

I was very much interested in your description of M. and your life there. How well I can visualize it. It is as if I see it painted before me in a big picture and though I have never been to America I am sure this picture is fairly correct. Why is it that I can not even attempt to give you a similar clear picture about Life in Lucknow? It is the same feeling of frustration which I had when I went back to Berlin in 1936 and people asked questions about India and I talked and talked and in the end I knew that I could not convey a single picture of India which was correct. I knew that my words created ideas in the minds of people which did not at all correspond to the reality that is India.

This is one of the reasons why one feels the separation from friends so much stronger here than anywhere else because even in long intimate letters one cannot reveal oneself to one's friends. It is like living on a different planet. I found that even the most sympathetic friend in England or Switzerland-even if he can imagine what 120° in the shade means, even if he can visualise what a "monsoon" means weeks and months of incessant rains- cannot understand what the heat or the rain are doing to us, how they change our character, our way of thinking, our way of feeling.

There are, of course, great authors who may be able to convey these things to their readers, but I think that even the best books about India or the Far East become real and alive only after one has seen those places and met the people whom these authors describe. Somerset Maugham was a favourite author of mine already in Europe, but only now that I am so much nearer to the places he describes and have come in contact with the ~~kind~~ <sup>kind</sup> of people his books deal with, can I ~~fully~~ appreciate his greater ability of description and characterisation.- Well, dear Anne, this seems to lead to the conclusion that <sup>it</sup> is no use even trying to answer your questions in a more than superficial way!

But in spite of all I have said so far, I simply feel I must ~~try to~~ attempt some kind of answer! The picture of our friendship in old days has been recalled with such clearness: how well we understood each other, how we shared every thought and every emotion. I feel that in spite of the years that have passed, in spite of the different kind of life we have lived and are living now, there must still be something <sup>left</sup> of the intuitive ~~truth~~ understanding between us- and so I shall try and write to you and give you a picture of myself and of my life in India.