

Bank House,
Penicuik,
Midlothian.
24 Feb, 1897

Dear Douglas of the Warm Heart,

Certainly - herewith is a guinea for Moore. I am very glad to join and will come as soon as I can and rejoice with you.

Fact is, I've been through a good deal since I saw you, and could I tell you which I can't at present (on paper) I know I should be sure of your sympathy.

My wife's distressing illness and its nature have kept me perhaps too much away from my fellows.

But time and the strong heart will find a way through. I have found unremitting work my best anodyne - and in that I have been happy. Well don't whine and keep face forward is the best rule.

I am such a Hermit up here in my chalet among the woods that I had not so much as heard of Christie Murray's attacks. But I am sorry to hear of them. Poor chap, hasn't he been down on his luck of late? You never know what a fellow may be driven to do in that case. Thank you dear boy, go in and wipe the floor with him. Own up if you like that I've got all the faults; but if he says that I am not a square man honestly doing his best, or if he calls me mean or conceited - tell him he lies.

I suppose the fact that it is past four years next April since I published "The Stickit Minister" makes some of the old stagers sore. But the one thing is to keep right along doing one's best every time and all the time, and the absolute logic of facts confounds both specious lie and venomous attack. And I suppose it is true also I suppose it is true also that only strong men and live men are attacked.

Praise the pigs, I have good friends who won't stand by with their hands in their pockets while the enemy uses up their stickpots. And the initials of one of these friends is Douglas Sladen.

I say if you have a copy of one of these assaults you might send it to Andrew Lang at 8 Gibson Place, St Andrews. He usually likes to see these things and sometimes takes a hand himself on the side of fair play. As you say I shan't read a word of them, even if some candid ass sends them. But nobody has done so; so there is some sense in the world. Thank you dear boy for your kind sympathy - there are other things, besides which newspaper attacks are but as the tickling of summer flies. I transfer from good feeling to what really hurts. I know you are soundly my friend and will be through weather fair and foul.

Ever yours cordially
S.R. Crockett

P.S. By the way you might ask Mrs CW Williamson and her husband - also her friend Miss Petrie (the Evelyn Campbell who was Froman's leading woman in America till she left the stage - to be members of the Argonauts Club. Would that they are clever and charming.