mildred, Aquinas College, 69 Ransom N. E., ~~Grand Rapids~~ Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Your usual sturdy invitation not to come to Quebec has been received. I would like to disappoint you on this score and annoy you a bit sometime this year, but I admit it does not look very promising, what with the war situation getting increasingly worse, and the auto situation so gloomy. I received the John of St. Thomas thing from M. abbe Parent, but will you tell him to mail any other copies more carefully? The envelope in which it came was open, though this may have been done by the censor.

No item of any kind from St. Paul.

March 31, 1942.

Dear Jack,

I am sending you an official letter which you may show to your dean to whom I prefer not to write personally, for the simple reason that I do not know how to do such a thing.

Your thesis is really very good. But would you mind comparing what you say on page 60 "man is a word etc...." to page 61 "would not be verified" with John of St. Thomas cura. Phil., T.I., p. 30 a. The example you chose and the way you analyse it seems confusing. It does not bring out the rôle of the copula which is essential in this verification.

There still remain a few pages to go over with Dionne. Since he is leaving to-day until next Monday it will be another week before we can finish it. I will then send it to Father Farrell of The Thomist.

In haste,

March 31, 1952.

Mr. John Oesterle,
706, Madison Avenue, S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Dear Mr. Oesterle,

There has been some delay in approving your thesis for the doctor, because of the chapter you added on Russell with whose latest book the examiners were not sufficiently acquainted. As I have explained to you before, the only reason for further delay is the publication which will automatically make you a full-fledged Ph.D. as the certificate which the secretariat is sending you will show. In most cases the candidate himself has the thesis printed at his own expense. But as I told you before, we want to spare you this burden by having it published, at least in part, by some philosophical periodical. I am sure The Thomist will be glad to have it. Your thesis is very well done and shall not fail to make an impression. If for some reason The Thomist could not publish it in time, I will find some other arrangement. You may be sure however of having your title by September, and probably sooner.

I will be very glad to see you some time in June.

Yours very sincerely,

Charles De Koninck.

April 4, 1942.

Dear Charles,

Thanks a great deal for sending the official notice, your formal letter, and your informal letter (which was also sort of formal). I am very happy that the thesis meets with your general approval as, in all seriousness, the only one I have cared about satisfying has been you. More on this at the end of the letter.

First I want to clear up any confusion about the passage in the thesis pp. 60-61 (and J.S.T, p. 30 a). I am not sure whether I grasp the difficulty you find there. In general, the situation is this. J.S.T., very carefully and very technically, is explaining *suppositio* and, in particular, distinguishing it from *significatio*. This precision of JST is, of course, central to the whole thesis. I underline this distinction in both parts II and III of the thesis. In part III (and on this same point from page 83 to 87), I can't proceed very formally since I am there merely trying to condense JST. In part II, I am proceeding relatively loosely, since I am trying to make the same points and distinctions in terms of the writers attacked, which procedure, while stronger rhetorically, is undoubtedly weaker analytically. Hence, I take you to mean by confusion there that I have not succeeded in making the distinction between *suppositio* and *significatio* clear in the looser language.

Assuming this is the difficulty, I am going to try and show the translation I made between the loose language and the precise Latin.

I try to show mere signification of a word in various ways. One is merely to write 'man' in quotation (zero imposition). When I speak "of the meaning of 'man'". I mean the same thing. When I speak of merely "substituting the word 'man'" (as opposed to "further substituted"), I mean again the same thing or, in precise terminology, '*substitutio representativa*' (as distinct from ~~*suppositio*~~ *substitutio applicativa*'). And, similarly, by '*suppositio*', I mean in that paragraph: "'man' employed in this way," "verifying the meaning of 'man'," "application" of 'man'," etc.

Now this may be all clear already. You mention that this section does not bring out the role of the copula in '*suppositio*.' This may be a matter of emphasis, and I can see where the criticism might then come in. But there are two reasons, mixed with temperament, why I do not stress the copula more at this point. The first is: Considering the writers I am referring to, I do not want to use the word 'copula' since I know they think we think the copula and the verb are identified. (In this particular example, the verb does express the copula, deliberately chosen for simplicity and clarity - in the expression "red rose" you would have, for example, neither a sentence nor a verb, although you do have a simple proposition). I still think if I were to stress the copula any more than I do here, loose logicians would go on identifying our logical copulas with grammatical verbs. I might add also that I do specify implicitly the function of the copula in the sentence: "In this case, it would seem that the meaning of 'man' can be

verified as a part of that proposition because it could be pointed out that what is meant by 'man' is capable of having what is meant by 'two feet' related to it in a certain way." I would have thought, at this point, that this was enough at the time to indicate that "further substitutions" of the meanings of words can occur only within a proposition, which means they have to be "related in a certain way." Without the relation in a definite way, (the copula,) we can never have "further substitutions." The emphasis here is still on "man" or "two feet", but that is because it is the logical subject and predicate which involves suppositio, not the copula.

