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{lh}To David Meldrum

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 81

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

3^d Jan 1900

{lsa}My dear Mr Meldrum.

{lb}I hope you have all begun the year in good health and with easy minds. May luck and happiness attend you as long as the years keep rolling.

I am sending by this post a batch of MS. Lord Jim to end Ch XVII.¹
Of course the chap^s. are short.

The next batch should be the last, unless I were to forward an instalment before the 15th inst^t.

L. J. is a rather bad business for me on account of its length that is to say. Otherwise I am pleased with it and, I think, with some shadow of a reason.

But the artistic pleasure is neither here nor there. Bread is the thing.

When the end is delivered I hope Mr Blackwood will be kind enough to send me at least £{bp}80 (100 if possible). I have innumerable bills flapping about my ears! Thereupon I shall proceed to write 20000 words (either A seaman or First Command or a Skittish Cargo² or any two of them to make up the number) for publication serially when he thinks fit and convenient (if you only knew how sick I am of this contriving and of being always behind!) when we shall see how we stand for words v. sovereigns. By that time the book shall be out too, perhaps and fallen into the bottomless hole as likely as not. Well never mind. Some day, something will come up out of the pit.

Drop me a line as to yourself and family. Borys is not at all well with a cold and a cough. The grown-ups are so-so.

{lc}With my duty to Mrs Meldrum I

{lc}am always yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

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{lh}To John Galsworthy

Text MS POSK; Danilewicz 7

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

4 Jan 1900

{lsa}Dearest Jack.

{lb}And I thought you were on {op"}the shoot"! It is somehow more odious to think of you laid away in bed than of any other man I know. We all -- including Borys -- are very much concerned. He's very anxious to know whether you have a dog to lie on your bed till you get well. I can't imagine whence that form of anxiety. But it's well meant.

I am writing whether or no. But what a grind! I must stick to my hole and to my post to fight the awful shadows. It is an endless job. Thereupon {op'}so long' for the present as the Australians say. Let me know how you progress. It is hard to be kept from running up to you.

{lc}With all our affectionate

{lc}regards

{lc}Ever Your

{ls}Conrad.

{lh}To R. B. Cunninghame Graham

Text MS Dartmouth; Watts 129

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

4th Jan 1900

{lsa}Cher ami

{lb}I just write a word to thank you for putting a little heart into me. I was glad to know You are back. And what of the affair?¹ I am pretty miserable -- nothing new that! But difficulties are as it were closing round me; an irresistible march of black beetles I figure it to myself. What a fate to be so ingloriously devoured.

I think the historian is quite right.² It's a pity my style is not more popular and a thousand pities I don't write less slow. Of such that do is the Kingdom of the Earth. I don't care a damn for the best heaven ever invented by Jew or Gentile. And that's a fact.

And if the Kg^{om} of Earth were mine I would forthwith proceed to
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London to waylay you for a talk. As it is it shall not be -- alas! Borys is not well. Heavy cold. He sends his How do you do. Ipsissima verba.¹

{lc}Jessie's kind regards.

{lc}Weather beastly.

{lc}Ever yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To H. G. Wells

Text MS Illinois; Unpublished

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

6th Jan 1900

{lsa}My dear H G.

{lb}I send you my affectionate thanks for the book² and for the terms of the inscription on the fly-leaf; for the more I know of you -- in our inconclusive talks -- the more I feel that such should be the terms of our intercourse.

I've of course read the book more than once.

You get hold of one by your immense power of presentation, by your capacity to give shape, colour, aspect to the invisible; and the same power of presentation brings out the depth of things common and visible. Therefore to a man like me you are doubly fascinating. I think of the Plattner Story on one part and of A Catastrophe and The lost inheritance on the other. I can't and won't write platitudes about the power of your fancy.

The strenght*-- the creative strenght* -- of your imagination is the most obvious of Your gifts. I prefer to contemplate your qualities: the lucidity of expression which is admirable and often poetic, the wonderful {op'}easiness' of your work, your fidelity to that ideal intention which stands before the artist's eyes like a veiled figure at the end of a long gallery; distant and, perhaps forever, mysterious.

I feel very small before the concrete power of your phrases, and before your rectitude of purpose I feel like a fraud. This does not prevent me from taking your achievements to my heart and in that sense making them my own. I flatter myself that I have a capacity for that at least!

