

.p3

{lh}**To Minnie Brooke**

Text MS Texas; Unpublished

3^d. Jan 1898

{lra}Stanford le Hope

Essex.

{lsa}Dear Mrs Brooke.¹

{lb}A letter -- in a very contrite tone --- left here early on Xmas Eve for Slingsby Rectory. Has it reached you? Meantime your good and forgiving missive reached my unworthy hands. But I trust that by this time you have read my wishes and my news.

I am very much touched by the kindness that prompted you to write. Jess was delighted. And so life goes on: we are ever greedy of kindness and most so when we least deserve it. But perhaps this year at last I shall succeed in turning over a new leaf. Good resolutions are written there; but the page is heavier than lead -- alas! And I have learned to mistrust my strenght.

I shall not repeat here my wishes. The feeling is lasting and the written words will come into your hands at some time or other; and I shall think and feel then as I have felt and thought before, as I shall think and feel in the future.

My books! -- Well if You must know, one has appeared in Dec^{er} published by Heinemann;² another shall appear in the spring from Mr Unwin's house.³ They appear, are praised and drop into the past like a stone into water. A small ripple -- gone for ever. It is bread -- hardly that even; probably as much as I deserve.

{lc}I am always your very faithful and obedient servant

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lps}P.S. Jessie sends her love. As I wrote, we are in daily expectation of an event. She is getting on very well but I am very anxious all the same. I shall let you know -- before long. May it be good!⁴

To R. B. Cunninghame Graham

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, I, 220; Watts 58

Stanford le Hope.

7th Jan 98.

Cher ami.¹

Business first.² If a damned stack fetched away in a gale it would have to stay down I fancy. But if it got only loose then chains, wire rope, any blamed thing you could lay hands on would serve to secure it. Never saw a stack quit its post, tho' I saw a cold green sea go right down into one.

Yes. A fore-stay-sail and a main stay-sail (if carried) could be set to steady the roll of a steamship, providing the gale was not too heavy. Fore stay-sail alone -- hardly; tho' it's quite conceivable. In a serious affair they would be useless and in any one case would speedily vanish; the necessity of steaming head to sea causing a tremendous strain on the canvass.

And in exchange will You tell me whether that life-boat that capsized (of which you wrote) was a steam-lifeboat? And what does your brother think of steam-lifeboats?³ I hate machinery but candidly must own that it seems to me that in most cases steam's the thing for that work.

A year of happy life for every good word spoken of the Nigger -- to You! Had you the pluck to read it again? Eh! Man! Ye are perfectly fearless! What mad thing will you do next?

Read the Badge. It won't hurt you --- or only very little. Crane-ibn-Crane el Yankee is all right. The man sees the outside of many things and the inside of some.⁴

I am making preparations to receive the Impenitent Thief which* all the honours due to his distinguished position. I always thought a lot of

that man.¹ He was no philistine anyhow --- and no Jew, since he had no eye for the shent-per-shent business the other fellow spotted at once.² I hope your essay is sympathetic.

Do send everything you write -- it does a fellow good. Or at any rate let us know where the things are so that I may scuffle around to get them.

As to the Saga it confirms me in my conviction that you have a fiendish gift of showing the futility -- the ghastly, jocular futility of life.³ Et c'est tre{g}s fin -- tre{g}s fin. C'est finement vu et c'est prime{a} avec finesse -- presque a mots couverts, avec de l'esprit dans chaque phrase.⁴ Excuse this polyglot epistle to the faithful.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}J. Conrad

{lps}P.S. Re-reading your letter --

That's how a stack would go perhaps.⁵ And this would give you an idea how to secure it again. Here both lanyards to S have been carried away --- say, by a roll. the thing is then to catch the ends of chains hook quick a spare tackle into the big link and the ring on deck and set taut. Should chains go same principle of action must be followed or should only one of each pair of chains go then could secure in a hurry thus with a rope (5 inch line) the steam-pipe would check the fall of a funnel and it would go over slowly and land on one of the ship's boats -- probably -- and smash it no doubt. Or if pitched forward it would damage the bridge -- and the man on it too very likely. But the most dramatic circumstance would be the hellish mess of soot blowing about or washing over the deck. Does the plot hinge on the funnel? You must have a plot! If you haven't, every fool reviewer will kick you because .p6

there can't be literature without plot.¹ I am in a state of wild excitement about the stack. Let's know quick what happened in the tramp. A Scotch tramp is a very good tramp. The Engineers tell anecdotes, the mates are grim and over all floats the flavour of an accent that gives a special value to every word pronounced on her deck. You must know I've a soft spot for Scotchmen.² Be easy on the tramp.

Ah! Amigo! I've thought of Rajah Laut in London and if not in the

W-H³ then next thing to it. But I haven't the heart. I Haven't! Not yet.

I am now busy about his youth -- a gorgeous romance -- gorgeous as to feeling I mean. Battles and loves and so on.⁴

{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text MS Sutton; G. 115 (in part)

7th Jan 98.

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Garnett.⁵

{lb}I've been putting off writing so as to send you the MS. at the same time. But I want to have a little more still, for you to see, so that you may judge of the way I take hold of the actual story.⁶

I had a most kind appreciative, good letter from your wife -- and more shame to me not to have acknowledged it. Present my excuses. I was delighted. I've pasted it in my copy of the Nigger: the most prized words of praise and specially interesting as disclosing the woman's point of view to look at such a rough performance.⁷

.p7

The P[atron] writes he can't anyhow place the Return and I give it up. What upset me is that he means to fire off the book at once!¹ At the same time Pawling writes me he is going to start the Nigger upon the book-sellers.² He is going to {op"}bang it" he says. If the books clash it will be fatal to both of them.

I wrote a temperate letter to the P. telling him that I sold him the book for spring publication -- end March at earliest -- and that it was so agreed plainly in our conversation. That I object to publication at once -- thinking it bad for the stories -- from a business point of view. He must let the Reviewers have their say about one thing before throwing at them another.³ Firm and polite. Reminded him of our talk. Said I hold him to it. But really I am helpless. The man is unsafe -- and I am a fool.

I think I am going to have the 2^d part of the Rescue written by first week in Febr^y. Meantime things are pretty serious with me. Casting about for ways to obtain bread and peace the following commercial transaction suggested itself to me.⁴ To be faithful to Pawling I have

practically thrown away a safe £{bp}300. Blackwood would have given that. His man here told me so.⁵ Now Pawling himself wrote that he had almost positive hopes to get for me {bp}£400 in serial rights alone. (Here & in Am[erica]). But serial rights must be waited for and the book is not finished. What I think of proposing to Pawling is this: I shall sell him outright the serial rights of the Rescue for £{bp}240 and as the book is not finished (and even if it was) I don't want cash down. I want him to pay me say £{bp}20 p. month. Perhaps before he had made 3 such payments he may find a place for the Rescue (having then a half finished book to show). It's no concern of mine. I don't even want to know for how much he sold it. I want him to go on with the monthly payments (£{bp}20) for a year (£{bp}240) -- even if the book is finished in another six months.⁶ And if he thought he could get 400 for me then he ought to get 300 for himself. I

.p8

think that the extra £{bp}60 (or perhaps more) will make the business not so bad for him and even cover the extra risk of such a transaction. This is the risk of my illness or death before finishing the story. However my health is not particularly bad (and without worry would be better) and I have no reason to expect death this year. Remain accidents. (Rwy. boating and snow) For that I have a {bp}£1000 policy out of which (should I break my neck in some way) any advance he would have made till then can be repaid by my wife.

As You have done so much for me -- in fact everything -- with Pawling I submit this plan to you and should you dislike it I shall forbear mentioning it to our friend. I don't want to do anything that would look as if I were trying to get at Pawling. To my mind it appears a simple commercial transaction in which risk and profit are on one side and a great convenience on the other. Note that by this arrangement he never stands to lose anything like even 200 pounds. He would stop the monthly payments in case of my decease and the book shall be finished in six months and by this time the amount will be paid at {bp}£20 p. and would be only {bp}£120. And I think that the risk is so small that to propose the affair is not quite like begging on my part. What do you think? Would you add to the many acts of brotherly regard and give your

thought to this -- and then tell me frankly what You think. That I must borrow money somewhere is very evident; and no man can so well understand the only security I offer than Pawling. I don't think he would be annoyed by such a proposal. Do you? After all I've given him in Nov^{er} a very fair chance to choke me off, which he would not take.¹ He believes in me? Or is it only the stress of competition?

At any rate I do not wish to say anything till nearly ½{s2} the book is written. (2 parts complete). He writes to me in a most friendly manner and seems pleased with the reviews. He says that he is going to work the N off on the booksellers after the 15th inst when they have finished stock-taking. I have confidence in him but don't expect much. Still perhaps the Nigger may exist for a few years and so not be a bad spec for him. Note (Should I make the proposal above and be accepted I would let the royalties of the Nigger (I've only had the value of 1.500 copies) remain with him as further security to diminish the amount of any loss -- should I peg out naturally).

