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{lh}**To Helen Watson**

Text MS Yale; J-A, 1, 233

2^d April 1898

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

Essex

{lsa}Dear Miss Watson.⁵

{lb}Permit me to answer informally and through You the invitation we have had to Your wedding, since it is to Your friendly feeling and Your memory that we owe it.

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That we cannot give way to our very strong desire to be present at the ceremony is, believe me, the fault of the unbending circumstances. The despotism of the baby, my wretched health and the necessities of my work prevent me from leaving home.¹ And, indeed, were there no inexorable obstacles I would perhaps, perhaps hesitate out of my sincere affection for you both to show my sour face and (let us charitably say) my constitutional melancholy on the day of all days when all the omens should speak of unalterable serenity, and peace, and joy.

But if the face is sour and the mind (more or less) diseased the heart, I trust, has not been touched by a subtle evil; and though you who found your wor[l]dly welfare upon the uncorruptible promises of Eternity have no need of men's wishes to be the forerunners of your happiness, yet You will allow me to send mine the most true--the most sincere--straight from a heart, let us hope, untouched by evil.

Jess joins me in this imperfect expression of feelings. She is happy with Your happiness and begs You to believe that her thoughts, like mine, will be with You both on the momentous day. Believe me, dear Miss Watson with true affection and profound respect Your most
{lc}faithful obedient servant
{ls}J. Conrad Korzeniowski.

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

Text MS Dartmouth; Watts 81

Thursday. [7 April? 1898]²

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Cher ami.

{lb}Only a word. I had your letter last night and am overjoyed to learn you like the stories. I wonder if they will bring me the needed success. I don't think so - and with mixed feelings don't know whether I am pleased or sorry.

I send back the letter. If what the sheik said is true then it is hard to find an excuse for the Major.³ The whole business seems to have been managed in a mysteriously silly manner. I've done better in my time but

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then I didn't act for a syndicate.¹ And by the bye the sheik in saying the word {op"}Yahudi" was only half wrong. Isn't the Globe Syd^{cte} managed by one Sassoon?²

However my criticism is impertinent since I do not know all the circumstances. But it looks like a wretched fizzle.

Let me know how you get on. I am still lame. {lc}Ever Yours
{ls}Conrad.

{lps}My wife sends her kind regards

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

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

9th April 1898

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Ted.

{lb}Forgive me if I don't come to see the last of You in your bachelor character. I have twinges in all my joints and a beastly cold ambitious to become influenza. I must check its aspiration.

I think of You daily with unmingled feeling of satisfaction since you are approaching the end of trouble and worries and the beginning of happiness; and I am fortunate enough to gain (as is so seldom the case) another and a precious friendship by your marriage. Last week I wrote my last letter to Miss Watson in reply to an invitation to the wedding, which we had through her kind and friendly thought. Obviously we couldn't come. I wrote to say so and also to say a part, a very small part (because words are so inadequate) of what I feel. When next I address her on paper it will be as Mrs E. L Sanderson and you two will be facing the world side by side. May your hearts never falter and may your courage be ever sustained by that Higher Power to which You both commit your hearts and your fate.

I send three cheers and one more after you as You turn out of the darkness of bachelor ways into the broad path of married life, and in this

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primitive demonstration Jessie joins me with all her heart. Our thoughts are with you both.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lh}**To Spiridion Kliszczewski**

Text MS Williams; J-A, 1, 273

12th April [1898]¹

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

{lsa}My Dear Old Friend

{lb}Here's the latest volume of my works which I beg you to accept for yourself and dear Mrs. Spiridion.

I haven't written for a very long time as it seems to me: but both you and I are busy men, each in our way. I daresay you will forgive me. After six hours pen in hand one does not seem to have anything more to write--even to one's best friend.

The book I've been writing since last December and am writing still is sold already for serial appearance both in America and also here. The price is not so bad, considering I get {bp}250 for serial rights in both countries. Then, for book form I shall probably get {bp}100 in all. Well one can live on that. But meantime I am living on these prospects the book not being finished as yet. I am trying to complete it by end July and if the health holds out, I shall not doubt do it. I must ask you to forgive my delay in repaying the amount I owe you, though I do not for a moment suppose you are impatient.

