

FORDS, HOWARD, & HULBERT,

No. 30, Lafayette Place,

(Below Astor Library).

New York, April 29, 1891.

Hon. A. W. Tourgee.

My Dear Judge:-

We have been thinking and talking a good deal about a paper edition of "Eastman"; but, in the first place, there is simply no use at all in attempting to sell a paper covered book for \$1. It must be 50¢ at the highest, or it will not meet with a popular sale. The question of cost, therefore, enters immediately into it; and the idea of putting out a 545 page book at 50¢, and that not a book stolen from England but one paying a good healthy American copyright to a monopolistic author [I believe that is your idea of copyright] is rather alarming to the manufacturers.

We have taken counsel of quite a number of experienced jobbers here in the town, and, one and all, they say: "Do not even think of putting the book into paper until you have got it pretty well squeezed for

cloth; if you get out a paper edition you may as well consider that the sale of the cloth is ended. Wait, therefore, until it has had its run in cloth and then give it another go in paper."

It has occurred to us, therefore, that it might be possible to benefit that book, both as a work of art and as an object to ~~be~~ manufactured and jobbed. Upon this basis: I suppose that at least one-half of the notices of the book, when there was any evidence that the reviewers took any pains to read and review on their own hook, expressed the opinion that it was a great pity that so graphic a story, carrying its own philosophy and moral so well expressed, in the current of its own events and experiences, should have been lumbered up with so many discussions and sermons and unnecessary preachments. I know that you have a great distrust of the average reader, and feel that unless the matter is explained to him to the last detail he is not going to understand it, but I do not agree with you; I feel sure that a good many pages could be taken out of "Murvale Eastman" with almost indisputable benefit to the story as a story, and ^{nearby} to the philosophy and ethics which you wish that story to convey.

What do you think about it? Let us know!

Faithfully,