I had 23 reviews. One indifferent (The Standard) and one bad (the
.p9

Academy).¹ Two or three of a hesitating kind in prov[incial] papers. The rest unexpectedly appreciative. Did I tell you I had a warm letter from Quiller Couch? He is going to say something about the Book in Pall Mall Magazine for Febr'y.² -- I'll be sending You the R[escue] next week. A damned pot boiler. But I am quite interested myself tho' I write without pleasure.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad

{lps}Jessie sends her love and thanks to Your wife. She wants to know whether Bunny³ remembers her. We are standing by here.

{lh}**To T. Fisher Unwin**

Text MS Berg; Unpublished

7th Jan 1898.

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear M^r Unwin.⁴

{lb}I am sorry to hear You have given up the placing of the Return. The story is none the worse for it, however -- and it may do the Vol good to have one at least that has not appeared before.⁵ I did not for a moment suppose that the magazine you mention would care to publish that tale. It is not much their style -- but it is a serious loss to me.

As to the publication of the book I can hardly suppose You mean to do it before the spring. You mentionned next autumn -- and I stipulated for next spring (which I understood to mean end March at the very earliest) to which you agreed. But as your letter may mean that you .p10

intend publishing next month--or even next week I wish to submit to you my reasons against that course.

--Imprimis my last book the Nigger had not as yet its chance. It looks as tho' it would be discussed; and many important reviews have not yet appeared.¹ I had letters about it from various people. I know that even as late as middle Febr^y a causerie about it shall appear by Quiller Couch in a popular magazine. The book is worth notice as much perhaps by its faults as by its qualities--and I think that notice it will get. Now it strikes me that another work of mine launched on its heels, so to speak, won't get its fair value of attention, besides interfering with the sale of the previous work while doing no good, commercially, for itself. I want--and of course you do also--to have the vol of short stories noticed, noticed properly. They also deserve it. The longer the discussion of the last published book the better it shall be for its successor. Let the critics have their say out about one thing before they begin on another or else they will neglect one of them. Now you may take my word that they won't neglect the unique sea tale. They will slate or praise it--it's all one to me but there will be no conspiracy of silence. It seems to me, then, that it would be better business as well as carrying out the spirit (and even the words) of our understanding, to publish the Tales of Unrest about the 25th March or the first week in April.² I was so firmly convinced that such was your intention that I furnished a note to that effect to the Editor of Literature³--and I see other papers are copying it already.

After all you can well afford to follow my desire in that matter. The

book can hardly be a loss to you, since for my last (I don't mind telling you) I get $17\frac{1}{2}\%$ and 20% on pub. price in England⁴ and 15 cents per copy in the States: terms considerably higher than those I asked you for the Tales.

Let us then say: The Return shall appear for the first time in the vol. The vol: shall appear after the 25th of March--as I understood from the first.

{lc}With kind regards faithfully yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}PS I'm sorry I can't come to town but I shall be wanted at home the next week or two. It would have been more satisfactory to talk the matter

.p11

over. I trust You are well. The Return is not a tale for puppy dogs nor for maids of thirteen. I am not in the least ashamed of it. Quite the reverse.

All the others had attracted notice when they appeared. I am very anxious about these tales. Give them a fair chance. Congratulate you about Hugh Wynne a fine book.¹ Was it appreciated?

{lh}**To John Galsworthy**

Text MS Forbes; Unpublished

[early January 1898]²

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Galsworthy.³

{lb}I send back the MS to-night. The chapters are all they should be. The last line excellent. Good luck to the book.⁴

Don't you feel like an orphan since You finished?

F[isher] U[nwin] is trying to play me a dirty trick. He got possession of the whole manuscript under pretence of placing the Return (serially) and now suddenly writes that he is tired of trying for it--so concludes to publish the book at once! Neither in previous letters nor in conversation did he ever give the slightest hint of such an intention. In fact the scoundrel pretended a desire to delay pub^{on} till autumn. He got the book for a song and now wants to make money by the stir of the N of the N. not caring how he may injure me. I wrote temperately that I object absolutely. But what can I do? The man is unsafe and I am a fool when

dealing with such a type for I can't understand it.

Try for higher terms than You are disposed to accept. He will never give you what the book is worth--nobody would of course; but he won't even give you what the book should fetch. Generosity on Your part would be misplaced.

Yes! I am immensely pleased with the work. Not everybody's writing and not everybody's reading either. There is something in your sen-
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tences that touches me time and again in a tender spot. I like it. And I believe it will be appreciated. I do. I don't despair of mankind. The best of luck to you and the story.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}J.C.

{lh}To Edward Garnett

Text MS Williams; G.117

Monday.¹

9.1.98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dearest G.

{lb}Your letter is most helpful. I shall write to C[unninghame]

Graham to night. I am in intimate correspondence with him. He writes to me every week once or even twice. He is struck. Pawling is (lately) also in correspondence with him. What about I don't know but P did mention this to me incidentally in his last letter.

I can speak plainly to C.G. about the Sat R idea. I don't know whether he is on very good terms with F.H. tho'.² Fact to note: all the fiction (it may be called) the S.R publishes is furnished by C.G. alone.

I don't see why P[awling] should fail to fix serial of Rescue since Blackwood was positively ready to accept it. The only question is time. The Rescue would have perhaps to wait a year or so for a place. Scribners would have made offer if they had not been full for 98 &

99. And even then if the book had been finished they would have made an offer. So their letter to P (I've seen it) says. Still this may be a too sanguine view. I send You by this post my copy of {op"}N" with notices.

Thanks millions of times. You are a whole mountain of bricks---to think and scheme for me so. I'm indeed blessed in this friendship.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

.p13

Look in the {op"}N" copy back and front. The Lond. Dailies are all in front.

Are these good selling notices?¹ I don't think so.

After I hear from C.G. I may try Q² but this I am more reluctant to do. Do write what you think of {op"}N" and Why. I study it and there seems now like a flavour of failure about it.

{lh}**To Stephen Crane**

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 167

Wednesday [12? January 1898] ³

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Crane⁴

{lb}I hope You haven't been angry with me. Fact is my dear fellow I've been having a hell of a time--what with one thing and another.⁵ Had I come that day I would have been no good at all. I am hardly yet in a decent frame of mind.

I am curious to know Your idea; but I feel somehow that collaborating with you would be either cheating or deceiving You.⁶ In any case

disappointing you. I have no dramatic gift. You have the terseness, the clear eye the easy imagination. You have all--and I have only the accursed faculty of dreaming. My ideas fade--Yours come out sharp cut as cameos--they come all living out of Your brain and bring images--

.p14

and bring light. Mine bring only mist in which they are born, and die. I would be only a hindrance to you--I am afraid. And it seems presumptuous of me to think of helping You. You want no help. I have a perfect

confidence in your power--and why should you share with me what then may be of profit and fame in the accomplished task?

But I want to know! Your idea is good--I am certain. Perhaps you, yourself, don't know how good it is. I ask you as a friend's favour to let me have a sketch of it when you have the time and in a moment of inclination. I shall--if you allow me write You all I think of it, about it, around it. Then you shall see how worthless I would be to you. But if by any chance such was not your deliberate opinion--if you should really, honestly, artistically think I could be of some use--then my dear Crane I would be only too glad to work by Your side and with your lead. And Quien sabe? Something perhaps would get itself shaped to be mangled by the scorn or the praise of the Philistines.

Take your time and answer me. My wife sends kind regards. We are standing by for a regular bust-up. It may come any day. I can't write. The Dly Mail has given a bad notice to the Nigger.¹ There's no other news here.

{lc}Yours ever

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}This letter has been held back and now since I can't come I send it. My Sister in law must go away to morrow,² and I can't leave my wife all alone here. Do write your idea. I am anxious

{lc}Yours

{ls}J.C.

{lh}**To T. Fisher Unwin**

Text MS Syracuse; Unpublished

14 Jan. 98.

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mr Unwin.

{lb}Thanks very much for Smith's letter. Of course I would be very glad to have the story accepted in the States if its publication there would not

.p15

interfere with your plans for the book.¹ I may mention that nothing of

mine shall appear (at any rate in book form) this year--except these Tales. I trust they will be liked--(or at least read) enough to make their publication profitable to us both.

With kind regards

Very faithfully Yours

Jph. Conrad

To R. B. Cunninghame Graham

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, I, 221; Watts 63

10 pm. 14 Jan. 98.

Stanford le Hope

Essex

Cher ami.

A really friendly letter and my conscience smote me at every word read when I thought of your work upon which I intrude with my miserable affairs.

Semm! Pronounce the Name--and write to F. Harris.² This is a service and a most important one. I would rather owe it to you than to any one else--in fact don't see myself owing it to any one else. Frankly (you may have guessed) I was pretty nearly in my last ditch before I thought of attacking Harris. I talked to you in my letter as if I were ready to face fire and water and an Editor, but my heart was in my boots. Yours is a helping hand. And if You don't think you are thus sacrificing an old friend to a new one--well then Say the Name--and write.