When you have a moment of spare time give me the news of your wife's and your own health and tell us all about your boys. We often talk of them and especially of Clem for whom my wife has a soft spot. May your prosperity always increase and your shadow never grow less.

What do you think of foreign affairs? I am simply sick to see the blind and timid bungling of the men at the head of affairs. This is this country's very last chance to assert itself in the face of Russia and indeed of the whole* Europe. I am convinced that at this moment all the chances would be in favour of England and after a first success there would be no lack of friends and allies. But there! What's the use talking;

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I am not foreign minister.¹ Jessie sends her love to all. She is pretty well. The baby flourishes exceedingly. He is very big and seems very strong. I am afraid he is tasking my wife's strenght* to the utmost.

Well! Good-bye for the present.

{lc}My affectionate greetings to you
all. I am always yours
{ls}Jph Conrad.

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

Text J-A, 1, 234; Najder 225²

12.4.98

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

{lsa}My dear Aniela,

{lb}Forgive my long silence. The bad state of my health is the reason why the news of our terrible bereavement has put me in such a state of nervous excitement that I am quite unable to follow my thoughts or to write a couple of lines.

I am filled with admiration for your courage and the strength of mind with which you bear this awful blow inflicted by Fate.³ I have not written, but I can tell you that every day I have been with you in my thoughts.

The exigencies of life do not bring relief--they only drive back the outward show of grief. The day before yesterday I returned to my work; it could not be otherwise. And it is thus, with poignant grief in my heart, that I write novels to amuse the English!

I thank you for your letter which I read with much sadness and which brings me nearer to your grief; in sharing your feelings and your sorrow, I do not feel so much alone! I feel as if in sorrow, at least, I were near you. Alas! it is impossible to remove the consciousness of the distance which separates us. There is a wish to take the hand and to hear the sound of the voice, but it cannot be. My wife and child are well, thanks be to God. As for me, I am not ill, but I am not well either. And then the

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uncertainty of our destiny oppresses me. We live with difficulty, from day to day--et c'est tout! My reputation grows, but popularity remains behind. The work is not easy and every day seems more difficult to me. Que la vie est cruelle et be{cr}te! But enough for today.

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

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 233; Watts 82

Thursday. [14 April 1898]¹

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Cher et excellent ami.

{lb}Yesterday I hobbled out and away to London. Not hearing from you imagined all kinds of serious things. So I called at Chester Square.² The bird was flown! I thought {op}"very good!" but had a suspicion you went away too early. Your letter confirms my surmise. I thought it wasn't a common cold you had. If I was You (or rather if You were me) I would take it easy for a couple of weeks. It would pay better in the long run.

The cutting is valuable. Do you possess Lavery's portrait of yourself? Of Lavery I know only the Girl in White, but I knew he had done some oriental things.³

Don't you take it into your head you are getting old.⁴ You are simply run down and strong men feel it so much more than weaklings like me--who have felt overtaken ever since the age of 28.⁵ True! And yet I

had another ten years of sea--and did my work too. It isn't your body--it's your brain that is tired. The battery wants recharging. Time, with common caution, will do that. My wife was very much concerned about you. Women have a curious insight sometimes. She said to me after you left. {op"}I am sorry M^r Cunninghame Graham came. He ought to have been at home. I am sure he will be ill."--I said {op"}Oh bosh! You don't know anything; that kind of man is never ill." I consider you played a mean trick on me with your affectation of influenza. My position as an infallible man is badly shaken at home. I never had it elsewhere.

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I am glad you like Karain. I was afraid you would despise it. There's something magazine'ish about it. Eh? It was written for Blackwood.¹

There is twilight and soft clouds and daffodils--and a great weariness. Spring! Excellentissime--Spring? We are annually lured by false hopes. Spring! Che coglioneria!² Another illusion for the undoing of mankind.

Enough!

--Do spare yourself if not for your own sake then for the sake of the horse.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lh}**To C. L. Hind**

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

16th April 1898

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

Essex

{lsa}Dear Sir.³

{lb}Mr Clifford's book⁴ reached me only yesterday--the 15th--tho' his letter within is dated on the 5th. I mention this to show that I have at once (tho' busy with another work) answered to Your kind proposal--this being the best manner of showing my appreciation of it.

