Lettre de E. M. R. Dundas à Émile Zola du 19 février 1898

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Les folios

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4 Fichier(s)

Les mots clés

affaire Dreyfus

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6 Priory Road. 9D
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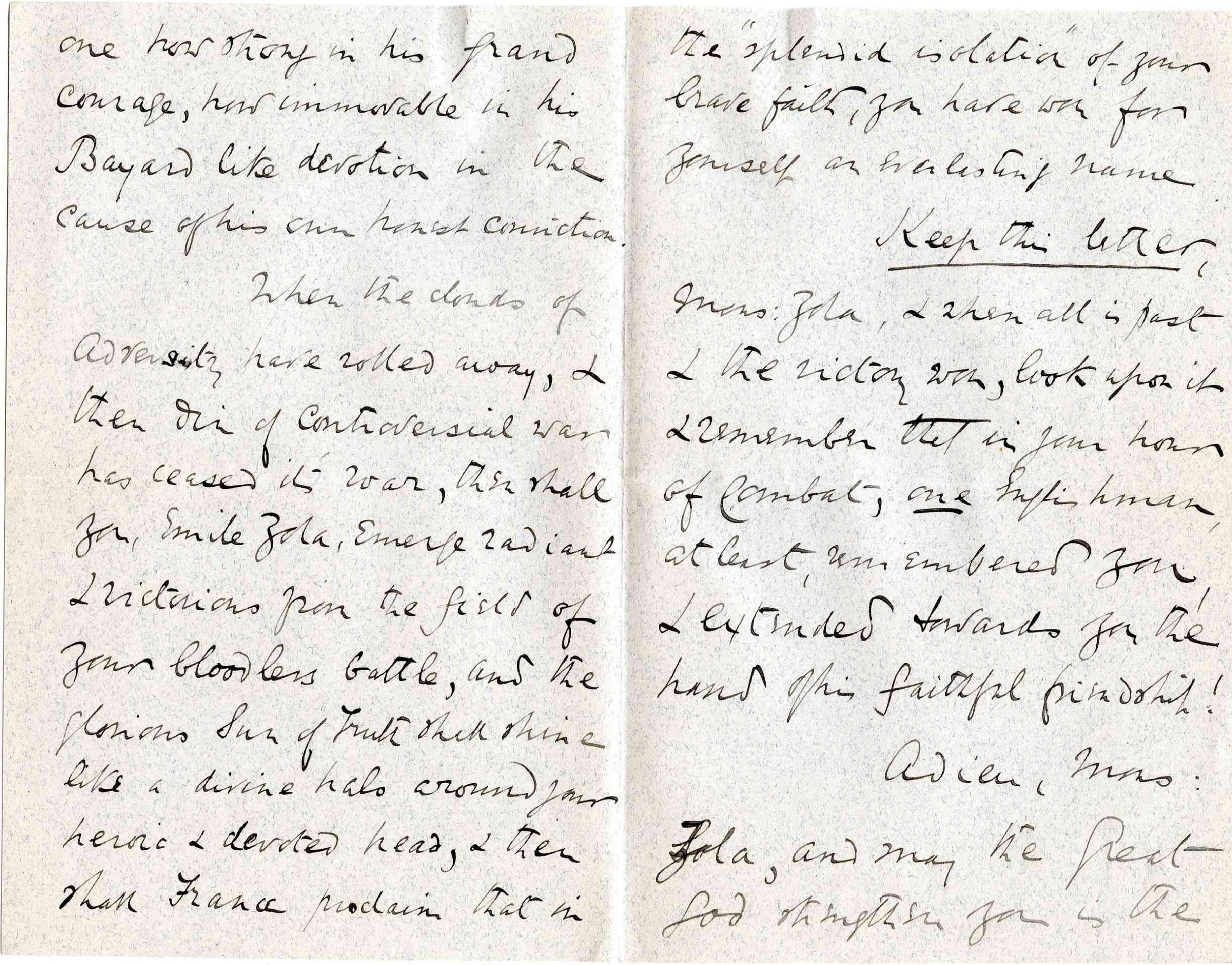
London. N.W.

19 Feb 1898.

Dear Mons: Zola,

Accept my honest & heartfelt goodwishes in this trying hour, and believe me when I say that I hope & trust you will Emerge triumphant & laurel crowned from the arena of your magnificent & stupendous Combat. One against many, but that



one how strong in his grand courage, how immovable in his Bayard like devotion in the cause of his own honest conviction.

When the clouds of Adversity have rolled away, & then din of Controversial war has ceased it's roar, then shall you, Emile Zola, Emerge radiant & victorious from the field of your bloodless battle, and the glorious Sun of Truth shall shine like a divine halo around your heroic & devoted head, & then shall France proclaim that in the "splendid isolation" of your brave faith, you have won for yourself an everlasting name.

Keep this letter, Mons: Zola, & when all is past & the victory won, look upon it & remember that in your hour of Combat, one Englishman, at least, remembered you, & extended towards you the hand of his faithful friendship!

Adieu, Mons: Zola, and may the great God strengthen you in the will of your friend & admirer.

E. M. R. Dundas.

I enclose a cutting from "Vectis" printed & edited by Dr. Dabbs, of Shanklin, Isle of Wight, a friend of mine. It may interest you.

Voltaire and Zola.

What Voltaire did a century and a half ago for the misjudged Jean Calas, another great Frenchman, Emile Zola, is doing to-day for Captain Alfred Dreyfus; in the cause of justice, he has braved the rage of opposed oppression, the brutal rabble's fury, and the venomous darts of threatened interests. His letter to the President of the Republic, printed in seven columns of *L'Aurore*, under the title "J'Accuse!" is a fearless, trenchant, and tremendous indictment of Colonel Du Paty de Clam—the Penny-Novelette intriguer, who constructed the case against Dreyfus; and of Generals Billot, de Boisdeffre, and Youse, whom he charges with positive knowledge of Dreyfus' innocence, and with deliberate concealment of the truth because of religious prejudice and professional fears.

This conscientious cry has provoked from the rotten Parisian press and the hysterical mob a characteristic howl of insult, calumny, and violent threat. *Le Jour* comes out with headlines running across the whole six columns of its front page, announcing—"Zola struck by mental aberration! Medical Consultation." The same paper declares, with regard to Joseph Reinach, one of the Dreyfus champions, that his ancestor made his fortune by buying from German officers, on their return from the war, stocks and shares which they had stolen from French houses.

Another journal denounces Zola in big headlines as "Zola the Shameful! Flower of Pus!" and a writer denounces him as "A German spy, a traitor, a coward, a monster." The article ends with the cry: "Zola to the Gallows."

A special sheet issued with "The Reply of All Frenchmen to Emile Zola," tells the author of "Germinal" and "Nana" *qu'il*

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n'a pas de meilleur parti à tirer de ses petits papiers à la louange de Dreyfus que de les donner à sa Mouquette pour lui servir de feuille de vigne.

And now Zola is being tried for his treason; perhaps will be imprisoned!

The Panama and Southern Railway thieves occupy the high places in the Legislature. The illustrious literary man who dares tell the truth about the general rottenness is sent to disgrace and imprisonment.

"Disgrace?" Nay, on second thoughts, that word scarcely goes with "imprisonment" in modern Paris. The disgraced persons are those who go free — especially those who wear decorations of the Government in their buttonholes.