

5th January, 1927.

My dear Friend,

Since I had the great pleasure of sending, from us both, our heartiest best wishes for many happy returns on your 80th birthday - I have been hoping every day to be able to write to you, but owing to the great preoccupation of my time, the days have passed away so fast that I have hardly noticed how long has gone by.

Now, however, that the Christmas and New Year festivities are over I do not wish to wait a moment longer without sending you some news from us at the beginning of 1927.

We have our four sons at home and had a delightful Christmas and Sylvester Night. We gave a very successful Dance for Paul, our third son, who came of age, and only, at that Dance, which was crowded with youthful dancers - did I realise how popular he is - they were all mostly young people from Oxford and Cambridge.

At present, as usual, I am very busy, and am just now painting a most interesting man, of whom you will have heard, Lord Reading, in his Viceregal Robes, for the palace at Delhi, and many others.

From the middle of February we are going first to Lisbon - then on to Madrid, where we have been invited by the King - and before returning home I hope to spend two or three weeks in the South and do some studies for myself, so we shall use the time while the boys are away to be absent from home, and return about the end of March.

I was very pleased to see your son and daughter-in-law at my Paris studio - I think they were at my reception there, then I saw them just for a few minutes here, at our house, but no doubt you will have heard from them.

Girliczky told me that your daughter-in-law would like to have a sketch by me. I hope I shall be able to do so, but I did not know, beforehand, of their coming and all my hours, just then, were so taken up, that it was impossible, but I do hope your son another time, will let me know in good time, so that I can do that sketch, which would give me great pleasure.

I was so pleased to see your son in the best of health after all those months of suffering, and we shall much look forward to hearing from you and getting good news that you and your dear wife are also in the best of health.

Time is now getting on, and my boys all growing up and getting their own responsibilities, but I was glad to see, from your writing, that your hand is still unchanged, in spite of the 80 years, and that you keep your youth. I hope the Almighty may bless me in the same way when I am 80 and that I shall still wield my brush with the same certainty as you do the pen!

Again with our united best wishes for the New Year and many happy years to come.

Believe me,

Yours very devoted,