

9/4/70

Dear Gary,

I would ask two additional things of you:

When Sprague is there again, try and learn from him what writing Flamonde plans (book and mag), who is to publish, what he has done, learned-in short, what he has contributed to knowledge. To fend off another theft and another sickening and hurtful thing as he did with Garrison, aside from protecting my own interests, this is necessary knowledge.

On Mary, I have a fear that has been developing since she wrote of Jimmy's illness and the possibility that it might be meningitis. First, as I told her, the one thing she can't do is see or be with him for at least three weeks. So, there is no profit in going immediately and every point in not going. However, I have several fears: first, that she is not thinking but is acting emotionally, and second that she may, without realizing it, be hurting Buck. I might say hurting Buck more. I'll explain, briefly. I think her note shows no sign she consulted Buck about what they would do. Second, I think she is ridden with a guilt feeling, that she has not been a good mother (knowing nothing but her, I think this very improbable). So, I think she feels impelled to do, whether or not what she does has or can have meaning, so that in the doing she will be satisfied she is assuming her proper responsibilities. As I once, rather elliptically, indicated to her, she should let Buck carry his part of the family weight. If he really abdicates, then she has to, but not because she thinks he'll abdicate. Even if he does, if there is any way she can get him to do what should be done, I think that would be better than doing or deciding herself. This is a complex and delicate thing, but I fear that with continuing problems, Mary may make the situation deteriorate, may make it worse-and with the best intentions in the world. I wish I had the funds to discuss this kind of thing with her and with him (I've never spoken to Buck). And, I lack your scientific insight into such things. So, I raise the question with you for you to do what you think you might or not do if you believe that is the proper course. But, when she was here, I did get a feeling of intensity about all of this from Mary, and I did get what I hope is a wrong impression, that in some way she cannot articulate, she feels all the troubles are her responsibility. I just do not believe this is or can be the case, but I do think she has this subconscious feeling of guilt about it. Hurriedly, AW