The second reason is that I do not want to confuse, in loose terminology, the verification of a term with the verification of a proposition (JST, p. 30 a 10 sq.) Now the copula is the form of the proposition, while the propositional terms are the matter. But this is with respect primarily to verifying the proposition for truth or falsity, which I bring in in the next paragraph. It is crucial, I think, to keep the points separate, and I still feel that adding anything more would, especially in loose language, confuse the two.

Now there are three things which can be done. One is to let it stand as it is, if the foregoing is sufficient to justify it (the importance of the copula, I repeat, is there implicitly, and in pt. III, p. 85, note 65, I quote JST on this directly). The second is to add a footnote at the end of the sentence at the top of page 61. This could be designated 53a, and could run as follows:

As will be emphasized later, this further ~~consideration~~ substitution of the meaning of 'man' is determined by the way it is related to "two feet", and vice versa, i. e., in terms of the logical copula.

Third, this disputed paragraph could be rewritten in an effort to bring out the function of the copula without entailing any of the above difficulties. I could still send you this in time if you dropped me a card. I think, however, an added footnote would make the point sufficiently for the purposes there. Does this take care of what you mean?

You have no objection to the actual proposition "man has two feet" have you? Modern logicians like to refer to man's two-footedness (rather than his rationality) and I thought I would play along with them. Then there is always Bertrand Russell who, in a recent broadcast on "Invitation to Learning", said: "It's so dull to keep saying man is rational." Right now, I would just as soon use "Some men miss the boat" or "Some men beat their wives" (which, incidentally, is pretty good suppositio). Or any unimportant proposition.

////

The news about publishing it in The Thomist is most welcome, not only because of your considerate thought of saving the burden of printing cost, but also because there is some chance of it getting read there. I don't attach any exaggerated importance to the bulk of it, but ever since I first ran across the main point of the thesis I have been a little

all we will have
is suppositio in relation
to the copula

Note: "C'est comme il sera dit plus loin, cette substitution
ultérieure se fera pour suppositio in relation
aux signifiés de la copula."
Better example: "Man is a horse".

nettled that no one has taken any kind of crack at the widely-touted principle of verification. This is what happens, apparently, when people pay no attention to the work that has been done in the tradition. Except for Maritain's logic, I can't recall a current logic manual that refers to suppositio intelligently (e. g., Hartmann's Logic which treats suppositio as imposition - zero, first, and second imposition!) Incidentally, I met Fr. Farrell about a month ago when he was in G. R. to give one of our lectures. We spoke then about the possibility of my reviewing some books, so he at least will know me. I should like to add, too, that I would rather wait a bit and have it published in The Thomist, if this is necessary. It probably could not make the July issue, but would not the October issue do?

There is one thing that certainly is not brought out in the thesis, and that is you. There is no point in telling you this, and there is no way to show it in the thesis, except by the vague acknowledgement, which is only grammatically plural. I am willing enough to take credit for having run across the original problem (or rather for having read JST), but when I said, plurally in the acknowledgement, that whatever was creditable in the dissertation was due to their time and ability, I was very serious about whom I meant. Of course, there were times when I could have cheerfully gutted you for the unnecessarily nasty way with which you could draw a pencil through a page. My only point is that if the thesis is good it would not have been had you not spend some hot, miserable days on it. Or, to put the whole thing at a minimum, you taught me how to write it.

I owe abbe Dionne plenty too. It's too bad there was the linguistic difficulty for both of us. But his logic course gave me a lot, to say nothing of all the work he has put in on reading the thesis.

If there is any possible way of my getting to Quebec this summer I am coming, if for no other reason than to see all of you. A possible, though not probable time, is early June. But we may have early summer school here. A more likely time is middle August, when perhaps we could sandwich in a little vacation in Boethius. But it all remains less than probable. It is at least a 50-50 shot that I shall be in the army by then. And after all, viewed in the perspective of final causes, that will be as it should be. ,

Best and holiest of Easter greetings to all of the De Konincks, especially to the ever sweet Zoe.

