



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1910-11-16

Letter from Frank H. Scott to John Muir, 1910 Nov 16.

Frank H. Scott

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THE CENTURY CO.
UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK

November 16, 1910

John Muir, Esq.,
Martinez, California.

My dear Mr. Muir:

I have your letter of the 7th.

I note its concluding suggestion and appreciate your feeling that our book should pay you 15% royalty, the same that you are receiving on your later volume.

We shall be glad to do this if it is practicable. The main difficulty is that in our desire to make this your first book popular we made the price very low (\$1.50) for a volume of this sort, and there was not a large margin of profit either to you or to us; indeed, we soon found that we were practically making nothing on the venture - and it was for this reason that we simplified the cover by leaving off the gilt, thus reducing somewhat the cost of manufacture.

The restoration of the gilt and the other changes which we have been considering would put the cost of the book back to where it was originally, and would proportionately reduce any profit we might make, - and, frankly

speaking, we do not think that they would materially effect the sale, as there has been no criticism of the binding from any other source, and we think that the volume in appearance compares favorably with other similar books issued at the same price.

In view of all the facts, I have this suggestion to make: Suppose we go ahead with the volume practically as it is without the gilt top and cover, but making new plates of the first three or four pictures of mountains (from which we feel we can get better results), - and that, beginning with the new edition, which we can issue by next spring, we advance your royalty from 10% to 15%. Will this be satisfactory?

If so, kindly let us know, and we will proceed with our preparations at once.

Very truly yours,

Francis Scott.

We should decide as to the new edition very soon as our stock is low.

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