

February 13, 1940

Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss
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Blessed One:

First to answer the Torrey Botanical Club invitation which Robert has just received. Unless Robert is passionately interested in scientific and systematic botany, or wishes to present \$10.00 to a good, deserving but purely scientific society, I should not advise his joining the club. I am not myself a member, and would only be tempted to become one if the club is in danger of sinking for lack of funds. I think Robert may put it out of his mind.

With regard to the Casa Dorinda Eucalyptus. Mr. Kennerly has already been most politely thumped on the head with regard to the method he suggests of cutting the trees by the California State Relief Association.

He says mildly: "I am perfectly helpless to do anything about it. Would I be asking too much if I suggested that you draw up an agreement based on the salient points of the California State Relief Association, which you think would be acceptable to Mrs. Bliss and the Relief Association. I will positively guarantee to take care of the brush and second growth of the Eucalyptus trees. The little green shoots springing from the stumps could be clipped off with a pair of florist shears in a minute, and I am just as anxious to have the place good looking as anyone could be.

"I do certainly appreciate your friendly cooperation in this matter, and you have so much more knowledge concerning these things than I have, that I am throwing myself upon your good nature."

Evidently Mr. Kennerly is in a very bland frame of mind and has no intention of going on with the tree cutting until it is satisfactory to all of us. I will make a stab at drafting some sort of agreement, but have little hope that the Relief Association will start any work in which they are not totally absolved from any damage they may do. This will, I think, surprise Mr. Kennerly, and it may so disappoint him that he will not feel like proceeding with the arrange-

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ment. Don't worry about what Mr. Kennerly calls "the battle of the Eucalyptus", as he and I will probably stall and correspond until I go to Casa Dorinda in March.

Naturally, the agreement will have to be passed upon by Mr. Russell and Mr. Delafield before we sign it. As Mr. Kennerly is still in St. Louis, all our conversation has to be done by long distance letters.

Max thanks you for your commendation on his friends of the Huntington Library report. We are a lively body, and I have just tidily turned in our subscriptions for this year, and my chief reported happily a few days ago that several hundred dollars have already come in. Hooray!

Your news of the epidemic of quails at Dumbarton is joyously echoed by Agnes Milliken's report of bluebirds in Greenwich, and as we are already hearing the shouts of meadow larks in the grassy neighborhoods, and neighbor mocking birds have come back to perch on and sing down our chimneys, we too feel that they and the peach blossoms are really the signs of nearing spring.

Needless to say, I chortle in thinking of the stuttering Bryce sturdily driving, while his three companions keep the wheels of conversation going. He was looking forward eagerly to his holiday, as he feels certain in his own mind that Florida is what he calls "the Tropics". How sensible Bryce is not to allow either of us to embark on the boxwood replacing until he sees how the winter has treated the present ring.

Thanks for doing the Yew hedge replacements, and thanks too for not giving up the willow on the box walk, until you and I have taken a good feed on it.

What a pity the Geraltine wax flower got frozen on its way East in the stratosphere. Obviously that is what happened, as the plant, when reasonably fresh, only drops a few of its little pod buds on the floor and the rest of them open pinkly and stay for a long time, unfaded. I won't try another sending until the weather is milder in the upper regions of the air.

Max has just come in from the library and is off again with his playmate and my chief at Yale, Tom Farnam. They are going golfing, Max with a light heart because he has just said that the last draft of his report has gone to be copied. Now he must tackle the budget reductions - a nasty job.

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I must seem to you as though I were neglecting Dumbarton and its "note" writing. There has been rather a heavy cloak laid on my shoulders lately, as the Library is getting up a "trial gallop" of a garden book exhibition, and as I am conveniently nearby, they are asking for help in making the titles for the books on exhibition, and getting together some sort of rough idea of arrangement. This too is nearly finished, so I am hoping within a day or two now to get down to what is my real work, as well as my intimate for dear you and equally dear Dumbarton.

INCLINATION

The golfing Max and I both send our fondest to you and Robert, in fact to Milrob.

Your always devoted,

BF:GMT