As ever and always,

Sack

June 11, 1942

Dear Charles:

Thanks ever so much for sending me the mimeographed stuff on Marxism and methodologie scientifique. I am reluctantly parting with a premium American dollar bill to cover the expense. In a crisp, enclosed note you generously itemized the bill at 75¢, but what the hell, I might as well be thoroughly knifed. (Quite aside: I appreciate anything you send me). ((Not aside: I expect I might read it sometime)).

I wonder if it would be asking too much to find out what the devil happened to my thesis.

I wonder if it would be asking too much to find out what the devil happened to St. Thomas. (the college, not the saint).

I wonder if it would be asking too much to find out why the devil you haven't the civil decency to write me at least the occasional, unintelligible epistle.

Time was when I would say to my intimates: "Oh, Charley De Koninck; he is a very close friend of mine. He's a great guy."

Somewhat later I have said to what intimates were left: "Yes, I know M. Charles D. De Koninck. I have sat (uncomfortably) in several of his classes."

More recently I have said to my intimate: "De Koninck? De Koninck? Zaccharius De Koninck? Oh, Chas. De Koninck. I've heard the name somewhere. Railroad engineer, I believe."

It has been raining for seven damn weeks.

My mamma bought me a swivel chair for my birthday (tomorrow, thank you; I am older than Zoe again). I am now teetering back and forth in it. It gives me the air of importance so richly deserving of me. I also bought a cabinet into which I have put a lot of your junk. It is right behind me, but it is too soon after dinner to look at it. (the 'it' may refer to the cabinet).

I ate too much for dinner.

I wish I knew what the hell happened to my thesis.

I miss Zoe and the kids. Also that lousy barber you referred me to. Two plus two either is or are four.

De Raeymaker says John of St. Thomas is a mumbskull.

My swivel chair ~~knacks~~ creaks when I teeter. This makes me nervous. I don't like corn and tomatoes mixed together. Sometimes I don't even like them separate. The world is everything which is the case.

The case is everything which is the world. Everything which is case is world. one, two, three, four five: is my thesis dead or alive? six, seven, eight, nine, ten: shall I bother with St. Thomas again? eleven, twelve - (can't rhyme fifteen).

Well, to business. I was over in Chicago a couple weeks ago. I had lunch with Mert and Janet and later attended the Hutchins-Adler classics course. At least forty students and they have been spending the whole year on natural theology, viz., ~~St.~~ the Summa. Had a heck of a time with the proofs for existence of God, so I understand, with Mert thinking there is really only one proof involved, a sort of enlargement of the one on necessary being. The day I was there, discussion was on God's will, love, etc. Another difficulty they have had, carrying it perhaps to the point where it is not doing anyone any good, is whether God creates freely or necessarily, and the undesirable consequences following from either. How are we to understand God having free will, and so on. Mert sat on this so hard that one day going home from the university he ran through a red light. The cop said: "what's on your mind, bud?" Mert said: "God's will." Mert paid three dollars.

Nevertheless, it is quite a sight to see half a hundred more or less bright collegians, very few Catholic, spread out all over the Summa. They are probably dumbfounded to notice for the first time the wealth of a tradition they have never suspected. It is making them think. There is also a great danger. Everyone can become so lost they may end up in hopeless confusion and perhaps despair. Will they become ~~that~~ natural theologians or skeptics?

The call for army men is really becoming severe, and if I go it would be this summer. If I don't, I want to explore all the possibilities for shaking Grand Rapids by a year from now, so let me know if it is worth my while to go after St. Thomas, or any other place, for then. I have profitted a lot here, but I shall become stagnant if I take root. Consider what I am doing this summer (aside from teaching philosophy of man & ethics in summer school): I am tutoring a girl in German from scratch. You will sneer that I am taking money under false pretense, but, on the basis of an introductory lesson, all I can do is stand and gape and marvel at my admirable Sprachgefühl. Such is becoming my pre-occupation.

Did I send you a copy of our summer bulletin? If not, I won't bother.

But when it is all summed up, I am lonesome for Quebec, and I don't see what in the deuce I can do about it for quite a while. So I guess I'll just quit writing and only teeter in my swivel chair.

June 20, 1942.