And since you offer to do me this good turn I had better tell you that it would be rather important for me to have the publication begin as soon as possible--say in two -- three months. By that time there would be a good lot of copy to go on with while I twisted the remainder out of my bowels. (It's wonderful how this fool-business of writing is serious to one.) The book is by no means near its termination. About 30000 out of 90000 words are ready.³ Won't it be too cheeky approaching H. with such a small beginning?

I would be very glad, very, to see him--in any case. But You know I am shy of my bad English. At any rate prepare him for a {op"}b--y furriner" who will talk gibberish to him at the rate of 10 knots an hour. If not forewarned the phenomenon might discourage him to the point of kicking me downstairs. This is submitted to your wisdom which embraces the world and the men in it from Patagonia to Iceland.¹ Our ears are open.

Was the fire serious? And has Your wife got over the emotion? You know when I sprung that affair of mine on you I had no idea of the accumulation of troubles in Gartmore.² But all the same it was dam' unkind of you to lead me on gently to make an ass of myself about smoke stacks and stay-sails and then fire off at me a lot of sailor talk about going down the leach of a top-sail.³ What don't you know! From the outside of a sail to the inside of a prison!⁴ When I think of you I feel as tho' I had lived all my life in a dark hole without ever seeing or knowing anything.

Nothing would be more delightful to me than to read a review of the N by you.⁵ I never dreamed you would care to do this thing. I do not know who, when and how it is to be reviewed. But is the N worthy of your pen and especially of your thought! Is it too late. Do you really mean it?--There will be a vol of short stories app^s in March. One of them The Outpost. Now if you are really anxious to give me a good slating.....

{op"}Put the tongue out" why not?⁶ One ought to really. And the machine will run on all the same. The question is, whether the fatigue of the muscular exertion is worth the transient pleasure of indulged scorn. On the other hand one may ask whether scorn, love, or hate are justified in the face of such shadowy illusions. The machine is thinner than air and as evanescent as a flash of lightning. The attitude of cold unconcern is the only reasonable one. Of course reason is hateful--but why? Because it demonstrates (to those who have the courage) that we, living, are out of life--utterly out of it. The mysteries of a universe made of drops of fire .p17

and clods of mud do not concern us in the least. The fate of a humanity condemned ultimately to perish from cold is not worth troubling about. If you take it to heart it becomes an unendurable tragedy. If you believe

in improvement you must weep, for the attained perfection must end in cold, darkness and silence.¹ In a dispassionate view the ardour for reform, improvement for virtue, for knowledge, and even for beauty is only a vain sticking up for appearances as though one were anxious about the cut of one's clothes in a community of blind men. Life knows us not and we do not know life--we don't know even our own thoughts. Half the words we use have no meaning whatever and of the other half each man understands each word after the fashion of his own folly and conceit. Faith is a myth and beliefs shift like mists on the shore; thoughts vanish; words, once pronounced, die; and the memory of yesterday is as shadowy as the hope of to-morrow²--only the string of my platitudes seems to have no end. As our peasants say: {op"}Pray, brother, forgive me for the love of God". And we don't know what forgiveness is, nor what is love, nor where God is. Assez.

Yesterday I've finished the Life.³ {cd}a m'a laisse{a} une profonde impression de tristesse comme si j'avais ve{a}cu toutes les pages du livre. I can say no more just now.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

15th/1/98

{lps}PS. This letter missed this morning's post because an infant of male persuasion⁴ arrived and made such a row that I could not hear the Postman's whistle. It's a fine commentary upon this letter! But salvation lies in being illogical. Still I feel remorse.

.p18

{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text MS NYU; G. 119

15th 1.98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Garnett

{lb}Infant of male persuasion arrived to-day and made a great row.

Everything is going on well here.

I had a warm letter from Graham. He offers to write Harris--thinks the idea splendid--and so on. I have in him a friend at court indeed. I replied telling him to go ahead.

Chesson wrote me a splendid letter about the Nigger.¹ It quite cheered me. I haven't written anything of the story since I saw you, but I think of it every day.

Crane wrote me, also, a penitent letter for not replying to mine at Xmas. He says he finds it easier to write about me than to me. Says he has written about me, but where he says not.²

Graham said incidentally he would have liked to review the Nigger. I told him he may be in time yet.

Upon the whole the Harris business might come off if Graham's letter reached him when he is in good temper. I shall let you know without delay how it turns out.

My kindest regards to your wife.

{lc}Ever yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lps}Sinjohn³ writes me that the N[igger] is in great request at his club--Junior Carlton. Great guns! I wish they would buy it
.p19

{lh}**To W. H. Chesson**

Text MS Yale; Keating 34

Sunday 16. Jan 98.

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

Essex

{lsa}Dear Mr Chesson¹

{lb}Your unexpected and delightful letter reached me yesterday morning.

I would have answered it at once had it not been that the house was in a state of disorganization on account of the arrival of an infant of the male persuasion. However this fuss is over thank God.

Your letter shows such a comprehension of the state of mind which produced the story, that had you given blame instead of generous praise

it would still have been a rare pleasure to be thus understood--seized in the act of thinking, so to speak. Of all that has been said about the book this what you say gives the most intimate satisfaction, because you not only see what the book is but what it might have been. When you say, {op"}One almost regrets Donkin being one of the crew," I take it as the very highest praise I have received--inconceivably different in its insight within those dark and inarticulate recesses of mind where so many thoughts die at the moment of birth, for want of personal strenght* --or of moral rectitude--or of inspired expression.

One would like to write a book for your reading.

This is what touched me most. The other words of commendation I take as Your recognition of a tendency of mind repulsive to many, understood by few, clearly seen by You--and which I cannot help thinking of as not wholly without merit. But a tendency of mind is nothing without expression and that the expression should please you is in my opinion my very great fortune.

It is to your letter (now incorporated with my copy of the Nigger)² that in moments of doubt and weariness I shall turn with the greatest confidence as to an infallible* remedy for the black disease of writers. I've read it several times since yesterday.

.p20

I have also corrected all the like into as in my copy. One is so strangely blind to one's own prose; and the more I write the less sure I am of my English. Thanks for going to the trouble of pointing out to me the passages. I don't think the N will have a 2^d Ed: but if--in years to come--it ever has, the corrections shall be made.¹ Believe me very {lc}gratefully and faithfully Yours,

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}PS I trust you haven't bought the book. I haven't forgotten I have the privilege to owe you a copy. But I am coming to Town soon and the precious debt shall be discharged.

{lh}**To Minnie Brooke**

Text MS Texas; Unpublished

Sunday. [16 January 1898]²

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mrs Brooke.

{lb}Excuse this post card. Can't lay hands on anything else and want this to go to day.

The event came off happily yesterday about noon. The mother and the child (a very noisy boy) are doing well--unexpectedly so.

Jessie sends her love. She is in the seventh heaven. I would tell You how I feel if I didn't suspect You know it without my telling. I was very glad to get your letter and to see you take interest in the notices of my Nigger. It is just like you to be so forgiving. We would like to have news of You and your little boy. Poor little chap. I've been a sick child too and feel for him. {lc}I am your very faithful and obedient servant.
{ls}Jph Conrad.

.p21

{lh}**To Stephen Crane**

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 169

16th Jan 98.

{lra}Stanford le Hope

Essex

{lsa}My dear Crane

{lb}Dont you bother about writing unless You feel like it. I quite understand how you feel about it--and am not likely to forget you because you don't write. Still mind that when You do write You give me a very great pleasure.

A male infant arrived yesterday and made a devil of a row. He yelled like an Apache and ever since this morning has been on the war path again. It's a ghastly nuisance.

Look here--when you are coming to town next time just fling a sixpence away on a wire (the day before) to me and I shall try to run up too.¹ If detained shall wire care Heinemann. {lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lps}Say--what about the Monster. The damned story has been haunting me ever since.² I think it must be fine. It's a subject for you.

{lh}**To John Galsworthy**

Text MS Forbes; J-A, 1, 223³

Sunday [16 January 1898]⁴

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Galsworthy.

{lb}Writing to F[isher] U[nwin] I would say:{op"}as to terms of publication I would suggest the following arrangement - - - - -" I wouldn't take up an unyielding position.⁵

The good lady in the North judges from a remote standpoint. It never probably occurred to her to ask herself what you intended doing--how near you've come to that intention. Now I contend that (if I understood our attitude of mind) You have absolutely done what you set out to do.
.p22

I contend that the people You take being what they are, the book is their psychology; if it had gone deeper it would have found nothing. This is my opinion. And the merit of the book (apart from distinguished literary expression) is just in this: You have given the exact measure of your characters in a language of great felicity, with measure, with poetical appropriateness to characters tragic indeed but within the bounds of their nature. That's what makes the book valuable apart from its many qualities as a piece of literary work.

