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5-9 Letters to Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin and Co. November 12, 1899

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Recommended Citation

Chesnutt, Charles W., "5-9 Letters to Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin and Co. November 12, 1899" (1899).
Charles Chesnutt. 13.
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November 12, 1899

64 Brenton St.,

Cleveland, O. Nov. 12, 1899.

Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.,

Boston, Mass.

Dear Sirs:-

Replying to yours of November 9th would say that I am pleased to know that you think of undertaking special work on behalf of "The Wife of his Youth," and assure you that I shall be glad to cooperate in any possible way.

I have ordered a large negative made from the same photograph you have heretofore used, as it is generally regarded as a good one; I do this to save time, and will sit for another later. They will be mounted as you request, and I will forward some of them to you as soon as completed. I think I can get a good view or two of my library, and will have them made the first clear day.

As to old MSS. for use in windows, I had a great quantity of them -- most of my things have been written several times -- but they were mostly typewritten, and I burnt up a lot of them several weeks ago when I closed my business office. I have found a few, however, of which I send along ^{several} several that are complete; they are not final copies but intermediate drafts. There are pages among them very effectively disfigured -- I suppose those would be the most interesting, as the perfect ones, being entirely typewritten, would not reveal any of the author's individuality. This is a very dirty town, and the MSS. are somewhat soiled. I have a lot of incomplete copies, similar to those I send, and I can send them if you like. Or if you should think some "original" MSS. done entirely with the pen would be desirable, I can reproduce some of old things. I could make up two or three copies of the story "The Wife of His Youth" from drafts that I have here, by supplementing them a little.

It occurs to me that the drawings or oil sketches made for the illustrations to "The Wife of his Youth" would be good stuff for window displays. I have been promised one of them "The Wife of his Youth" scene, but will cheerfully waive my claim until any possible good use can be made of it.

I have a set of proofs of "The Conjure Woman", if they would be of any use in a window. Have you ever made up a window display showing a book in the various stages of production -- the rough draft, the various revisions, the proof-sheets or revises, the unbound book, the completed book (with various editions), the portrait of the author, view of his study, and so on? I suppose you have. I enclose another letter in reply to yours of the 10th.

Yours very truly,

Box No. 1

Folger No. 5

PC# 8

64 Brenton St.,

November 12, 1899

Box 4

f. 3

Cleveland, O., Nov. 12th, 1899.

Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.,

Boston, Mass.

Dear Sirs:-

Replying to your favor of 10th inst. I note what you say with reference to special advertising work in connection with my lectures. I am going to give you every opportunity to do as much as you are willing to stand, just as soon as I can get started at it; which will be very soon; in fact I am started now, to the extent that I have accepted all engagements offered me, but have not as yet actively sought any, even in Cleveland. I am however, going to appear three or four times within the next month, in Cleveland and Washington. I have not troubled you about the Washington engagement, for it is being very thoroughly worked up by people there, and will undoubtedly result in considerable sale of books. The Cleveland end of it will also be well looked after, as the new book will keep me advertised here. I imagine The Wife of His Youth will sell very well here.

The circulars you have sent me have all been used at lectures, of which I have given Three here and in the neighborhood during the past month -- all but a few which I have left. I shall be glad if you will send me the 100 others that you refer to, as I think I can use them in Washington the latter part of this week, as I am going to give a reading there on the 17th. If you will kindly mail them to me at

2124 K. St. N.W., Washington, D.C.,

it will save me the trouble of carrying them there with me.

I think it much better to print a smaller number of "Wife of His Youth" circulars -- say five hundred to start with, and include in it later such good notices as the book may elicit. I have already a number of excellent notices of the separate story "The Wife of His Youth."

I shall be glad to cooperate with Burrows Bros. Co. and The Helman-Taylor Co., in pushing my books, which I have every reason to suppose they are willing to do. The Helman-Taylor Company have displayed a great deal of interest in them from the start, though you know better than I do which has sold the most books -- they or Burrows Bros.

As soon as the book is out and under way I shall put my name in the hands of some one or more lecture bureaus, and see if I can secure some engagements through them, and also get some myself in quarters that I know of. I hope that with our joint efforts we shall make the books go. Call on me at any moment for anything I can do, and in the meantime believe me Sincerely yours,