Dear Sir,

It is a pleasure to be able to tell you that I sent neither the mimeographed stuff nor the bill of 0.75 cents. I can only explain it all by Father Parent's condescendence.

Your thesis is in Washington. Whether or not it will be accepted, I do not know. In any case I am going to have it translated into French and published here, possibly at your expense. Frère Clément, I don't know that you remember him, has just finished his doctorate with a thesis on the transition from poetry and theogony to philosophy proper. A good piece of work. I would like to put these and a couple more out before the end of the year if possible. I think the time has come.

As to St. Thomas' College, I thought I had written to you about Father O'Donnell's answer long ago. As a matter of fact, I thought I had asked Jean to write you about it. Now I wonder if I actually asked her, since you seem to know nothing about it (I did not say she forgot. Note the charity). Enclose you will find a copy of O'Donnell's letter.

Again I am sorry to have to tell you that I had no time to spend on the railroad this year.

Adler has no worried. Janet should translate for him John of St. Thomas' *Quaestiones Theologiae*, T.I, disp.2, a.2: "An requiritur ad theologiam fides supernaturalis?"

You'll be in Grand Rapids no longer than is necessary, if I can help it. Too bad you can't come down here this summer.

Read the notes on this year's methodology course, particularly the third objection on page 24 and the answer to it on page 26.

Well,

August 20, 1942.

Dear Charles:

Thanks very much for sending on the card with the good news about the publication of the thesis by The Thomist. I had about reached the state of thinking I might write them myself, although I figured that this would not add anything to it. In fact, I had concluded that if they had kept the stuff this long they were likely going to publish it anyway. I am sure you know I appreciate what you did toward getting it published.

I am very much interested - in fact, fascinated - by your remark of the possibility of translating it into French and having it published in Quebec. Who on earth could translate such a mess successfully, a problem whose inception, at least, arises from an ambiguity possible only in the good, old English tongue? I am sure that even if I knew French on a par with English, I could not make the transition. Perhaps it can be done, and you probably know this better than I, but I would be surprised to see it. And if it should be done, I shall certainly be curious to read it. This would give the delightful scene of taking a dictionary and trying to find out what I said, and maybe even refuting myself in the process.

Fr. Belleperche blew in here in a sort of confidential way. We went up to our cottage on the Pere Marquette river at Baldwin, about 75 miles north of here. I am only hoping that sometime, somehow, someday, you and Zoe and even all the kids could come there; I am quite sure you would like it, and from many standpoints it is ideal in its loneliness of forty acres. Fr. B and I, alas, got a little thick one day, and, almost breaking Aristotle's 10th predicament with nudity, began shooting arrows at a target. An interesting series of matches brought us to the point where one of us literally could not hit the side of a barn, and so we finished off by shooting straight up in the air. Very refreshing. Fr. B. also brought the left-over of refreshing air from the cool, illuminating Quebec atmosphere which did me a lot of good.

Adler has asked me, even strongly requested, to assist ^{him} in his work on analogy. I am aware, of course, of his somewhat tempestuous manner in these things, and I shall not, accordingly, co-operate to the extent he might want - namely do some of the actual writing. But since I think he is an excellent tonic in revitalizing the tradition in spots where it so easily embraces decay, I am going to assist at least by way of thrashing out points or difficulties to the extent I am able, and perhaps also prevent him from unnecessarily getting out on a limb. I have read his first copy of the book, which needs revision, but I think he at least has a problem to present and, in addition to that, I hope to be of assistance in suggesting a manner of writing such

that it will really be an objective presentation of trying to find out what is the case. This would tend to avoid occasional subjective dispositions he himself incurs and, even more so, perhaps forestall the usual slimy reviews he gets in return. I am convinced myself that Adler has an awful lot to offer even at the expense of his usual prematurity in writing. My hope is that even if his problem of analogy does not make whatever points he holds, it will be written in such a way that it will lead to analytical precision on the matter and this alone, I think, would be a philosophical advance and worth the effort. For if he will write it that way, then there ought to be the occasion for decent philosophical communication about it; if not even this minimum value is obtained, I shall despair of any philosophical communication at all in this century of personalistic and sectarian perspective. At present we have very little impregnation by the object; it seems to be mostly intellectual masturbation. My position in the thing is only as a learner, so, in any event, I should profit. At most I might write a preface to the thing, gently hinting at the dire need of genuine philosophical communication. I think you would approve this.