I don't go in for a detailed (and futile) review of the stories. The {op'}Cone' is weak. That and one or two others (two) seem to have dropped off
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before they were ripe. The stuff is in them indubitably. You've never -- as far as I know -- written anything hollow.

And with this last tribute to your manifold worth and affectionate regards from us both to you both I am my dear Wells Ever Yours
{ls}Conrad.

The poor little chap has been seedy with coughs and colds and shut up for days. I am sorry for him. His disposition is fiendish.

{lh}To William Blackwood and Sons

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 82

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

7 Jan 1900

{lsa}Messrs. Wm Blackwood & Sons London.

{lsa}Dear Sirs.

{lb}Herewith further inst^t of Lord Jim p 376-394. Chap.xviii.

I trust You've received all eight previous inst^{ts} p. 342-375 sent by registered packet.

When returning MS and type kindly register or keep back MS till type is received as in case of loss we would have no other copy available.

{lc}I am dear Sirs very faithfully yours

{ls}Joseph Conrad.

{lh}To David Meldrum

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 82

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

Tuesday. [9 January 1900]¹

{lsa}My dear Mr Meldrum.

{lb}I fully intended to let you know in my last letter that Mr B'wood had written to me and sent £{bp}20 which I received on Xmas day I believe.

My wife and I are very much distressed at her apparent neglect in answering Mrs Meldrum's letter; but the fact is that we had not the letter. Whether I -- after extracting your note -- have dropped the envelope with Mrs Meldrum's message into the waste paper basket, I can't say. It would be just like me -- my wife says. Unless we didn't get your last letter at all -- which is just barely possible. Most likely it isn't the P.O. but I who am the culprit. Pray present my apologies to Mrs Meldrum and Jessie's expressions of regret. I really ought to have a .p241

nurse -- since my wife must look also after the other child, to say nothing of the everlasting cooking.

I've sent off last Friday another inst of Jim Ch XVIII, rather longer than either of the three previous ones. I am driving on with the story and you may expect another Chap: shortly. And then the end! I do wish for the end. After the end a visit to you -- if convenient. Even if Jess couldn't come I would take a run up to town. But the pressing necessity to write more hangs over me. I don't know when and how I will ever fight my way back to the Rescue. I try not to think of it.

With our kind regards to you[r] wife and yourself I am always yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To David Meldrum

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 83

{lra}[Pent Farm]

15 Jan 1900

My Dear Mr Meldrum.

Just a line to tell you I've found Mrs Meldrum's and your own letter amongst the pages of returned MS! I had never looked for anything from you thinking the envelope was dispatched from the office.

You must have thought me wretchedly ungrateful -- while the truth is I am immensely touched by the warm tone of Your New Year's message. I do not know how to tell you how much I appreciate every proof of your friendly feeling -- and you have given me not a little of them. I

reciprocate with all my heart every wish of yours.

Post waits.

{lc}Ever yours most sincerely

{ls}Conrad.

{lps}Jessie is going to write

{lh}To Edward Garnett

Text MS Colgate; G. 163

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

15 Jan 1900

{lsa}Dearest Edward.

{lb}Thanks for the vol. of Turg:¹ I haven't yet looked in.

I shall send You the B'woods only I am trying to collect all the stray
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proofs so as to send you a lot of copy, since you won't wait till it is
finished.

Our love to you three

{lc}Ever yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lps}--Tell me what are your plans? Ford has been talking about some
weekly paper. Is there anything in it.

Times are deucedly hard here. But it's no use talking. This imbecile
war has just about done for me.

{lh}To R. B. Cunninghame Graham

Text MS Dartmouth; Watts 130

{lra}Pent Farm.

19 Jan. 1900.

{lsa}Tre{g}s cher ami.

{lb}It's worse than brutal of me not to have answered your letter sooner.

To say the truth I haven't the heart to write either MS or letters; but
now since I received the Sat Review I've something to write about. The
German Tramp is not only excellent et bien tape{a} but it is something
more.¹ Of your short pieces I don't know but this is the one I like best.
The execution has a vigour -- the right touch -- and an ease that delight
me. It is wonderful how you perceive and how you succeed in making
your perception obey and bend to your thought. The gold fish the escaped
Indians sketch² and this one stand in a group by themselves waiting for
more with just that easy probing touch which no one but you can give.
There is nothing in these that the most cantankerous caviller could
pronounce out of focus. They are much more of course than mere
Crane-like impressionism but even as impressionism these three
sketches are well nigh perfect.³

Well, I want to know -- you know, so you should write to me. I would
write to you too if it were not for shame of having nothing to write. Out of
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that a good letter could be concocted but my mind is not enough at ease
for such exercises. And I don't think you would care to get a mere
exercise in vacuo from me.