The book is interesting, has insight, sympathy and, of course, unrivalled knowledge of the subject. But it is not literature. This being so I have, in the enclosed review, followed an unliterary train of thought, which however, I trust has a grain of truth in it.⁵

I have signed my review. I am of course aware that it is the high standing and the intellectual authority of the publication which gives its final value to the criticism appearing in its pages. And it is this conviction which induced me to avail myself of your offer. Yet it seems to me that fundamentally, in the matter of criticism it is always the individual voice that speaks and, if so, then the individual should not be hidden. The responsibility for truth or error is on his shoulders also.

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I say this not knowing whether the rule of unsigned articles is imperative in the Academy.¹ In any case I hope you will find the enclosed suitable for your columns.

{lc}I am, dear Sir, very faithfully

yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

The Editor of the Academy

{lh}**To Cora Crane**

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 179

19th April 1898

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Mrs Crane

{lb}We imagine how lonely you must have felt after Stephen's departure. The dear fellow wired me from Queenstown,² just before going aboard I suppose. Jess is very concerned about you and wishes me to ask you to drop her a line on your arrival in Ireland. I think your going there would be a good thing as solitude after separation is sometimes very hard to bear.

We thought of asking You to come here at once but on receiving Stephen's wire I imagined you were all in Ireland already. However you will be more entertained at the Frederic's³ for a time, and on your return to England I hope you will have the will and the courage to undertake the risky experiment of coming to us with Mrs Ruedy. Moreover I fancy Stephen's absence won't be very prolonged⁴ and we may have the felicity of seeing you all here together. I trust you will let me know how he fares whenever you hear from him. He is not very likely to write to anyone else--if I know the man.

Jess and Dolly send their very best love to you and Mrs Ruedy. The baby flourishes exceedingly and its mother is more of a slave than ever. I am as usual ineffective and lazy.

{lc}Believe me dear Mrs Crane your
very faithful friend and servant

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

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{lh}**To C. L. Hind** [?]¹

Text J-A, 1, 235

23rd April, 1898

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My Dear Sir,

{lb}It is a sore temptation, but I don't think I ought to review Crane's last book.² The excellent fellow in the goodness of his heart has been praising me beyond my merits on his own side of the water³ and his generous utterances have been quoted here. I've not enough standing and reputation to put me above the suspicion of swinging back the censer. Consequently my review would do no good to Crane's work, which deserves a warm appreciation. I've seen many of these stories in MS. and others in proofs and have discussed them all ends up with him; yet what can be said and explained during an all-night talk may wear a different complexion in the cold austerity of print. Upon the whole then I think I had better not. Pardon all this long letter, for the simple purpose of saying no. But I wished you to understand why I can't avail myself of your flattering offer.

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

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 235; Watts 84

1st May 1898.

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Cher et excellent ami.

{lb}I take it for granted you are not angry with me for my silence. Wrist bad again, baby ill, wife frightened, damned worry about my work⁴ and about other things, a fit of such stupidity that I could not think out a single sentence--excuses enough in all conscience, since I am not the master but the slave of the peripeties and accidents (generally beastly) of existence.

And yet I wanted badly to write, principally to say: {op"}Je ne comprends

pas du tout!" I had two letters from you. The first announced an inclosure which was not there. The next (a week ago by the gods!) alluded no doubt to the absent enclosure and said you corrected proof (of a sea-phrase) by wire. It being Saturday I jumped at my N^o of the S.R. making sure to see there the story of the Scotch tramp on a .p60

Christmas Eve.¹ Nix! Exasperation followed by resignation on reflecting that unless the world came to a sudden end I would worm out of you the secret of these letters. I want to know! Istaghfir Allah!² O! Sheik Mohammed!³ I take refuge with the One the Invincible.

By all means Viva l'Espana!!!!⁴

I would be the first to throw up my old hat at the news of the slightest success. It is a miserable affair whichever way you look at it. The ruffianism on one side, an unavoidable fate on the other, the impotence on both sides, though from various causes, all this makes a melancholy and ridiculous spectacle. Will the certain issue of that struggle awaken the Latin race to the sense of its dangerous position?⁵ Will it be any good if they did awaken? Napoleon the Third had that sense and it was the redeeming trait of his rule.⁶ But, perhaps, the race is doomed? It would be a pity. It would narrow life, it would destroy a whole side of it which had its morality and was always picturesque and at times inspiring. The others may well shout Fiat Lux!⁷ It will be only the reflected light of a silver dollar and no sanctimonious pretence will make it resemble the real sunshine. I am sorry, horribly sorry. Au diable! Apre{g}s tout cela do it m'e{cr}tre absolument e{a}gal.⁸ But it isn't for some obscure reason or other.