I shall have occasion to write you again rather soon. I am also going to take up seriously with you the finishing off of the translation of John of St. Thomas. If you think there is a real possibility of it being published somewhere, I shall try and finish it up and go over the whole translation during the coming year.

Everything best to all of you,

Non-Joseph.

You might want to add the following to your string of more or less stercorary bazookas:

A little girl wandered, presumably a casu, into the men's lavatory. She stopped in the middle of the fragrant room and gazed with interest and wonder at the lengthy, open urinals. She became obviously nonplussed. A little boy brushed by her and, zipping open his pants, passed into the environs of a urinal. The little girl, at once understanding and envious, broke out with: "Handy, little jigger you got there!"

Godfield
Sept. 13, 1942.

Dear Charles and Joe:—

I don't think this news will come to you as a complete surprise, but fear and I are married, and are starting the happy life up here at the summer cottage. We had planned it to be a less fraught time, but gave no advance notice, in part due to the uncertainty arising out of the war situation. But all this is a matter of Providence, not specific intimations.

Needless to say, we are both supremely happy and richly thankful in this new blessing.

This is the only anthology of its kind I know which has ~~not sacrificed the content to the form~~ takes into account the ~~contents~~ ^{contents} as well as the form, with a heavy accent on the ~~of~~ content.

(
Riches of us forgets how
much God has instructed
to both of us and, in par-
ticular, the Reformed Com-
stead. Please remember us
in your prayers.

You will hear from us
soon again, Meanwhile,
we are living in the full
present which is the
guarantee of a full future.

Our best wishes and
prayers to you both, and
to all of you.
Love and Yours
J

224 Union Ave. S. E.
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Oct. 25, 1942

Dear Charles and Zoe,

This is awfully late to acknowledge your telegram of congratulations, but if you recall the beginnings of domesticity, you will probably appreciate how things of all sort take up time. But we were very glad to hear from you so speedily, and please acknowledge our thanks to the philosophy faculty (via, I presume, M. l'abbe Parent) for their telegram as well.

Among other things, we are settled in a place of our own, as you can gather from the address above. It is a six room upper apartment, completely furnished. We were more or less looking for something well furnished as, given we had nothing at all to start with plus the much weightier reason that at the present, with the uncertainty of the war, nothing can be planned, we concluded the temporary thing to do was start this way. We were fortunate in running across this, as the lady was returning east to be with her family "for the duration" and did not want to store any of the furniture, and so on. The space is ample - we have an extra bedroom and I even have a den or study off the dining room. Which means, though I suppose the possibility is remote, that if you are down this way there is room. The only drawback is that I have to take care of the furnace. So far (about a week) I have mastered it. Sc., fire burns.

The college proceeds as usual. The new draft on 18-19 year-olds will likely hit us a lot. My draft status implies nothing immediate, though there can be no certainty about it. Jean is sandwiching in one course at the college along with her domestic duties; she has taken over the introduction to philosophy course and is giving the students a real dose of Plato. I have, for the first time, a course in religion, i. e., theology, and am trying mimeos from some of the first questions in the Summa. I also have a course in St. Augustine, in which we are reading the Confessions, which ought to do every one in the class (the teacher especially) some good.

We both miss Quebec a great deal - Jean, now, even more than I. She has also all of New York to add to that, which makes it rather overpowering. But we have each other, which compensates even for Grand Rapids, and there has to be some reason why we are here, so that is that. Jean will write shortly with respect to her unfinished thesis work. Do you know if my thesis is to appear in the January Thomist?

Best wishes and prayers to you and to all the young ones. You will hear from us soon again.

As ever and always,

Jack

R



JEFFERSON BARRACKS
MISSOURI

not quite the
sort of place
I am living in

Jan. 9, 1943.

Dear Charles and Joe -

Hello, etc. Thanks for the Christmas greetings and apologies for getting out so late a return in kind. I could find no decent Christmas cards around here and, in addition, just before Christmas I was busily pre-occupied with the finishing touches of the basic training program, designed to make American men men. In fact, we concluded with something in the way of field maneuvers and stayed out two nights in pop tents. Fortunately, the weather was relatively mild.

Now I am in a transition period awaiting assignment to some air base (known to be in the Army Air Force). But apparently nothing aeronautical for me. Instead, I am tapped as a classification specialist which, at this stage of the game, means only to me something of a way of interviewing men whether for classification in the air force or rehabilitation or what.

How are you? I am now
rugged.