In fact the force of the book is in its fidelity to the surface of life--to the surface of events--to the surface of things and ideas. Now this is not being shallow. If the episode of life you describe strikes your critic as without profundity it is not because the treatment is not deep. To me you have absolutely touched the bottom and the achievement is as praiseworthy as though you had plumbed the very ocean. It is not your business to invent depths--to invent depths is not art either. Most things and most natures have nothing but a surface. A fairly prosperous

man in the state of modern society is without depth--but he is complicated--just in the way you show him. I don't suppose you admire such beings any more than I do. Your book is a dispassionate analysis of highminded and contemptible types--and you awaken sympathy, interest, feeling in an impartial, artistic way.¹ It is an achievement. I am rather angry with your critic for so wholly missing the value and the fundamental art of the book. As to the essential beauty of the work she could not very well have said less. The book is desperately convincing. She quarrels with you for not making it inspiring! Just like a clever woman. You and I know there is very little inspiration in such a phase of life--but women won't have it so. Prepare yourself to be misunderstood right and left. The work is good. And as work it is inspiring. Even so!

I am anxious to see the added chapter. If you have a duplicate copy please send the three chapters without delay. Interpolating like this is a dangerous experiment.

F.U. climbed down with a very bad grace but only after I had written a letter containing several hard truths as to his methods of conduct.² To give you the measure of the man--he tries to turn off the thing into an innocent joke. I wrote him I didn't see any reason why he should joke with me.

.p23

An infant of male persuasion arrived yesterday. All is going on well here. I feel greatly relieved and hope to do some work now.

I should like to know what agreement you make with Unwin. I've told Garnett to look out for your MS. He is simply overwhelmed with work.

{lc}Affectionately

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}I am glad to hear your club reads the {op"}N"

The Nigger lenght. * 50,000 words. You are well within limits of a 6/- book.

{lh}**To Aniela Zago{a}rska**

Text Wiadomości Literackiej (Warsaw) 1929, no. 51; J-A, I,

224; Najder 223¹

{lrs}Stanford-le-Hope,

Essex.

21st January, 1898

{lsa}Che{g}re Cousine,²

{lb}I have received the wafer³--accompanied by a bitter complaint that was not quite deserved. Les apparences mentent quelquefois.⁴ But that does not altogether excuse me.

The baby was born on the 17th of this month⁵ and I particularly waited these three days in order to be able to inform you definitely that tout va bien. The doctor reports that it is a magnificent boy. He has dark hair, enormous eyes--and looks like a monkey. What upsets me is that my wife maintains that he is also very much like me. Enfin! Please do not draw hasty conclusions from this surprising coincidence. My wife must be wrong.

He will be christened in the Chapel of the Cloister of the Carmelites in Southwark (London).⁶ The principle on which his name was chosen is .p24

the following: that the rights of the two nations must be respected. Thus, my wife representing the Anglo-Saxons chose the Saxon name Alfred. I found myself in an embarrassing situation. I wanted to have a purely Slavonic name, but one which could not be distorted either in speech or in writing--and at the same time one which was not too difficult for foreigners (non-Slavonic). I had, therefore, to reject names such as Wl{1/}adysl{1/}aw, Bogusl{1/}aw, Wienczysl{1/}aw etc., I do not like Bohdan: so I decided on Borys, remembering that my friend Stanisł{1/}aw Zaleski gave this name to his eldest son, so that apparently a Pole may use it.¹ Unless, Aniela dear, you care to suggest a nicer name (and there is still time) please remember that there is a certain Alfred Borys Konrad Korzeniowski, whom I commend to your heart in the name of God and of those who, after a life full of trouble and suffering, remain in your and my memory.

I kiss your hands. A warm embrace for Karol. My wife sends her dear love to all of you.

Your loving,

Konrad Korzeniowski.

She says that it is now only that she feels she belongs to the family. She is extremely pleased with herself and with the whole world. C'est naïf mais touchant.

{lc}Both our love to the dear girls.

{lh}**To R. B. Cunninghame Graham**

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, I, 229; Watts 68

Sunday. [23 January 1898]²

{lrs}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Cher ami

{lb}I've got a bad wrist; that's why I did not write sooner. I gave it complete rest. Much better now.

The Impenitent Thief has been read more than once.³ I've read it several times alone and I've read it aloud to my wife. Every word has

.p25

found a home. You with your ideals of sincerity, courage and truth are strangely out of place in this epoch of material preoccupations. What does it bring? What's the profit? What do we get by it? These questions are at the root of every moral, intellectual or political movement. Into the noblest cause men manage to put something of their baseness; and sometimes when I think of You here, quietly You seem to me tragic with your courage, with your beliefs and your hopes. Every cause is tainted: and you reject this one, espouse that other one as if one were evil and the other good while the same evil you hate is in both, but disguised in different words. I am more in sympathy with you than words can express yet if I had a grain of belief left in me I would believe you misguided. You are misguided by the desire of the impossible--and I envy you. Alas! What you want to reform are not institutions--it is human nature. Your faith will never move that mountain. Not that I think mankind intrinsically bad. It is only silly and cowardly. Now You know that in cowardice is every evil--especially that cruelty so char-

acteristic of our civilisation. But without it mankind would vanish. No great matter truly. But will You persuade humanity to throw away sword and shield? Can you persuade even me--Who write these words in the fulness of an irresistible conviction? No. I belong to the wretched gang. We all belong to it. We are born initiated, and succeeding generations clutch the inheritance of fear and brutality without a thought, without a doubt without compunction--in the name of God.

These are the thoughts suggested by the man who wrote an essay on the Impenitent Thief.¹ Forgive their disconnected impertinence. You'll have to forgive me many things if you continue to know me on the basis of sincerity and friendship.

I wanted to say a word or so about the technique of the essay but I can't.² A la prochaine--donc

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad

.p26

{lh}**To John Galsworthy**

Text MS Forbes; Unpublished

Monday [24 January 1898]¹

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Galsworthy

{lb}Thanks for your good wishes. We on our side wish that You should never know unhappiness and in the work, the new work of your brain and heart find always the intimate satisfaction of your own approval and the justice of public recognition. I've been very unwell myself this morning. A kind of nervous disturbance which has left me tired out. I return F.U.'s letter. I think you ought to stick to him. He has means to push a book--the connection and the best agent in the trade. Terms--I should say: 5d per copy first 500. Then 10d up to 2000. Afterwards 12d. Ask more than you would take. F.U. shall haggle or I am much mistaken.

{lc}My wife's kind regards. I am ever

yours

{ls}Jph Conrad

{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text MS Yale; G. 120

Monday evening [24 January

1898]²

{lrs}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Garnett

{lb}I have your letter and the proofs.³ You are the best of fellows to go through all that disgusting kind of toil for me. And my ingratitude is so complete, is so black that I can by no means be ashamed of it. This morning for half an hour or perhaps a little less I disliked you with the utmost cordiality and sat brooding about some way to do You a serious mischief. But now--at 5 pm--I feel I could bear the sight of You without showing any unholy emotion.

Yes. Seriously. You are right in everything--even in the suggestion to let the story go as it is. It shall go--and be hanged to it. It is bad--and in .p27

sober truth I can't bear the sight of it any more.¹ Let it go. No one will notice it particularly, and even if someone arose to solemnly curse it, the story and the curse would be forgotten before the end of the week.

My very sincere thanks to Mrs. Garnett for saying a good word--the only good word--for the woman. Tell Her please that as to the story I think it is as false as a sermon by an Archbishop. Exactly. This is to you.² Another man goes out than the man who came in. T'other fellow is dead. You have missed the symbolism of the new gospel (that's what the Return is) altogether--and You call yourself a critic! The only weak point in the story is the slamming of the street door at the end. I ought to have stopped on the {op"... not even a footstep on the thick carpet... as though no sooner outside he had died and his body had vanished together with his soul" and then in leaded type {op"}He never returned". That would have made the newspaper boys sit up. They would have wanted to know

where he went to, how he got downstairs; they would have made guesses at it--they would have called it realism, naturalism, or new humour. I've missed fame by a hair's breadth. And then we could have hired some chinaman of letters to explain that the whole story is transcendental symbolico-positivist with traces of illuminism. I've missed my best chance. Enough fooling. It strikes me I am {op"}taking up your valuable time".
{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}J Conrad.

{lps}Jess sends her love to Mrs Garnett and desires me to state that the baby is a very fine baby. I disclaim all responsibility for that statement.
Do you really think the volume will do?

{lh}**To Minnie Brooke**

Text MS Texas; Unpublished

25 Jan 1898

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

Essex.

{lsa}Dear Mrs Brooke.

{lb}My wife shall write as soon as she may sit up; meantime let me thank you in both our names for the coverlet--and still more, for the friendly thought.

.p28

Everything is going on all right here and on the 14th of next month I think Jess will be strong enough to travel to London where the boy shall be christened. His names are to be: Alfred Borys Conrad, which last he may use for a surname as his father does.

