

Dear Emmett,

I don't think I ever answered your letter of 26 September, and I am not sure if you know why. I had not done so when I was taken ill at the beginning of November with a mild coronary, and what with a complication in the form of pneumonia I spent most of that month in hospital; and after my release (one can only think of hospitals as prisons) it was more than a month before I felt well enough to become active and start writing letters, and so forth. I am glad to say that all has since gone well, and I am more or less restored to health, though I have of course been warned to take things easy in future. This means I am refusing to take on new commitments and shall concentrate on completing the things I have started.

I had just finished the texts for CMIK II, and we hope to start getting proof of this volume shortly. Plans are going ahead for Vols. III and IV, and I hear there is some prospect that we may be able to get JPO's computer to do the typesetting. In any case there will be a modified format for volumes which will contain nothing but small fragments and the indexes. If you have any ideas on what needs to go into the last volume, let me know. It might be a good idea if we had similar ideas, e.g. of which sort of reverse index to include.

Glad to hear you are still making discoveries in PY texts; in one sense this is a job which can never be finished, but the point comes when one says 'Manum de tabula!' I was interested to hear your account of the ceremony I missed; it all sounds a bit familiar, and since I had already had my special trip to Athens, I couldn't face another one in the same year. I shall probably have to curtail my foreign travel, but Tassos Christides is anxious to get me to go to Thessaloniki, and I am committed to a cruise (especially Mycenaean) in August. Next year there is to be a Colloquium for linguists in memory of P. Chantraine at Grenoble that I should like to go to. I turned down an invitation to Bellagio (N. Italy) this month, because I could not see what there was to discuss under the title proposed (Indo-Europeans and Pre-Indo-Europeans). I believe in IE languages, but not people.

I expect Risch sent you his article on the Nestorbecher. I pointed out to him that if it really says 'I am Nestor's cup' on an 8th cent. vessel, it must be meant as a spoof. If I go to a tourist shop in Tintagel and come home with a plastic sword inscribed EXCALIBUR, I don't expect you to imagine I have the genuine article; but you might be amused, and that is what the owner of this cup presumably expected his friends to be. Moreover I pointed out that eúpton becomes meaningful if it is contrasted with the Homeric original which must have been very dúspoton. All of which seems to confirm that something like that passage in the Iliad was well known at that date. ER replies that it's hard to judge other people's sense of humour, which is true; but I think some of these early inscriptions are less serious than has generally been believed (e.g. the Dipylon vase).

I have been well enough to give some classes in Mycenaean Greek this term, and conduct our Linear B seminar for some sessions. I was talking about the PY Jn series last night. Numbers are very small, and the University is coming under such pressure from the Government that I see no great future for Classics in this country; I hope things are better in USA.

Joan sends her love to Marja to which I add my usual good wishes,

*Yours ever,*

*John*

By air mail  
Par avion



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