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

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 242; Watts 90

Saturday. [2 or 9 July 1898]<sup>1</sup>

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Tre{g}s illustre Seigneur.

{lb}I write at once because to-morrow is Sunday et dans le village arrie{a}re{a} where you sojourn now there is no postal delivery to-morrow.<sup>2</sup>

Pourquoi-pas? It is a jolly good idea for the play.<sup>3</sup> Of that particular bit of history (and of every other) I have but the slightest, the haziest idea. In the way of writing I do not see Your limitations. Revez la dessus, and something very good may come out of it. You are as romantic as the rest of us. Nous sommes tous dans cette gale{g}re.<sup>4</sup> The thing is{--}the expression. Now as to that I have no doubt. You'll find it for the simple reason it is in you. Il s'agit de fouiller au plus profond<sup>5</sup> and you will reach the vein. I am only afraid You would make it too good{--}much too good for scenic success. The gods are stupid. You'll not be conventional enough, for them to understand you.

These are brave oaths! Ils me mettent du coeur au ventre.<sup>6</sup> I shall write to you re Sir F.E. when I hear.<sup>7</sup> It occurs to me however that it may not happen for a long time{--}may never happen! Quien sabe? La plus belle fille du monde ne peut donner que ce qu'elle a.<sup>8</sup> You know this proverb? Therefore if before you return to your native wilds you come across the Donald creature just whisper softly into his ear.<sup>9</sup> I've served in so many Scotch ships (from the Duke of Sutherland to the Highland Forest<sup>10</sup>{--}the list is too long) that I imagine myself to possess some sort

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of claim. A word from Sir Donald would go a long way with any firm north of the Tweed. Let the big-wigs compete for the honour of employing the immortal author of{--}of{--}I forgot now.

I conclude from your letter I shan't see you here this time. Tans pis. Let me know when you are passing through London on your way to Morrocco.\* Veuillez presenter mes tre{g}s respectueux devoirs a Madame {lc}Votre Femme. Ever Yours {ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}Boris is better. I find it difficult yet to forgive him for preventing your visit here. On ne rattrape l'occasion qui passe, qui est passe{a}e!<sup>1</sup>

{lh} **To Edward Garnett**

Text MS Sutton; G. 133

Tuesday [12 July 1898]<sup>2</sup>

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Garnett

{lb}This day with You has done me good. I feel much calmer and more hopeful about my work. I still think it very bad and do not feel that eagerness to show it to You which in the past impelled me to forward successive chapters hot from the oven{--}for Your inspection. However I send two parts by this morning's post. You shall read and see; I am afraid to think of what you will say. I am afraid that even as an infamous pot-boiler this book<sup>3</sup> is too unskillfully made. I think I went wrong from the beginning but now I am waist deep and there is no going back.

My kindest regards to Mrs Garnett. My wife sends her love. We are well here.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad

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{lh}**To Spiridion Kliszczewski**

Text MS Spiridion; Unpublished

12th July 1898.

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope.

Essex.

{lsa}Dear old Friend.

{lb}I would have written sooner but what with the press of work on one hand and laziness to take a pen on the other I've been sadly delayed.

Thanks for Hubert's letters. Apart from the interest attaching to his experiences and views (not to mention the feelings of friendship for him as your son) I've been struck by his descriptive ability and by the clear easy style{--}not without a distinct charm. I had a real pleasure in reading these letters and I repeat my thanks to your wife and yourself for having given me the opportunity.

Is Clem<sup>1</sup> then coming to London? I suppose you will come with him to see him settled. If so you must take a run down here and see us. You needn't be told that during Clem's residence in London we shall be glad, we shall be very happy to see him as often as he can spare time to run down to Stanford. Sundays or week days, early and late our door shall fly open for him. And if weary with London atmosphere he wants a breath of fresh air he can find it here. If he cycles{--}two hours over easy roads will bring him to our door.

I am happy to see the dispute is about to be settled. I can quite imagine how everyone must suffer. Is your loss really very serious? You say you are dropping money every week; I am grieved to hear it; you've worked too hard for it not to deserve better luck.

My wife's best love to Mrs. Spiridion and all the family. My kind remembrances and regards to your wife and boys. I am always your {lc}affectionate friend.