Which shows my folly. Because men are {op"}fourbes la{cr}ches, menteurs, voleurs, cruels"⁹ and why one should show a preference for one manner of displaying these qualities rather than for another passes my comprehension in my meditative moments.

However I need not worry about the Latin race. My own life is difficult enough. It arises from the fact that there is nothing handy to steal and I never could invent an effective lie--a lie that would sell, and last, and be admirable. This state of forced virtue spreads a tinge of fearsome melancholy over my wasted days.--But I am ever Yours {ls}Conrad.

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{lh}To R. B. Cunningham Graham

Text MS Dartmouth; Watts 85

17 May 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Excellentissime,

{lb}Heer's* Garnett's letter.¹ I've looked in of course because he told me I may. I've heard all this said with greater warmth of appreciation, since You have been (in Your work) a subject of long discussions between us.

By the Gods! Atlas is magnificently good.² Vous taillez dans le vif la{g} dedans!³ My envy of your power grows with every new thing I see. I am glad--very glad the sketches are going to be collected. One will be able to live with them then. Now one hunts for them in a waste of paper and printer's ink.

I wonder how things are with you. I trust Your Wife is better by now. I would like to know.

I am still miserably unwell, working against the grain while all the time I think it's no good no good. Quelle mise{a}re!

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Conrad

{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text MS Sutton; G. 129

18 May 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Garnett.

{lb}I've sent off Your letter to Cunningh[a]me Graham. I've looked into it. What you say is just. Your idea of the {op"}colonial" series is excellent.⁴

What shall I say? Things aren't well with me dear friend. I grow a little hopeless now. Writing is as difficult as ever.

Forgive me if I do not come to see you in town. And yet I want to see You very much. When you are again abreast of Your work and can find .p62

time run down to see me here. A word the day before will do. I am not likely to move from here.

My wife sends her kindest regards and hopes we shall see you soon. A ridiculously small quantity of the Rescue has been done. I am horribly sick of life.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text MS Colgate; G. 130

Saturday [28 May or 4 June]

1898]¹

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dearest G.

{lb}I've sent you today a copy of the Children etc, 3 or 4 of your own books and that amazing masterpiece Bel-Ami.² The technique of that work gives to one acute pleasure. It is simply enchanting to see how it's done. I've sold (I think) the sea thing³ to B[lackwood] for {bp}35 (13000 words). Meldrum thinks there's no doubt--but still B must see it himself. McClure⁴ has been the pink of perfection. {op"}We will be glad to get as much as we can for you in America"--and so on. He is anxious to have a book of short tales. I think Jim (20.000) Youth (13.000) A seaman (5.000) Dynamite (5.000)⁵ and another story of say 15.000 would make a volume for B here and for McC. there. That is after serial pub^{on}. I broached the subject and they seem eager. Have made no conditions but said I would like to know what B. would offer. As to McC. I leave it vague for the present.

The Rescue shall not begin till October next. That means bookform for winter season of 1899. A long time to wait--and to find it after all a dead frost--perhaps.

I don't feel a bit more hopeful about the writing of Rescue than .p63

before. It's like a curse. I can't imagine anything. How do you like C. Graham?

Jess sends her love to you all

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lps}I told C. Graham to get Mrs Garnett's translation of Turgeniev.¹ He admires T. but only read the French rendering. My most friendly regards to your wife.

{lh}**To Helen Sanderson**

Text MS Yale; J-A, 1, 238

3 June 1898

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mrs. Sanderson.²

{lb}Your letter is all that's good and kind and charming to read and I thank you very much for it. I can't imagine any letter from you that could be anything else to me. So Your remarks at the end--since you know my feelings toward the House of Sanderson, in all its ramifications--seem not so much the outcome of modesty as of mistrust of my own peevish disposition. You are here humbly (but firmly) requested not to do it again. To hint that reading Your letter could be for me a loss of time is at least unkind--if not bitterly ironic. My dear Mrs Sanderson, the friendships contracted at Elstree,³ Ted's solid affection, Your friendly feeling--are the clearest gains of my life; and such letters as yours assure me that I've not lost that without which I would be forlorn indeed, and ruined beyond retrieving.