We are very much concerned about your little boy. Have You had a very trying time? Am I right in my surmise that You are staying in Wales on his account? We would dearly like to hear good news of You and the children.

Excuse the hurry of this letter but I ought to have written yesterday and must not miss the post to-day. I am afraid You will not like my last book; it is too salty and tarry.¹ I shall send you my vol: of short stories in March, as soon as it comes out. I am dear Mrs Brooke your most

{lc}obedient and faithful servant.

{ls}Jph. Conrad Korzeniowski

{lh}**To Cora Crane**

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 169 (in part)

25 Jan 1898

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

Essex

{lsa}Dear Mrs Crane.²

{lb}My wife shall write as soon as she is allowed to sit up. Meantime let me send You our warmest thanks for the beautiful flowers and for your very kind invitation.

I would hesitate to inflict myself upon you with the tribe--but since You call your fate upon your own head the temptation to please ourselves is too irresistible. So, all being well, we shall descend upon your peaceful homestead on the 19th.³ I have grounds for hope that by that date my wife shall be able to travel. We shall meantime devote all our energies to the taming of the baby lest he should break out and devastate your countryside, which, I feel, would put you and Crane in a false position vis-a-vis your neighbours. Perhaps a strong iron cage .p29

would be the most effective expedient; however we shall judge at the time the exact degree of his ferocity and act accordingly. My most earnest consideration had been also given to the matter of a good reliable keeper--which you with such kind forethought mention yourself. My wife will want some help, not being even at the best of times very athletic. Could we--instead of a nurse--whom we have not--bring Dolly, whom we have. Dolly is a young person with her hair down her back, and of extreme docility. I have the distinction of being her brother-in-law. She is now (and for the next six months) staying with us for the sake of her health and to help my wife. Will you frankly tell me whether there is the slightest objection to this plan. As Crane perhaps told you I am cheeky but easily repressed. You must really forgive me

the coolness of my impudence.

The child is, I am sorry to say, absolutely callous to the hono[u]r awaiting him of his very first visit being to your house. I talked myself hoarse trying to explain to him the greatness of the occurrence--all in vain. I want Crane to give it his artistic benediction and call upon its head the spirit--the magnificent spirit that is his familiar--the genius of his work. And then when our writing days are over he who is a child to day may write good prose--may toss a few pearls before the Philistines.

{lc}I am dear Mrs. Crane Your most obedient and faithful servant

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lh}**To R. B. Cunninghame Graham**

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 225; Watts 70

31 Jan 98.

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Cher bet excellent ami.

{lb}In the wrist there was gout or some other devil which rendered it quite powerless, besides it being horribly painful. It's all over now.

It is good of you to push my fortunes. You are the only man--in this or any other country--who took any effective interest in them. Still I think that F. Harris should not be pressed.¹ You have given him two broadsides and if the man will not surrender, well then let him run.

Now the first sensation of oppression has worn off a little what remains with one after reading the Life of S^{ta} Theresa² is the impression

.p30

of a wonderful richness; a world peopled thickly--with the breath of mysticism over all--the landscapes, the walls, the men, the woman. Of course I am quite incompetent to criticise such a work; but I can appreciate it. It is vast and suggestive; it is a distinct acquisition to the reader--or at least to me; it makes one see and reflect. It is absorbing like a dream and as difficult to keep hold of. And it is--to me--profoundly saddening. It is indeed old life re-lived.¹ And old life is like new life after all--an uninterrupted agony of effort. Yes. Egoism is good, and altruism

is good, and fidelity to nature would be the best of all, and systems could be built, and rules could be made--if we could only get rid of consciousness. What makes mankind tragic is not that they are the victims of nature, it is that they are conscious of it. To be part of the animal kingdom under the conditions of this earth is very well--but as soon as you know of your slavery the pain, the anger, the strife--the tragedy begins. We can't return to nature, since we can't change our place in it. Our refuge is in stupidity, in drunken[n]ess of all kinds, in lies, in beliefs, in murder, thieving, reforming--in negation, in contempt--each man according to the promptings of his particular devil. There is no morality, no knowledge and no hope; there is only the consciousness of ourselves which drives us about a world that whether seen in a convex or a concave mirror is always but a vain and floating appearance. {op"}O{cr}te-toi de la{g} que je m'y mette"² is no more of a sound rule than would be the reverse doctrine. It is however much easier to practice.

What made you suspect that I wanted vous faire une querelle d'Allemand³ about the technique of the Impenitent Thief? I leave that to Wells, who is in the secret of the universe--or at least of the planet Mars.⁴ It struck me when reading your essay that the style was not the Cunninghame Graham I've known hitherto. As to the matter, however, there was not the slightest doubt--and, as I have said, every word has found a home. As to the form: c'est plus d'un seul jet⁵ if I may say so. It grips in a different way. The pictures and the figures are drawn without lifting pencil from paper. I like it very well. It's just the thing for that .p31

essay whether You did it of set purpose or by caprice or, perhaps, unconsciously?

I am glad your brother likes the Nigger.¹ Symons reviewing Trionfo della Morte (trans:) in the last Sat. Rev. went out of his way to damn Kipling and me with the same generous praise. He says that Captains Courageous and the Nigger have no idea behind them.² I don't know. Do you think the remark is just? Now straight!

I haven't written to your brother. I am not going to inflict myself upon

the whole family. I shall devote all my spare time and what's left of my energy to worrying you alone of the whole of your House. And why not? Haven't you rushed upon your fate? I am like the old man of the sea.³ You can't get rid of me by the apparently innocent suggestion of writing to your brother. Seriously speaking I was afraid of trespassing--and then each man is so busy with his own futility that the handwriting of a stranger cannot be very welcome to him. Is he a naval officer? I am glad he likes the nigger. Please tell him so--if you ever do write to him.

{op"}The Rescue: A Romance of Shallow Waters", spreads itself, more and more shallow, over innumerable pages. Symons (who lives on ideas) shall have an indigestion if he reads it. It would be for him like swallowing a stone; for there I know there are no ideas. Only a few types and some obscure incidents upon a dismal coast where Symon's humanity ends and raw mankind begins.

And so the end! The lamp is dim and the night is dark. Last night a heavy gale was blowing and I lay awake thinking that I would give ever so much (the most flattering criticism) for being at sea, the soul of some patient faithful ship standing up to it under lower topsails and no land anywhere within a thousand miles. Wouldn't I jump at a command if some literary shipowner suddenly offered it to me!⁴

Thanks for your inquiries. My wife and the boy are very well. I was very sorry to hear of your wife's indisposition. Nothing serious I hope. If your horse has not eaten you up entirely⁵ I trust you will write before the end of the week.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

.p32

{lh}**To W. H. Chesson**

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

[late January 1898]¹

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mr Chesson

{lb}I obtained this copy for you wishing to present the book to you in this shape, unlovely indeed, but which in this sordid age has the merit of not having its price--for, it can't be bought.² It seems to me that thus I can show better how much I have been comforted by the generous warmth of your appreciation.

{lc}Believe me always faithfully

Jph. Conrad.

{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text G. 121

Wednesday [2 February 1898]³

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dearest Garnett.

{lb}This is a free evening before I go into harness again to pull out of the mire, out of the slough of despond that damned and muddy romance.⁴ I am getting on--and it is very very bad. Bad enough I sometimes think to make my fortune.

The news I want you to know are

1st. The Cranes have invited the lot of us man woman and child to stay with them ten days--from 19th February--and I've accepted for I feel that if there is no break I will go crazy or go out altogether.

2nd. Harris keeps quiet like a man in hiding. Graham blasphemes and curses.

3rd. I've gone and done it. I write for the press!!!!!! I've sent to the Outlook an unconceivably silly thing about A. Daudet. {op"} Words! words! words!" Apparently that's what they want. They asked for more. Today I've sent another silly thing about Kipling.⁵ It took me one and a half days to write 1500 words. I can do this kind of thing quicker than the muddy romance. Damn! I've lost the last shred of belief in myself. I .p33

simply dare not send you the MS. But ultimately I shall. It is unredeemed trash. Are you near enough to Crane to be invaded?¹ My wife shall want to show the blessed baby to your wife. I hate babies. Will you manage to

see me while I am there? Do you object to read 100 pages of my handwriting? It feels like a lot of wheels in my head.

I am sending you here a bit of the Sat. Rev. Symons criticising trans: of Annunzio mentions Kipling and myself as you can see.

Frankly--is the remark true?

That the Voynich book sells does not surprise me. Some people will take it as an attack on the Popish religion.² La be{cr)tise humaine est capable de tout.

It is bad with me when the thought does not unfold itself easily when talking to a friend. I feel I am boring you with this letter--and yet don't wish to stop. I can't say half the things I want to say.

I want to hear you speak--I do. I want to come in contact with your thought.