The leaden hours pass in pain but the days go in a flash; weeks
disappear into the bottomless pit before I can stretch out my hand and
with all this there is an abiding sense of heavy endless drag upon the
time. I am one of those who are condemned to run in a circle.¹ Now and
then only I have an illusion of progress but I disbelieve even illusions by
this time. And where indeed could I progress!

Of course there is a material basis for every state of mind, and so for

mine. Fame is a fraud -- and, scurvy thing as it is at best, it is beyond my reach. Profit I do not get -- since you did ask whether that was the matter. There may be the illusion of being a writer -- but I had the honour to remark that I no longer believe in illusions. This particular one I leave to my friends -- it's something to have even this to give.

The fact of the matter is things go badly with me, and nobody can help -- not even you unless you could invent something to make me write quicker. Palliatives won't do. And yet in the fourteen months I've been at the Pent I've written upwards of 100 000 words -- that's a fact too -- including of course some unutterable bosh for the unfinished Rescue. But I have lost all sense of reality; I look at the fields or sit before the blank sheet of paper as if I were in a dream. Want of mental vigour I suppose -- or

perhaps it is all the fault of the body? I am discouraged and weary and

Satis! Send me everything you publish. When is Heinemann going to {op'}produce' your book?²

Presentez mes devoirs a Madame Votre Femme. Jessie sends you her kind regards and Borys wishes to know whether you are coming to-morrow. And I wish you were here. Ever Yours
{ls}J Conrad.

{lh}To Edward Garnett

Text J-A, 1, 289; G. 163³

{lra}Pent Farm,

20 Jan. 1900.

{lsa}Dearest Edward,

{lb}You make my head whirl when you write like this. What a letter for a poor devil to get! You've knocked my evening's work on the head; I .p244

found it impossible to write any copy. You frighten me; because were I to let you take me up on these heights by your appreciation the fall before my own conscience's smile would be so heavy as to break every bone in my body. And yet what, oh! what would become of me if it were not for your brave words that warm like fire and feed like bread and make me drunk like wine!

No. I didn't know anything about Jim; and all I know now is that it pleases you; and I declare as true as there are blind, deaf-mute gods sitting above us (who are so clear-eyed; eloquent and sharp of hearing) I declare it is enough for me; for if you think that because I've not been sending you my MS., your opinion has ceased to be a living factor in my individual and artistic existence, you are lamentably mistaken. I was simply afraid. And I am afraid still. You see the work fragmentarily; and the blessed thing is so defective that even that far within it you can not possibly (with all your penetration and sympathy) you cannot possibly know where I tend and how I shall conclude this most inconclusive attempt. You don't; and the truth is that it is not my depth but my shallowness which makes me so inscrutable (?). Thus, (I go cold to think) the surprise reserved for you will be in the nature of a chair withdrawn from under one; something like a bad joke -- it will strike you no doubt. Bad and vile. Now had you taken the whole thing the fall would not have been so heavy, I imagine.

There has been a John Kochanowski a 15th century poet who wrote a threnody amongst other things and really our literature dates from him.¹ Of course his name is no more like mine than Brown is like Robinson. His name is derived from the word which in Polish means love while mine derives from the word root.²

Then in the thirties of the 19th century (or forties) there was a novelist of about say -- Trollope's rank (but not so good in his way) named Joseph Korzeniowski. That is also my name but the family is different, my full name being Joseph Theodor Konrad Na{l}e{cd}cz Korzeniowski, the underlined word being the appellation of our trade mark as thus [SEAL HERE] = Na{l}e{cd}cz without which none are genuine. As a matter of fact I and Alfred Borys Konrad Korzeniowski are the only two of that particular brand of Korzeniowski in existence. There are other families .p245

whose arms are like mine but whose names are altogether different.¹ This is a distinct bond -- though not a relationship in any sense. It may indicate a common origin lost in the midst of ages? It was always recognised as a title to good offices from a powerful family towards a humbler one -- and so on.

