

Phila. March 26th 1889

Mr. H. H. Harrison:

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 23^d inst. is recd.

I know of nothing that could give me greater pleasure than the "disquiet" you say your readers are expressing in regard to Factolus Prime. It is simply the healthful effect of a strong truth. I felt - out to ask American Christianity a question that ought to give it the yipes. I did it by presenting a realistic picture of one possible day in the life of a half dozen actual types. I asked a question which it is the especial business of American Christianity to answer. God much write the sequel. That is of the future

work of today — and your readers' hearts are the palm-leafets on which its characters will be traced. I have depicted an actual Christmas out of the lives and thoughts of actual existing men and women of today.

At the end of it I put a query as God puts at the end of every day's life. Given these elements in today — in religion, in society, in politics, — what shall be the tomorrow?

There is no better presage of this than the disgust of which you speak: It is simply the anger of the opium-eater aroused out of his dream. So

far as our moral relations to the questions propounded in this

story of a day — you must re-
 member it is only one day's story
 — is concerned, we have simply
 been chewing Comstock's India
 until we are unpleasantly dis-
 turbed by a sound healthy douche
 of actuality.

Please tell your readers
 for me, with all kindness and sin-
 cerity, that if they will get upon
 their knees and study their own
 hearts as Christians and American
 citizens, in the light of Paulus
 Prime's curiously distorted life —
 a life dwarfed and crippled by the
 ordinary events and sentiments of
 our average life — that they will

do more than any human genius
 can towards determining what the
~~result~~^{sequel} of the lives of those millions
 who stand where Benny and Egan are,
 shall be. I did not write *Parables*
Prime merely to please — and cer-
 tainly not to instruct ^{— your readers.} It would
 ill-become me to think that I
 could instruct the wise and Christian
 people of our land. I only wrote
 it to impell them to ask ^{themselves} what
 such Christmas days and Christmas
 thoughts and Christmas complacency
 will bring forth in the unnumbered
 tomorrows of earth and the bound-
 less tomorrow of Eternity. It is
 not for me to preach or to prophesy but

I have done faithfully what it is the
province of the novelist to do - I have
pointed the truth in today's life. If
it is an unpleasant ^{truth} ~~one~~, I cannot
help it. There is no sequel yet to be
written, because God only knows
what shall come out of these ele-
ments. If I should merely prolong
the lines and write what logic
and reason would seem to pro-
claim as the truth to be derived
therefrom - the facts of a new
tomorrow - I might have to write
in colors deep enough to trans-
form your readers' disintegrated
fiction into horror.

As to the Fall's story, I have

no objection to making it ⁶ ~~unch~~
 along the lines indicated by Pectolus
 Prime but I am by no means
 inclined to bind myself to a
 sequel, nor do I think your pres-
 ent dissatisfaction a fit index
 of what you desire. You will find that
 dissatisfaction is one of the surest indi-
 cations of a powerful impression and
 the best thing that could happen to a
 story is to have its readers insist
 that it does not end as they had
 craved that it should.

Yours truly
 N. W. Lowmyer