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}P.S. I've fallen behind with my work. Since May however I get on better. My health was very indifferent all the first part of the year. I shall write you again end this month.

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{lh}**To A. T. Quiller-Couch**

Text MS Quiller-Couch; Unpublished

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

Essex

13th July 1898

{lsa}My dear Sir.<sup>1</sup>

{lb}Many thanks for your letter. It has given me a great, a very great pleasure. Nothing would please me more than to act upon your suggestion. Unfortunately there is always some nigger in the fence. I am now struggling with a book{--}a mass of verbiage with some dim idea so well lost in it that I, even I have a long time ago lost sight of it. This thing sits on my shoulder like the old Man of the sea, and embitters my life. I write, I write and the wretched thing doesn't move an inch.

On the other hand Mr. Blackwood is waiting for some short stories. These however would have been too long for your magazine.

But I am exceedingly loth to let this opportunity you offer pass away from me. Will you allow me to answer in this way:

As soon as there is a break in the clouds I shall think out something 4-5000 words in length, and send it to Fowey<sup>2</sup> for you to look at. If tolerable you shall give me the usual rate of your magazine, and allow

McClure to copyright it for the States. This will cause no delay.

But I can give you no idea of when I may be ready with it. It may be months.

I saw the notice of the new Magazine under your Editorship<sup>3</sup> and I need not say that, on the strength of your name, I wished it all possible luck. You have laid hold of the big end of a very heavy job. There is in mankind a bias, a tendency, that drives it towards the cheap, towards the worthless, in letters, in art, in politics, in sentiment, in{--}by all the gods that sit grinning above{--}in the very love itself. A trace of the original ape I suppose. To drive it on an upward path you must pat the ape on the back lest it turn and rend you.

This is an immoral theory but I've left my morality on the sea. Still I .p79

am very pleased that you, when about to fight for the good cause, have thought of me. I am afraid, afraid{--}I don't quite deserve it.

My best wishes for your attempt and for the magazine. Believe me, dear Sir,  
{lc}Very faithfully yours  
{ls}Jph. Conrad

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

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 241; Watts 92

19 July 1898

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Cher ami.

{lb}Thanks for Cyrano.<sup>1</sup> I haven't yet read it but shall do so before the sun rises again.

I've seen Sir Francis Evans this morning. He was full of business with twenty people waiting for an interview, but he received me at once and was kindness itself. The upshot of it is this: It is of course impossible to place me in the Union Line<sup>2</sup>{--}I said I did not even dream of such a thing but explained that I thought he might have some tramp or good collier. The Company he said owns no tramps or colliers but he might hear of something of the kind and in such a case {op"}would let me know."

{--}He has my card but my address is not on it. Perhaps you would drop him a line pour l'entretenir dans la bonne voie<sup>3</sup> and mention where I live.{--}He said he would be {op"}extremely pleased to do anything for a friend of Mr Cunninghame Graham". Thereupon I salaamed myself out and another man rushed in.

Something may come of it. In any case many thanks. Since you have begun that trouble yourself I feel less compunction in asking you to keep it up when an opportunity offers. Now some shadow of possibility to go to sea has been thus presented to me I am almost frantic with the longing to get away. Absurd!

I return Don Jaime's<sup>4</sup> letters. It is amusing. The glimpse into the .p80

{op"}cuisine" of criticism is very entertaining. I would expect anything from a man like Traill. C'est une vieille ganache.<sup>1</sup> He wrote once a book about Flaubert for which he deserves to be disembowelled and flung to die on a garbage-heap.<sup>2</sup> Who's Watt? And why is he inimical to the Ingenious Hidalgo, as presented by Don Jaime?<sup>3</sup> Moi je suis naif et je ne comprends pas. Enough of this twaddle. {lc}Ever Yours.  
{ls}Conrad.

Lps}Mes devoirs a Madame Votre Femme. Jess who sends her kind regards is as anxious for the sea as I am.<sup>4</sup> She is very touched by Your references to Borys, in your letters, and full of gratitude for your efforts on my behalf.

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

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 243; Watts 94

Saturday

30<sup>th</sup> July

98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Tre{g}s cher ami.

