**NLI 13073/24**

**Hal Gielgud to Casement**

**5 March 1911**

**[This is extracted in TNA FO 371/1201, with two Casement notes (in brackets)**]

**[Casement note:]**

R at Belfast

14 April

**[At top:]** No trace of Agassiz I am afraid. Can he have gone to look for Miranda?

S.S. Liberal

nearing Iquitos

5/3/11

Dear Casement,

Many thanks for your letter which reached me on the 21st February.

Mindful of the Italian officers’ fate we did not visit the capital or chief towns of Abisinia, though we put in a couple of days tramping through that country each way to & from Santa Catalina. However “Ichabod! its glory is departed & “Lycidas your loved one is no more” which being interpreted runs “Abisinia has no longer any separate existence as a section, being merged into one big Boras district with Santa Catalina under a good man & the able Aguero (I forget his epithet & anyhow it’ld probably not suit the mildness of phraseology affected by myself) is gone.” With one or two fellow–criminals sacked simultaneously he retired to the Caquetá after doing all he could by burning chácaras & other pleasing tricks to make the Boras rise – without effect, so far as I’ve heard, I’m glad to say: the misfortune is that they couldn’t tie him up in one of the chácaras with his friends – it would have been an acceptable holocaust.

I learn from Cazes that the judge who was coming to the Putumayo has had to go away on sick leave, so matter is in abeyance for the moment. Anyhow, he couldn’t do a great deal of good now as only some very third rate criminals are left. It is significant that so far as I know only one of the sacked ones has gone to Iquitos – the majority making for Brazil or the Caquetá.

**[Extracted Casement note - from where?]**  (This is Viagarra I fancy. He was only a subordinate – a peon almost at 80 soles (8) per month at Santa Catalina when he had been one of the infamous band of Aurelio Rodriguez. I know of his cutting ears off Indians for one thing.)

On our way down Putumayo we met the “America” (the largest of the Government war ships at Iquitos. She was built in England – steams 17 knots and could carry 200 men.) just near the frontier taking troops for the mouth of the Cahuinari & alto Cara–Parana owing to Columbian rumours.

We were in Pebas yesterday but alas! no Yahuas. I’ll try however to get photos for you in Iquitos, which may be possible, though they won’t have had the distinction of being taken by me.

I hope by this time Robert Banks has sent you copies of those you were good enough to take home for me. I have also some decent Boras & others which I’ll let you have when I can. Don’t forget to let me have copies of yours. H. Gielgud (my Father)

7a Laurence Pountney Hill,

London E.C.

is my most permanent address at present.

I hope to be home sometime in May, when I shall endeavour to collect the promised libation. By the way I’m badly in need of a barber now – with the aid of a little powder a bit of ribbon, I could make a lovely “queue”!

All the saints (As you know there are only 3 in this country besides myself) salute thee. They are fairly well, but suffering from a fairly acute attack of fedupness: It’s a pity you couldn’t come right through with us.

Hal L. Gielgud

P.T.O.

**[Later postscript:]**

Iquitos 10/3/11. Have just learnt that Paredes (editor of the “Oriente” of Iquitos) has been appointed to proceed to the Putumayo to investigate: he is acting as judge at present. Also P. Zumaeta has entered into bond for £2,000 for the production on demand of Aurelio Rodriguez, Prefect having apparently received strong cable from Lima.

HLG

**[Extracted Casement note - from where?]** (I know damaging facts about this man – also about his paper the “Oriente” which was a subsidised organ of the Arana Brothers against “La Felpa” and “La Sancion” when these two first denounced the crimes of the Putumayo in 1907 and 1908. I will send a despatch on him & the “Oriente”. R.C.)

16/3/11 Camino has sent round a Yahmas dress for you. Will you write to my Father’s office telling me where you’d like it sent. No luck with photographs of same people yet.