

A.W.T. PAPERS 16 Jul-Oct 1891

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My dear Judge

I am very glad to learn that Mrs & Miss Fougere are well again. Their sickness has been a severe experience for you all, to say nothing of our disappointment.

Some six months ago I promised the History Co to go to Mexico for them, and told my family - wife & 4 little ones - if they would learn to speak Spanish I would take them. They have been and are at work on the proposition. I expect to be gone about four months. I do not see how I could possibly do the work as laid out by you.

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I know you will pardon me if I speak with frankness. You have outlined a magnificent proposition, one that would have great fascination for me had I the time and strength to carry it out.

Let me make a suggestion. Suppose you give up going to Spanish America and Europe. You can get quite a vivid description of those countries from books, and to gather material on the customs, etc. of the times from Spanish archives, would be long and laborious, with meager results, comparatively. Then do both of the books yourself. I could not help you any way on the story, and my name could not rightly appear in connection with it. With the material before you, in English, you would do the other book much better than I. I say in English, because you would want it taken out upon a plan of your own making, not always in the length or language of the original.

I might help you to such material
 as I have, in this way. There are here
 one or two of my old library men,
 who are thoroughly conversant with
 Spanish, and used to taking out
 material according to a plan. The
 plan should be very carefully detailed -
 subjects + sub-subjects, + if you wanted
 some few important passages, taken
 out in the original, under quotation
 marks, &c &c. I have seen
 one of these men to-day, and
 he says he will do any work
 you may have for him to
 the best of his ability at 25 cents
 a folio of 100 words. I need not
 say that I and my library are
 freely and entirely at your service

I hope you will pardon me
 for making this suggestion, but not
 being able to do the work myself
 I think I can see your way clear to
 do it yourself, & better than I could do it.
 You are a rapid worker, I am not. If we
 had gone on with the work in the spring, I
 should have had much of the material
 out by this time, and be able to take it with
 me to Mexico, & work on it some there.
 But I doubt even then if I would have had
 to take up a separate volume for each
 with high esteem, & wishing to
 succeed.