{lb}This morning I had the Aurora from Smithers N<sup>o</sup> 2 of the 500 copies.<sup>5</sup>

C'est, tout simplement, magnifique yet I do not exactly perceive what on earth they have been making a fuss about.<sup>6s</sup>

I am afraid Henley is a horrible bourgeois.<sup>7</sup> Who drew the frontispiece? I can't imagine anybody whose name I know. Is it an English drawing? It does not look like it.<sup>8</sup> I notice variations in the text as I've read it in the typewritten copy. This seems the most finished piece of work you've ever done. Il y a une note, une resonance la{g} dedans, vibrant de ligne en ligne. C'est tre{g}s fort.<sup>9</sup> No one will see it.

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I had a note from Fisher Unwin written evidently for the purpose to inform me that he had met {op"}Our Mutual Friend (!) Mr Cunninghame Graham at Wilfrid's\* Blunt."<sup>1</sup>

Quel toupet!<sup>2</sup> As long as such a man exists I will not admit equality, fraternity--as to liberty vous et moi nous savons bien a quoi nous en tenir.<sup>3</sup> I've read the little book three times this morning--and behold! I am disgusted with what I write. No matter.

Blackwoods Magazine for this month has an appreciation of F. M. Kelly's edition of Don Quixote.<sup>4</sup> Very fair. Nothing striking but distinct recognition.

I do like the attitude of the Maga on the Spanish business.<sup>5</sup>

If one could set the States & Germany by the ears! That would be real fine. I am afraid however that the thieves shall agree in the Philip[p]ines. The pity of it!

Viva l'Espan{tld}a! Anyhow.

Do you believe in a speedy peace. Write me all you know. I would like to see the thing over and done with tho' mind I think that Spain is perfectly invulnerable now and may keep the Yanks capering around for an indefinite time.<sup>6</sup>

When do you start for Morocco?

I've been seedy--in my head--in my idiotic cabeza. I feel lazy (always did) and sleepy. When I've written a page I feel it ought to be sold to the ten-cent paper man in New York.<sup>7</sup> It's all it's good for.

C'est Zolaesque ce que je viens d'e{a}crire Hein?<sup>8</sup> But look at the circumlocutions. If you want to know how I exactly feel to my work put the above into plain Zola language and it will give you a faint idea then.

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{lc}Assez. Toujours le votre

{ls}J Conrad.

{lps}Mes devoirs a Madame Votre Femme.

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

Text MS Dartmouth; Watts 98

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

Essex

2<sup>d</sup> August 1898

{lsa}Tre{g}s cher ami.

{lb}Indeed I do understand, and though I do not want to say much I wish you to know that I feel the pain of your defeat with an intimate comprehension.<sup>1</sup> I know you well enough to be certain that the fight was a good fight. It is a satisfaction but not a consolation--not to me at least tho' it may be to you. When one responds with such depth as one has to a friend's trouble it is difficult to delude oneself as to the brutality of facts. The end is seen--nothing else. He who strove has the memories of blows struck--of hopes--of sensations. I have only the knowledge of the catastrophe--as unexpected as a stab in the dark.

It is good of you to think of my miserable affairs.--When one hears news of that kind the natural selfishness leaps out and the first pain is the pain of perceiving how useless one is. And there is humiliation in this finding out that all one's friendship goodwill, affection that seemed so strong, so far reaching are powerless to ward off the slightest pain or the greatest misfortune, are as though they had not been!

I did not intend to disregard your wishes but indeed I understand too well to be altogether silent. {lc}Ever yours.

{ls}Jph Conrad

{lps}Mes hommages tre{g}s respectueux a Madame Votre Femme. Jess sends her kind regards.

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{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text MS Virginia; G. 133

3<sup>d</sup> Aug. 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Garnett.

{lb}I am not dead tho' only half alive. Very soon I shall send you some MS. I am writing hopelessly{--}but still I am writing.<sup>1</sup> How I feel I cannot express. Pages accumulate and the story stands still.

I feel suicidal.

Drop me a line and tell me where and how you are. If you could come down it would be an act of real friendship and also of charity.

