Springfield Oct. 27. 1837.

My dear Gibbs.

I am charmed to hear of your intended stroll into our Arcadia. To write a good biography, it is necessary to let a constant reference to general principles shine through your narrative: so that each incident, unimportant in itself, may awaken universal sympathy by its appeal to a universal truth. The greatest specimen of success in this way is [illegible] age, where topics of the most trivial nature, barren of interest, are woven into a most instructive & enchanting narrative. The secret of success lies in the perpetual reference to great principles.

Your subject is noble. It includes an important portion of N.E. history and of our national history. It blends the incidents in your family with the character of our forefathers & the destiny of our country. Immense, patient diligence in research, careful induction from a close consideration of many particulars, the wise rejection of trivial things, the close, compact narrative, the mixing up of personal, N.E. & national interest must give your undertaking its passport to public approbation. It is a hard thing to write a good book: spare neither time nor labor. The reward is worth the while.

I think to be in N.Y. before winter. I shall claim of you the MSS. about Louisburgh. & shall review with you your treasures. Anything that I can benefit you with, any helps my years of plodding among past things can afford, shall be placed most fully & most cheerfully at your service.

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