I am again thinking of attacking Pawling.³ Something must be done and that soon. With a book half written I can talk better to the man. He is a good fellow. I should not like him to curse the day he set eyes on me. If he feels so sure of Scribners why not accept my proposal on a business basis: Acquire from me my serial rights. The risk will be great enough to prove his goodwill and friendship anyhow. As to asking him to, plainly speaking, pension me I don't think I can. Moreover do you think he would care to keep a private author on the staff? I won't do anything without giving you information in time for a last word of advice. For after all you are the serpent and I am a bedraggled silly dove.

Jess sends her love--she intends to write tomorrow to your wife. Everybody here is in rude health at which I am sorry because of the enormous appetites which is so expensive--and the stores running low at that.

{lc}Ever yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

.p34

{lh}**To E. L. Sanderson**

Text MS Yale; J-A, 1, 227

3^d Febr. 98.

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Ted.¹

{lb}I haven't yet thanked you for Your congratulations and the classical greeting to the boy. I liked it immensely. May your wishes expressed in the words of old Ajax come true.² But the child is born to a dismal heritage. I like sometimes to forget the past.

There isn't much to say. All goes well here--and for that I am inexpressibly thankful. I work. I reproach myself with my incapacity to work more. Yet the work itself is only like throwing words into a bottomless hole. It seems easy, but it is very very fatiguing.

And so I've taken to writing for the press. More words--another hole. Still the degradation of daily journalism has been spared to me so far. There is a new weekly coming. Its name The Outlook; its price three pence sterling, its attitude--literary; its policy--Imperialism, tempered by expediency; its mission--to make money for a Jew; its editor Percy Hurd (never heard of him); one of its contributors Joseph Conrad--under the heading of {op"} Views and Reviews."

The first number comes out on Saturday next. There will be in it something of mine about a Frenchman who is dead and therefore harmless.³ I've just sent off a second contribution. It is a chatter about Kipling provoked by a silly criticism. It's called--Concerning a certain criticism;⁴ I'll send you the number in which it appears, probably N° 2.

Stephen Crane is worrying me to write a play with him.⁵ He won't believe me when I swear by all the gods and all the muses that I have no dramatic gift. Probably something will be attempted but I would bet nothing shall be done. This is all my news. And now Your turn--when You really can spare the time. Do not think hardly of me because I don't

.p35

write often. I think of you more perhaps than I would if I saw you every day; and when the good time comes we shall foregather--and find no change.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lh} **To R. B. Cunninghame Graham**

Text MS Dartmouth; Watts 74

4th Febr 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Cher ami.

{lb}I was glad to get your good letter. From his point of view Runciman is right. It would stereotype the paper.¹ And after all they did take a line which at any rate is not philistinish.

Pawling is a good friend to me and I think that my acceptance by {op"}Scribner's"--thanks to his efforts--is assured if I can wait till they have space. Barrie blocks the way.² I shall scout around energetically to find a shop where they take in pawn the **future** of **writers**.

I haven't said half what I wanted to say about S^{ia} Theresa--and what I have said has been stupidly expressed. I am glad Mrs Cunninghame Graham is not angry. This is the sweetness of women, for there is nothing more exasperating than an ignorant appreciation.

-- How did you come to know such a delightful man as your friend of the barquentine?³ A coaster eh? I've served in a coaster. Also a barque^{ne}. {op"}Skimmer of the Seas" what a pretty name!⁴ But she is gone and took a whole lot of good fellows away with her into the other world. Comme c'est vieux tout c{cd}a! In that craft I began to learn English from East Coast chaps each built as though to last for ever, and coloured like a Christmas card. Tan and pink--gold hair and blue eyes with that Northern straight-away-there look! Twenty two years ago! From Lowestoft to Newcastle and back again. Good school for a seaman. As soon as I can .p36

sell my damaged soul for two and six I shall transport my damaged body there and look at the green sea, over the yellow sands. Eheu! Fugaces!¹

Excuse these tears.

And to think you were dining my wretched carcass at the Devonshire² while you might have been on board the {op"}Tourmaline" giving invaluable tips to her owner about Sidi Haschem.³ Sir--you have sinned. But

as your sinning was my profit you are forgiven. But why the devil have they been arrested. One should never be arrested. And where exactly? Tho' I can read you with ease (honor bright) the proper names stump me.⁴ Is it West Coast of Morocco? or about cape Blanco? I am lost in conjectures.

On the 19th all our tribe man, woman and child shift camp to Oxted to dwell for ten days in the tents of the Beni-Crane. A risky experiment.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}**To Aniela Zago{a}rska**

Text J-A, 1, 228; Najder 224⁵

6.2.98.

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

{lsa}My dearest Aniela,

{lb}It is still more painful and hard to think of you than to realize my loss;⁶ if it was not so, I would pass in silence and darkness these first moments of suffering. Neither you, nor he, know--can know---what place you occupy in my life--how my feelings, my thoughts and my .p37

remembrances have been centred round you both and your children.¹

And perhaps I myself did not know until now how much I depended on his memory, his heart, and his personality--who, even when seen only once, could arouse such feelings of devotion and confidence. He had the gift of drawing all hearts to him and from the moment when I saw him for the first time, fourteen years ago,² I was overcome with affection for him, as the man most akin to me in thought and by blood--after my Uncle, who took the place of my parents. Not a single day passed but I found myself thinking of you both--bet dans les moments pe{a}nibles l'ide{a}e qu'il y aurait unjour ou{g} je pourrais lui confesser ma vie toute entie{g}re et e{cr}tre compris de lui: cette pense{a}e e{a}tait ma plus grande consolation. Et voila{g} que cet espoir--le plus pre{a}cieux de tous--s'est e{a}teint pour toujours.³

The sound of human words does not bring consolation--there is no consolation on this earth. Time can soften but not efface sorrow. I have never felt so near to you and your little girls until this moment when we feel together the injustice of Fate which has loaded you with the burden of life without any support. In the presence of your grief I dare not speak of mine. I only ask you to believe in my attachment to you and in my memory of the mourned husband and father who, with you, was my whole family.

My wife said to me with tears in her eyes: {op'}I felt as if I knew him'--and seeing her tears, it seemed to me that never had I cared for him so much as now. Unfortunately she never knew him--although she had often heard me speak of him--for I was not capable of appreciating the worth of such a man. I did not know him thoroughly; but I believe that I understood him. I had a profound affection for him, I always went to him in my thoughts. And now I feel quite alone--even as you.

I kiss your hands, my poor Aniela, I also kiss your little daughters, for whose sake you must be courageous. Be sure of my affection and devotion to you.

{ls}K. Korzeniowski.

.p38

{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text MS Yale; G. 124

Thursday. [10 February 1898]¹

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dearest G.

{lb}Just a word to thank you for your invitation. We shall certainly call on you² but as to inflicting the baby and all for more than a day--well it would be taking a mean advantage of your hospitality.

-- I saw Pawling the other day. He is very nice. Thinks prospect of Scribners distinctly good. What he wants me to do is to get ready as much of the story as I can and send it off to Am: by the mail of the 23^d inst. so as to reach N.Y. while Heinemann is still there.³ (He left

yesterday). I shall therefore write all I can up to the last moment--and Pawling says he shall get the typing done in one day. I must write another chapter and correct shorten and arrange part 1st. Then about 45000 words shall go to the Yanks--and we shall see.

Jess sends her thanks and love. She is very keen on that visit. You may live yet to regret bitterly your indiscretion in suggesting its possibility.

{lc}In haste Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}**To Stephen Crane**

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 175

Tuesday [15 February 1898]⁴

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Crane.

{lb}I've been rather seedy lately--all worry I think. But I am going to put my worries aside and have a real good time with you. I shall wire You on Sat: by what train we are coming; some time in the afternoon but not late. I shall bring a lot of paper and You shall find a pen. I am anxious to know what You have done with Your idea for a play.⁵ A play to write is no play. I believe You can do anything.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}J. Conrad.

{lps}Our kindest regards to Mrs. Crane. Baby sends a friendly howl.

.p39

{lh}**To R. B. Cunninghame Graham**

Text MS Dartmouth; Watts 77

16 Febr 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Cher ami.

{lb}I did not write because I was beastly seedy--nerve trouble--a taste of

hell. All right now.

Thanks for sending me the paper and the letter about it which reached me in an incomplete state--4 pages missing. Yes it did me good to read about the good fellows. That was a good ship because of the men in her. Yes you do appreciate that kind of thing and that's why I seem to understand you in whatever You say.

The Bristol Fashion business is excellently well put.¹ You seem to know a lot about every part of the world and, what's more, you can say what you know in a most individual way. The skipper of the barque is {op"}pris sur le vif".² I've known the type. And the tongue is put out all along in a fine, effective way.³ More power to your pen!

You have not sent any kind of guide book!!⁴

An extreme weariness oppresses me. It seems as though I had seen and felt everything since the beginning of the world. I suspect my brain to be yeast and my backbone to be cotton. And I know that the quality of my work is of the kind to confirm my suspicions. I would yell for help to anybody--man or devil if I could persuade myself that anybody would care--and, caring, could help. Well. No more. Ever Yours.
{ls}Conrad.

