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{lh}To T. Fisher Unwin

Text MS Texas; Unpublished

2^d Oct 1898

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mr Unwin.

{lb}Very many thanks for the copies of agreement, which are to day to hand. Sorry for the trouble I gave You.

{lc}Faithfully Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To Ford Madox Ford

Text MS Yale; Listy 143; Original unpublished

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

Essex.

2^d Oct 1898.

{lsa}My dear Mr Hueffer.

{lb}I am very much concerned to hear your body is making itself so objectionable to you.¹ It is very good of you to write at length* and I am immensely pleased at the arrangement. Pray do not think of shortening Your stay on my account.² My nerves are simply ridiculous, and not

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deserving of deference. I am, of course, cowed, but I think of them with contempt.

As you mention 3 weeks we shall take it that in the usual course of things we may move in after the 25th of October, and shall be ready to migrate by that date. If You wish for any reason to remain longer we can put it off since our tenancy here expires only in December.

Nothing could suit me better than to have you for my landlord. I only hope you won't find me too objectionable. Your wife's suggestion¹ is lovely and excellent whether derived from the Romans or not. Why should I be alarmed? I had in years gone by a certain reputation for courage. Now, no doubt, all this is changed the spirit being brushed out of me by the tyranny of mysterious sensations, yet still a spark, a dim spark exists somewhere -- a vestige of the old fire under the tepid ruins. And in any case I could not look upon you as an invading enemy.

I hope that whenever we leave Pent Farm for a time You shall step in as a matter of course; and the time also could be arranged to suit both our tribes.

I shall make my appearance before many days to have a preliminary look around. Should you have coals or such things in store we could take them over from You -- perhaps?

What is it about Your eyes? It sounds so very serious. Is it something you have experienced before? I put these questions but I don't want to give you the trouble of writing -- really. I shall no doubt turn up next week.

{lc}With our kind regards faithfully

yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To E. L. Sanderson

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

3^d Oct 98

{lsa}My dearest Ted

{lb}Jack² has been here and tells me Your wife has been ill, he thinks rather seriously. Do send me news. I understood him to say she was getting better. I want to hear the confirmation of this from you.

I am like a wounded animal -- withdrawing from my kind from a sense of my own weakness. How absurd and even wicked it is I know well,
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since I've experienced nothing but kindness even from those who may be regarded as strangers. Towards you, of whom I am sure, I am inexcusable, but then don't you see I am so sure that I do not even attempt to excuse myself. I may only tell you this is not a case for anger (not that I think You are angry) but for (horrid word) compassion.

Tell me about you all. It can be done in very few lines. The story of my purgatorial experiences cannot be so shortly told so I don't begin.¹ I would like to know I am not cast out tho'.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To? [an American admirer]

Text MS Rosenbach; Unpublished

4th Oct^{er} 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Sir.²

{lb}Thanks for your appreciation. Besides the two books you mention I have published last year a study of sea and seamen entitled {op"}Children of the Sea" A tale of the Forecastle published by Messrs Dodd Mead & C^o and early this year a volume of short stories called {op"}Tales of Unrest" published by Messrs: Scribners -- I think.

My next book which shall appear serially in the US very soon (I don't know in what periodicals) is a Romance of the shallows called the Rescue.

It will come out as book at the end of next year under the imprint of the S. S Maclure* P[ublishin]g C^o of New York.

You have here the complete information You seek. Pardon a busy man for not enlarging upon the pleasure of hearing from one of his readers, {lc}and believe me very faithfully Yours
{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To Ford Madox Ford

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

Thursday 6th Oct 98

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dear Mr. Hueffer.

{lb}Here I am again. May I descend on You tomorrow Friday some time in the afternoon and stay till Sat midday?

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I reckon You will get this about 9 am. If you want to stop me please wire Conrad c/o Editorship London.¹

If I get nothing by noon I shall come on without fear.

{lc}With infinite apologies to Mrs Hueffer and less so to you I am yours faithfully.

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To Edward Garnett

Text G. 138

Sunday [9 October 1898]²

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Edward,

{lb}I am very anxious to see the horrors of the Academy.³ You are a dear old generaliser. I fancy you've generalised me into a region of such glory that no mortal henceforth will succeed in finding me in my work. However this letter is not written for the purpose of abusing you but strange as it may seem -- on business which may concern you.

I went on Friday to Pent Farm. On my way I called on Robert McClure⁴ whom I had not seen since the letter and telegram I showed you -- as you may remember. He insisted upon feeding me and, while we chewed, the conversation which turned upon famous criminals of history by some strange association of ideas reached your name. Robert must have heard of you from Pawling -- or rather about you -- and wanted to know more. Then by gradations too subtle to record he came out plainly with his desire to make your acquaintance. He means something. I am pretty sure he has some definite idea in his mind. What it is I don't know -- but I encouraged it all I could for this reason that anything I may have said not engaging you by any possibility yet gave him the notion that you were open at any rate to listen to any proposal he might make. I wish I may be shot if I don't think he wants to carry you off from Unwin.⁵ However that may be he asked me whether I could bring you two together -- dinner or something. I told him it could be done almost any Thursday or Friday in the week. I don't suppose you can have any

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objection to meeting McClure -- a very decent little chap. You know how well he behaves to me. He is quite in earnest. At parting he told me {op"}I have a matter of business to bring before him" or words to that effect, the word business being pronounced. Upon that I said I would arrange the thing. As my train went off he shouted {op"}don't forget" about Garnett? -- Now when, how, do you wish it to come off? If you do wish? I think there's no possible harm. Could we manage a lunch on next Friday or Friday after next.¹ I want to officiate and it would be more convenient for me to make it a lunch instead of a dinner because of the wretched trains. Drop me a line and then I shall know what to say to McClure. -- I like Pent. It will do. We're going there for the 26th. -- Ford tells

me you don't like the place. I hope tho' you like me well enough to come and stay. I fancy I'll get on there all right. I always hope. Oh well.

{lc}Ever yours

{ls}Conrad

{lh}To H. G. Wells

Text MS Illinois; J-A, 1, 249

11th Oct 98²

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

Essex.

{lsa}My dear Mr Wells.

{lb}I am writing in a state of jubilation at the thought we are going to be nearer neighbours than I dared to hope a fortnight ago. We are coming to live in Pent farm which is only a mile or so from Sandling Junction.³ The other day I met Pugh⁴ who told me you are much better and in good spirits. We render thanks to Eshmu{cr}n the Liberator the same who in the country of the Greeks is called Aesculapius⁵ and we pour, after the Ph[o]enician manner, a libation of clear water out of a glass cup for our means do not run to a cup of gold. As to sacrifices of goats, bulls, lambs and pigs these are for kings or rich merchants to be offered on altars of temples with priests and ceremonies -- but when we meet (soon -- let us hope) we shall offer up a piece of ox-flesh on the altar of domestic gods and partake of the holy viands according to prescribed rites in gratitude

for Your return to health and work.

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I am still wretched and ashamed of what I am doing and only the hope that you all for whose opinion I care will forgive me for the sake of what went before, gives me the courage to struggle on. We take up our residence at Pent on the 26th of this month and I shall wander out your way soon after that date. {lc}Always faithfully yours
{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To David Meldrum

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 29

12th Oct. 98.

{lra}Stanford le Hope

Essex.

{lsa}Dear Mr Meldrum.

{lb}That was a good and kind letter you wrote and I ought to have answered at once. But I seldom do things I ought; if I did I would be a better man, by a long sight.

Jessie's and my thanks to you and Mrs Meldrum for the invitation which delighted us. The state of affairs however is this.

We leave here on the 26th of this month to go to another farm house but this time in Kent. My new address will be Pent Farm Postling, Stanford N^r Hythe.

I got it from a man called Hueffer a grandson of Madox Brown and nephew to D.G. Rossetti. He is an exceedingly decent chap who lets me have the thing awfully cheap. Besides the whole old place is full of rubbishy relics of Browns and Rossettis.¹ There's Brown's first picture, likewise that of Dante Gabriel; Christina Rossetti's writing table which I intend to profane by my own wretched MSS. -- and so on. It's a great solitude about a mile and quarter from Sandling Junction Station on S[outh] E[astern] R[ailway] and within 3 miles (by road) of Hythe. Chalk soil and a vast view on the valley of the Stour.

What with this and having no one to leave our precious baby with I don't see how we could avail ourselves of Your invitation very soon. But we lay it back carefully in our memory for use at the very earliest opportunity. Now we are unsettled and soon we shall be still more unsettled till we shake into our new place. And then I must write with
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fear at my back and ruin before me if I don't make good time. The Rescue begins in first April's issue of the Ill^d Lond. News to run 3 months.¹

The people in Edinburgh did their little best to ruin me because the delay of sending proof of Youth to McClure made the copyrighting of that story fall through² and the Atlantic Monthly which was going to publish it cancelled the arrangement in consequence. However it's past, no use lamenting and for Jim I shall have a duplicate copy typewritten to make sure.