When your letter arrived I was finishing a short story⁴ and I put off my answer till the end was reached. Half an hour ago I've written the last word and without loss of time, after a short stroll up the meadow, sat down to expostulate with you--a little--but mostly to thank you for all You say and for the kindness that shines between the lines of Your letter.
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I am anxious to see You and Ted in your new home. The servant trouble, the financial shortcomings are of the kind one gets used to. Just as well one should--since they are unavoidable. And in time the household machine will run smooth--but You must not let it grind you small.

And you mustn't let other things grind you at all. In these matters the great thing is to be faithfully yourself. I am quite alive to the circumstances, to the difficulties that surround you. They must be faced {op"} in propria persona" so to speak. You and Ted--Ted and You--the two, the one must meet them by being faithful to yourselves--and by that alone. This seems vague--yet it is my clear thought for which I cannot find another form. Nothing more difficult than expression. And if--at times--you feel defeated, believe me it will be a delusion, because no circumstances of man's contriving can be stronger than a personality upheld by faith and conscience. There! I wish I could say something really helpful--something practical to you--and here I am unable to present anything but a belief. I believe it is truth. For the rest I so completely trust your tact and Ted's instinct of the world (his knowledge of it of course being granted) that I contemplate your future with interest with sympathy--but without uneasiness.

There's hardly room left to thank you for the invitation. Of course I am eager to come--and I shall very soon--my visit being to St Mary's.¹

Believe me dear Mrs Sanderson

{lc}Your most faithful friend &

servant

{ls}Joseph Conrad.

{lps}Hand-shake to Ted. I am inexpressibly glad to hear good news of his health. I feel criminal in not answering his letter. Will he receive me if I come?

{lh}**To David Meldrum**

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 21

Friday. [3 June 1898]²

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mr Meldrum.³

{lb}I send you the end of Youth Sorry for the delay but had lots of interruptions.

I beg you will read it and if it should not commend itself to you send it
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back at once. If you do not think M^r Blackwood would like it I can't wait
for his return.¹

I'll send Jim along on Monday--as much as there is of him.²

I would be awfully pleased to see you here--soon. Drop me a line a
day before.

{lc}Faithfully yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lh}**To William Nicholson**

Text Krishnamurti

3 June 1898

{lra}Stanford le Hope

Essex

{lsa}My dear Nicholson,³

{lb}Ever so many thanks for the Don Quixote⁴ received this morning and
for the words written thereon. It was good of you to remember me. I like
the Knight very much. You have given him a lovely face and the
individuality of the horse is as engaging as that of the rider. May you
flourish exceedingly. You and your art and all that belongs to you in a
greater or lesser degree.

{lc}Your faithful admirer

{ls}Joseph Conrad

{lh}**To David Meldrum**

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 21

Saturday. [4 June 1898]⁵

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mr Meldrum.

{lb}Last night I posted You the last pages of Youth. Here I send the first 18
pages of Jim: A Sketch just to let you see what it is like. It will give You an idea of the spirit the thing is conceived
in. I rather think it ought to be
worked out in no less than 20-25 thousand words. Say two numbers of
{op"}Maga".

Suppose You let Mr Blackwood have a sight of it? I leave it however to
your judgement. The MS is sent to you, just to form an opinion; I would
want it back but at Your convenience.

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As to book-form publication You understand I do not wish to--so to
speak--intrude the matter upon Mr Blackwood. I am averse to conclud-
ing anything as to a work not yet in existence. Nevertheless I would be
glad to know what M^r Blackwood would offer for it. All being well we
could perhaps be ready for the next spring season.¹ The SS McClure C^o
would have the book in the States.

What do You think of a day in the country? Say the week after next.
Fix Your own day and drop me a word. There is a train from Fenchurch
Street at 11.35 which would bring You here in time for lunch. Last train
at night at 8. But we could put you up and you would be in London at
9.30 next day.