{lh}**To T. Fisher Unwin**

Text MS Leeds; Unpublished

17 Febr. 98.

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mr Unwin.

{lb}Have you heard about the Return? I would be very disappointed if the thing should fail in the States because I have had comm[unicati]on with the Bacheller Syndicate⁵ who wish to have there the first refusal of my
.p40

work and offer to act as my agents without commission, for serial publication.

With kind regards

{lc}faithfully Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lh}**To Spiridion Kliszczewski**

Text MS Spiridion; Unpublished

[21 February 1898]¹

C/o Stephen Crane Esq.

{lra}Ravensbrook

Oxted

Surrey.

{lsa}My dear friend.²

{lb}Could you lend me a five pound note for a couple of weeks? I find myself a little short while on a visit here; but since last week my prospects have improved wonderfully.³

This visit does lots of good to my prospects. You see I come to you in a little difficulty of that kind because if I went to other people I could certainly get it but it would lay open to them the nakedness of the land. I hope you won't think me a nuisance. If you do send please send a note to the address above.

Excuse this blackmailing letter. In great haste.

{lc} Affectionately Yours

{ls} Jph. Conrad.

{lh}**To Jane Cobden Unwin**

Text MS Chichester; Curreli

22^d Febry 98.

{lra}[letterhead: Ravensbrook,

Oxted, Surrey]

{lsa}Dear Mrs Unwin.⁴

{lb}I am so sorry we cannot accept Your kind invitation. My good host has arranged something for every day and on Saturday I am engaged to stay here and meet some people who are coming on purpose to have the

.p41

felicity of beholding me¹ in {op"}my habit, as I live".² And on Monday a very important business calls me to London. It is indeed very probable that we shall have to curtail our stay here considerably.³

Perhaps You will kindly express to M^r Zangwill my regret at missing this opportunity of making his acquaintance.⁴ His mention of the Nigger in the {op"}Academy" has given me a great pleasure.⁵ It was an unexpected reward for a disinterested admiration for his work--dating far back, to the days of Premier and the Painter which I read by chance on the Indian Ocean---a copy with covers torn off and two pages missing. Tempi passati!⁶ But the admiration of his talent, of his art so individual and so sincere has grown with the passing years.

{lc}With friendly regards to Mr Unwin. I am dear Mrs Unwin Your most obedient and faithful servant.

{ls}Jph Conrad

{lh}**To Spiridion Kliszczewski**

Text MS Rosenbach; Unpublished

23 Febr 98

{lra}[letterhead: Ravensbrook]

{lsa}My dear Friend

{lb}I've received a five-pound (£{bp}5) note for which let this letter be a receipt. Thanks for your friendly readiness.

Yes. I understand Your feeling--every bit of it. Give our most hearty greeting to dear Clement and may happiness attend him,⁷ all yours and Yourself

in haste

{lc}Ever Yours affectionately

{ls}Jph Conrad

{lps}Jess sends her love

.p42

{lh}To S. S. Pawling

Text MS Heinemann; Unpublished

27th Febr. 98

{lra}[letterhead: Ravensbrook]

{lsa}My dear Pawling.¹

{lb}I am perfectly satisfied with the terms you have obtained from Maclure.² I shall go right ahead with the story and hope to finish it in five months--at the outside, probably in four.

One thing is absolutely necessary if I am to write and keep good time I must have £{bp}20 per month for these five months--to commence in March each month paid in advance. On my side I promise not to write during that time anything but the story. In July I would have had £{bp}100 and you would have the story complete and then some further arrangement as to payment could be made.

The only risk is of me going off the hooks in a natural way. I have a £{bp}1000 accident insurance policy so that you would lose nothing if I fall out of the boat. But even should I kick the bucket unexpectedly there are 500 pounds of mine knocking about loose in the world, on which I can't lay hands now, but which are sure to turn up all right before long.

Please tell me at once whether you accept this proposal. Write to me c/o E. Garnett. The Cearne--Kent Hatch. N^r Edenbridge where I shall be till the 4th of March. On the 6th I shall be home and at work.

{lc}Ever yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lh}To Stephen Crane

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 170

5th Febr [March] 98.³

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

{lsa}Dear Stephen.

{lb}We got home last night. Ever since I've left You I am wondering how you have passed through Your crisis.⁴ I would like to hear all is well; it hurts me to think You are worried. It is bad for You and it is bad for your

.p43

art. All the time I was at the Garnetts we have been talking of You. We conclude you must be kept quiet; but who is going to work that miracle?

We trust in Mrs. Crane and in the sagacity of publishers. That last is not much to trust to--I admit. Still!...

I've had letters of thanks from Pearson¹ and Blackwood for inducing You to call on them. The Pearson man writes he hopes they shall be able very soon to do something quite satisfactory to M^r Crane {op"}if he gives us an opportunity". The Blackwood man sends an invite to lunch for the week after next to you and me if you will condescend to accept that invitation through me. It appears old Blackwood is coming to London himself to make your and my acquaintance. He is a good old Scotchman and if you like the idea drop me a line to name the day. It is left to you.²

Your whisky old man has effected a cure and I feel quite fit for work. How long that disposition will last only the devil in charge of my affairs knows. I miss You horribly. In fact Ravensbrook and its inhabitants have left an indelible memory. Some day--perhaps next year--we must take a house together--say in Brittany for 3 months or so. It would work smoothly--I am sure.

Present my respectful and most friendly regards to Your wife and assure Her of our gratitude for Her more than charming hospitality. My wife sends her love to the whole household. She is going to write in a day or two--as soon as we are a little settled.

Give me some news--good, if You can.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lh}**To R. B. Cunninghame Graham**

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 230; Watts 79

5th March 98.

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope.

{lsa}Cher ami.

{lb}I see you don't bear malice for my delays in correspondence so I don't

apologise.

The Guide book simply magnificent Everlastingly good!³ I've read it
.p44

last night having only then returned home. During my visit to the
Cranes we talked of you and your work every day. Stephen is a great
admirer of Yours. The man after all knows something. Harold Frederic¹
also enthused with perfect sincerity. My opinion of them has gone up a
hundred points.

Your engineer is immense! Wish I had seen him. It is good of You to
think of me when such a subject comes in your way.² I never seem to
meet any one of that kind--now. I am on the shelf--I am dusty.

Yes. We Poles are poor specimens. The strain of national worry has
weakened the moral fibre--and no wonder when You think of it. It is
not a fault; it is a misfortune. Forgive my jeremiads. I don't repine at the
nature of my inheritance but now and then it is too heavy not to let out a
groan.

I've sold my american serial rights of the Rescue for £{bp}250 to Maclure (of New York). I get another £{bp}50
on acc/t of book rights in the states (15%
royalty) I think--upon the whole--this is not bad. Pawling arranged it
all for me--free of charge. The worst is the book is not finished yet and
must be delivered end July at the latest. Pawling told me they
(Heinemann) are going to publish your book--the Morocco book I
understand.³ I wait for it anxiously. My short tales--{"op"} "Tales of Unrest"--
shall appear (from Unwin's shop) on the 25th of this month.⁴

Well! Till next time

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lps}PS It was Harold Frederic who wrote the criticism of the Nigger in the
Satur: R. He affirmed to me that Runciman had cut out the best
passages.⁵ I tried to persuade him I did not care a hang--which is true.
.p45

{lh}To Edward Garnett

Text G. 124

Sunday evening [13 March 1898] ¹

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dearest G.

{lb}Thanks ever so much for your letter, and more still for your promise to come on Friday next. Do come early. Could you get here for lunch.

There is a train from Fenchurch Street at 11.35 a.m.

You have already cheered me up. I did miss you dreadfully. I had really a hard time of it and not a soul to turn to.

Jess sends her kind regards and is anxious for you to see the baby. The poor girl is a perfect slave to it--but thinks she likes it.

Of course we can put you up--and you shall sleep as long as you like or the baby likes.

Could you find out any facts about the sales of the Tales. Unwin wrote me the book went off well!!? What could have been his object?

{lc}Ever yours

{ls}Conrad

{lps}My friendly regards to Mrs. Garnett. Jess sends her love to her and to Bunny. Remember me to that promising youth!

{lh}To Cora Crane

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 176

Tuesday. [15 March 1898]

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mrs. Crane.

{lb}I am sorry to say I am not well enough to keep Stephen's engagement for Saturday evening.² It is nervous trouble and the doctor advises me to keep very quiet. I think I ought to follow his advice. A dinner in town means sleeping in town and I simply don't feel equal to it. I hope Stephen won't be angry; but really I do not feel at all well. I am writing

to day to Meldrum³ saying that Stephen would like to meet M^r

.p46

Blackwood if it can be managed on Saturday next. If the thing is arranged I shall try to come up on that day for the lunch, but must get home in the afternoon.

