

h. 24

Estk. 1921 Jan. 24

Telegraphic & Cable Address

TESTIMONY CAIRO

Telephone: 13-39.



Church Missionary Society.

35, SHARIA EL FALAKI,



CAIRO 19 Dec 1914

My dear, venerated, beloved Professor,

How shall I excuse myself for my procrastination and apparent dreadful want of sympathy, in not writing to you, to enquire after you, as soon as those dreadful prison-doors of war were thrown open? Truly, I cannot excuse nor forgive myself. I can only say that many times during the war, and many times after the Peace, my thoughts turned to Buda-Pesth, and I bethought me of those two Friends ^{whom I have} - whom the war had so long shut from our view and from our knowledge. But how should you be aware of that? I can only ask you to forgive me for such want of sympathy and friendship, and to believe that you were not, nevertheless, forgotten.

How often I wondered how you were, - and whether you were and are escaping the worst horrors of these wretched years. For the reports from Austria and from Hungary are so bad. I could not bear to think of my friends suffering, - in a quarrel or

far removed from being theirs, too! Do write
to reassure me about this.

I have heard that your worst trouble
was the intellectual famine and isolation.
Massignon (whom I have seen several times
since 1910) told me that he ^{had} ~~had~~ magazines
etc to be sent you especially so that you
might not feel too deserted.

And now Macdonald writes to
me, and this ~~is~~ is the occasion - proxima
sed non vera causa - of my breaking this
blameworthy silence. He says that you
desire to have a copy of the little book on
Archie metres, at the end of which I
undertook to put a few of the verses which
I wrote at Englishet in 1911. It is
a pleasure and an honour to ~~write~~ send

you some copies. The mournful cadence
of the last verse - which fitted the
circumstances so well in 1911 (after your
departure) - fitted them also all too
well during the war, when you were
(figuratively) dead and buried to us
of the outside world: but I think it does
not suit so well now! Please accept
the little book as though dedicated to you.



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I have not got a complete copy of the verses. If it is not too much trouble could you have a copy taken for me. I know more about verification than I did then (you will see another of my efforts, under جواب in that book), and I should like to touch up your verses.

Just before the war Messrs. P. sent on to you a little Manuscript of an opusculum attributed to Shazzali (mystical) which interested us much. Did it reach you? I should like to have your opinion of it, and the M.S. itself.

1919

MADE IN
ENGLAND
T.M.B.

Ah, my magnum-parvum opus
 (Stygia's Nir el tower and the Phageli
 problem) appeared just as the war
 broke out in Ser Man, and consequently
 fell still-born and dead. I have
 therefore not heard one opinion on it
 from the small circle (perhaps a
 dozen) for whom I wrote it!

I long to have your opinion on a work which
 was my débat - and adieu - to the world of learning.

It was with you I first read
 Nir el tower, and everything in the
 article reminded me over and over
 again of that memorable, beautiful,
 sweet, wondrous month I spent
 in Buda Pesth with my two "golden" hearted
 friends.

And now dear Professor, write to me to
 reassure me how you ^{both} are, and how you passed
 the dreadful ordeal of the war, — and the
 work one of the Peace.

Your devoted
 W. P. Fairbairn