My paternal grandfather Theodor N. Korzeniowski served in the cavalry. Decorated with the cross of {op'}Virtuti Militari' (a plain white enamel with a green wreath of laurel and these words in the centre) something in the nature of V.C. Attained the rank of captain in 1830 when the Russo-Polish war occurred after which the so-called Polish Army ceased to exist. Two wounds.² Retired to a little hereditary estate adjoining the extensive possessions of the family of Soban{a}ski (they are in the Almanach de Gotha) great friends and I fancy distant relations. Administered the territorial fortune of Madame Melanie Soban{a}ska.³ Wrote a tragedy in 5 Acts, Verse, privately printed, and so extremely dull that no one was ever known to have read it through. I know I couldn't notwithstanding my family pride and the general piety of my disposition.

My other grandfather Joseph Bobrowski⁴ landowner, man of wit, owner of a famous stud of Steppe horses, lived and died on his estate of Orato{a}w; popular, greatly lamented. Never wrote but letters (and very few of these) and a large number of promissory notes dedicated to various Jews. Left a large family of sons and one daughter Eva -- my mother.⁵ There was an extraordinary Sister-Cult in that family from which I profited when left an orphan at the age of ten. And my mother certainly was no ordinary woman. Her correspondence with my father and with her brothers which in the year 1890 I have read and afterwards destroyed⁶ was a revelation to me; I shall never forget my delight, admiration and unutterable regret at my loss, (before I could appreciate her) which only then I fully understood. One of her brothers Thaddeus .p246

to whom I stand more in the relation of a son than of a nephew was a man of powerful intelligence and great force of character and possessed an enormous influence in the Three Provinces (Ukrai{um}ne, Volhynia and Podolia). A most distinguished man.¹ Another Stephen was in 1862 chief of the Polish Revolutionary Committee in Warsaw, and died assassinated soon after the Polish outbreak of 1863.²

None of the members of the many families to which these two are related was a literary man; all made sacrifices of fortune, liberty and life for the cause in which they believed; and very few had any illusions as to its success.

My father Apollonius N. Korzeniowski. Educated in the University of St. Petersburg. Department of Oriental Studies and Philology. No degree.³ Debts. Social successes and any amount of {op"}bonnes fortunes". Poet. Married in 1855. Came to Warsaw in 1860. Arrested in 1862 and after 10 months detention in the Citadel condemned to deportation into

Russia. First in Archangel,⁴ then in Tshernigow. My mother died in exile. My father liberated in '67 on the representation of Prince Gallitzin that he was no longer dangerous.⁵ He was dying. Comedy in 5 acts in verse of modern life (date about 1854).⁶ Trans: V. Hugo, Legende du Sie{g}cles. Travailleurs de la Mer. Hernani. Alf. de Vigny Chatterton.⁷ Drama. (Verse) Shakespeare. Much Ado About Nothing. As you Like it. Two Gentlemen of Verona. Comedy of Errors. Othello.⁸ (These I remember seeing in proofs when sent for his correction.⁹ There may have been others. Some of these I've read when I could be no more than eight or nine years old.) After his liberation, in Cracow (Austrian Poland), one of the Editorial Committee of a Newspaper (Kraj) then founded if I remember .p247
rightly by Prince Leo Sapieha (?)¹ but too ill to continue actively in the direction.

A man of great sensibilities; of exalted and dreamy temperament; with a terrible gift of irony and of gloomy disposition; withal of strong religious feeling degenerating after the loss of his wife into mysticism touched with despair. His aspect was distinguished; his conversation very fascinating; his face in repose sombre, lighted all over when he smiled. I remember him well. For the last two years of his life I lived alone with him -- but why go on?

There were piles of MS. Dramas, verse, prose, burnt after his death according to his last will. A friend of his a Polish critic of distinction wrote a pamphlet entitled {op"}A little known Poet" after his death.² And so finis.

Have I written enough? I certainly did not mean to write so much, when I began. I always intended to write something of the kind for Borys, so as to save all this from the abyss a few years longer. And probably he wouldn't care. What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba.³ Tempi Passati brother! Tempi passati. Let them go.

{lc}Ever yours
{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To David Meldrum

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 83

{lra}[Pent Farm]

Thursday. [8 February 1900]

{lsa}My dear Mr Meldrum.

{lb}Since the 25 of Jan I've been ill. Ten days in bed and it is only today that I managed to leave my bedroom.

Bad! Thank God tho' there is enough copy ahead to keep Maga going. They've been sending me proofs of the book but I haven't had the strength to look at them yet. I shall do so to-day perhaps.

I can't write any longer. Believe me always

{lc}Yours
{ls}Jph Conrad.

