

ROSE LAWN,

KINGSGATE-ON-SEA,

KENT.

February 24th, 1948.

Dear Frank Snell,

This is very good of you. I particularly want a copy of the book to send to a chap who is a missionary out in Eritrea--a promised copy. So I will without delay take advantage of your kind offer to secure the Last Rose of Summer, as it were, at the Bideford newsagent's. Enclosed postal order 8/- to cover same and postage. And many, many thanks.

How very curious that you should discover Saturday Book 1945 at Boots' library. I am glad that you have been able to read the article. This was written during the War, six or eight months ahead of publication--and a few hasty emendations had to be made when it came into print to put the War into the past tense. There were doodle-bugs hovering over the chimney when it was written--we used to get quite a lot of them in London N.W. They were queer days--when you looked out of your window of a morning and saw a blank space where a house had been standing the evening before. Yet all the while, only one single solitary chunk came through my roof, and that did not damage beyond letting in a spot of rain. About shorthand, it is a curious thing--some people can, and some cannot, and I am one of the cannots. I should put it down to sheer fatheadedness, only there are some things I can do. I think I told you that I picked up Braille quite easily, a few months ago, sufficiently to write a letter in it: yet several times I have had a shot at shorthand, and always missed! I have since given it up as a bad job--my Waterloo. Still, I can do fifty a minute on the typewriter, which is not bad. Experts, I believe, have done up to 100--but they don't have to write a story as well!

I am very interested in what you tell me of your literary efforts. I am not surprised that the Pool play got the "bird" in the circumstances: but the fact that you became so

deeply engrossed in it as to forget those circumstances, seems to me to indicate the existence of the "urge to write" which is the beginning of authorship. One quite extraordinary coincidence is that I selected the very same subject for a radio play, partly written more than a year ago, but crowded out by other things and never finished. My "plot" was: a junior master at a not very jolly school, much ~~mismanaged~~ nagged by a bilious head-master, who was suddenly able to turn from a chrysalis into a butterfly by a Pool prize of £10,000. He was so bucked that he offended all the seniors' masters in Common-Room, cheeked the Head, and so on--only to find at the finish that there was an error and he hadn't won anything at all. Collapse!

It was said of old that great minds run in grooves! I am glad to hear that your second effort has been a success.

If you would like to read that article in Horizon, I have an old copy which I would lend you with pleasure.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

*Frank Richards*