I called on you last Friday with the intention to carry You off to lunch with McClure but was told You weren't in town at all. Better luck next time. {lc}With very kind regards from us both I am always faithfully yours
{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}PS As soon as the decks of our new ship are cleared you must come and affront the hardships of our household on a Saturday to Monday expedition. And if the weather is clement and Mrs Meldrum has the courage I trust we shall have the great pleasure of seeing her with you. Miss Meldrum too.³ There is a spare cot, and it's high time Borys was introduced to ladies of his own age. I'll be writing to you soon.

{lh}To Edward Garnett

Text MS Colgate; G. 140

Wednesday [12 October 1898]⁴

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Dearest Edward.

{lb}It is magnificent.⁵ I can't conceive how You could find in me the source of such vibrating, tender and illuminating utterance. I can't conceive but I can accept. It is absorbingly interesting to me not as .p103

appreciation of myself but as disclosure of you. And I appear to myself wrapped in the glamour of Your intention -- not of what has been done, but of what should be done, what should be tried for, what should be desired -- what cannot be attained.

I send back the proof without more words because I feel I can't arrange them into an artistic expression of gratitude -- not for what You say but for what You feel. But I am very proud of what You feel and also a little humiliated. There is likewise a grim delight in the thought that now You have spoken you can't take it back -- never -- never.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Conrad.

{lps}I wire to McClure and shall write You tonight where and when we meet.

{lh}To Edward Garnett

Text MS Colgate; G. 141

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

Wednesday [12 October 1898]

{lsa}Dearest G.

{lb}I propose that little (Hotel d'Italie?)¹ shop at the back of Palace Music Hall where they have tolerable Asti. The time to be 1.15 pm. Say first floor -- or still better private room. I know they've got one. You shall be there first no doubt and if so pray use your judgment. If the public room on 1st floor is crowded retain the cabinet -- if not, retain a table good for three. Or if you think privacy desirable you had better retain the cabinet in any case. I shall bring Mac along which probably may detain me a little. If place does not commend itself to you write at once proposing something more suitable. There is however no need to be ceremonious with Mac and the food if I remember rightly is tolerable in that gargotte² -- We mustn't pamper editors (this is a joke). I've destroyed all I did write last month but my brain feels alive and my heart is not afraid now. Permanent state? -- who knows. Always hope.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lps}Write pc to say you got this all right.

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{lh}To the Hon. A. E. Bontine

Text MS Castle; J-A, 1, 250

16th Oct^{er} 1898.

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope

Essex.

{lsa}Dear Mrs Bontine¹

{lb}I need not tell you with what pleasure I've read your letter so full of that kind of appreciation for which the author's heart yearns and so seldom obtains; and thanks being mostly ineffective I will not enlarge on

my sentiments of gratitude. The com[m]endation of your son Charles is very precious to me. He can appreciate the intention and also the detail of my work.² His praise has an especial significance to me, for, though no two lives could have been more dissimilar, there is between us that subtle and strong bond of the sea -- the common experience of aspects of sky and water -- of the sensations, emotions and thoughts that are in greater or lesser degree the companions of men who live upon the ocean. Perhaps you would let him know my feelings lamely expressed above. I would have written direct had I not been held back by the thought he is a busy man -- and a sailor -- and in this double capacity no doubt averse to increasing his correspondence.

My last letter from Robert was from Tangier, the day after he landed. I can well understand your anxiety. Want of water and wild tribes are dangers but the absolute magnitude of such perils depends in a great measure upon the man who affronts them. Robert is courageous and foresighted. He has also experience. With his qualities and knowledge he is not likely to proceed rashly. Firmness and tact -- which he possesses -- go a long way towards minimizing the danger from wild tribes. The scarcity of water means privation and a call upon endurance, perhaps, but not necessarily serious danger. I have the greatest confidence in his management and in the success of his journey. We shall get news -- and good news -- soon, I think.³

{op"}Higginson's dream" is super-excellent.⁴ It is much too good to remind me of any of my work, but I am immensely flattered to learn you discern some points of similitude. Of course I am in complete sympathy .p105

with the point of view. For the same accomplishment in expression I can never hope -- and Robert is too strong an individuality to be influenced by any one's writing. He desired me to correct the proofs but the Sat. Rev people did not send me the proofs. I am very much annoyed for there is a misprint which makes nonsense of a French phrase. I wrote them reproachfully when sending the MS of {op"}Pulperia"¹ which I did four days ago, and now I clear my character before you as Robert's literary representative.

To your kind inquiries about my wife and boy I am lucky enough to say they are both very well. In fact Jessie is better than she has been for some time. We are leaving Stanford-le-Hope on the 26 Oct^{er} for good. Our new residence is also a farm-house in Kent, near Hythe, and thus near the sea though not absolutely in sight of it. I have no ship (but I still have la nostalgie de la mer) though Robert has really done almost the impossible for me. I did take a run to Glasgow for a day and saw Dr McIntyre² who was kindness itself. I am afraid nothing will come of it. Il y a trop de tirage, from novel writing to the command of a ship, I fear. Moreover I am tied just now by my engagements to American and English publishers -- engagements I failed lamentably to keep through nervous ill-health and I can't think of going away till I've liberated myself from the incubus of that horrid novel I am trying to write now. Early next year, when the torment is over, (and I am hardly able to realise that such a time will ever come) I will without scruple use and abuse everybody's good will, influence, friendship to get back on the blue water. I am by no means happy on shore.

The fact is that in the Academy photograph it is not my clothes that are endimanche{a}s but my face³ -- the artistic! photographer's aim being always to obliterate every trace of individuality in his subject -- so as to make a respectable picture. {op"}Voila{g}. La be{cr}tise etant respectable" he did not obliterate that. {op"}Je trouve que j'ai l'air idiot la dedans".⁴ But the notice is sympathetic and not commonplace. The man who wrote it is Edward Garnett a great and discriminating admirer not only of

Robert's work but of his personality which he -- in a measure -- understands. This cannot be said of many men (especially literary men) in England.

I do not know whether I outrage {op"}les re{g}gles de la biense{a}ance" by .p106

writing such a long letter. If so you must forgive me in consideration of my answer to your first letter having been telegraphic. I did not do it for the sake of conciseness however. I was from home when your letter arrived and on my return knowing you were about to start on a journey I wished my answer to find you at home yet. If this excuse is not valid then by invoking the name of the absent I am sure to be pardoned.* Since I learned it was you who first put my work before Robert I consider I owe to you alone one of the most fortunate events of my life -- and these are not numerous. With such a thought and such an obligation a purely ceremonious attitude is impossible. Thence the {op"}abandon" in the matter of the length* of this letter. I promise however not to sin very often.

I have grievously sinned towards your nephew. He gave me in the kindest way an invitation to call on him, which I promised to do and did not do. It is not so much through my fault as it may look. I beg for your intercession in getting my {op"}pardon" for what looks like unexcusable negligence. May I be permitted to keep the invitation for future use -- as soon as possible. I have been worried horribly and I have not been well at all. I am haunted by the idea I cannot write -- I dare say a very correct idea it is too. The harm is in its haunting me. For the last six months I've not known a minute's real peace of mind. {op"}Enfin! On se fait a tout." I got* hardened now -- {op"}mais j'ai eu des bien mauvais moments".¹ With many thanks for remembering me I beg you to believe me, dear Mrs {lc}Bontine, your most faithful and obedient servant {ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To W. E. Henley

Text MS Morgan; Baines 217

{lra}Stanford-le-Hope Essex.

18 Oct 98

{lsa}Dear Mr Henley.²

{lb}I don't know how to thank You for your letter. I don't know how to begin. I won't begin. I shall accept my good fortune {op"}sans phrases", but I would have answered yesterday, by return, had I not been in the midst of concocting a letter to the {op"}Times" about the {op"}Mohegan" affair. .p107

Whether they will print I don't know.¹ I have relieved my feelings by firing off three thousand words. I've never worked so fast with pen and ink before, and I wouldn't stop, feeling that if I did I would never take up the job again. The difficulty to keep swear words out of that communication was very great. There were also other difficulties. That of writing at all is always the greatest with me.

I have meditated your letter. The line of your argument has surprised me. R. L. S. -- Dumas -- these are big names and I assure You it had never occurred to me they could be pronounced in connection with my plan to work with Hueffer.² But You have judged proper to pronounce them and I am bound to look seriously at that aspect of the matter. When talking with Hueffer my first thought was that the man there who couldn't find a publisher had some good stuff to use and that if we worked it up together my name, probably, would get a publisher for it. On the other hand I thought that working with him would keep under the particular devil that spoils my work for me as quick as I turn it out

(that's why I work so slow and break my word to publishers), and that the material being of the kind that appeals to my imagination and the man being an honest workman we could turn out something tolerable -- perhaps; and if not he would be no worse off than before. It struck me the expression he cared for was in verse;³ he has the faculty; I have not; I reasoned that partnership in prose would not affect any chances he may have to attain distinction -- of the real kind -- in verse. It seemed to me that a man capable of the higher form could not care much for the lower. These considerations encouraged me in my idea. It never entered my head I could be dangerous to Hueffer in the way you point out. The affair had a material rather than an artistic aspect for me. It would give -- I reflected -- more time to Hueffer for tinkering at his verses; for digging hammering, chiselling or whatever process by which that mysterious thing -- a poem -- is shaped out of that barren thing -- inspiration. As for myself I meant to keep the right to descend into my own private little hell -- whenever the spirit moved me to do that foolish .p108

thing -- and produce alone from time to time -- verbiage no doubt -- my own -- therefore very dear.

