

Bank House,  
Penicuik,  
Midlothian.

May 1st 1897

Dear Douglas Lad,

Alas, I shan't be in town, I kenna when. I was on the Continent recently for a walk up tour, but was only one night in London on my way North. I am a kind of hermit just now till things work round. I have the children here and they are a perennial joy.

I don't care a damn for the crew of "can't-do-it-myself-so-you-shan't." My life is my work and my work is my life - just now anyway. By and by, please the eternities will come pleasure and the unbound heart. But it is good to have a friend in among the throngs of men like Douglas Sladen. Some day I will thank him and have a try at getting square.

Yes, I think it may be the Gossists. I had the ill luck to offend him once and also to refuse dealings with a certain distinguished firm which shall be nameless. I never go near him now hence this business. But I never read a word of it - not one syllable, so what I don't know does not hurt.

Many thanks for the kind and capital reviews. You are kind.

You will like both Lochinvar and The Red Axe. There are women after your mind in them both, whom it makes even the author's heart warm to think about. It may interest you to know that the Graphic people think the Red Axe about as good a serial as ever came into their place. I wish to God you would say a word to Cox to get me Frank Richards to illustrate my coming Queen story. You see what their kind of things they put in if left to the freedom of their own will. The only good thing in [ ] Lads Love is "Nance" and that I sent him - a photograph I mean, so small [thanks ] But the illustrations to Lochinvar and The Red Axe (for the graphic) are wonderful. I don't want Sauber, and Richards does with spirit and insight mystery too what I suggest. I first interpreter. Tell Cox and I will write him too. There's a born angel.

My good affectionate greetings to you and your loved ones.

Believe me

Dear Douglas, [ ] and true.

Ever your friend,  
S.R.Crockett