



TO JOHN CARTER BROWN, ESQ

OF PROVIDENCE IN RHODE ISLAND



THESE PAGES GRAVITATE AND IN-
scribe themselves of their own sweet will very natu-
rally to you. Frank explanation and profound
respect as naturally take the place here of apology
and flattery. A quarter of a century ago, when
the writer's beard was shorter and less grey than
now, he made a bibliographical pilgrimage from
Boston to Providence to see you and your books. He was on the eve
of his departure for Europe. That visit was a pivot in his life, and has
always been recalled and recounted with gratitude and affection.

He had graduated at Yale but two years before, one of which two
years had been passed at Cambridge reading passively with legal Story,
and actively with historical Sparks, all the while sifting and digesting the
treasures of Harvard Library. For five years previous to that visit, he
had scouted through several States during his vacations, prospecting in
out of the way places for historical nuggets, mousing through town
libraries and country garrets in search of anything old that was histori-
cally new for Peter Force and his American Archives. For himself and
others he had tramped over many of the scenes of the Old French War
and the Revolution, at one time exploring Rogers' slide, and at another
descending, torch in hand, into the wolf-den of Old Put. From Vermont
to Delaware many an antiquated churn, sequestered hencoop, and dila-
pidated flour barrel had yielded to him rich harvests of old papers, musty
books and golden pamphlets. Finally, in 1845, an irrefragable desire
impelled him to visit the old world, its libraries and bookstalls.

Your enlightened liberality in those primitive years of his bibliogra-
phical pupillage contributed largely towards the boiling of his kettle, for