My kind regards and Jessie's love to your wife. Jess is knocked up with the boy's teething performances. He has (and she has also) a rough time of it.

I am afraid there's something wrong with my thinking apparatus. I am utterly out of touch with my work--and I can't get in touch. All is darkness.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

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

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 224; Watts 100

3<sup>d</sup> Aug 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Excellent Ami.

{lb}Thanks for letter with communication from Sir Donald.<sup>2</sup>

It is sound advice but does not meet the case. If I wanted to do what he advises I would hunt up some of my old skippers. That however I can't do. It would be giving up everything to begin life for the third time and I am not young enough for that. Do not worry about that affair. If I thought that in the midst of your troubles my silly desire to get out to sea added to your occupations my conscience wouldn't let me sleep.

Je suis triste a crever.<sup>3</sup> I think of you preparing your capitulation with

fate et j'ai le coeur gros. Fourteen years! How much that means in the  
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past--and for the future too--since this fight must have grown and  
taken root in your life.

{lc}Toujours a vous de coeur

{ls}Jph Conrad

{lps}Jess sends her best regards. She understands enough to be very sorry.

Write only when you have time. Could I do anything in the way of  
reading the proofs for you?<sup>1</sup>

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

Text MS Leeds; Unpublished

8<sup>th</sup> Aug 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mr Unwin.

{lb}I forward you a post card which reached me to-day. I am writing to  
M<sup>r</sup> Bussow to say that personally I would be very pleased to have the  
Outcast translated into German.<sup>2</sup> The business question I leave to you  
since you have a half share in the rights.

Would You communicate with this Mr Bussow? I know nothing  
about him. And I think it would be expedient to find out something,  
before giving him the authorisation he asks for. He may publish in a  
hole-and-corner manner in some obscure provincial town--which  
would be undesirable. On the other hand he may be a satisfactory  
person. I am not in a position to make inquiries and so perhaps you may  
be inclined to take this matter in hand.

{lc}With kind regards

very faithfully Your

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

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{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text MS Indiana; G. 134

Saturday. [13 August 1898]<sup>1</sup>

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dearest G.

{lb}I trust you completely and if in your judgment you lean towards  
mercy--as it seems to me--well this mercy is very welcome and perhaps  
not altogether undeserved. In any case it is human for it brings  
alleviation to a very real (though ridiculous) suffering. So, the thing is  
vivid--and seen? It is good news to me, because, unable to try for  
something better, higher, I did try for the visual effect. And I must trust  
to that for the effect of the whole story from which I cannot evolve any  
meaning--and have given up trying. The book will be of 15000 words.<sup>2</sup>  
That's certain. I am able to write now. I shall be better able after I've  
seen you.<sup>3</sup> I must be getting well since, looking back, I see how ill,  
mentally, I have been these last four months. The fear of this horror  
coming back to me makes me shiver. As it is it has destroyed already the  
little belief in myself I used to have. I am appalled at the absurdity of  
my situation--at the folly of my hopes, at the blindness that had kept  
me up in my gropings. Most appalled to feel that all the doors behind  
me are shut and that I must remain where I have come blundering in  
the dark.

I am looking forward to your coming. I have some plans for my  
manner of life and for work which I shall talk over with you. I hope this  
uncautious frankness won't scare you away. Cunng<sup>me</sup> Graham is very

unhappy. Shall tell you when we meet. He got into his head to get me the command of a steamer or ship and swears he will do it. Meantime he is again in Paris about his eyesight. I saw his wife (for twenty minutes) the author of the St<sup>a</sup> Theresa book--you know. Details when we meet.

{lc}Ever yours

{ls}Conrad.

{lps}My kindest regards and Jessie's love to your wife.

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{lh}**To C. K. Shorter**

Text MS Wellington; Knowles

Tuesday. 23<sup>d</sup> Aug 98.

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mr Shorter.<sup>1</sup>

{lb}I return proofs of chap<sup>rs</sup> I. II III.<sup>2</sup>

The beginning of chap III falls about the middle of slip 8.

In a day or two Mr R McClure shall be in possession of nearly the whole of part III. in all 60.000 words. Another 40-50 will complete the story.