This is the truth -- the whole truth. Now of course all this looks otherwise. Were I a Dumas I would eat up Hueffer without compunction. Was it you who called the old man {op"} a natural force"? He was that; and a natural force need not be scrupulous. Not being that I must navigate cautiously at this juncture lest my battered, ill-ballasted craft should run down a boat with youth at the helm and hope at the prow¹ -- pursuing shapes -- shapes. I know a man who at the end of a long talk was moved to tell me -- {op"} You don't seem to have a conception of what Sin is." Perhaps not! but it seems to me it would be sinful to sink Hueffer's boat which for all I know may be loaded with splendid gems or delicate roses -- and all for my private ends. No. I shall not go mad and bite him -- at least not without a fair warning. If I do speak at all I shall recite to him faithfully the substance of your letter -- that is if he does not kick me out before we get so far. If he does he shall never know he had the high fortune to occupy Your thought for an appreciable space of time. He will miss a fine chance for gratitude. I -- thanks to Pawling -- haven't missed mine.²

And this brings me to what was in my mind all the time when writing this, for months before, not only in my mind -- a poor habitation -- but in me, from the crown of my head to the tips of my fingers. That I've during the last year composed, walking up and down my room (a quarter-deck habit) several letters to you need not be an alarming intelligence. I've forgotten them -- and it is well. Words blow away like mist, and like mist they serve only to obscure, to make vague the real shape of one's feelings. I have let out some of these words before Edwin Pugh at one o'clock in the morning before the steps of the Mansion House³ and -- since nothing is lost in this world -- they may be knocking about yet amongst the stones. He said, I remember, {op"} You're with me; the best -- the kindest" -- well {op"} we will let it go at that" as the Baboo in Kipling's tale of {op"} The finest Story in the World" says.⁴ It has been a fine story to me; so fine that I have suddenly regretted the years gone by, regretted not being young when the future seems as vast as all eternity and the story could go on without end; so fine -- you are to understand -- .p109

that when it comes to setting it down the gods of life say nay and one can only mutter {op"} no doubt -- but the door is shut."¹

And what you say of {op"} Youth" is part, another line, of my {op"} Finest Story in the World." Yes -- but the door is shut. Were I to write and talk till Doomsday you would never really know what it all means to me. You

would not know because You never had just the same experience. Therein I have the advantage of you and I shall hug this incredible, amazing, fabulous precious advantage with both hands, I shall hug it as long as I can grip anything at all {op"} in this valley."² A chance comes once in life to all of us. Not the chance to get on; that only comes to good men. Fate is inexorably just. But Fate also is merciful and even to the poorest there comes sometimes the chance of an intimate, full, complete and pure satisfaction. That chance comes to me when you accepted the Nigger. I've got it, I hold it, I keep it, and all the machinations of my private devil cannot rob me of it. No man, either, can do ought* against it. Even you, yourself, have no power. You have given it and it is out of your hands.

This last reflexion is prompted not by impudence but by a less useful and a shade more honourable sentiment. I ask myself sometimes whether you know exactly what you have given, to whom, how much. But I love to think that if You perceive the shade of meaning within these lines you will not -- perhaps -- regret your gift -- whatever happens to morrow or the day after.

Satis. Enough words. The postman will carry away this letter, the mist shall blow away and in the morning I shall discern clearly what to-night I am trying to interpret into writing -- which remains. Let it remain, to show with what thundering kick the gods of life shut the door between our feeling and its expression. It is the old tale, the eternal grievance. If it were not for the illusion of the open door -- sometimes -- we would all be dumb, and it wouldn't matter, for no one would care to listen.

I've run on trying to tell you something and haven't told you how concerned I am at the news of your ill-health.³ Had I know I would have been still more appalled when Pawling told me he had sent my letter to you. I never dreamt of his doing that. I am very glad, inexpressibly glad though not a little remorseful, now I know the full extent of your generosity. If I could honestly think myself worth your trouble it is to

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You I would turn for advice, with perfect confidence with certain trust. And for what You have given I am honestly grateful I am faithfully and {lc}affectionately grateful.
{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lh}To Ford Madox Ford

Text MS Yale; Listy 148; Original unpublished

Thursday. [20 October 1898]¹

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}Honoured and Dear Landlord.

{lb}The time approaches for me to step in amongst your relics. That you do feel the impending desecration I do not doubt. Let me exhort you to be a man, and bear up -- they are not lost -- only left behind. You must be unselfish (it's our duty to be so) and in the midst of your sorrow be consoled by the thought that I (a fellow creature with a soul and sensibilities) am very happy.

Ethel² and I shall leave London at 11 am on Wednesday. We shall have a heavy breakfast-lunch in London. I mention this for I do not wish Mrs Hueffer to undertake the slightest trouble on our account. We are both most grateful to Her for Her efforts to get us a servant. If there's one of any kind to be got I beg she may be engaged if her wages are anything less than {bp}100 per month. I engage myself never to address her but bareheaded and with the signs of the most profound respect. We cheerfully agree to call her Miss or Your Ladyship -- or Your Majesty.

We don't stick at trifles. We are puir, servant-ridden fules -- Heaven help us!

If there be no girl perhaps Mrs Nash could be bribed to come on Wednesday and also on Thursday when Jess arrives? And could you order the funereal animal with a vehicle attached to meet our train on Wednesday? I don't know the address of the man who keeps him, but if he be difficult to get at from Pent please send me same on scrap of paper and I shall wire to him.

I understand it still holds good You do not leave till some time in the afternoon. Perhaps if the day is fine (when in doubt consult the prophet) you could instruct the carriage man to call at Pent first, and Mr, Mrs & Miss Hueffer could drive out to meet us; in that way as we drive back Your Wife could with less trouble point out to Ethel the places where

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milk is to be got for that precious baby and eggs for his precious papa -- but enough! I am overcome by the magnitude of the interests of which I treat!

There are also other interests -- not mentioned here. No room. They are big, big. Fact is I would be glad of a quiet half-hour with you. I've a word for your ear. Hist! Mystery! Silence! Codlin's your friend -- not Short.¹

I hope you are better You are well in mind and body -- same thing tho'.

I beg to be remembered to Mrs Hueffer. My wife sends her kind regards. All our loves to Christina.

{lc}Faithfully Yours,

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lps}still in Stanford-le-Hope, Essex

PS I've read Two Magics Henry James's last.² The first story is all there. He extracts an intellectual thrill out of the subject. The second is unutterable rubbish. Quite a shock to one of the faithful.

{lh}To Ford Madox Ford

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

Friday [21 October 1898]³

{lra}[Stanford-le-Hope]

{lsa}My dear Hueffer

{lb}Just had your note. We had been all along under the impression it was the 26th. I think I said 26th at any rate I was so much under the impression I had said it that we did act upon that impression.

I am afraid we cant put off our departure from here, the van arrangements being made. So Ethel and I are coming on the 26th.

But suppose you stay on? May I get a room in the village? While Ethel can be stowed away in Pent. Jess is coming on the 27th. If you write us to that effect she may stay one day longer in London. The furniture won't be there till the 29th I suppose.

Let me know how You decide.

{lc}Faithfully Yours

{ls}Conrad.

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{lh}To John Galsworthy

Text MS Forbes; J-A, 1, 252

{lra}Pent Farm. Postling.

Stanford nr Hythe.

28 Oct 98.

{lsa}My dear Jack.

{lb}Thanks for your letter and the cheque for {bp}10 for which let this letter be an acknowledgment.

I turned to You confidently. Your words of cheer are more valuable than all the money in the world -- they help one to live -- while the money enables one only to exist. And yet one must exist before one can even begin to live.

I feel pretty hopeful -- not extravagantly so, which is rather a good sign than otherwise.

I concluded arrangement for collaboration with Hueffer.¹ He was pleased. I think it's all right. Details when we meet.

The first letter in my new home was from You, and you must be the first visitor -- the first friend under the new roof

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lps}Jessie's kind regards.

{lh}To Cora Crane

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 191

{lra}Pent Farm. Postling

Stanford

N^r Hythe.

28th Oct 98.

{lsa}My dear Mrs Crane.

{lb}Just a word in haste to tell you I shall try to do what I can. Don't build any hopes on it. It is a most remote chance -- but it's the only thing I can think of.²

.p113

What kind of trouble is Stephen in? You made me very uneasy. Are you sure you can bring him back. I don't doubt your influence mind! but not knowing the circumstances I do not know how far it would be feasible. In Stephen's coming back to England is salvation there is no doubt about that.

Will he come? Can he come? I am utterly in the dark as to the state of affairs.

We recognise your good heart in your acts. God forbid that we should throw the first -- or even the last stone. What the world calls scandal does not affect me in the least.¹ My sincere approval and high recognition of the course You've taken is not based on Christian grounds. I do not pretend to that name -- not from irreverence but from my exalted idea of that faith's morality. I can't pretend to such morality but I hold that those that do pretend and boast of it should carry it out at the cost of personal sacrifice, and in every respect. My admiration of your courageous conduct exists side by side with an utter disapproval of those whom You (in your own extremity) befriend.² They invoke the name of a faith and they've dragged its substance pretty well through the mud. It may be only folly -- of course -- unutterable folly. But it looks worse. The only Christian in sight in this whole affair is you, my dear Mrs Crane -- exercising that rarest of the Creed's virtues: that of charity.

