

FORDS, HOWARD, & HULBERT,
PUBLISHERS,
No. 30, Lafayette Place.

Dictated.

NEW YORK, Feb. 9th, 1891

A. W. Tourgee Esq.

My Dear Judge: -

Yours of the 7th received with the copy of Bishop Vincent's letter. He has also taken the trouble to send us a letter, saying: "I have forwarded to Judge Tourgee my opinion of his new book, 'Murvale Mastman.' It is a remarkable book and ought to be read by every minister, mechanic, merchant, millionaire and farmer in America."

We will utilize it through the Methodist papers as you suggest; perhaps also in the "Chautauquan," although our feeling about that is that the "Chautauquan" subscribers are so packed and jammed with the special line of reading laid out for them by their directors, that advertising other books than those upon the Chautauqua list is pretty nearly money thrown away.

You ask about some English reviews. We have requested Sampson Low & Co. to send a copy to Gladstone, Farrar, and any other prominent persons who they think

would be likely to say a good and influential word for it. They have answered promising to do so.

As to "Buttons' Inn," I suppose the plates of that little book would weigh about half a pound each, and old metal of that kind brings now about 30¢ a pound, so that you could easily see for yourself what that would be worth. As to their prices on the copies, - if I remember correctly they charged for cloth copies 30¢ each, which cost 20¢ or less; for paper copies 18¢, which may have cost 12¢; and for sheets 13¢, which possibly cost 8¢. If they are doing nothing with the book now and are not likely to, they ought to be willing to sell them at cost price, particularly if they have to pay no copyright upon them, as of course would be the case in clearing out the old edition to the author. It is a good deal of a question to know what to say as to the advisability of buying in these old copies. It is almost impossible to resuscitate a dead book unless it is so old that the present generation never heard of it, when it might have the effect of novelty. Mr. Bell reports that the sales of your books

in our hands are less in the form of sets than of single volumes. In fact most of your books in our hands are sold by separate volumes, as you have probably seen by the reports; some more than others.

To get up an attractive, illustrated edition of "Buttons Inn" -- even if the topic and the popularity of the book made it advisable -- it would be, I think, poor policy to use the old plates with a lot of full page illustrations; because the present fashion is rather for illustrations scattered through the text. This is done very largely in these days, both as to landscape and figure illustrations, not by engraving on wood, but by half-tone photographic reproductions from wash-drawings, which are then set into the text in all varieties of size, form and position [including, of course, some full page designs], and all printed on a calendered paper.

Yes, I had heard with exceeding pleasure of Miss Ainee's striking success at Phila. and wish that I might see some of her work. How far it could be made applicable to book-illustrating, of course we do not know, not having seen it. Probably she would know better herself.

But it seems to me that discussion of this would better come later, inasmuch as the getting of "Buttons Inn" ^{plates} and the remaining edition of nearly 600 volumes would be a handicap upon the new edition; especially as so many of them [469] are bound in cloth in Roberts' style, and would have to be either scattered by means of the Trade Sale Auction (probably at less than cost, which would of itself be a weight upon the new edition,) or rebound and sent out in paper covers, (which is something we never succeeded with yet.) Let us make "Eastman" go first; then we shall know where we are. [When I say "we" I mean, of course, both you and F. H. & H.]

You ask about Abbott. I did get from him a very cordial letter; I think I showed it to you. I have not as yet made any use of it, nor of the few others that have come in. The review of the book was left with Mr. Mabie, who told me that he had put it in the hands of a man who, he thought, would give it a good notice. Of course it must take its turn in their columns, since they have similar material ready constantly. The New York Sun had a good notice, and the World one that is not at all bad in many respects, though rather

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NEW YORK, Feb. 9th 1881

comical in others. ~~we~~ send you the latter. One sentence in it: I have underscored, because I believe *(no not exactly for his reasons!)* it. "The one thing that Judge Tourgee needs is a cold-blooded blue-pencil fiend, to handle his manuscript before it gets into book form." As I wrote Mrs. Tourgee when I read the copy, the book has an embarrassment of good things in it, and would have been far stronger if it were at least 25% briefer.

Please tell Mrs. T. that we have as she requested sent a copy to Lillian Whiting, Boston.

We are getting reviews every day and shall very shortly start out a lively dodger with booksellers imprint.

Respectfully Yours,
J. Howard