Allow me at this opportunity to tell you how much I appreciate Your generous recognition of my work. The attitude of Your publications towards my books has been a source of the greatest pleasure to me--especially the reference to the Nigger in one of the last papers contributed to the News by the late Mr James Payn.<sup>3</sup>

Believe me, dear Mr Shorter

{lc}Very faithfully Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}**To C. K. Shorter**

Text MS Berg; Unpublished

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope. Essex.

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1898

{lsa}Dear Mr. Shorter.

{lb}I could not catch this morning's post to answer your letter of yesterday's date.

Had I obtained the slightest hint of what you now propose doing, say two months ago I would have disregarded the urgent representations of my medical man and gone on driving at the Rescue. What the book would have been like in that case I do not like to say--or even think of. At any rate it would have been all there for you to judge and decide.

As it is I must ask You whether six weeks is enough to prepare for the press an instalment of the story. If so then I can promise to deliver the last pages six weeks before the last date fixed for their appearance. It is very probable that by the middle of October all the story will be in your

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hands but to feel quite safe I must take the very outside limit. Say 15<sup>th</sup> Nov. You will kindly remember I was told the book was to begin in a month in October, so that your extremely flattering offer to use the tale for the News finds me altogether unprepared.

I cannot adequately express my regret; the more so that I have to a certain extent misled Mr R. McClure (not in bad faith tho') but through being too sanguine as to my rate of work.

Should you still (after this confession) intend my work for the News may I be permitted to suggest that it would perhaps be safer to effect a few cuttings in Part II. There are a few bits of description and analysis which could come out or could be shortened without injury to the tale

proper. As it is the story must be a close fit; and part III & IV could not be touched without interfering with the action.

If you think my idea opportune perhaps you will send me the MS of Part II?

{lc}Believe me, dear Mr Shorter,  
very faithfully yours  
{ls}Jph. Conrad

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

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 244; Watts 100

26<sup>th</sup> Aug 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Cher et bon.

{lb}I return the pages To Wayfaring Men.<sup>1</sup> I read them before I read your letter and I have been deeply touched. I think I can understand the mood from which the thing flowed. And if I can't understand your mood--which is probable--I can understand my own emotion at the reading of these pages--a silly thing for which you should disclaim responsibility because your words are meant for better men.

Ah! The lone tree on the horizon and then bear a little--(a very little) to the right. Haven't we all ridden with such directions to find no house but many curs barking at our heels. Can't miss it? Well perhaps we can't. And we don't ride with a stouter heart for that. Indeed my friend there is a joy in being lost, but a sorrow in being weary.

I don't know whether it is because I know too much--but there seems .p88

to me to be a deeper note in this preface than in any of your writings I've seen. But what business have you O! Man! coming with your uncomprehended truth--a thing less than mist but black--to make me sniff at--the stink of the lamp.

Ride on to the tree and to the right--for verily there is a devil at the end of every road. Let us pray to the potbellied gods, to gods with more legs than a centipede and more arms than a dozen windmills, let us pray to them to guard us from the mischance of arriving somewhere. As long as we don't pray to the gods made in man's image we are sure of a most glorious perdition.

Don't know tho! I wouldn't give two pence for all its glory--and I would pray to a god made like a man in the City--and do you know for what? For a little forgetfulness. Say half an hour. Oh bliss. I would give him my soul for it and he would be cheated. To be cheated is godlike. It is your devil who makes good bargains, legends notwithstanding. Meantime let us look at Soheil<sup>1</sup> and reflect that it is a speck in the eternal night even as we are. Only we don't shine. At least some of us don't. We are as celestial as the other bodies--only we are obscure. At least some of us are. But we all have our illusion of being wayfarers. No more than Soheil, amigo! The appointed course must be run. Round to the left or round to the right what matters if it is a circle. Ask Soheil. And if you get an answer I shall with my own hands give you a piece of the moon. {lc}Ever Yours

{ls} J. Conrad.