I would not have said all this but your good friendly letter, I consider, has in a sense authorised me to speak.

I would of course have done what you wish without a moment's delay but the exact truth is I've only {bp}8 in the bank and am in debt to publishers so heavily that I can't go to them for more. Or else I would do it, believe me. I've tried however to do something but don't reckon on it and do not relax your efforts in other directions. I am a poor business man and can't give you any hints as to raising money on life insurance.

Couldn't Stokes advise you?³

Jess shall write to morrow. I will let You know shortly (I hope)
whether my plan has been of any good. Affectionately and faithfully
{lc}Yours
{ls}Jph. Conrad.
.p114

{lh}To Cora Crane

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 192

1st Nov 98.

{lra}[Pent Farm]

{lsa}Dear Mrs. Crane.

{lb}Yours to hand. That's what I am doing; trying to get at B'wood. I
took M^r Meldrum into our confidence.¹ He is an admirer of Stephen.
What you say about your husband is golden truth.

To B'wood I suggested a loan of {bp}50 on three securities. One (for
which they would care most) Stephen's work second Your property third my
own undertaking to furnish them copy to the amount advanced should
unforeseen circumstances prevent you and Stephen from paying him
back as soon as he may expect.

We must approach B'wood through Meldrum who is most friendly.
B'wood himself is a good, kind man but must be handled cautiously. It
is better done through me and Meldrum. How it will turn out it is
impossible to say. It will also require time. I am writing to M. again this
post.

Before you give bill of sale on furniture make sure the furniture dealer or
dealers (from whom You bought) are paid in full as in the contrary case
you would make Yourself liable to prosecution.

My letter to Stephen was sent through Reynolds.²

I am sure you are doing and planning for the best. That is the way to
rescue poor Stephen. I only wish I had something to pawn or sell; you
would not have to wait long for means. As it is I have only my work and
that I've offered to B'wood for what it is worth.

{lc}Most faithfully Yours

{ls}Conrad.

{lps}Jessie sends lots of love. She is very much concerned and anxious
about your health.

.p115

{lh}To Cora Crane

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 193

Thursday [3? November 1898]¹

{lra}[Pent Farm]

{lsa}Dear Mrs Crane.

{lb}I forward you Meldrum's letter. He is a man of good counsel and you
can see for yourself that he is anxious to do something. Please read his
letter with care. His suggestion is worth consideration. The same ideas
occurred to me. If I had the means there would have been no need to
mention them, but as you see if we are to do something we must have
recourse to strangers.² I must mention here that the originals of your
letters are destroyed and that the whole matter is treated on a perfectly
confidential footing. I had to let M. know the exact state of affairs as far
as we all on this side are aware of them.

Would Stephen come back by himself if written to? Would he tell us
how much is wanted to enable him to leave Havana? Would he recognize
the engagements we would enter into here for means to bring him back?

His future is here -- I firmly believe -- but will he see it? Whatever happens the matter must be kept quiet, and his reputation shielded. I know of personal knowledge that B'wood is a little angry.³ A short letter from Stephen saying he could not send anything would have made all the difference. It is too late now. What do you think of me writing him a strong letter urging his return and saying that we keep {bp}50 ready for that purpose if he gives his word. Please write. {lc}Always yours
{ls}Conrad.

{lh}To Edward Garnett

Text MS Colgate; G. 141

Monday [7 November 1898]⁴

{lra}[Pent Farm]

{lsa}Dearest Edward,

{lb}Did you think I had died? We are here -- over a week now and the place is a success. I reckon Ford told you. I reckon you disapprove. {op"}I rebel! I said I would rebel." (d'you know the quotation)⁵ I send you
.p116

here Henley's letter over the matter.¹ I feel hopeful about my own work. Completely changed. When do you come here. When? Both of you with Bunny. Or you alone to begin with. I feel orphaned. Are You in Constple?² {lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Conrad

{lps}Love from us all.

{lh}To R. B. Cunninghame Graham

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 253; Watts 105

{lra}[Pent Farm.

Stanford near Hythe.

9th Nov 98

{lsa}Tre{g}s cher et excellent ami.

{lb}I only got your letter on Monday and the tray came this morning. And for both thanks. We shout cries of welcome.³ Travel[l]ing is victory.

As to returning bredouille⁴ well that's better than a crack on the head -- if not for yourself perhaps (note how habit of cynicism clings to me) then for your friends. A virtuous man lives for his friends.

{op"}Remember this!" as the edicts of the Emperor of China conclude.

I was just thinking of sending a note to the Dev[onshi]re Club to meet you when your letter arrived {op"}announcing presents". Days had slipped disregarded full to the brim with the botheration of moving. Now I am here I like it. I can write a little a very little. A little is better than nothing but it is so little that out of the present worries I look with terror into the future still. Oh the weariness of it, the weariness of it.

They did not send me the proofs of Higg[ins]on's Dream. There is a misprint in French. When sending Pulperia I reapproached* them.⁵ They sent me proofs of that but without the MS, so if there is anything wrong it is not so much of my fault as it may look.

I had a most enjoyable trip to Glasgow. I saw Neil Munro and heaps of shipowners and that's all I can say. The fact is from novel writing to skipping il y a trop de tirage. This confounded literature has ruined me entirely. There is a time in the affairs of men when the tide of folly
.p117

taken at the flood sweeps them to destruction. La mer monte cher ami; la mer monte and the phenomenon is not worth a thought.

My letter is disjointed because I can't think to-night. I am touched to

think that when wandering through the brass-workers' bazaar (in Fez -- was it?) you thought: There's that Conrad. Well yes -- there he is -- for a little while yet. I have been looking at the thing all day. It has a fascination. I seem to see the face bending over it the hands that touched it. A brown meagre hand, a hooked profile, a skullcap on a shaven head, lean shanks ending in splay slippers, thus I picture the man who hammered the brass according to the design known to his remote forefathers.

{lc}Pressing both your hands Ever

Yours

{ls}Conrad.

{lps}I didn't know the review was by your Wife.¹ I liked it immensely. I noted it. I hope her health is good. Mes hommages les plus respectueux. I shall levy toll of one copy upon your book -- comme de juste.²

{lh}To Neil Munro

Text MS NLS; Unpublished

9th Nov 1898.

{lra}Pent Farm.

Stanford Near Hythe.

Kent.

{lsa}My dear Munro.³

{lb}I feel like a wretch for not having written to tell you how touched I was by Your friendliness. Yet the feeling is abiding and loses no strenght* by the lapse of time.

My congratulations upon the advertisement of the fourth edition of John Splendid.⁴ And splendid indeed it is. I've no gift of critical expression. I feel the beauty strongly but I cannot liberate my artistic emotion in art terms or in any other terms. You must take me on trust. If I had you there, in the room, and the book with us two, then, then perhaps thumping the pages out of your own heart and art with your .p118

own words¹ I could give you a glimmer of my sensations. And some day I love to think it will be. Remember me when you come south. I look forward to seeing you and seeing you here. We shan't stir from home for months ahead. {lc}Believe me Always most faithfully Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To Ford Madox Ford

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

Saturday. [12] Nov 98.²

{lra}[Pent Farm]

{lsa}My dear Hueffer.

{lb}We are very happy here from which you may guess we haven't yet set fire to the house. The acceptance of our joint work is assured as far as Pawling is concerned. McClure I guess is all right.³ We must serialise next year on both sides of the pond.

I have read the Shifting of the Fire.⁴ I have read it several times looking for your {op"}inside" in that book; the first impression being that there is a considerable {op"}inside" in you. The book is delightfully young. Mind I say delightfully instead of drearily, or morally, or sadly, or frightfully or any of these things which politeness would have induced me to paraphrase. The movement, the imagination, the conviction of it are delightful (in the literary sense too). Felicitous phrasing is plentiful and with that the writing is wonderfully level. There is certainly crudeness in

the presentation of the idea. The facts, the emotions the sensations are painted somewhat as the scenery for the stage is painted but Youth does not make for fineness -- except in inexpressible ideals, in acted dreams, in the spoiling or making of a life. Never in writing about it. More could have been made out of the situations by a more spiritual method. The analysis however if not crafty is true and every fact is significant. That's indubitable. Nevertheless it is apparent only on reflection. And that's the fault. Why exactly it is so I am of course unable to say. It is a matter of .p119

fact to me only so far that it is a matter of feeling. I feel that the effects are partly lost. But I am not like Homocœa.¹ I don't touch the spot. No doubt the general cause is (O! happy man) youth -- inexperience. How it worked I can't say. These belated remarks are asinine, but not so asinine as the charge of immorality propounded by the D[aily] T[elegraph]. What is mostly obvious is the talent of the writer and that I have the sense to recognise. I need not say I am in accord with the idea -- in complete accord. ---

Have you written for Serafina (or Seraphina?). I get on dreamily with the Rescue, dreamily dreaming how fine it could be if the thought did not escape, if the expression did not hide underground, if the idea had a substance and words a magic power, if the invisible could be snared into a shape. And it is sad to think that even if all this came to pass -- even then it could never be so fine to anybody as it is fine to me now, lurking in blank pages, in an intensity of existence, without voice, without form -- but without blemish.

