

(Talbot Hopkins Min.)

Cum gratia, Mass., July 8/76

My Dear Cairnes - I have just received your letter of the 6th with enclosure - and hasten to say that I will with your permission defer forwarding the one to Mr. Cushman - for the following reasons.

In the first place I fear the tone of it would give annoyance, which it is well to avoid. As Trustee - he is justified in what he says, and his intentions are always good. - I have already told you that he cannot be disconnected morally from equal interest with me in the book - neither would I wish to disconnect him - In the matter of my having had an understanding with him to leave the matter entirely in my hands, it referred entirely to action on his part independent of me & of you - without first consulting us, but was not intended to leave him out otherwise - I should not like him to receive such an impression - and I fear your letter conveys it -

2^dly - I do not remember having said anything in any of my letters to you which placed the conclusions of the matter with Osgood or any other publisher entirely in your hands -

I have the drafts of all my letters, and do not find anything to this effect - whatever I may have said - was meant to refer to the condition of my health, which might throw all the labour & care in writing the book upon you - I refer to this - because you stated it for the second time in your letter to Mr. C.

3^dly with regard to materials - I have endeavoured to be very clear & explicit in my statements about them - that they were very desultory and uncertain - that we had nothing from England - and that the book could not well be written, leaving out that important period - You will recall that in our first conversation, you suggested the idea of going out yourself to England to hunt them up - I also told Mr. Osgood these difficulties - and urged them as my reasons for desiring delay - I have deprecated haste from the beginning and felt most anxious to have possibilities at least clear before I committed myself - But circumstances have urged on the matter - and I felt myself forced to yield - hoping as we all have done that things would shape themselves in time - I make this statement again to lift from my shoulders the responsibility of having promised more than I can perform!

I send you back Mr. C.'s letter as you request but will retain yours

which I hear from you.
Now in view of all the uncertainties and difficulties which beset us -
and most especially with reference to the condition of my health -
which does not improve & gives me much uneasiness, and
which is entirely unfit to contend with worries and anxieties -
indeed I think it capable of breaking down into utter incapacity at
any moment - and also in view of the fact that I could not
consent to allow any of these materials to pass through other
hands - before they have gone through mine - It seems to me
I am justified in asking you to amend - or if possible to
postpone our agreement with Mr. Osgood - until I can see
what time brings in the way of health & additional
materials - & before we are finally committed to what might
prove a failure.

I am more grieved than I can tell you to have to say this,
comprehending as I do - how great the disappointment will be
to you as well as to myself - but you may trust me in believing
that I would not do it if it could be helped - and that
I will do whatever in me lies in averting any consequences
or retrieving any harm which may have come to you
through it.

I have written in some haste - and pray you to pardon any
oversights, or anything in fact which might not come
from the most faithful of your friends - which I pray
you believe me -
Yours ever
E.S.