{lps}I've got your short note. Thanks for sending on my papers. Look here! Shorter of the Ill. Lon. News who bought Rescue from McClure suddenly decided to put it into the last quarter of the News. Begins in Oct<sup>er</sup>! I thought I had months before me and am caught. The worst is I had advances from McClure. So I must write or burst. It is too awful. Half the book is not written and I have only to 1st Nov<sup>er</sup> to finish it! I could not take a command till December because I am in honour bound to



furnish the story to time. Yet to get to sea would be salvation. I am really in a deplorable state, mentally. I feel utterly wretched. I haven't the courage to tackle my work.  
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{lh}**To R. B. Cunninghame Graham**

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 246; Watts 103

27 Aug 1898

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Cher et excellentissime.

{lb}I have been thinking of You every day and more than once a day.

Garnett just left. He showed me your preface to the Fisher Unwin's volume of Your sketches.<sup>1</sup> We howled with satisfaction over it. Vous e{cr}tes tout a fait unique et inimitable.

He read Aurora here. He thinks it is simply great. On the other hand he abused you bitterly for spoiling the effects of Victory.<sup>2</sup> As he said he had written to you about it I shan't repeat his criticism. Moreover I dissent.

Sometimes I feel deeply distressed. At times a little angry. But I think and think--et la terre tourne. How long O Lord! How Long?<sup>3</sup>

If this miserable planet had perception a soul, a heart, it would burst with indignation or fly to pieces from sheer pity.

I am making desperate efforts to write something. Why the devil did I ever begin. Que tonteria!

I am writing coglionerie<sup>4</sup> while I don't know how the Teufel I am going to live next month. The very sea breeze has an execrable taste. Assez.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}Mes devoirs tre{g}s respectueux a Madame Votre Femme. Jess sends her kind regards.

Can't understand Rimbaud at all.<sup>5</sup> You overrate my intelligence. Je ne suis bon qu'a lire Cyrano and such like coglionerie.<sup>6</sup> That's what I am fit for only since I am no longer fit to carry sacks of wheat in a hold. I wish you would come to shoot me.

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{lh}**To Helen Sanderson**

Text MS Yale; J-A, 1, 246

31 Aug<sup>st</sup> 1898

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mrs Sanderson.

{lb}Thanks for your kind and friendly letter. I have been passing through a period of ill health and worries and had no heart to write. It is good of you to remember me.

I am glad of the good news. Of course I will come if you still want me. Don't I want to come! If there is a place I wish to see it is Elstree.

I am in the midst of various difficulties--but the baby is well. He is very large and noisy and (they say) intelligent. He has broken ever so many things--a proof of intelligence indubitably. He has not put anything together yet and it is that I am anxious to see. He is very precious and very objectionable. I want Ted to let me know what is the very earliest age a boy may be sent to school--say to Elstree?

The Rescue is to appear as a serial in the Illustrated London News--to begin on Oct<sup>er</sup> the first and end with the year.<sup>1</sup> This is sprung on me suddenly; I am not ready; the {op"}artist" is in despair; various Jews are in a

rage; McClure weeps; threats of cancelling contracts are in the air--it is an inextricable mess. Dates are knocked over like ninepins; proofs torn to rags; copy rights trampled under foot. The last shred of honour is gone--also the last penny. The baby however is well. He is singing a song now. I don't feel like singing--I assure You.

My head feels as if full of sawdust. Of course many people's heads are full of sawdust--the tragic part of the business is in my being aware of it. The man who finds out that apparently innocent truth about himself is henceforth of no use to mankind. Which proves the saving power of illusions.

I am like a tight-rope dancer who in the midst of his performance should suddenly discover that he knows nothing about tight-rope dancing. He may appear ridiculous to the spectators but a broken neck is the result of such untimely wisdom. I am trying to be as serious as I know how--for indeed the matter is serious enough to me.

Still I have till Nov<sup>er</sup> the 15<sup>th</sup> to find out whether I can dance on a tight-rope. That honourable occupation shall engross all my energies--up to that date. Afterwards--the deluge,<sup>2</sup> probably. Should I break my neck I hope You will sometimes remember the acrobat. If his head was

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full of sawdust his heart--well we will not talk of his heart since that also must die and turn to dust.