{lc}Faithfully yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lps}Our kindest regards to Mrs Hueffer and love to Christina.

{lh}To Ford Madox Ford

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

17 Nov 89* [1898]

{lra}[Pent Farm]

{lsa}My dear Hueffer.

{lb}Herewith some notices which came within the last 3 days.

Had your* letter. I did hear from G[arnett]. He doesn't think of snakes -- not he. He hasn't enough imagination; -- as to You, you have too much and that causes you to call yourself zoological names. I hear from Pawling G wrote him a letter commending our partnership on grounds that evidently appeal to P. G is not so bad as he pretends to be.

Come when you like. Next Sunday week (27th) to Mond: I shall have two men for one night here. Except this you may just walk in with or without notice, into the Pent. You will always find me here. I would be very, very pleased to hear Seraphina read. I would afterwards read it myself. Consult your own convenience and (especially) your own -- whim. It's the only thing worth deferring to.

Our kindest regards to you both.

{lc}Ever yours

{ls}Conrad.

.p120

{lh}To H. G. Wells

Text MS Illinois; J-A, 1, 254

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]¹

17 nov. 98

{lsa}My dear Wells.

{lb}I was glad to find you well enough to be out for an airing though of course horribly sorry to miss you. I couldn't wait. A man was coming to see me whom I had to meet at Sandling. I only made a dash to Sandgate to hear how you were getting on. My dear fellow don't you talk of sunsets in connection with your health or your anything else. Nothing more beastly than a sunset -- in the abstract. But practically it argues the possibility of sunrise. I ain't clear. I want to say -- think of sunrises. This is obscure. Try to understand and believe I am not intoxicated. Too early. It is the first hour of the day and after breakfast I will be more articulate -- but the post will be gone. So I write now -- 7 am. One is still capable of heroism.

I've been bothering Pugh² to come and see me. He may turn up next Saturday week in sheer desperation. If he comes, in decent time we might invade you for a couple of hours. Or would you be well enough to come along and sit on us boys. Veni, vidi, vici.³ You may veni by a train that gets to Sandling about 12.40. I would meet you on wheels if you write in time. There is a return train about 5 -- another at six.

We would have called together before this but Jess is tied to the house. Our girl's temperament was too artistic. She would wander off and disappear for hours at a time. What she found to dream about on country roads in the mud and after dark I can't imagine. We aren't straitlaced ourselves but -- dash my buttons -- she was too unconventional. So we parted -- suddenly. The noise of that wrench had a melancholy shrillness like the screams of sea gulls. I kept my head throughout but wouldn't like to go t[h]rough it again. She departed; another's coming soon, of a philistinish aspect; meantime we stop at home and look after the baby. It takes a minimum of two wide awake persons to ward off the dangers besetting his reckless infancy. So as I said we sit at home -- and watch.

Let me know about your health. I am not very bright myself. I beg to .p121

be remembered to Mrs Wells. The first fine day (baby permitting) I shall bring my wife along to be introduced to her.

Upon that threat I remain

{lc}Ever Yours.

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To the Hon. A. E. Bontine

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 255

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

22^d Nov 1898

{lsa}Dear Mrs Bontine.

{lb}Many thanks for Your good letter and the enclosed Max Nordau autograph.¹ Would Robert² let me keep it? I own myself surprised. There is not the slightest doubt M.N. has understood my intention. He has absolutely detected the whole idea. This to me is so startling that I do not know what to think of myself now. However I am pleased. Praise is sweet no matter whence it comes. What strikes me as strange is that he writes as though Robert had asked him why he (Robert) liked the book!³ The expounding attitude is funny -- and characteristic too. He is a Doctor and a Teacher -- no doubt about it. But for all that he is wondrous kind.

When I heard of Robert's decision to return my first impulse was to rush to a telegraph office and wire You my jubilation, exultation, congratulation. You will not deny he has justified my trust in his judgment and good sense. He has done so much in his life and knows so well what he can do that he would not attempt the impossible as an

untried man could be tempted to do. We exchanged two letters. I think that the trip anyhow has done him good.

My wretched novel begins in April in the III^d Lond. News as a serial to run 3 months. It will appear in book form in Oct^{er} next.⁴ I am afraid that You and Robert will be disappointed. You will see but you will be disappointed. Everybody else won't see -- the idea has the bluish tenuity of dry wood smoke. It is lost in the words, as the smoke is lost in the air.
.p122

Attempting to tell romantically a love story in which the word love is not to be pronounced, seems to be courting disaster deliberately. Add to this that an inextricable confusion of sensations is of the very essence of the tale and you may judge how much success material or otherwise I may expect. Le lecteur demande une situation nette et des motifs definis.¹ He will not find it in the Rescue.

I can't imagine where we could find a reviewer worthy of Robert and of Roberts book.² If I could review myself I would do it, and, under the mask of anonimity* give full play to the baseness of my nature. Robert being my friend, the friend, it would be sweet to abuse him with safety and propriety. But seriously speaking I do not see anybody. Wells (H. G.) does that kind of thing, has some intelligence, partly understands Robert -- (only partly) and perhaps would like to review. Yet he is scarcely the man. There is Garnett also. But the man is slow and sometimes inarticulate out of the fulness of his heart. There would be no doubt of his sympathy and intelligence. Shall I write to him? Perhaps I could work the Academy. Ask Garnett first and then set Lucas³ (one of the Academy gang) to work the oracle within the temple, so as to get the book sent to Garnett? I live like a silly hermit and can be of no good to my friends. Je ne suis pas dans le mouvement.

Of Henry James's last I share your opinion. The second of the Two magics is unworthy of his talent.⁴ The first evades one but leaves a kind of phosphorescent trail in one's mind. Frederic⁵ for me is unreadable. Mr Fitzmaurice Kelly's book⁶ I have not seen yet but would like to and shall before long.

Thanks for your kind enquiries. My wife and boy are well. We like our new place. I have been horribly seedy with some kind of gout. It always leaves me demoralised and gloomy. I only got up yesterday. Tears besprinkle my manuscript, but my bad language can be heard across the fields even as far as the sea. {lc}Believe me dear Mrs Bontine always Your most faithful and most obedient servant
{ls}Jph. Conrad.
.p123

{lh}To H. G. Wells

Text MS Illinois; J-A, 1, 256

Friday. [25] Nov. 98¹

{lra}Pent Farm

{lsa}My dear Wells.

{lb}I did not nourish robust hopes of seeing You on Sat. The weather is infamous. I have been laid up also, with a kind of gout entertainment which lasted 3 days and of course I can only hobble now it is over. As to struggling over darkling hills I thought I made it plain there are wheels -- not of chance, but of certitude.² Of course our carcasses for the sake of their inhabitants require careful handling, but at all events I am telling you that I shall be (on wheels) at Sand. Junc: on Sat at 12:30 to remove Pugh. Thereafter same wheels could take you back at five or six. Bringing P to lunch is another matter. As I tell you one of my propellers is damaged and done up in flannel -- an obscene sight -- not to speak of

the pain and impiety, for swear words issue from my lips at every step I take. I don't think I really could undertake a journey to Sandgate either tomorrow or on Sunday. I go to the station because P is a stranger and may starve or otherwise perish in the fields like any other beast unless he is taken care of. But I shall not leave the fly, and I intend to hoot like a sick Martian³ outside the station. He is sure to be interested by such a remarkable noise and thus he shall find me.

Re Henley.⁴ There is a furnished house in Hythe standing isolated at the Sandgate end of Hythe High Street. A red brick thing, rather large. It would do at a pinch -- perhaps.

If you have a copy of the Invisible man⁵ send it to me. I lent mine to a god-fearing person who stole it. Thus wags the world. I ain't cadging for a gift -- it's a loan I want and I will try my best not to steal.---

Really why shouldn't you both come? I take all the transport arrangements upon myself on this end. They won't fail. At your end you have omnibuses if you are not too hightoned to use them. And you may be home at six -- and that's virtuous enough. Well Well. I don't want to be a nuisance. I throw out a suggestion like the angler his hook -- the rest is with fate -- and the gullibility of the fish. Let me also mention that with Mrs Wells to take care of you You can't come to any harm. On the other hand Mrs Well[s] with Your support can affront for a few hours .p124

our shabby, wretched, rural bohemianism with a fair chance of surviving the adventure. And we will leave it at that.

With kindest and hopeful regards to your wife

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lh}To R. B. Cunninghame Graham

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 257; Watts 109

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

1st Dec 1898

{lsa}Cherissime et excellentissime.

{lb}Your photograph came yesterday (It's good!) and the book¹ arrived by this evening's post. I dropped everything -- as you may imagine and rushed at it paper knife in hand. It is with great difficulty I interrupt my reading at the 100th page -- and I interrupt it only to write to you.

