

Penicuik

Feb 9th

Dear Unwin,

I quite understand about simultaneous publication in America. I only hope that you can set a time for the issue of the book, because I want to come up to town a week or ten days after... in the sort of psychological moment to meet a number of authors and critics at the instigation of my friend Nicoll. And be it remembered that I have to make arrangements for locum tenens etc here so that I must know in good time. I had tentatively arranged to be away from the 12th to the end of March, but I daresay I could put it back a week or so if you think it absolutely impossible that the book can be out on the 1st or 6th. Of course if it can be managed, let it be tried and done – the sooner the better, and I am sure that you will hurry up as fast as you can.

As you say about map and frontispiece, perhaps it is better not to march too close at the heels of Stevenson, Haggard and Co, so we may give up the idea of a frontispiece. Your idea of a facsimile is a capital one, unfortunately the document is in the crown offices and they won't permit a loan. I have only the transcript in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials dated 1830 which it would be no use copying. So that we shall just have to go to press without it.

The pattern of cloth sent is of course just the thing – the quality is just what I want and should like. If that particularly metallic gloss and quality could be got in the shade of the Stickit, that would be exactly what I want – It was for the texture and finish more than the shade that I sent the book of plays. My greatest anxiety is lest the book should be fat like Byron 'I hate your dumpy women' .. and dumpy books as well. So in despite of the tendency for adipose, keep the book slim.

I sent a line to your address which you might send on to Mark Rutherford, congratulating him on his book 'Catherine Furze' which I have just read. It is beautiful. 'Markam Howard' not to hand yet but when it does come I shall note the cloth and let you know what I think in my next letter. There is no more proof to hand this morning so that I am in the proud position of being clear.

Ever truly yours

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