If You catch sight of the brown covers of Blackwood's Magazine (for Sept<sup>er</sup>) there is a thing of mine there called Youth: A Narrative<sup>1</sup> and if You have time perhaps You will look at it. I would like You to see it very much. A bit of life--nothing more--not well done--{op"} a small thing--but mine own."<sup>2</sup>

After all--chi lo sa?<sup>3</sup>--perhaps I may yet save neck.\* And then won't I inflict myself on all my friends! It shall be a pilgrimage, beginning at Elstree. Received with kindness I shall make myself insupportable out of pure lightness of heart, and shall depart in the midst of rejoicings. It is too good to come to pass I fear!.

Jessie sends her love. She is pretty well and under proper subjection to the baby.

{lc}Believe me dear Mrs Sanderson  
your most affectionate and  
obedient friend and servant.

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}My immense love to dear old Ted. I shall write to him soon--or at least as soon as I can. I am going to stay with my friend Garnett for a fortnight to do a monstrous heap of work; if a silly novel may be so called.

{lh}**To H. G. Wells**

Text MS Illinois; J-A, 1, 248

6<sup>th</sup> Sept 1898.

{lra}The Cearne.

Kent Hatch

N<sup>r</sup> Edenbridge<sup>4</sup>

{lsa}My dear Sir.<sup>5</sup>

{lb}I am profoundly touched by your letter--and Lucas<sup>6</sup> whom I expect to see this evening shall have my warmest thanks for his share in procuring me this unexpected piece of real good fortune.

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A few days ago I learned with great concern the news of your illness.<sup>1</sup> It saddened me the more because for the last two years (since your review of the Outcast in S.R compelled me to think seriously of many

things till then unseen)<sup>2</sup> I have lived on terms of close intimacy with you, referring to you many a page of my work, scrutinising many sentences by the light of your criticism. You are responsible for many sheets torn up and also for those that remained untorn and presently meeting your eye have given me the reward of your generous appreciation.

It has been treasured, and if two letters I wrote to you in that time were never sent it is only a further proof of our intimacy. I had obtained so much from you that it was unnecessary to presume further. And, indeed, there was perhaps a deficiency of courage. I am no more valorous than the rest of us. We all like, in our audacities, to feel something solid at our back. Such a feeling is unknown to me. This confession is induced by honesty which You will take for what it is worth. To be dishonest is a dangerous luxury for most of us, I fancy, and I am sure it is so for me.

As to the flaws of {op"} Youth"<sup>3</sup> their existence is indisputable. I felt what you say myself--in a way. The feeling however which induced me to write that story was genuine (for once) and so strong that it poked its way through the narrative (which it certainly defaces) in good many places. I tell you this in the way of explanation simply. Otherwise the thing is unjustifiable.

Looking at your letter so dim in the sunlight, I cannot help thinking what a lucky day it was for me when in 1880 I shipped in the {op"} Palestine".<sup>4</sup> And it was a gloomy rainy day too. Well. Peace to its ashes. Only four years ago poor old Beard<sup>5</sup> ran after me outside the South West India Dock gates. He was a little grayer, a little more twisted and gnarled. He was very grimy and had a chocolate coloured muffler round his throat. He told me he had piloted a foreigner down the North sea. His eyes were perfectly angelic. This is not a sentimental exaggeration but an honest attempt to convey the effect. He was so bent that he was always looking upwards so to speak. In the poky bar of a .p93

little pub he told me {op"} Since my wife died I can't rest". He had not been able to snatch her in his arms that time.<sup>1</sup> He said he was glad I {op"} got on" and did not allude to our voyage towards Bankok. I should think he can rest where he is now.

Yes. The story should have been ended when you say or perhaps at the next paragraph describing the man sleeping in the boats. I am afraid I am wearying you not a little but it has been such a pleasure to talk to you a bit that I gave rein to my ferocious selfishness--for once. I would like to hear how your recovery progresses and when you are going back to work. May it be soon! I--for one-- can not have enough of Your work. You have done me good. You have been doing me good every day for many months past. Some day You will perhaps deny me--cast me out--but it will be too late. {lc}I shall be always yours.  
{ls}Joseph Conrad.

{lh} **To Ford Madox Ford**

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

29 Sept 1898

{lra} Ivy Walls

Stanford-le-Hope

Essex.