A man staying here has been reading over my shoulder; for we share our best with the stranger within our tent. No thirsty men drank water as we have been drinking in, swallowing, tasting, blessing, enjoying, gurgling, choking over, absorbing, your thought, your phrases, your irony, the spirit of your wisdom and of Your expression. The individuality of the book is amazing even to me who know you or pretend to. It is wealth tossed on the roadside, it is a creative achievement, it is alive with conviction and truth. Men, living men are tossed to these dogs -- the readers, pictures are flung out for the blind, wisdom -- brilliant wisdom -- showered upon fools. You are magnificently generous. You seem to be plunging your hand into an inexhaustible bag of treasure and fling precious things at every paragraph. We have been shouting slapping our legs, leaping up, stamping about. There was such an enthusiasm in this solitude as will meet no other book.

I do not know really how to express the kind of intellectual exultation your book has awakened in me; and I will not stay to try; I am in too great a hurry to get back to the book. My applause, slaps on the back, salaams benedictions, cheers. Take what you like best of these, what you think most expressive. Or take them all. I can't be too demonstrative.

{lc}Ever Yours with yells

{ls}Conrad.

.p125

{lps}Why did you lug in J.C. into your pages.¹ Oh why? Why take a sinner on your back when crossing a stream.

{lh}To the Hon. A. E. Bontine

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 258

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

4th Dec. 1898

{lsa}Dear Mrs. Bontine.

{lb}Just a word or two about Robert's book. It is a glorious performance. Much as we expected of him, I, and two men who were staying with me when my copy arrived,² have been astounded by the completeness of this achievement. One said -- {op"}This is the book of travel of the century." And it is true. Nothing approaching it had appeared since Burton's Mecca.³ And, as the other man pointed out, judging the work strictly as a book -- as a production of an unique temperament -- Burton's Mecca is nowhere near it. And it is true. The Journey in Morocco is a work of art. A book of travel written like this is no longer a book of travel -- it is a creative work. It is a contribution not towards mere knowledge but towards truth -- to the truth hidden in men -- in things -- in life -- in nature -- to the truth only exceptional men can see, and not every exceptional man can present to the ordinary dim eyes of the crowd. He is unapproachable in acuteness of vision -- of sympathy; he is alone in his power of expression; and through vision, sympathy and expression runs an informing current of thought as noble, unselfish and human as is only the gift of the best.

The book pulled at my very heart-strings. Et voila{g}! I've been trying to tell you this -- and only this -- from the first page to this line. Je ne parle pas de son esprit. Chaque page en est un exemple, chaque phrase en est une preuve. Le livre est rempli d'un charme e{a}trange et pe{a}ne{a}trant. C'est bien la{g} la terre, les hommes, le ciel, la vie! Cette oeuvre brillante laisse dans l'a{cr}me du lecteur comme une trai{cr}ne{a}e de lumie{g}re.⁴

I must close this macaronic letter. I could write on for ever and just to .p126

so little purpose. {lc}Believe me, dear Mrs Bontine, Your most faithful and most obedient servant.

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}PS Je viens de recevoir une lettre du se{a}re{a}nissime Seigneur. Il se dit triste. Pourquoi!¹ He seems also uncertain about the book. Exactly. The poor man is quite incapable of judging impartially or even sensibly, the work of Mr C. Graham. A man who can write like this is a creator -- not a critic.

{lh}To H. G. Wells

Text MS Illinois; J-A, 1, 259

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

4th Dec 1898

{lsa}My dear Wells.

{lb}Thanks ever so much for the Invisible Man. I shall keep him a few days longer.

Frankly -- it is uncommonly fine. One can always see a lot in your work -- there is always a {op'}beyond' to your books -- but into this (with due regard to theme and length* you'e managed to put an amazing quantity of effects. If it just misses being tremendous it is because you didn't make it so and if you didn't there isn't a man in England who could. As to b -- y furriners they ain't in it at all.

I suppose you'll have the common decency to believe me when I tell you I am always powerfully impressed by your work. Impressed is the word O! Realist of the Fantastic, whether you like it or not. And if you want to know what impresses me it is to see how you contrive to give over humanity into the clutches of the Impossible and yet manage to keep it down (or up) to its humanity, to its flesh, blood, sorrow, folly. That is the achievement! In this little book you do it with an appalling completeness. I'll not insist upon the felicity of incident. This must be obvious even to yourself. Three of us have been reading the book (I had two men staying here after Pugh left) and we have been tracking with delight the cunning method of your logic. It is masterly -- it is ironic -- it is very relentless -- and it is very true. We all three (the two others are no fools) place the I.M. above the War of the Worlds. Whether we are right -- and if so why -- I am not sure, and can not tell. I fancy the book

.p127
is more strictly human and thus your diabolical psychology plants its points right into a man's bowels. To me the W of the W has less of that sinister air of truth that arrests the reader in reflexion at the turn of the page so often in the I.M. In reading this last, one is touched by the anguish of it as by something that any day may happen to oneself. It is a great triumph for you.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Conrad.

{lps}My compliments to Mrs Wells. How are you? I am not well. I am eating my heart out over the rottenest book that ever was -- or will be.

{lh}To Cora Crane

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 197

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

4th Dec 1898.

{lsa}My dear Mrs Crane.

{lb}You made us quite happy with your letter. I had a couple of pretty bad days just before; having heard from Meldrum about that wretched McQueen.¹ You may imagine how sick I felt. I did not write to you at once because I did set to think of some other expedient. I would have gone to London to seek had it not been for my r[h]eumatism which kept me on my back in bed 2 days and even when I got up I could not do more than hobble across the room. I was at my wit's end. Luckily it's over. I dreaded opening your letter, having nothing to propose or suggest. It was an immense relief to hear you had been lucky in some other quarter.² Do you think Stephen will be in England before Christmas?

His story in B. is magnificent.³ It is the very best thing he has done since the Red Badge -- and it has even something the Red Badge had not -- or not so much of. He is maturing. He is expanding. There is more breath⁴ and somehow more substance in this war-picture. We (I had two men visiting me last week) are delighted with this bit of work. It is Stephen all himself -- and a little more. It is the very truth of art. There is an added ampleness in his method which makes me augur a magnificent future for his coming work. Let him only come -- and work!

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Excuse me if I end here. I am in arrears with my correspondence -- besides other worries. Ah! but I do feel relieved.

Jess sends congratulations and best love.

Believe me always most faithfully

{lc}Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lh}To R. B. Cunninghame Graham

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 260; Watts 110

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

9th Dec 1898

{lsa}My dearest amigo.

{lb}I wrote to your mother about your book. I found it easier to speak to a third person -- at first. I do not know what to tell you. If I tell you that You have surpassed my greatest expectations you may be offended -- and this piece of paper is not big enough to explain how great my expectations were. Anyway they are left behind. I am ashamed of my moderation¹ and now I am looking at the performance I ask myself what kind of friend was I not to foresee, not to understand that the book would just be that -- no less. Well it is there -- for our joy, for our thought, for our triumph. I am speaking of those who understand and love you. The preface is a gem -- I knew it, I remembered it² -- and yet it came with a fresh force. To be understood is not everything -- one must be understood as one would like to be. This probably you won't have.

Yes -- the book is Art. Art without a trace of Art's theories in its incomparably effective execution. It isn't anybody's art -- it is C-Graham's art. The individuality of the work imposes itself on the reader -- from the first. Then come other things, skill, pathos, humour, wit, indignation. Above all a continuous feeling of delight; the persuasion that there one has got hold of a good thing. This should work for material success. Yet who knows! No doubt it is too good.

You haven't been careful in correcting your proofs. Are you too grand seigneur for that infect labour?³ Surely I, twenty others, would be only too proud to do it for you. Tenez vous le pour dit.⁴ I own I was exasperated by the errors. Twice the wretched printers perverted your meaning. It is twice too often. They should die!

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I write because I can't come.¹ Can't is the truth. I am sorry to hear of your depression -- but O friend who isn't -- (I mean depressed). I am not able to say one cheering word. It seems to me I am disintegrating* slowly. Cold shadows stand around. Never mind.

I thought it was next Tuesday you were coming to town. Stupid of me. Now this letter'll be probably too late to catch you. I am very sorry to hear of Your wife's indisposition. Remember me to her please. I trust she is better.

I daren't ask you to come down. I am too wretched, and its worse than the plague. Au revoir. {lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To William Blackwood

Text MS NLS; Blackburn 33

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

13th Dec 1898

{lsa}Dear Mr Blackwood.

{lb}I owe you a great many thanks for the Maga which reaches me with a most charming regularity. In truth it is the only monthly I care to read, and each number is very welcome, though each is a sharp jog to my conscience. And yet, God knows, it is wide-awake enough and daily avenges the many wrongs my patient publishers suffer at my hands.

And this is all I can say unless I were to unfold for the nth time the miserable tale of my inefficiency. I trust however that in Jan^y I'll be able to send you about 30000 words or perhaps a little less,² towards the Vol: of short stories.³ Apart from my interest it is such a pleasure for me to

appear in the Maga that you may well believe it is not laziness that keeps me back. It is, alas, something -- I don't know what -- not so easy to overcome. With immense effort a thin trickle of MS is produced -- and .p130

that, just now, must be kept in one channel only lest no one gets anything and I am completely undone.

The Stephen Crane in the last number¹ has given me great satisfaction. The man will develop. I find this story, broader, gentler, less tricky and just as individual as the best of his work. It is the best bit of work he has done since the Red Badge. One or two competent men wrote to me about it and they share my opinion.

I had a treat in the shape of a N^o of the Singapore Free Press 2 ½ columns about {op"}Mr Conrad at home and abroad".² Extremely laudatory but in fact telling me I don't know anything about it. Well I never did set up as an authority on Malaysia. I looked for a medium in which to express myself. I am inexact and ignorant no doubt (most of us are) but I don't think I sinned so recklessly. Curiously enough all the details about the little characteristic acts and customs which they hold up as proof I have taken out (to be safe) from undoubted sources -- dull, wise books. It is rather staggering to find myself so far astray. In Karain, for instance, there's not a single action of my man (and good many of his expressions) that can not be backed by a traveller's tale -- I mean a serious traveller's. And yet this story {op"}can only be called Malay in M^r Conrad's sense". Sad.

Well. I only wanted you to know I am alive and not utterly lost to sense of my shortcomings. Accept my best wishes for the coming year. It is near enough already to make sinners of my sort think about turning over a new leaf and so on. I hope you will like my new leaves however belated they may be. {lc}I am dear Mr Blackwood always Yours faithfully {ls}Jph Conrad.

{lps}I am most sincerely glad to see Munro's book³ in its 4th Edition. Munro is an artist -- besides being an excellent fellow with a pretty weakness for my work.

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{lh}To Aniela Zago{a}rska

Text J-A, 1, 261; Najder 226¹

{lra}Pent Farm, Stanford.

18.12.1898.

{lsa}My dear Aniela,

{lb}If I did not believe in the constancy of your sentiments towards me I would not dare write to you after so long a silence. As a matter of fact, my dear, I have been in a sad state of health -- miserable rather than bad -- and I preferred not to weary or tire you with the sadness of my letters. And also I was ashamed to display before you -- who are so brave among the difficulties and sufferings of life -- my foolish and not very praiseworthy pessimism.

This is how the days, weeks, and months have gone by; I waited -- always thinking of you, with my pen ready to write -- I waited for a moment of lucidity, of calmness, of hope. It is hard to attain. And here comes Christmas and the end of the year. One has to ask for pardon, express one's feelings -- promise to amend for the hundredth or thousandth time, as all sinners do.

As you will see, we have come to live here; this is also a farmhouse, somewhat smaller but more convenient and, what is most important, it is situated on higher ground. I found that I could not work in our old place. It is better here although I have nothing to boast about. We are

only five kilometres from the sea. The railway station is 3 kilometres and Canterbury 1 ½ kilometres² away. Before my window I can see the buildings of the farm, and on leaning out and looking to the right, I see the valley of the Stour, the source of which is so to speak behind the third hedge from the farmyard. Behind the house are the hills (Kentish Downs) which slope in zigzag fashion down to the sea, like the battlements of a big fortress. A road runs along the foot of the hills near the house -- a very lonely and straight road, and along which (so it is whispered) old Lord Roxby -- he died 80 years ago -- rides sometimes at night in a four-in-hand driven by himself. What is rather strange, however, is that he has no head. Why he should leave his head at home while he takes a ride, nobody can explain. But I must tell you that during the two months we have lived here, we have not yet heard the noise of any wheels and although I sometimes walk along this road near midnight, I have never met a four-in-hand. On the other side of the little garden stretches out quiet and waste land intersected by hedges and

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here and there stands an oak or a group of young ash trees. Three little villages are hidden among the hillocks and only the steeples of their churches can be seen. The colouring of the country presents brown and pale yellow tints -- and in between, in the distance one can see the meadows, as green as emeralds. And not a sound is to be heard but the laboured panting of the engines of the London - Dover express trains.

We live like a family of anchorites. From time to time a pious pilgrim belonging to la grande fraternité^{a} des lettres comes to pay a visit to the celebrated Joseph Conrad -- and to obtain his blessing. Sometimes he gets it and sometimes he does not, for the hermit is severe and dyspeptic et n'entend pas la plaisanterie en matière^{g} d'Art!¹ At all events, the pilgrim receives an acceptable dinner, a Spartan bed -- and he vanishes. I am just expecting one today, the author of Jocelyn,² which is dedicated to me! The novel is not remarkable, but the man is very pleasant and kind -- and rich, que diable fait-il dans cette gale^{g} -- where we are navigating whilst using pens by way of oars -- on an ocean of ink -- pour n'arriver nulle part, hé^{a}las!

Jessie is dreaming of a visit to Poland -- which to her means a visit to you. And I am dreaming the same. Pourquoi pas? It costs nothing to journey in thought to those we love. It costs nothing -- only a little heartache when we find how far the dream is from reality.

Now Christmas is drawing near.

{lh}To Edward Garnett

Text MS Sutton; G. 142

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

[18 December 1898]³

{lsa}My dearest Garnett.

{lb}I was glad to see thy fist. The Crane thing is just⁴ -- precisely just a ray flashed in and showing all there is.

Jess' and my love to you, and best wishes -- and through to all yours please when you write.

Before Mrs Garnett comes back you must come and see me -- us.

I've been writing not so badly.

Now I am at a short story for B'wood⁵ which I must get out for the sake of the shekels.

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Then again at the R[escue].

Come soon. I've read the play.¹ There's something to say about it but viva voce when we meet.

{lc}Ever Yours
{ls}Jph. Conrad
{lps}I don't send you type of R because McCl[ure] is always anxious to get it back at once. And there's nothing to boast of.
Galsworthy is awfully anxious to make your acquaintance.

{lh}To David Meldrum

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 35

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

21/12/98

{lsa}Dear Mr. Meldrum

{lb}The heartiest wishes to you and yours from us both. I trust next year we shall be able to foregather often.

I don't know whether I've told you that Mrs Crane got the cash² and has sent it off to Havana to bring Stephen back. I know you will like to hear that she got over that trouble.

I think the Harness is first rate.³ The best bit of work since the Red Badge days. Several men wrote to me about it in almost these very terms.

Excuse hurried scrawl but I've left all my Xmas letters to the last and have a dozen more to write tonight. With kindest regards {lc}Always faithfully yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}I am writing something for Maga a tale (short) in the manner of Youth, to be ready in a few days.

{lh}To R. B. Cunninghame Graham

Text MS Dartmouth; Watts 112

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

21.12.98

{lsa}Cherissime ami.

{lb}With a bad pen by a smoky lamp Hail to you! May all the infernal Gods look upon You with favour; and may all the men who are food for .p134

Hell shake their heads at your words and gestures. To be happy we should propitiate the gods of evil and fly in the faces of evil men.

I cannot sufficiently recover from the shock of missing your dear visit to relieve my feelings by strong swears. Not yet. When you come (and you will) I shall explain what infamous thing had me by the neck then. I have eaten shame and my face is black before you.

I toil on. So did the gentleman of the name of Sisiphus. (Did I spell it right?) This is the very marrow of my news.

Mes devoirs les plus respectueux a Madame Votre Femme et mes souhaits de la Nouvelle anne{a}e. As to you O Friend! Time overtakes us. Time! Voila{gr} l'ennemi. And must I even congratulate you upon a defeat because men lie to each other to conceal their dismay and their fear. Not

I! {lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Conrad.

{lh}To E. L. Sanderson

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

21st December 1898

{lsa}My dear Ted.

{lb}All hail to your handwriting and your news. Our best wishes go to

You both with such strenght* of sincerity that were human wishes of any avail they would secure you earthly happiness beyond the power of all adverse fates.

I am glad you've not given me up. I am going through such a period as would leave any other man without a single friend.¹ But my friends are not like other men's friends and thus I know that when I come out (a better man let us hope) I shall be met by extended hands and by welcoming words.

The {op"}lean and slippered pantaloons"² who writes this wishes you to know that the trains for Pent Farm are the trains for Paris -- exactly. Also the Vienna express stops to set down and take up my guests. This is not (as You might think) in recognition of my literary achievements but only to suit the ends -- the inscrutable ends -- of the S[outh] E[astern] R[ailway].

I am torn between the wish to see you get a {op"}pup" (which would .p135 please You) and the desire to see You here (which [is] the true heart's desire).

I've a dozen more letters to write to-night. I left everything to the last. With love from us both to You both

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Conrad.

{lps}from Char[in]g X. best train. 11 AM notify the day before Pent being 2 miles from the Station and the fly man mighty touchy.

{lh}To Cora Crane

Text MS Columbia; Stallman 198

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

23/12/98

{lsa}My dear Mrs Crane.

{lb}You are indeed good and kind to remember us all so charmingly. Jess was delighted with this proof of your friendliness and as to the boy he simply went mad over the things. For sometime he looked with suspicion at the big doll but at last he kissed her and they are great friends now. As to the animals he won't part with them. He persists in saying Moo! to the goat. He takes it for a cow -- evidently.

I wish you could have given us some news from Stephen. Well, please god you will have your mind and your heart at rest soon.¹ I need not tell you it is the fervent wish of those who live here and however ineffectually, but not the less sincerely take part in your anxieties and hopes. May the Xmas be a season of joy indeed and the new year a year of peace to you. Amen.