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{lh}To William Blackwood

Text MS NLS; Blackburn 84

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

12 Febr 1900

{lsa}My dear Mr Blackwood.

{lb}I've had an exceedingly rough time of it since the 25th of last month when beginning with a severe fit of malaria I continued with bronchitis* and an attack of gout, giving my wife a variety entertainment. The

poor woman can hardly stand, and as to myself I managed yesterday to totter downstairs for the first time.

The sorry news will explain my delay in returning proofs of *Maga*: and book, and the stoppage of further copy.

To-day (monday) I send off proofs of chap. xvi and xvii and also proofs of book, up to page 208. I have yet ch xviii in proof, which I shall forward very soon together with two more chap^{rs} of copy. After these another two chapters will see the end of Jim.²

You have no idea what an anxious time I had. The illness looked much more serious than it has turned out to be and the thought of {op'}copy' nearly distracted me. All's well that ends well.

{lc}Believe me dear Mr Blackwood

{lc}always very faithfully yours

{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To R. B. Cunninghame Graham

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 292; Watts 132

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

13 Febr 1900.

{lsa}Cher ami.

{lb}Je me suis colle{a}te{a} avec la mort ou peu s'en faut.³ However not this time yet it seems. I've been ill since the 26th of Jan^y. and have only tottered downstairs yesterday.

Malaria, bronchitis and gout. In reality a breakdown. I am better but I've no sense of rebound don't you know; I remain under the shadow.

Ma pauvre femme est extenuée{a}e.⁴ Nursing me, looking after the child,
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doing the housework. She could not find a moment to drop you a line of thanks for Borys' purse.¹ He was delighted with it, and she wanted badly to write and tell you so. I suppose it isn't so much want of time but weariness that prevented her. I am afraid she'll break down next and that would [be] the end of the world. I wish I could give her a little change but -- quelle mise{g}re.

I think that to-morrow I'll be able to begin writing again. What sort of stuff it'll be devil only knows. Moi aussi je suis extenuée{a}. Il faut se raidir. Pardon this jeremiad. Ever yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lh}To David Meldrum

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 85

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

Tuesday.

14 Febr 1900

{lsa}My dear M^r Meldrum

{lb}Ever so many thanks for your letter. I am able to write you that I am somewhat better but still cast down a bit. In an hour we shall leave here to go to H. G. Wells for two days. It'll do me good I think and perhaps when I get back I shall be able to grapple with pen ink and paper. I haven't done anything yet tho' my head is full (too full) of Jim's end but when it comes to putting it down black on white the brain wanders.

When I start 10 days will be enough to finish the thing.

I've sent 208 pp. of proofs corrected for book and also proofs for *Maga* of Ch: XVI XVII. I've been able to do that much anyhow. I've also written a few lines to Mr Blackwood.

If I could get £{bp}20 it would be a great convenience for my balance is very near zero; this worries one -- you know.

With kindest regards from us both to Mrs Meldrum and yourself

believe me
{lc}Always Yours
{ls}Jph. Conrad.
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{lh}To Ford Madox Ford

Text MS Yale; Unpublished
{lra}The Pent Stanford Kent
Sat. 17th Febr. 1900

{lsa}My dear Hueffer

{lb}Thanks for your letter which I received in Sandgate where we went on Tuesday to stay with H.G. Wells for two days.

I have nothing to boast of as regards my physical or mental condition; I am low and fanciful. On Tuesday I got so worried about your Christina that I made my wife wire to Ethel for news¹ my forebodings being of so gloomy a character that I could not bear the idea of asking you directly. This will illustrate my morbid condition at the time.

To-day I am less of an ass but my distaste to every form of literary exertion persists. What will be the end of this I can't imagine or rather I imagine only too well. I don't wonder You are not disposed to write. You had some anxiety and bother -- hadn't you? Would it do you good to come and talk over the last chap: again?² I am ready for that now. The MS is in Heinemann's hands.

I trust You are all well. Our love to you all

{lc}Ever Yours
{ls}Jph. Conrad.

{lh}To E. L. Sanderson

Text MS Yale; Unpublished
{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]
19 Febr. 1900

{lsa}Dearest Ted.

{lb}I had put off replying to your letter till I felt better. I had ten days in bed and so on with gout, bronchitis and malaria; a debauch of disease. It flattened me like a pancake, emptied my head and gave me a horror of every exertion. I am rather better now.