{lsa} Dear Mr. Hueffer.<sup>2</sup>

{lb} I've just got back from Glasgow and write without loss of time asking you to conclude the affair with the landlord.<sup>3</sup> I would prefer to be a quarterly tenant; should he wish however to let for a year do not let that

small matter stand in the way. This opportunity is a perfect godsend to me. It preserves what's left of my piety and belief in a benevolent  
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Providence and probably also my sanity.<sup>1</sup> I shall run down as soon as I can, after first consulting your convenience by a wire. Say early next week? We would move in directly You leave<sup>2</sup> so as not to have the house standing empty more than a day or two.

If you were to kindly drop me a line just to say it's all right I would recover that serenity becoming a self made philosopher and a pilgrim on the stony path of Art.

{lc}Very Faithfully Yours,

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}Kind regards from us both to Mrs. Hueffer<sup>3</sup> and compliments to the Lady Christina.

{lh}**To Edward Garnett**

Text MS Sutton; G. 135

29<sup>th</sup> Sep<sup>t</sup> 1898

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dearest G.

{lb}I got back to-day. Nothing decisive happened in Glasgow; my impression however is that a command will come out of it sooner or later<sup>4</sup>--most likely later, when the pressing need is past and I had found my way on shore. I do not regret having gone. McIntyre is a scientific swell who talks art, knows artists of all kinds--looks after their throats, you know.<sup>5</sup> He has given himself a lot of trouble in my interest and means to hammer away at it till I do get something.

All day with the shipowners and in the evening dinner, phonograph, X rays, talk about the secret of the universe and the nonexistence of, so called, matter. The secret of the universe is in the existence of horizontal waves whose varied vibrations are at the bottom of all states of  
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consciousness. If the waves were vertical the universe would be different. This is a truism. But, don't you see, there is nothing in the world to prevent the simultaneous existence of vertical waves, of waves at any angles; in fact there are mathematical reasons for believing that such waves do exist. Therefore it follows that two universes may exist in the same place and in the same time<sup>1</sup>--and not only two universes but an infinity of different universes--if by universe we mean a set of states of consciousness; and note, all (the universes) composed of the same matter, all matter being only that thing of inconceivable tenuity through which the various vibrations of waves (electricity, heat, sound, light etc.) are propagated, thus giving birth to our sensations--then emotions --then thought. Is that so?

These things I said to the D<sup>r</sup> while Neil Munro<sup>2</sup> stood in front of a Ro{um}ntgen machine<sup>3</sup> and on the screen behind we contemplated his backbone and his ribs. The rest of that promising youth was too diaphanous to be visible. It was so--said the Doctor--and there is no space, time, matter, mind as vulgarly understood, there is only the eternal something that waves and an eternal force that causes the waves--it's not much--and by the virtue of these two eternities exists that Corot and that Whistler in the dining room upstairs (we were in a kind of cellar) and Munro's here writings and your Nigger and Graham's politics and Paderewski's playing (in the phonograph)<sup>4</sup> and what more do you want?

What we wanted (apparently) was more whisky. We got it. Mrs McIntyre went to bed. At one o'clock Munro and I went out into the

street. We talked. I had read up the Lost Pibroch<sup>5</sup> which I do think wonderful in a way. We foregathered very much indeed and I believe Munro didn't get home till five in the morning. He turned up next day and burned incense before me, and saw me into the train after a dinner at the Art club (not to speak of the whisky).

This is the true and faithful report of our gestes in Glesga.<sup>6</sup> I returned to the bosom of my family at 1 pm today and wrote to Hueffer at once to clinch the matter (there's no matter) of Pent Farm (which is only a vain .p96

and delusive appearance). I hope I may get it. If I don't I shall vanish into space (there's no space) and the vibrations that make up me, shall go to the making of some other fool.

I feel less hopeless about things and particularly about the damned thing called the Rescue. Tomorrow I write but this evening I feel merry. When I feel sure of Pent Farm I shall be comparatively happy.

If we get fixed there you must come and stay with us a good long time when your wife is in France. This is what I am looking forward to now. Look ever forward, ever forward. What a sell! For me to look forward is folly--but then it's good. Don't you throw cold water on my vision.

There's no reason why you should. We shall work. By heavens and earth we shall work!

We three send our love to you three.

{lc}Ever yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad