

Jan^y 20th - I want you to read a book called "A
 life for a life" - that is if you ever have time or in-
 clination now for works of fiction of that kind -
 I think you did read one of those you so kindly got
 from the library for us when I was in Cape Town -
 I want you just to read it carefully, tho' the opening
 chapters may perhaps make you inclined to shut
 it up as stupid - not worth the trouble - & then
 if & when you have time to give your candid
 opinion abt it - you know I once read a tale of
 German life & manners at your asking - & I think I
 may fairly make this request in return - don't you?
 It is by a Miss Mulock - a Scotch lady - tho' this
 I have named not in the library - I dare say one
 of her many others might do - "The Head of the
 family" - "Agatha's husband" - "Olive" are some of
 hers wh I have read - I dare say from it being written
 by one of a different nation much in it or rather
 more so I believe you understand English as well
 wh seem different to you to what it wd strike an
 English man or woman - Still there are some things
 wh belong to human nature - & therefore to us natrs
 in particular - But in short - I want you very
 much to read it & to give your candid opinion
 on all of it wh may seem to you worth an opinion
 either way - wh of course some - perhaps you wd say
much of it doesn't - I want on mind at all now
 not that it is worth anyth - but because I think one
 generally reads a book fresher & best with an utter-
 ly unbias'd mind - Not that I flatter myself dear
 friend that my poor little opinion wd have so
 much weight - but at all events an opinion
 sets one on the look out I think as to whether
 such & such things are so - & therefore in look-
 ing more particularly to them rather destroy-
 ing the harmony of the entire impression a book
 wd naturally produce whether pleasant or the re-
 verse - I've been reading it for the 2nd time these last
 few days - at least parts of it - chancing to find
 it here - & it has set me thinking much of you
 & of many things - I mean of many of the great
 realities of life - & I ad like yr opinion of the

views she gives of them - Oh I do look -
long as for the next mail - & Thacker tells
me to lie down much - & this curtails my writ-
ing time greatly as you can fancy - to my sor-
row as regards writing to you - & dear Louis all I want
but I feel he is right - & its now nearly a year
very nearly - since dear Louis persuaded me to
settle to come to England for getting well - & here I
am / this very much better / mostly like strong or
well enough for it to be wise to think of re-
turning to Africa yet - so I feel I really must
play at getting well as it were any longer - but
try & set too in real earnest - But that is
so very difficult - as you doubtless knows
only too well - Its so hard to know how
much rest & doing nothing is wise & right
& when the boundary line bet divides it for
itself laziness lies - However I know
one thing which is I ought to be writing on to you
now - much as I care to do it - clock says bed
time - so Goodbye for tonight -

Scraps written at odd times
not knowing when I should send
them or not -