Jack³ who came charitably to see me last Sunday told me You are ordered to the front.⁴ As I understood him there's nothing between you and South Africa but a medical examination.

This news has interfered with my peace of mind not a little. However ready you may be for every sacrifice I deplore the necessity which
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removes you from the sphere of your real usefulness. Knowing as I do your moral worth, your intelligence and your sense of duty I cannot help feeling that your life-work would serve your country more than all the military virtues of courage and endurance you may be called upon to display. War is a wasteful business at best.

For Grey¹ I have nothing but congratulations and every wish of good luck and for the opportunities of distinction. He is young; it is his career after all.

It is sad for me, though a perfectly useless person with shattered nerves and a depressed mind, to sit here in my shell and think of you who are going and of those who remain. Let me know when you start and will it be from London or from South[ampt]on? I don't ask for a long letter; just a word. With our love.

{lc}Ever yours

{ls}Conrad.

{lh}To Helen Sanderson

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

19 Febr 1900

{lsa}My dear Mrs Sanderson.

{lb}Your letter reached me just as I was entering upon the period of convalescence after a rather sharp illness. Before I was mentally fit to answer You as I wished to answer, Jack Galsworthy brought me the news of Ted being ordered to South Africa.

I've just written to him trying to express some part of my thoughts; but to you I find it much more difficult to write. I know you are both ready for every sacrifice and ones heart goes out to you. That's all one can say. Since we heard the news you have not been out of our thoughts for a moment.

It is fortunate that -- as I firmly believe -- the campaign has taken a decisive turn. Thus your separation need not be very long after all. I think events shall move quickly now and I wouldn't be surprised if the heaviest of the fighting were actually over before Ted lands at Cape-town.² There is some comfort in that thought. If Ted must go, then (even apart from the feelings of those who love him) the sooner he is .p252

back the better it will be. He can do more for his country in Elstree¹ than in the field though wherever he is I know he will give of his best. May I ask you for a line or two about yourselves. I am very anxious and the truth is I am not fit to travel yet or you would see me in Elstree. Pardon this disconnected letter. I am so absurdly weak that I can't think clearly. Jessie sends her love and assurances of her heartfelt sympathy. She is completely knocked up with the nursing and anxiety. Believe me, dear Mrs Sanderson always your affectionate and faithful servant
{ls}Conrad.

{lh}To William Blackwood

Text MS NLS; Blackburn 86

{lra}[letterhead: Pent Farm]

20th Febr 1900.

{lsa}Dear M^r Blackwood.

{lb}Many thanks for your letter. When it arrived here I was away in Sandgate (only seven miles from here) staying with H.G. Wells for a much needed change.

It has done me some good so that yesterday I got hold of Jim again. When I get into the stride a fortnight will see the end of the story, though I shall not hurry myself since the end of a story is a very important and difficult part; the most difficult for me, to execute -- that is. It is always thought out before the story is begun.

The last proof and some more **copy** shall be sent in a couple of days.

As to your very kind offer of some money the truth is I had already written to M^r Meldrum asking whether it was feasible. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your kindness which seems proof against all my wearisome imperfections.

{lc}Believe me, dear Sir always very
faithfully yours

{ls}Joseph Conrad.

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{lh}To William Blackwood

Text MS NLS; Blackburn 87

{lra}The Pent.

Stanford

M^r Hythe.

26th Febr 1900.

{lsa}Dear Mr Blackwood.

{lb}Many thanks for the cheque for {bp}40 in further payment on acc^t of Lord Jim which I received this morning.

I am at work at last. Proofs leave here to-morrow morning together with 2 new chap:

I trust I shall be a credit to Maga with Lord Jim -- even to the very end. I mean to try hard.

Believe me, dear M^r Blackwood, always very faithfully yours¹

{lh}To Ford Madox Ford

*Text*MS Yale; Unpublished

{lra}[Pent Farm]

27 Febr 1900

{lsa}My dear Ford.

{lb}Many thanks for cheque for six guineas. The man has been here with his horse. I think we can do a trade tho' I am not enamoured of the animal.

Heinemann writes will do his damndest to serialise our story here.²

Come next week not this, because Jess is going to London for two days and there will be precious little to eat.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jsph Conrad.

{lps}My love to Your House.

{lh}To David Meldrum

Text MS Duke; Blackburn 88

{lra}The Pent.

Stanford. N^r Hythe.

