

STATE LIBRARY,
BOSTON, January 29, 1878.

JOS. SABIN, ESQ.:

DEAR SIR: We have considered your Dictionary of American History of such value to this library, as to keep its file on our shelves for reference from the beginning, and should be very unwilling to have it discontinued.

I hope that no consideration will interfere with its continued publication.

Yours very respectfully,

OLIVER WARNER, *Asst. Librarian.*

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY,
CAMBRIDGE, MASS., Dec. 4, 1877.

JOS. SABIN, ESQ.:

DEAR SIR: I am well acquainted with your Dictionary, and know well the competent labor that is put upon it. Its imperfections are inseparable from such a work. Its merits are positive, and no one can deal with titles of Americana, as I have to a considerable degree for years, without knowing the help it can afford, which is always opportune and often great. Its progress has been slow; but I have borne with it gratefully in the belief that when done, it was worth waiting for; and haste would imperil its character.

Very truly,

JUSTIN WINSON.

Partly by way of filling up a spare leaf and partly as illustrative of a phase in the history of this book, I reprint the following article from the preface to "Trübner's Bibliographical Guide to American Literature." As to how far I have succeeded in carrying out Mr. Trübner's excellent ideas will be apparent upon an examination of the Dictionary.

A future notice will demonstrate the manner in which Mr. Trübner illustrates his own printed views.

"My object in attempting an American Bibliographical Guide has been twofold; on the one hand, to suggest the necessity of a more perfect work of its kind by an American, surrounded as he necessarily would be with the needful appliances; and, on the other, to supply to Europeans a guide to Anglo-American literature, a branch which by its rapid rise and increasing importance, begins to force itself more and more on our attention.

"It is admitted on all hands that such a work is a desideratum; at the same time, nobody can be more alive to the disadvantages under which a foreigner must labour in attempting it than I have been. I have broken the ice; let us hope that the very deficiencies of my work will summon some competent American bibliographer into the field, who from his vantage-ground may find both time and inclination to amend my errors and supply my deficiencies.

"A guide to American bibliography is, as just stated, a desideratum, called for by one of the daily increasing requirements of the age, for, bibliography, so to speak, is to the literary student what the light-house is to the mariner, without which he would be constantly in danger of hidden rocks and shipwreck, of disappointment and waste of energies, travelling fruitlessly perhaps over ground previously eminently preoccupied. Without catalogues literature itself would be like some huge pawnbroker's warehouse without a key to its contents, full of all that is costly and valuable, yet choked up by the rubbish which surrounds it,—that which is useful and valuable buried and lost to ready use, instead of being rendered at all times easy of access by means of system and arrangement. Literature is the store-house of the mind of the great human family, and of the past as well as of the present. That which has come down to us from age to age with all its accumulations of modern science, will go down to posterity, and from it the then student of history,—the future Macaulay, if you will, will have to select his materials; and often, as the noble historian himself has done, find the most valuable to consist of works which in the eyes of contemporaries were deemed unworthy of notice, and contemptuously consigned to oblivion. To rescue these is the office