

FCM Penicuik

Nov 24

My dear Publisher,

Well, then, all right about the corrections – you will just see with what you will have to charge me when the book takes hold. I am quite aware that you will have to be more exact under present circumstances. I shall even if I have to pay for it do justice to the book in corrections, but I am making the MS as good as possible, but naturally Scotch dialect is difficult for English printers. I sent you the first quarter of the book yesterday, and next week I hope to send you another quarter. Of course I want the book out as soon as possible, and I was not grumbling about haste, or pressure. It is my habit to get up early in the morning, and my words about publishers not getting up were but a foolish jape. I think it is not hardship to get up with the lark. I think The Raiders will do the trick for England which is done already for Scotland – though of course there is much more to be done there also of course I am just beginning and am full of stories if I can get them written – not all in one groove either, though I shall stick at one thing till we make a reputation. What I said about my friend who took to the hills was only meant as an indication of the company I was keeping at present. I don't know whether it will come to anything or not. I have not got enough done. But it strikes me that there is something in it. There is very little dialect, and the whole will be 'A Sketch in Sombre' which by the way I copyright as its title, if you put it in the Pseudonymn. We must have the Lilac out by the middle of October, because that is the time agreed with the Appletons – and also that it will be out of serial form before that. I don't believe in too great a hiatus in reputations. If you don't keep the public aware of your existence they forget. Besides I have a considerable pull in living in the country as I do. I see when I come up that many of the men who spent their lives about the literary and artistic clubs and coteries waste their time. They get into a habit of talking about their work instead of doing it. Than which nothing can be more fatal. Then working every day in the midst of a poor population where a strike like that which is going on just now in the east of Scotland means terrible [ ]of need [??] and many glimpses daily and hourly of what most men only see occasionally and when they go out to some place for a day or two to view at the nakedness of the land, is bound to give a grip to my walk that is if I am true to myself. Someday I mean to write the 'Whole History of a Poor Man' either a miner or a Railway man – probably the latter, with a fullness of detail the world has not seen yet (Galloway good conceit) for I know it and I have lived it. Indeed I see it every day. You will say and rightly about such talking 'Physician heal thyself!' But then you see there is not a soul here to whom I can speak about my work – meaning my literary work, except my wife. I have nearly a thousand poor bodies to look after in one way or another, and often there is small time for talk. But I always rise in the morning and for four or five hours escape into the world of dreams.

With kind regards

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