3 Mch 1900

{lsa}My dear Mr Meldrum.

{lb}If I didn't write to you I did write a little -- as much as I could. Now I send You 14 pp. of pretty rough MS to be typed in two copies and I shall .p254

keep up that kind of dribble if you don't mind so as to write and revise at the same time for greater speed in getting the copy ready for the press. I've {op'} got hold' again, thank God. It seemed at first as though I had written my last line.

I have, inexcusably, neglected to let you know of Mr. B'wood's cheque (£{bp}40), which reached me a few days ago, and was made very welcome. Though, speaking frankly, I don't doubt I am giving Mr B'wood the equivalent of his money I am very touched by his patient acceptance of my unpunctuality and by his readiness to respond to my demands. I hope he does not doubt it.

I do long for a pause -- but I am afraid my illness has done away with my holiday. I must drive on. One decent success with a book would give me a chance to breathe freely. But will it ever come? I fear that from this vol: I must not expect relief. There's the war..!

I trust Mrs Meldrum yourself and the children are all well. My wife sends her kind regards Believe me always yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lh}To R. B. Cunninghame Graham

Text MS Dartmouth; J-A, 1, 293; Watts 133

{lra}The Pent.

3 March [1900]¹

{lsa}Tre{g}s cher ami.

{lb}Just a word to thank you for your letter. Vous me mettez du coeur au ventre² though I can't possibly agree to your praises of Jim. But as to Buta it is altogether and fundamentally good; good in matter -- that's of course -- but good wonderfully good in form and especially in expression.

I am sad we don't meet but I couldn't come to town for the play⁴ as I very much wished to do. No doubt managers are as stupid as the majority of publishers. I don't see the papers only the Standard. It had a rigmarole but not even an attempt at any sort of appreciation so I don't know how Don Juan went.⁵ Is it going to be printed?

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I am trying to go on with my work. It is hard but damn it all if it is only half as good as you say then why groan? Have you seen the last vol of Mrs Garnett's Turgenev?¹ There's a story there Three Portraits really fine. Also Enough, worth reading.

Mes devoirs tre{g}s respectueux a{g} Madame Votre Femme. Jessie sends her kindest regards. Borys is very fat and unruly but wears the heart you've given him round his neck and thinks no end of it. Poor little devil; if he had a decent father he would come to something perhaps.

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}Jph Conrad.

{lh}To Helen Sanderson

Text MS Yale; J-A, 1, 294²

{lra}The Pent

Stanford

N^r Hythe

17 Mch 1900

{lsa}My dear Mrs Sanderson.

{lb}My wife thought I had written while I was under the impression she had done so days ago. The mutual recriminations of the {op"} You're another" sort which ensued were the most violent that ever troubled the peace of this bucolic spot. You being of a charitable and forgiving disposition will be glad to hear we've made it up; and it is in consequence of a friendly agreement that I write to offer excuses for us both, and to thank You for the good and friendly thought of sending us your and Bab's photograph. Baby³ is very delightful; it is indeed over the contemplation of her and her mother's portrait that the light was thrown upon the horrible situation and the scenes of recrimination took place. And it is a pleasure to have you too; for in truth we have Miss Helen Watson but of Mrs Sanderson who is so often in our thoughts (and now more than ever) we had no portrait. You have changed, a little, I think. It is difficult to say how much for on the photograph you are sacrificed to the child. She is a dear, cheerful, intelligent little woman and we are very much in love with her.

I doubly congratulate you on the recent victories.⁴ The sooner the war comes to its unavoidable conclusion the better for those we love; and the

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better for the national conscience which in my view is as much part of the Empire as the extent of the earth it holds; and of as great importance

to its future and to its power. Nations, like men, often act first and reflect afterwards; the responsibility* is with the leaders and the verdict with history, when the generations are gone and the truth of their sins and virtues alone remains.

But I don't know why I should inflict upon you my valueless meditations; and besides it is late. I had better refrain. You will share with me the first news of our dear Ted? Will you not? I am not anxious in any way but every day he is in my thoughts -- he has his part in the silent life within, which goes on deep and steady under the noise, the exertions, the clashing thoughts of our daily existence.

Believe me, dear Mrs Sanderson, always your most affectionate friend and servant

{ls}Joseph Conrad.

{lps}Jessie sends her love and her thanks; she would also send the boy's photograph only we have nothing recent.

