

Mayville N. Y.

June 13<sup>th</sup> 1889.

Robert Bonner's Sons:

Gentlemen: Yours of the 8<sup>th</sup>

inst rec'd. I very well understand your disinclination to contract for a story from an author with whom you have not already had relations, without seeing the work itself; <sup>but</sup> ~~it is absolutely necessary that I do not~~ <sup>with</sup> ~~which my serial medium is not in keeping~~ <sup>with</sup> ~~writing are.~~ I do not spare any pains in adapting work to serial use, frequently, I may say generally, recast my work for book publication, believing that serial interest depends on altogether different qualities than a book which is to be read through at a sitting. In preparing a serial therefore, I have <sup>especial</sup> regard to the length of installment required, and endeavor to make each one as interesting even to a reader who has

not read the previous chapters. It is  
for this reason in a great measure,  
~~that~~ I have to know my medium  
before I write a serial, in order that  
I may adapt, not so much the  
matter as the form, to the needs of  
the medium in which it is to ap-  
pear. Some require a long and some  
a short installment. It is not my  
business to prescribe these conditions.  
I take it that a publisher has studied  
these things for himself and knows what  
he wants, and it is an author's business  
to adapt his work to them. If he knows  
them and his audience beforehand he  
can do so. If he does not know them  
he is not likely to meet them.

As to the length of the story, I prefer to  
write one from 75,000 to 100,000 words as I  
find that the most profitable book-length and  
of course, needs less recasting. The num-  
ber of installments I can make to suit  
your requirement - that is, I presume, I can,  
if they should be such as I am un-  
able to comply with, I should most

assuredly decline the work.

I could not give you an elaborate  
scenario of the story because at this time  
because of these very things. The leading  
character will be a western boy of the  
transition epoch about 1840 to 1850 - just  
before the railroads and telegraph came  
in. He will represent the middle west, of  
that time, that is, the Ohio valley.

He will develop a boyish fondness  
for horses and an instruction capacity  
for their management.

His father will be a strict rather harsh  
man who designs the son for the min-  
istry; his mother a rather weak woman  
who wavers between her submission  
to her husband's wishes and her son's de-  
sires. He will probably visit the least first as  
a doctor's assistant - ~~probably an uncle~~.

<sup>Whitely</sup>  
As a boy he will form an attachment for  
the daughter of one of those western mer-  
chants of that almost forgotten epoch  
though the time is so recent, when the rivers  
of robbers and schrooners were known  
as the "lords of the lakes."

He will go to college in his own way  
and on his own hook securing the money  
by the sale of a volume he has discovered  
and partially developed.

He will overcome his sweethearts' fathers' ~~needs~~ objection by a bit of "horse-play" of a ~~more~~ rather exciting character.

He will probably enter the army and meet one or two of the horse-characters already developed somewhere in Tennessee and then encounter one or two others - new ones.

After the close of the war he probably becomes a New York business man. This is not yet determined; neither are the foils and counter-foils of the human or horse characters fully elaborated and can not be until the various questions of fitting them are determined.

I did not at all intend to call attention to my works by the list I sent, but to some horse-characters to show if it had chanced to escape you, my capacity for dealing with the horse as a character. I have learned that all people love horses if they are allowed to become acquainted with them in good company and under pleasant and attractive ~~conditions~~ circumstances - nothing love or swear, but love horse - ask natural picture of ~~the~~ <sup>horses</sup> ~~horses~~.

~~our~~ ~~of life~~ which our every-day life of various sorts,  
which ~~show~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~most~~ relief against  
are brought out by relations with the  
house.

My method of writing such a story is to fix upon  
the chief characters, then elaborate the <sup>main</sup> chief incidents  
according to the number of conclusions required  
and then combine the whole. I know it is a tedious  
laborious method but it pays in the completeness  
of the resulting work. While, therefore, I have a ~~few~~  
large proportion of the leading incidents, those  
which I rely upon to give colour to the story al-  
ready prepared, the story itself is only a skele-  
ton in my mind and will remain so until  
I am ready to work on it section by section as I  
see its effect and feel its touch.

I do not know whether you care for the  
suggestion or whether indeed you permit any sug-  
gestions of that sort to be made, but it is a fact  
that a great many people who are readers of my  
works and fond of my hours are not readers  
of the ledger. And I think such a feature would