I am so glad Stephen is writing; it consoles me from* my own inability to work. I haven't written three pages since I left You. I simply can't.

I am like a man under a fiendish spell cast over the power of thinking.

My wife and Dolly¹ send their love to You all. Believe me dear Mrs

{lc}Crane Your faithful and affectionate servant

{ls}Joseph Conrad

{lh}**To Cora Crane**

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 177

17.3.98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Mrs Crane

{lb}You are both awfully good to me. The only reason why I would hesitate to accept Your kind proposal² is that I am afraid the company of a wretched creature like me won't do any good to Stephen, who is an artist and therefore responsive to outside moods. Now my mood is unhealthy; and I would rather forbear seeing Stephen all my life--(notwithstanding my affection for the man and admiration for the artist)--than bring a deteriorating element into his existence. You, knowing him better than any one, may tell best whether my fear is justified.

However for this time I am inclined to be selfish and say yes. I haven't yet heard from the Blackwood man. I instructed him to write direct to Stephen about the Saturday lunch business. We shall no doubt both get a letter tomorrow (Friday). If yes we shall meet where he appoints. If not, then perhaps Stephen would wire to me on Saturday--as early as possible.

Wife and Dolly send their love to all, and I am dear Mrs Crane always

{lc}most faithfully your

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lh}To Edward Garnett

Text MS Sutton; G. 125

Monday. [21 March 1898]³

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Garnett

{lb}Well. It isn't so bad as I expected if in every two pages only one and a half are too bad for anything.

.p47

To tell you the truth I hate the thing with such great hatred that I don't want to look at it again.¹ I've read your remarks. Gospel truth--except where you try to cheer me on. I shall certainly go on--that is if I can. The best about the work is that it is sold. They've got to take it. But the thought that such rubbish is produced at the cost of positive agony fills me with despair. I have not an atom of courage left.

It was awful good of You to read and annotate. I don't know how to thank you. I shall try to do something before it appears as a book. Now I haven't the strenght* nor the pluck.

My kindest regards to Mrs. Garnett. Love to Bunny.² Is his cold better? I haven't been well.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}J. Conrad

{lps}My wife sends her love to you all.

{lh}To E. L. Sanderson

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

23^d March 1898

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Ted,

{lb}It is good of You to remember me in the midst of Your occupations, preparations, exaltations and botherations. Well, dear old chap all this will be soon over. Peace and content are before you, and not everyone

can say as much.³

I am glad to hear You are pretty fit. I am somewhat less limp but the work does not progress much for there is a curious inability to think clearly. A bad sign I should say; only I won't say. Not yet. I haven't given up hope but I don't feel very happy or very certain about the future.

If you've thought of me I have thought of you both. What is the date of the great event? In spirit I shall be by Your side on the most fateful day of a man's life--and that it is going to be the beginning of a serene happiness is my absolute conviction.

No more now or I will miss the post. Jess sends kind regards.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lps}The baby is very well.

.p48

{lh}**To Cora Crane**

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 178

24th March 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mrs Crane

{lb}Thanks for Your letter. I am glad to hear Stephen is at work. I am not.

I shall be at Heinemann's a little before one. I think it's the best place for us to meet on Friday before going to feed at old Blackwood's expense.

The time of feeding is 1.30 and the locality Garrick Club.¹

Jessie and Dolly send their best love to you and Mrs Rudie.² The baby has set up a carriage and is so puffed up with pride that there is no bearing him. He behaved like an accomplished ruffian when Stephen was here and has hurt my feelings so much that we haven't been on speaking terms since.

I am, dear Mrs Crane,

{lc}Most sincerely yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lh}**To T. Fisher Unwin**

Text MS Berg; Unpublished

26th March [1898]

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa} }Dear Mr Unwin.

{lb}Thanks for your note informing me of the publication of the Tales.³ I, of course have no suggestions to offer feeling certain that you will do everything needful to give the book a good send off.

The only thing I would ask is, that, as you correspond with Baron Tauchnitz,⁴ you would mention the Volume to him, should the reviews be favourable, as I anticipate they shall be. As a matter of fact in that book I come nearer to the popular notion of tale-telling than in any previous work of mine. All the stories had attracted notice when they

.p49

appeared in serial form. The only thing against the book is the general slump in short stories; an illogical phenomenon, since the intrinsic value of a work can have nothing to do with its length.*

Would you send an early copy to M^r Cunninghame Graham? He is now in London. 39 Chester Square.¹ I think it possible he may write a review²--and he is very friendly to me and my work.

{lc}I am, dear Mr Unwin very

faithfully Yours,

{ls}Jph Conrad

{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text MS Sutton; J-A, 1, 231; G. 126

29th March. [1898]

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Garnett.

{lb}I am ashamed of myself. I ought to have written to you before but the fact is I have not written anything at all. When I received your letter together with part II^d of R[escue] I was in bed--this beastly nervous

trouble. Since then I've been better but have been unable to write. I sit down religiously every morning, I sit down for eight hours every day--and the sitting down is all. In the course of that working day of 8 hours I write 3 sentences which I erase before leaving the table in despair. There's not a single word to send you. Not one! And time passes--and McClure waits³--not to speak of Eternity for which I don't care a damn. Of McClure however I am afraid.

I ask myself sometimes whether I am bewitched, whether I am the victim of an evil eye? But there is no "op" jettatura" in England⁴--is there? I assure you--speaking soberly and on my word of honour--that sometimes it takes all my resolution and power of self control to refrain from butting my head against the wall. I want to howl and foam at the mouth but I daren't do it for fear of waking that baby and alarming my wife. It's no joking matter. After such crises of despair I doze for hours till half conscious that there is that story I am unable to write. Then I wake up, try again--and at last go to bed completely done-up. So the days pass and nothing is done. At night I sleep. In the morning I get up with the horror of that powerlessness I must face through a day of vain efforts.

In these circumstances as you imagine I feel not much inclination to .p50

write letters. As a matter of fact I had a great difficulty in writing the most commonplace note. I seem to have lost all sense of style and yet I am haunted, mercilessly haunted by the necessity of style. And that story I can't write weaves itself into all I see, into all I speak, into all I think, into the lines of every book I try to read. I haven't read for days. You know how bad it is when one feels one's liver, or lungs. Well I feel my brain. I am distinctly conscious of the contents of my head. My story is there in a fluid--in an evading shape. I can't get hold of it. It is all there--to bursting, yet I Can't get hold of it no more than you can grasp a handful of water.

There! I've told You all and feel better. While I write this I am amazed to see that I can write. It looks as though the spell were broken but I hasten, I hasten lest it should in five minutes or in half an hour be laid again.

I tried to correct part II^d according to Your remarks. I did what I could--that is I knocked out a good many paragraphs. It's so much gained. As to alteration, rewriting and so on I haven't attempted it--except here and there a trifle--for the reason I could not think out anything different to what is written. Perhaps when I come to my senses I shall be able to do something before the book comes out. As to the serial it must go anyhow. I would be thankful to be able to write anything, anything, any trash, any rotten thing--something to earn dishonestly and by false pretences the payment promised by a fool.

That's how things stand to-day; and to-morrow would be more mysterious if it were not so black! I write You a nice cheery letter for a good-bye: don't I, dear old fellow. That's how we use our friends. If I hadn't written I would have burst.

Good luck to you and buon' viaggio signore. Think of me sometimes. Are you going to Milan? It's 24 years since I saw the Cathedral in moonlight.¹ Tempi passati--I had young eyes then. Don't give all your time to the worship of Bot[t]icelli. Somebody should explode that superstition. But there, You know better. It is good of you to think of the boy. He is bigger every day. I would like to make a bargeman of him: strong, knowing his business and thinking of nothing. That is the life my dear fellow. Thinking of nothing! O! bliss. I had a lunch with Blackwood good old smoothbore. Also Cunning: Graham came down to see me the day before dining with your father.² Has been in bed since but writes every second day. Recommend my short stories to your friend. Have you

.p51

seen the Nigger notice in Literature of last week. Amazing.¹ Jess sends her best love.

Vale frater²

{lc} Yours ever

{ls} J.C.

{lh} **To E. L. Sanderson**

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

30th March 1898.

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dearest Ted.

{lb}I have waited for the arrival of the brass clock--promised to you in the fulness of heart over the bachelor tobacco at the {op"}Fortune"³--for the 15th century dial that was (if You had gone to the expense of having it repaired) to me[a]sure the moment of Your happiness in the 19th.

Apparently it is as unattainable as though it had remained in the 15th century. It shall be conquered tho' but I will have to go to Poland for it--I guess. My letters abusive, plaintive, remonstrative all had one answer: {op"}Not to be found". And yet it is not an object that could fall through a crack in the floor.

You are the sufferer, let us hope only for a time. Meanwhile I wanted you to have something from me⁴ which you could use often--as a reminder of my affection, of my friendship and my fidelity. And here I send a trifle that represents so much of my best feelings

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Conrad.