

Letter from Rupert Brooke to James Strachey. 20 August 1905.

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'August

Southsea

(but write to
Rugby)

Dear Strachey,

This is an exceedingly low place, where we are staying for a fortnight, - not because we like the town, but because we wish to see something of my brother, who is working down here. Southsea is a loathsome place, full of Ugly houses, and trippers, and noises. I Solemnly curse it.

After a studious examination of a calendar + various data referring to tutors and other immovable arrangements, I should suggest Monday Sept. 4th (I think the numbers are right) for two or three days – till Wednesday

afternoon or Thursday morning. On the Thursday I find that I am supposed to begin work.

With regards to the Catechism:-

The Royal Academy – Yes: I approve of all forms of charitable institutions.

Also my religious soul commends their case in keeping the 2nd Commandment “Thou shalt not make any image ^[NYPL] of anything that is in heaven ... or earth ... or the sea”

In Re Oxford. Because they tell me to,-
-that is, if I am going. At present it is undecided which University I shall grace : some of my masters advice one, some the other; and my father is torn asunder. Anyhow I don't much mind which.

[6/1/68]

Thirdly

Certainly I approve of War at any Price.

It kills off the unnecessary.

As for Mr Chamberlain – I detest him. He

is a modern politician, and I hate modern politicians ; he comes from Birmingham, and I abhor Birmingham ; he makes a noise, and I loathe noises ; he is utterly materialistic, and!

About Wagner I have no views. I am very sorry, but I can't help it. I have tried very hard for years, but I cannot appreciate music. I recognize that it is a fault in me, and am duly ashamed. In literature, and a little even in Painting, I humbly believe I can feel the Beautiful, but I am born deaf. This is a tragedy For Christ – I am so obsessed by De Profundis

that I have no other views on this subject than those expressed therein. The Perfect Artistic Temperament.! You demanded a return catechism. Here it is. As yours “embraced all the Important in Life”; so mine, I hope, embraces all the Unimportant in Life – a much more essential thing.

1. What are the two greatest tragedies in Life? ^[NYPL]
2. Shew the comic side of both.
3. What is the most beautiful adjective in English?
4. When did you give up reading Tennyson
5. What is the world coming to?

Good-night.

Rupert Brooke'