Our heartiest and friendliest wishes to the good Auntie Ruedy.² We trust to see you all thre here before the young year has the time to grow old or even middle aged. Let me share in all that befall[s] you as you have done me the hono[u]r to allow me heretofore.

{lc}I am dear Mrs Crane Your faithful friend and servant

{ls}Jph.Conrad

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{lh}To H. G. Wells

Text MS Illinois; J-A, 1, 263

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

23/12/98

{lsa}My dear Wells.

{lb}We called yesterday by an act of inspiration so to speak, and with the neglect of common civilities did so at 2.45 pm. for which we were very properly punished by not finding you at home. We would have waited but we'd left the baby in the gutter (there was a fly¹ under him tho') and the days are too short to allow of camping in a friend's drawing room. So we went despondently. And by the bye. There was an Invisible Man (apparently of a jocose disposition) on your doorstep because when I rang (modestly) an invisible finger kept the button down (or in rather) and the bell jingling continuously to my extreme confusion (and the evident surprise of your girl). I wish you would keep your creations in some kind of order, confined in books or locked up in the cells of your brain to be let out at stated times (frequently, frequently of course!) instead of letting them wander about the premises, startling visitors who mean you no harm -- anyhow. My nerves can't stand that kind of thing -- and now I shan't come near you till next year. There!

Coming back we found Your Card. We haven't cards. We ain't civilized enough -- not yet. But the wishes for the health, happiness and peace of you both I am writing down here in mine and my wife's name are formulated with primitive sincerity, and the only conventional thing about them is the time of their voicing prescribed by the superstitions of men. Thus are we the slaves of a gang of fools unable to read your work aright and unwilling to buy a single entire edition of any of mine. Verily they deserve to have the Heat-Ray² turned upon them -- but I suppose it would be unseasonable just now. Conventions stand in the way of the most meritorious undertakings.

Has Henley come down here after all? When you favour me with a missive let me know how he is, if You know.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

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{lh}To Aniela Zago{a}rska

Text J-A, 1, 263; Najder 227¹

{lra}[Pent Farm]

Christmas 1898.

{lsa}My dear Aniela,

I have just received your letter and I am replying to it at once. The news that you give me distresses me. La vie est dure -- tre{g}s dure, for me also, my dearest.

I shall send you some cuttings (in envelopes, like letters) from the Saturday Review and other periodicals which deal with literature -- and I shall add occasionally some notes taken by myself.

Grant Allen's Woman Who Did,² c'est un livre mort. Gr. Allen is a man of inferior intelligence and his work is not art in any sense. The Woman Who Did had a kind of success, of curiosity mostly and that only among the philistines -- the sort of people who read Marie Corelli and Hall Caine.³ Neither of these writers belongs to literature. All three are very popular with the public -- and they are also puffed in the press. There are no lasting qualities in their work. The thought is commonplace and the style (?) without any distinction. They are popular because they express the common thought, and the common man is delighted to find himself in accord with people he supposes distinguished. This is the secret of many popularities. (You can develop this idea as an explanation of the enthusiasm of the public for books which are of no value). Grant Allen is considered a man of letters among scholars and a scholar among men of letters. He writes popular scientific manuals equally well. En somme -- un imbe{a}cile. Marie Corelli is not noticed critically by the

serious reviews. She is simply ignored. Her books sell largely. Hall Caine is a kind of male Marie Corelli. He is the great master of the art of self-advertising. He is always being interviewed by reporters and is simply mad with vanity. He is a megalomaniac, who thinks himself the

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greatest man of the century, quite a prodigy. He maintains that the lower part of his face is like Shakespeare and the upper like Jesus Christ. (This gives you an idea about the man.) Du reste aucune valeur, as you will see reading that book. Besides, one should say that he certainly made more than 60 thousand roubles on this book. His publisher is my publisher too -- and I know it from this source. For the American edition he got almost another 60,000 roubles.

Among the writers who deserve attention the first is Rudyard Kipling (his last book The Day's Work, a novel). J. M. Barrie -- a Scotsman. His last book Sentimental Tommy (last year). George Meredith did not bring out anything this year. The last volumes of the charming translation of Turgenev came out a fortnight ago. The translation is by Mrs. Constance Garnett.¹ George Moore has published the novel Evelyn Innes -- un succe{g}s d'estime. He is supposed to belong to the naturalistic school and Zola is his prophet. Tout c{cd}a, c'est tre{g}s vieux jeu. A certain Mr. T. Watts-Dunton published the novel Aylwin, a curiosity success, as this Watts-Dunton (who is a barrister) is apparently a friend of different celebrities in the world of Fine Arts (especially in the pre-Raphaelite School).² He has crammed them all into his book. H. G. Wells published this year The War of the Worlds and The Invisible Man. He is a very original writer, romancier du fantastique, with a very individualistic judgment in all things and an astonishing imagination.

But, my dearest, really I read nothing and I never look at the papers, so I know nothing of politics and literature. I have barely time to write, for I find work very hard and it is only with difficulty that I can earn a little bread. This is the whole truth.

I shall see Mr. Wells in a few days and I will ask him on your behalf for permission to translate The Invisible Man into Polish. If I can arrange this I will send you the book. The language is easy -- the story very interesting; it would make a very good serial for a paper. If you undertook this work and if you would send me the sheets as and when you finish them, I shall put notes in the margin which may help you. But you certainly know English as well as I do -- and I do not speak of your Polish!

For the moment I am not writing anything. Since the month of January! I have been in such a state that I have been unable to write

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anything. It was not until November that I started to work. The novel which was ordered from me is 10 months behind. This is catastrophe! and even now I am not at all well.

I kiss your hands. I embrace my little cousins.

{lc}Yours with all my heart,

{ls}K. Korzeniowski.

{lps}PS. With what I have written you and two books to review, on peut faire un article, -- pas une chose profonde, mais du bon journalisme. Try. I shall send you, at the same time as the cuttings, a few notes about the authors -- if I know anything about them. This is what the papers need. A chat, an appreciation, something light and interesting. Du journalisme tout pur. If you begin writing, try to do it. It always pays.

{lh}To William Blackwood

Text MS NLS; Blackburn 36

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

31/12/98

{lsa}Dear Mr Blackwood.

{lb}Come this moment to hand is your good le[t]ter whose kind wishes, believe me, I reciprocate with all my heart.

Your proposal delights me.¹ As it happens I am (and have been for the last 10 days) working for Maga. The thing is far advanced and would have been finished by this only our little boy fell ill, I was disturbed and upset and the work suffered. I expect to be ready in a very few days. It is a narrative after the manner of youth told by the same man dealing with his experiences on a river in Central Africa. The idea in it is not as obvious as in youth -- or at least not so obviously presented. I tell you all this, for tho' I have no doubts as to the workmanship I do not know whether the subject will commend itself to you for that particular number.² Of course I should be very glad to appear in it and shall try to hurry up the copy for that express purpose, but I wish you to understand that I am prepared to leave the ultimate decision as to the date of appearance to your decision after perusal.

The title I am thinking of is {op"}The Heart of Darkness" but the narrative is not gloomy The criminality of inefficiency and pure selfishness when .p140

tackling the civilizing work in Africa is a justifiable idea. The subject is of our time distinc[t]ly -- though not topically treated. It is a story as much as my Outpost of Progress was but, so to speak {op'}takes in' more -- is a little wider -- is less concentrated upon individuals. I destine it for the vol: which is to bear Your imprint. Its lenght* will be under 20.000 words as I see it now.¹ If suitable and you wish to curtail it a couple of pars: could be taken out -- from the proof, perhaps.

There is also the question of McClure securing copyright in the States. They bungled the Youth affair² and I am not in a position to despise the almighty dollar -- as yet.

All I can do is to hurry up. Meantime many thanks for thinking of me.

Friendly greetings to Your Nephew.³ I am delighted to be remembered by him.

{lc}I am dear Mr Blackwood, most

sincerely yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad

{lh}{lh}To Minnie Brooke

Text MS Texas; Unpublished

Tuesday. [1898 ?]⁴

{lsa}Dear Mrs. Brooke.

{lb}I write at once these few lines to tell you how grieved we both were to hear of your illness.

You had indeed a rough time of it lately!

You do say a lot of nice, kind things about my work. I am very grateful to You for the friendship and the interest you display. It is in the coin of sympathy and good will that my efforts towards literature are recompensed; and indeed it is the most precious kind of reward.

Thanks for kind enquiries about Jess and the boy. They are both well. My wife is going to write to you very soon. I am very unwilling to have their photographs taken. I hate photographs anyhow! But if there are any You shall be remembered first.

{lc}Believe me Your grateful and faithful servant

{ls}Jph Conrad.

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{lh}To E. L. Sanderson

Text MS Taylor; Unpublished

Sunday. [1897 - 1900]¹

{lsa}Dearest Ted

{lb}I hoped to invade you to-day, but got held up in the usual way. I am tired of the persistency and regularity of this odious infirmity.

We were grieved to hear of your elbow. Indeed I noticed at Elstree that it was worrying you, and told Jessie on my return. We saw lately the wonderful good effects of the treatment of which You speak and hope that it will not fail with You. The weather too will be improving before long -- or it ought to. I want to see You and shall [...] ² dare not run the risk of being laid up. I've been idle (or rather unproductive) too long already. Our dear love to you