I note in a discussion paper that you are now on the executive council of the ACPA. Were you even at the meeting?

Jeann mailed in the 3rd part of the Prob. of Meaning and I looked it over, made some alterations, and mailed it into the *Hermit*. What happens to the 4th part? I may pass thru Washington later this month (where Jeann now is) if I get some time off before my next assignment. To speak of the impossible, if you should mail it in now to the *Hermit*, I could examine it there. But shall we speak of other things?

Inadvertently, have I ever been officially granted the doctorate by Laval? Obviously, I am in no immediate pastoral need, but the war could end sometime whereupon I shall have to look for secular and drink.

I'd like to see you all. There are a couple I have never seen. Dear Joe: do you ever eat popcorn and think of me at all? Would Thomas, Arthur, Dominic or the beautiful Godeliva remember the deformed French linguist? Give my love to them all, and I shall say a rosary for all of you tonight.

All my love, wishes, and prayers,

Jack

Repondue
Adler
clm.

224 Union Ave. S. E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan

March 9, 1943

Dear Charles:

Your recent note in script, or shall I say ~~scrawl~~, came to my desk. (That is to say, I had to go over home and get it and bring it back to my desk; you might have misconstrued my first sentence into believing that my butler brought it to my desk). Thanks for the noble, epistolary effort.

The galley-proofs of the article came thru the mail almost directly after. It caused excruciating pains in the posterior regions (scil., an ass-ache) to read through the thing again, but I did it with aplomb and courage. It ran through about half of the thesis, with no indication that it was to be continued, about which I have written. If it stands as it is, it ends, characteristically, in a question mark. I also added a note to the effect that the piece was done in connection with doctorate work at Laval under the direction of Dr. Njyrk Bjerpkltz who, I believe, is dean or something like that. I suggested they append this item somewhere to the first page.

I have received the ~~Maritain~~ Essays in Thomism book to review for the Thomist. If you were a man who answered letters, I might go into this sordid matter in some detail and thereby evoke a comment or two from you by way of tempering whatever review I write. So far I have only read only the first ~~four~~ or five contributions and, well, it looks pretty bad. They seem to be doing two things particularly bad: 1) making St. Thomas an end in the wrong way, as if he himself were Truth; and then, 2), at the same time using it as an occasion to express their own drivel at the expense of the problems and truth itself. The thing of Maritain on necessity and contingency is unbelievable, to mention an item. Herbert's piece at the end should suffice as a review if the contributors had eyes - or wills.

Adler and I have had some words in connection with his article that appears in the Maritain volume. He sent the original to me, which had a different introduction and which, among other things, contained a subtle attack on St. Thomas' sanctity by charging him with subservience to Aristotle at the expense of truth. The present introduction is just as bad and only a shade different. Aside from the confusion he must be in with respect to what the five proofs show, and talking loosely about proving the existence of God as believed in revelation, and also a curiously twisted paragraph about his faith etc., etc., I suppose you have noticed where he directly twists St. Thomas out of context at the end of the Contra

Gentiles argument from motion - in fact, even misquotes him. Then, again, he certainly places a different interpretation on Cajetan's commentary on the Summa than Cajetan himself. I don't know whether there is much point writing him about this or not. I don't know what he supposes St. Thomas is worth if he supposes that St. Thomas is/ even horsing up the proofs for the existence of God. Adler struck me more than ever, in this writing, of bending everything to fit a pre-conceived thesis he has. I wonder what the editors of the Thomist were doing when this came along - apparently not reading St. Thomas.

Jean and I have been subsisting fine, exchanging colds throughout this dragging winter. I just got over the grippe last week, though not the excrementitious species. Which prompts me to ask you how you are feeling. I'm so sorry.

Give my best to Zoe and also the wishes and prayers of both Jean and me. And to all the young 'uns. Do they still remember me? By the next time I come the category of quantity, with respect to them, will have notably increased both in respect to the discrete and the continuous.

My draft board is fussing around with me again, and I may go down and blow asthma all over them. Then they will probably send me to the dusty desert of North Africa. But at the moment it remains indeterminate, though with the prospect of becoming more determinate soon.

By all means, let us know if your visa difficulties ever get straightened out and that you are able to come to the U. S. We'll have the extra room and Jean can try one of her new concoctions, such as "Intoxicated Pork." She can cook, when her mind isn't on Plato. - - Or, better yet, meat rationing or no, we'll have one good steak dinner at least.

Etc.,

J.