{lc}Very faithfully Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text MS Colgate; J-A, 1, 236; G. 131

Tuesday. [7 June 1898]²

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{ls}Dearest G.

{lb}Thanks for your letter. I am glad you like C. - Graham who certainly is unique.

As to Rescue you are under a {op'}misapprehension' as Shaw³ would have said. I intend to write nothing else. I am not even going to finish Jim now. Not before Sept^{ber}. The talk about short stories has been commenced by those men B[lackwood] and McC[lure] and seeing them willing to discuss the future I gave them an idea of what I would do. The fact however remains that this Rescue makes me miserable--frightens me--and I shall not abandon it--even temporarily--I must get on with it, and it will destroy my reputation. Sure!

B has returned yesterday and Meldrum wrote me saying I shall hear from him very soon.

Thanks for your care for your thought. Alas no one can help me. In the matter of R. I have lost all sense of form and I can't see images. But what to write I know. I have the action only the hand is paralysed when it comes to giving expression to that action.

If I am too miserable I shall groan to you, O! best of men.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}J. Conrad

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{lh}**To William Blackwood**

Text MS NLS: Blackburn 23

11th June 1898

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

Essex.

{lsa}Dear Mr Blackwood¹

{lb}Thank you very much for Your good letter² and for the cheque for {bp}40 of which {bp}35 in payment for the story entitled Youth and {bp}5 on account of the story (yet unfinished) entitled Jim: A sketch.

My thanks however are due both for the matter and for the manner, and if the first superficially viewed appears a business transaction where the word thanks may be taken as a conventional expression, I beg you to believe I have a very clear sense of the inestimable value of the second. Inestimable is deliberately written. Man does not live by bread alone, and very little bread will go a long way towards sustaining life -- without making it more supportable. For that last one must turn to men and be often disappointed. A word of appreciation, a friendly act performed in a friendly manner these are as rare as nuggets in gold-bearing sand and suddenly enrich the most obscure the most solitary existence.

This being the trend of my thought you may imagine I was gratified by the terms of Your letter apart from the {op"}bis dat qui . . ." You know the proverb.³ And for that also my thanks are due.

I trust You will like Youth. Its only merit is its being a bit of life. Of course I feel it could have been made better if it had fallen into better hands; but at any rate the sentiment which guided me was genuine.

I hope You have, in Aix-les-Bains, stored up health for a good long time. If the British Public, who is a kind of inferior Providence for the use of Authors, wills it I shall go there myself next year. I am, dear Mr

{lc}Blackwood very faithfully Yours

{ls}Joseph Conrad.

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

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 239; Watts 87

11 June 1898.

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Cher et excellent ami

{lb}Thanks ever so much for the book.¹

I have read it once so far.

The more I read you the more I admire. This is a strong word but not a bit too strong for the sensation it is supposed to describe. In your Wife's sketches I came again with delight upon the hand that had called to life the incomparable saint² and the mankind of that place and time.

I and Garnett have used up most of the adjectives we know in talking you over yesterday. He has sent me the Bloody Niggers and the Labour Leader.³ Tre{g}s bien!!

You are the perfection of scorn--not vulgar scorn mind, not scorn that would fit any utterance. No! Scorn that is clear in the thought and lurks in the phrase. The philosophy of unutterable scorn.

Ah! Amigo de mi corazon⁴ (is that right?) you may fling contempt and bitterness, and wit and hard wisdom, hard unpractical wisdom, at this world and the next--l'ignoble boule roulera toujours portant des e{cr}tres infimes et me{a}chants dans un univers qui ne se comprends pas lui-me{cr}me.⁵

I put first (of yours) Horses then Father Arch⁶--or bracket them. But I like every line of the others. Of your Wife's The Will⁷ is a perfect little thing and Yuste-Batuecas and Plasencia are pictures of a rare charm.

They breathe like things of life seen in a dream. Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lps}P.S. You are the most undemocratic of men. By what perversion of .p69

sentiment vous vous e{cr}tes fourre{a} dans une gale{g}re qui n'arrivera nulle part? Du reste c{cd}a importe peu.¹ The truth of your personality is visible, would be visible anywhere.

P.P.S. No. The Vanishing Race decidedly is first in my affection.

