

(Dictated.)

Mayville N.Y.

March 30th 1887

Roberts Bros.

Gentlemen:

Yours of the 25th rec'd.

Your estimate

in regard to my husband's greatest popularity is at least reasonable. It is no doubt the general estimate. You probably regard the popularity as an accident and think it arose from the subject he handled. I regard the subject as having been made popular by the author and its decadence of interest as having been an unavoidable disadvantage to him because of this general impression. That his work lacks neither the vigor nor the popularity which first ensured his success I have abundant evidence. I do not wish you to feel that I claim especially favorable terms on any past success, however. As he informed you, no novel of his has had a sale of less than 30,000 and of a work, not under his own name within the past two years, 10,000

and upwards were sold in less than six months. I do not think "Button's Inn", will have a large sale. I have no idea that my income from it will amount to \$11,000 in the first 60 days, as was the case with "Bricks Without Straw", which was my special property; nor do I anticipate that it will come within two cents of \$24,000 in six months, as did "A Fool's Errand". I do not think, however that ~~XXXXXX~~ a great success is a necessary prelude to failure, but do think the fact itself a guarantee of fair success for other works as well as of sure profit to the publisher.

At the lowest, I think it safe to estimate the sale of "Button's Inn" at 15,000. I question the policy of putting it at \$1.25, and would not like to make any terms that would seem to require you to do so. I have been offered 15% by a well-known Boston House, coupled with exclusive conditions with which I do not care to be hampered. I will therefore accept 12½% from you, if I can make satisfactory arrangements with you for its

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sale through certain channels not open to you. For instance: as a favor to my husband I do not doubt that the Chicago Inter Ocean would advertise and dispose of to its subscribers a considerable number. I should say from 2,000 to 5,000. They have often done this with his works, he having been connected with that paper for many years. If you will let me know at what price you can furnish me books for this purpose I will see if we can arrange with them so as to secure a margin for myself as an equivalent for what I have yielded. Of course I shall expect to be put on a level with the largest jobber without regard to number in the purchases I may make.

Yours truly,