{lh}To Ford Madox Ford

Text Telegram, Yale; Unpublished

{lra}[26 March 1900]¹

{lsa}Hueffer Aldington

{lb}Splendid reports of novel original popular great hopes society hit McClure takes serialising in both countries² as he has good connection wirepullers suggested by Edward³ as more catching and first chapter a little thin but the last three completely convincing my heartiest congratulation love from us all

{ls}Conrad

{lh}To Edward Garnett

Text MS Colgate; G. 168

{lra}The Pent.

26 Mch 1900

{lsa}Dearest Edward.

{lb}All my bits of luck come through you! You must be -- indeed -- as Jess says -- the best of men. I consider the accept^{ce} of the Inh.^{ors} a distinct bit of luck.⁴ Jove! What a lark!

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I set myself to look upon the thing as a sort of skit upon the political (!) novel, fools of the Morley Roberts¹ sort do write. This in my heart of hearts. And poor H was dead in earnest! Oh Lord. How he worked! There is not a chapter I haven't made him write twice -- most of them three times over.

This is collaboration if you like! Joking apart the expenditure of nervous fluid was immense. There were moments when I cursed the day I was born and dared not look up at the light of day I had to live through with this thing on my mind. H has been as patient as no angel had ever been. I've been fiendish. I've been rude to him; if I've not called him names I've implied in my remarks and in the course of our discussions the most opprobrious epithets. He wouldn't recognize them. 'Pon my word it was touching. And there's no doubt that in the course of that agony I have been ready to weep more than once. Yet not for him. Not for him.

You'll have to burn this letter² -- but I shall say no more. Some day we shall meet and then -- !

I am still at Jim. I've been beastly ill in Febr^y. Jessie is hunting all over the house for the Febr^y N^{o3} to send you. I am old and sick and in debt -- but lately I've found I can still write -- it comes! it comes! -- and I am young and healthy and rich.

The question is will I ever write anything?

I've been cutting and slashing whole pars out of Jim. How bad Oh!
how bad! Why is it that a weary heaven has not pulverised me with a
wee little teeny weeny thunderbolt?

Love from us to you three. I shall write again when I get time to gasp
once or twice.

{lc}Ever yours

{lps}Jph Conrad.

{lps}I suppose you've scornfully detected whole slabs of my own precious
writing in that precious novel?⁴

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{lh}To Ford Madox Ford

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

{lra}[Pent Farm]

[late March 1900]¹

{lsa}My dear Ford.

{lb}I am sending you P[awling]'s letter about Inh^{ors} and Cheque {bp}15
together with receipt for {bp}30 which we sign jointly. The report of
Stephen Gwynn² to McClure was also very hopeful. I am driving hard.
It's awful Shall write soon. Send receipt on to Heinemann.

Our love

{lc}Ever Yours

{ls}J Conrad.

{lh}To Ford Madox Ford

Text MS Yale; Unpublished

{lra}Pent Farm

Saturday 31 Mch [1900]³

{lsa}My dear Ford.

{lb}My aunt⁴ is coming on Monday to stay a week. I would be awfully
glad if your wife and yourself could come on Wednesday to lunch. Jessie
thinks that if you started early to arrive here about 10 so as to give your
wife some time to rest on a couch before lunch and also a couple of hours
after the meal before You start for home, there would be no imprudence
in the proceeding. I am of course anxious very anxious to introduce my
{op'}collaborateur' to the good woman who represents to me so much of my
family -- she had known so many of them on whom no eye of man'll rest
again. And the pleasure would be more than doubled if Auntie Elsie
could come too. I would have given You longer notice but for the fact
that I didn't know till this morning the exact day of my visitor's arrival.

I think Jess is writing too, but she has been unwell (Borys too) and is
awfully busy.

McClure's letter⁵ is most satisfactory. Stephen Gwynn (connaissez-
Vous c{cd}a?) read the MS for him and is distracted with admiration. Is
consumed with the desire to make our acquaintance. McC. also wishes to
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see us. They propose to come down here and beg me to let you know
what day I fix for the visit. I fancy you would not mind Friday next.

Would you? At any rate I want to see McC on my own affairs¹ and if
anything prevented you we shall later on extort a lunch from our Yankee
editor. It's so much to the good. S. Gwynn says in his report {op"}It is a work
no publisher anxious to produce literature should think of refusing."

The literary quality (and most other things) is all your own in that book.

I've written these ipsissima verba to McClure.

{lc}With love Ever yours

{ls}J. Conrad.

