

The Army & Navy Club,
Washington,
June 6, 1905.

Dear Myles,

I think Lydia a good name, for the same reasons that make you like it. But you err in thinking that I would be surprised to know about that wee Walshette. I hear from Claire sometimes, and naturally heard all about it. If I didn't believe with Schopenhauer that it is a crime to bring a child into "This place of wrath and tears" I'd felicitate you. Now that she's here I vote to let her remain; it would be hardly fair to put her to death.

No, my lad, you never read anything of mine before I "joined the crowd of phonetic-spelling humists," if you refer to the "Little Johnny" things; they were begun in London before your birth. And are not "phonetic spelling" humor at all; the spelling is done for vraisemblance and is intended to represent the actual spelling of such a kid. As to the "crowd", they are mostly my imitators, as far as they are able to be. I've seen the rise and fall of more than a hundred "Little Willies," "Little Sammies," and so forth. The American (in Mr. Hearst's absence in Europe) has laid on a "Little Bobbie." The editor, who doesn't love me, knew that that would make me quit, and it did. But there is a day of reckoning for him. Now I've no doubt that your taste is infallible, but perhaps if you were doing something commended in thousands of enthusiastic letters annually—many of them from more distinguished litterateurs than Myles Walsh, you'd look at the matter a little differently—particularly if the man from whom you got a hundred dollars a week were "stuck on" the stuff himself.

Would you mind knowing something of what you are talking about before talking about it? There is really something in the newspaper trade that you would be more competent to discuss if you knew a little about the conditions under which newspaper work is done. Anyhow, I'm not hungering and thinking for your views of my work, nor for anybody's.

I'm expecting to be in New York soon and if you've been good meanwhile I'll look you up and let you buy me a drink. Nothing could be fairer than that—except Mrs. Walsh, to whom my best regards.

Sincerely yours,
Ambrose Bierce.