P.P.P.S. I have also received Badminton with the most interesting Bolas.²

You are good to let me have all you publish. Continuez. Yahudi³ seems greatly impressed by you. Just like his cheek.

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

Text MS Dartmouth; Watts 88

15 June 1898

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Cher et excellent ami.

{lb}I need not tell you how delighted I am with your declaration of friendly purposes. Please tell the kind Author of S^{ta} Theresa that we both are waiting impatiently for the day when we shall have the honour and pleasure of seeing her in our camping place in the wilds of Essex.

This is the kindest and the most friendly thing that has been done to me for many years and I hope you will persevere in your charitable and rash intention.

Yes. B[loody] N[iggers] is or are good--very good, very telling; in fact they tell one all about you.⁴ And the more one is told the more one wants to hear more. Mais--cher ami--ne Vous eparpillez pas trop. Vos pense{a}es courent de par le monde comme des chevaliers errants, tandis qu'il faudrait les tenir en main, les assembler, en faire une phalange penetrante et solide⁵--peut e{cr}tre victorieuse--qui sait?--Peut-e{cr}tre-----

Et puis--pourquoi pre{icr}chez Vous au convertis?⁶ Mais je deviens stupide. Il n y a pas des convertis aux ide{a}es de l'honneur, de la justice, de la pitie{a}, de la liberte{a}. Il n y a que des gens qui sans savoir, sans .p70

comprendre, sans sentir s'extasient sur les mots, les repe{g}tent, les crient, s'imaginent y croire--sans croire a autre chose qu'au gain, a l'avantage personel, a la vanite{a} satisfaite. Et les mots s'envolent; et il ne reste rien, entendez vous? Absolument rien, oh homme de foi! Rien. Un moment, un clin d'oeil et il ne reste rien--qu'une goutte de boue, de boue froide, de boue morte lance{a}e dans l'espace noir, tournoyant autour d'un soleil e{a}teint. Rien. Ni pense{a}e, ni son, ni a{cr}me. Rien. ¹

{lc}Jess sends her best regards. I am ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lps}P.S. Mes devoirs a Madame Votre Femme et mes remerciements.

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

Text MS Yale; J-A, 1, 240

15th June 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dearest old Ted

I do not deserve the display of your patience and endurance towards me. It was good and next to angelic to write to me when I had not answered your letter after the end of the honeymoon. I did not answer; I do nothing; I have no time; I shall take arrears of correspondence with me into my grave--I fear. I am incorrigible. And by the by: what a good title for a play--a serious comedy in five acts: The Incorrigible. Almost any phase of life could be treated under that title.

Excuse me: I have play on the brain; nothing definite; just play in the abstract.

I am coming to see You in your own nest. Every day counts. When I'll get there is another matter. I am in a state of deadly, indecent funk. I've obtained a ton of cash from a Yank under, what strikes me, are false

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pretences.¹ The Child of the Screaming Eagle is as innocent as a dove.

He thinks the book he bought will be finished in July while I know that it is a physical and intellectual impossibility to even approach the end by that date. He sends on regular cheques which is--according to his lights--right, but I pocket them serenely which--according to my lights--looks uncommonly like a swindle on my part. And would you believe it? Sometimes I feel a kind of guilty exultation, a kind of corrupt joy in living thus on the proceeds of dishonesty. As we get older we get worse. At least some of us do. Others again remain young for ever. Thus the supply of tolerably decent people is kept up.

But as I don't wish to see Your door closed against me I hasten to inform You, that, partly from fear and partly from remorse, I have invited the Yank to lunch here to-morrow. In that way I return some part of my ill-gotten gains and may have an opportunity to break the fatal news gently to him. If I survive the interview you shall certainly see me very soon.

I am glad you liked my thing in the Outlook. Was it the Views & Reviews article about Marryat & Cooper?² It seems to have pleased various people--and the Editor (a decent little chap)³ most of all.

However that kind of thing does not pay.

I have written a species of short story for Blackwood.⁴ That pays pretty well. It is a sort of sea narrative without head or tail. When it will appear I don't know, and care not since the cash I've had--and have spent--alas!--already.

