

Whenever I have a London  
morning which I intended to  
write you,  
but it has  
gone blank  
every day.

London 4<sup>th</sup> May 1897-

My dear Alice: Every time I  
sit down to write to you I have an impulse to begin  
my letters "dear little wife," but that I may not do  
as yet, though the day can not come too soon for me.  
It grows harder and harder to write to you because  
I cannot help telling you the monotonous story of my  
love and I fear that you will grow tired of hearing it.  
You do not know how much your name is on my  
lips. But it is necessarily so for "out of the fullness  
of the heart, the mouth speaketh" and you have posses-  
ed yourself of all my heart. I know now what the  
poets mean by the pain of loving, as well as I know  
what that fool was driving at, who said, "absence makes  
the heart grow fonder." I would that I were at your  
side this very moment; but though I am far away,  
the consciousness of our deep mutual love bears me  
up under many trying circumstances. The English  
love me with an undesired and much disliked social  
attention. Last Sunday night I was quite the star of a  
"Conversazione" at Mr. Moncure D. Conway's Institute  
in South Place. The night before I had been invited to  
attend the Salon dinner of the Royal Association of  
Painters in Water Colour, to this I absolutely refused to  
go and now they have sent me an invitation for an-  
other on May 11<sup>th</sup> so you see my misery was only post-  
poned. Saturday afternoon I must go to tea with Mrs.  
Cantley who is a daughter of Chief Justice Blair of Vir-  
ginia but who has been abroad some years.

To say that I do not like England would be untrue. I like it from its rural hedges to its crowded streets, from Gunnersbury Lane to Piccadilly + Fleet street. But the source of my discontent is that I love America more.

I think that I told you in my last letter of the subscription reading which I am to give under the auspices of the American Ambassador. It has been postponed until June. 2<sup>nd</sup>. I have severed my connection with Mrs. Pond and am doing much better. There are some details about her that I can better tell you when we are married. I don't know whether she has returned to America or not, she will do all she can to hunt me there. But as the children say, "I ain't sheart o' her." I had intended after leaving her to shorten my stay here to six months, but I have already been asked to lecture when the winter season opens and I may consent to do so, though whether I can lecture or not remains to be seen.

My novel grows apace, though I can hardly call that a novel which is merely the putting together of a half dozen distinct characters and setting them forth on their destiny along the commonplace lines suggested by their nature + environments. It has some plot, but both incident and incident seems to be the thing nowadays.

I hope you are writing some too. Don't let that miserable school kill out every other ambition. I shall be glad when I can take you entirely away from it, and give you that leisure which is most congenial to successful composition.

I must close now darling for other duties call me, but I send you a world of love + a wealth of kisses or the reverse. Even though I cannot answer promptly, do you write me as often as you can.

Ever your devoted lover - Paul. (DUNBAR)