

standards, other standards upon the conditions they have to live under? Would they not go on developing better, and above all more soundly, upon their own lines, if they were given the chance?

We need, in dealing with the poor, 'to act sincerely in the presence of our ideas'; not to hold large ideas and act upon small ones; not to respect the poor in literature and treat them as silly children, who cannot be expected to know what is good for them, when we come to legislation. One of the principal characters in Mr. Joseph Conrad's *Nigger of the Narcissus* is an old seaman who has spent his life in ships' forecastles with no promotion, no material success, and scarcely a month ashore. During a gale his blind endurance at the wheel saves the ship. It is, we are made to feel, the culmination of his life and the beginning of his end. Judged by the standards in use, his life would appear a thing most ineffectual, his death of no note. It is one of the triumphs of a wonderful book that we see the old man in his true relation to the sea, to human existence, to what are called the eternal verities; a good sea-labourer, and as such a heroic figure; a life commonplace enough, but a life well to have lived. The great wise man, the heroic figures of the Bible