I am so-so. My wife is pretty well and the boy thrives alarmingly well.
To day is his fifth (monthly) birthday and he has two teeth. Jess sends
her kindest regards to you both and I am, speaking to both of You
{lc}Ever Yours
{ls}Jph Conrad

{lh}**To David Meldrum**

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 24

15th June 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Meldrum.

{lb}I had Your letter and a wire from McClure. Next week will suit me,
any day it suits You; but I rather think McClure is coming anyhow--
tomorrow probably. I've wired to know for certain.

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I had no intention to come to town for the next month. Could I not
give my mind and advice (both pretty worthless but very much at your
service if you have occasion for such rubbish) in writing? But if the thing
is really so that I can be of any use I could run down on Friday or Sat.
Just drop me a line.

I received Jim all right. Thanks. In any case we shall meet next week
and till then Au revoir

{lc}Yours faithfully

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}**To David Meldrum**

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 25

20th June 1898¹

{lra}Stanford le Hope

{lsa}Dear Mr Meldrum.

{lb}We shall expect You on Thursday for lunch.² Let me know what
train You are coming by so that I can meet you. There's a good train at
9.45 AM. arriving here at 10.46. Should this be too early then the 11.45
brings You here at one.

McClure has been here last Friday; came late and spent the night. I
think he is busy all this week. We talked of war and politics mostly. I
hope he wasn't too bored.

Expecting a word from you I am
dear Mr Meldrum

{lc}Yours very faithfully

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}**To Cora Crane**

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 182

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

27 June 1898

{lsa}Dear Mrs Crane.

{lb}I am, we are, horribly ashamed of ourselves for leaving Your good and
welcome letter so long without a reply. But we reckon upon your
generous forgiveness.

I was delighted to hear good news of dear Stephen. The life on board
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that tug of his will set him up in strenght* and appetite for years.¹ Have
You heard from him since you wrote? I suppose he landed with the army
and is in the thick of everything that's going. I've only heard lately he is

going to write for Blackwood.² They think a lot of him and expect--as well they may--first rate work. Meldrum was here (I suppose You've heard of him? Blackwoods man in London) the other day and spoke of Stephen with real enthusiasm. They are anxious but not impatient.--

We had a hard time of it. Jess is overworked and we positively can't get a decent girl. The pea-pickers are not come yet but are expected in a day or two and my wife is afraid lest they should bring some disease and harm the baby.³ It is most unlikely tho'.

Garnett told me You had secured a house after Your own heart.⁴ My congratulation on that and still more on the success of American arms especially on the exploit of Hobson! That was worth all the Manila battle!⁵ Magnificent.

It looks as though the war would drag after all. I think you had better not wait for Stephen's return and come to us with Mrs Ruedy⁶ (to whom my respectful duty) at least for the promised day and for longer if You can stand it. I am afraid You would get bored. We lead a wretched, shut-up, existence in the most primitive surroundings.⁷

Jessie will write to suggest the time but in reality you must consult your own convenience. The poor girl is doing all the house-work, nursing and cooking, herself. She is very cheerful about it but it makes me miserable to see her toiling like this from morning to night. Oh! for a success, a beastly popular success! I long for it on that account. My work goes on desperately slow. I think with difficulty and write without enthusiasm but still the book crawls on towards its lame and impotent end. But the end is not yet. Enough lamentations!

A word as to Your health, Your doings and Your plans would be very
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welcome. We send you here an amateur photograph of Jess and baby (doesn't he look like a little pig?) and another of our house--a side view.

My wife and Dolly send their very best love to you and Mrs Ruedy {lc}and I am, dear Mrs Crane, your most obedient and faithful friend and servant

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}PS I was so pleased to hear my tales are a success amongst the socialists of Ten[n]essee. I feel quite proud of it.

{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text MS Colgate; G. 132

[late June? 1898]¹

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dearest Garnett.

{lb}Thanks. Do come when you can.

I send you a few pages of P III.² The rest is not typed yet.

I am awfully behind and though I can work my regular gait I cannot make up for the lost 3 months. I am full of anxiety. Here, I have already had a 100 pounds on acct! And the end is not in sight. Horrid mess I am in.

I'll tell you everything when you do come. I am living in a hell of my own. Thanks for the books.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Conrad

{lps}Jess sends her love to you all. The boy is teething and is in a devil of a temper night and day.