

TWENTY-SEVEN PARK PLACE

NEW YORK

Dec. 8. 1887

Dear Judge:

Your letter regarding
M. Moot was duly received.

I think he is as right in being
amused by the printer's delay now
as the printer was in kicking
about his delays before.

I determined some time ago
not to be a buffer between these
forces, and so notified them
both, telling them frankly they
were both in the wrong, ad-
vising each what to do and
facilitating their intercourse
by every humanly possible
expedient — never holding
proof in my own hands longer
than was necessary to read it
(dropping everything else, a
matter which, while contem-
plated by me when I first
arranged with Moot long ago,
has become very embarrassing

now, when my time is fully occu-
pied with pressing affairs, & but
I still give this proof the prefer-
ence.) They have neither of
them adopted a single sug-
gestion from me — notably in
respect of working gradually,
& so making more speed. They
have both persistently stuck
to the plan which is the most
wasteful of time and patience
and the most fruitful of
disagreement. I beg the
printer to keep a few men
steadily on the job, & send me
chapter by chapter as he
turns it out; but he knows
his own business and let me
bang & whang at him for proof,
until he gets five, eight, ten
chapters set, & then he fires
them at me to read in one
night and sits with a halo
of complacent satisfaction

about him, until the proof comes back. Meanwhile his force gets to work on other jobs.

This is the author's opportunity. He would perish sooner than send me a few chapters as he turns them out. When he gets good and ready he fires at me five, ten, fifteen chapters, and then sits and wonders why a printer that amounts to anything cannot at a day's notice put all hands on his job and let him have the proof.

So they go. They are two cranks, Judge, and nothing less; and while my time, my patience and my ride-right oil are freely at their disposal, I'm d—d if I am going to take any responsibility for the ~~inter~~ consequences of the interplay

of their folly.

They both know they are right. You never saw two men with diametrically opposite views who were each so cock-sure he was right. I have patiently endeavored to point out to each the particulars in which he was wrong, or in which whether wrong or not he might facilitate the common ~~and~~ purpose. Then he falls back on the times when he was indubitably right, and tells me what might have happened if the other fellow hadn't been wrong.

In the present hitch I had set Williams (the printer) down as being the offender. He got a lot of copy in October, gave me proof about a week later of a fraction of it, and I had been able

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to get nothing out of him since. He now claims that about the time he sent me proof of 3 chapters (xxxii, xxxiii & xxxiv) he sent also five more (xxxv—xxxix)

I have never seen them and my book (a very careful record of the date of every receipt & transmissal of copy or proof) does not show it. He has today furnished me with these ~~three~~ chapters, which I am reading — at considerable sacrifice on account of the short notice & large quantity — and sending to Moot. The page proofs of the 4 chapters I got today also and have sent to the foundry — releasing type for more composition at once. If W. Moot will have

the 5 chapters now sent read and returned promptly, the balance of the book will be set very quickly.

But he won't: — I have so many times had both these fellows at a point where I have said: "Now, never mind how right you have been before; be right now, and by giving every facility to ^{the printer} _{the author} throw the responsibility on him of further delay — but without effect, that I have found the position of mediator very discouraging. He'll keep the proof as long as he please, & send me instead a rip snorting arraignment of the printer, which will no doubt contain much matter very pertinent for a jury but not adding one

cut it to the stature of his book. I cannot understand two men so desirous, the one of his book and the other of his money, who are so averse to following the narrow way that leads to both their objects.

[I qualify the above by saying that, whatever my book may reveal — I haven't it by me — I do not say that Mr. Moot has generally kept proof long; my impression is that while on occasion he has, in general he has not. His sins have related to copy as a rule. I make the prediction simply to illustrate the cursedness that seems to affect the parties to this enterprise.]

Now that the end is in

sight, I sincerely hope that both of them will do their part with as little friction or delay as I have done mine; and if either of them chooses to regard "your Mr. Howard as a fraud," I have abundant records and documents to establish the contrary to your satisfaction — and that is all I care about. It has been God's mercy that "your Mr. Howard" isn't in England by this time, as he may be before the winter is over.

There are just two points in which my conduct may be criticised. ① The selection of the printer. I got estimates from two printers — our old friend Little & Williams, the latter a printer who has done

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much very acceptable work for F. H. O. H., and a friend & protégé of Mr. Hulbert's. Little's prices were higher & the contract was made between Moot & Williams.

(2) If I had had more definite information from Williams, this last 5 chapters (supposing him really to have set them at the time he claimed, which I have no special reason to doubt) would have been known to me to be in type. But I have had little but obijurgation by Williams of Moot or by Moot of Williams in response to my demands for proof or copy, as the case might be. So far, however, as this last batch of 5 chaps.

is concerned I should probably
^{ought to} have known something about
it, even if it had taken some
time to learn it.

I am now (1) attending to some
outside business of my own; (2) attend-
ing to all my father's business
& writing all his letters - because
of his feebleness; (3) getting up
a sumptuous memorial to
Mr. Gunn, my old teacher, and
(4) ~~the~~ presumably devoting all
my time to the New York Tribune
- to which the vicissitudes of
journalistic life have trans-
ferred what I am pleased to
call my talents from The Herald.
I am getting along very well
with all except The Tribune, ⁱⁿ
I am forced to neglect by the
pressure of the others. When I
get through with them I shall
have time to make some money
& will send you a Christmas card.
Faithfully Yours H. W. B. H.