

Marion, Iowa, Nov. 12, 1889.

My dear Judge:- I am at home again and in the harness once more.- I find plenty to do. I had a most delightful visit in every respect. Especially did I enjoy my visit at your home. I shall not soon forget the day on Lake Chautauqua even if we were not successful in landing any of the monsters of the deep. I enjoyed every minute of the day. I was very glad to see you in your own home, to meet the good wife, and to have a peep into your workshop. As I read your books hereafter, I shall always have a picture of you at work and Mrs. Tourgee at the typewriter.

I found my two babes at Kent well and very glad to see me. I was equally glad to see them. We got home the next week and ^{found} the rest of the family well. We have had considerable diphtheria in town this fall and this gives us not a little anxiety. I have buried one babe since my return that died of that dire disease.

I want to thank you for the pleasure those volumes gave me. The short story from Tolstoi is charming. I enjoyed the second story very much, but regret that it is only a fragment apparently. As a narrative it is fine. The interest never lags. It is doubtless a true picture of the life that he describes. I thought for a time he was going to make one of the highest and grandest characters of Olenin. The young man at one time had such grand aspirations and seemed about to give his life to helping others. True he avoided the excesses of his associates in some measure and he actually gave a horse to his rival,

but he was not great in the very place that greatness was needed. He found out, however, that there is such a thing as love. Perhaps after all Marianka is the strong character. Colette is delightful.

I am trying to get the young people of my church interested in literary themes, but do not succeed in as high a degree as I would like. I believe that I have elevated the tone of the young people some. I am almost persuaded that one's unconscious influence is the greatest that he wields. I often find that the incidental remark that I make almost without thought is the one that finds lodgment in some mind. Again I sometimes mention a book in the pulpit without thinking of urging any one to read it, and I find before the week is out some young person is looking the book up. Pardon my moralizing.

I am writing this on a cheap machine that I got for the children. I find it necessary to ^{have} up the same placard that the organist of a church in a mining town nailed to his instrument: "Don't shoot the player. He is doing the best that he can."

Kind regards to Mrs. Tourgee, the sister, and "Judge's boy."

Yours very truly,

W. W. Gist