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A LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER

*Department of English, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.*

Dear Library Associates:

We began with really personal long-hand letters; we progressed to individually typed form letters; we declined to a printed letter; we now get two pages in a pamphlet. The typed letter was better as a letter, the long-hand letter best of all. Intimacy and the human touch (pun intended) are precious. But considering the purpose for which we were founded, it is clear that to have one hundred members is better than to have twenty-five; and it must also be clear that one bemused scholar cannot carry on genuine correspondence with one hundred people. We have passed the secular boundary which at the beginning we set as the goal of our ambition, and we must pay for our success by surrendering some of the values which made up for our small beginnings.

Which, in the language commonly used of men, means that I have turned over all the routine correspondence of the Associates to Mr. Rush, our Secretary. I shall continue to act as President, and shall hope to devote a good deal of time to the general policies of the group. I shall be more than happy to answer really personal letters from those of you who want to accompany your contributions with a word of friendship, but from now on the collection and acknowledgment of funds will be managed by printed forms as much as possible.

Since you are all thrifty people, you will wish to know whether this ostensibly more efficient method will not result in a beautiful machine and no product: whether most of the money we collect won't have to be spent to pay the cost of collecting it. You may be wholly assured that it will not. The entire cost of printing and mailing this quarterly is met by a group of devoted friends of the Library. Mr. Rush and his staff will handle the necessary typing without cost to us. I will furnish the incidental post-

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age and letter-heads. The charge against our funds will be no greater than in the past: that is, we shall spend more than ninety-six cents of every dollar for books.

We are buying some very interesting books. Last May at our Commencement meeting (I wish the Senior Class had given us more time) I pointed out some of them, particularly the two new volumes of the *Linguistic Atlas of New England* and the A. Edward Newton copy of Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* (1800). Here are a few other recent purchases that I notice as I leaf through the cards: Chesterfield's *Letters* (the new 6 vol. edition by Bonamy Dobrée); *The Colophon* (pts. 1-4, New Series); Dryden's *Dramatic Works* (6 vols., edited by Montague Summers); the Mellstock edition of Hardy's *Works* from Hardy's own library (37 vols.); *Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb* (E. V. Lucas's definitive edition); the first edition (1798) of T. R. Malthus's *Essay on the Principle of Population*; Seymour de Ricci's *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts* (vols. 2 and 3: will somebody give us vol. 1?); Updike's *Printing Types*. And in a modest way we are picking up manuscripts. On other pages of this quarterly you will have read about manuscripts by Frederic Harrison and by Ben Ames Williams. During the year we acquired, among others, original letters of Browning, Tennyson, Henry James, and Sarah Orne Jewett, and three manuscripts by Arnold Bennett.

Will you please testify your approval by sending your contribution of five dollars or more? Please make your checks payable to the Colby Library Associates, and mail them to N. Orwin Rush, Librarian, Colby College, Waterville, Maine.

With all best wishes of the season,

Faithfully yours,

FREDERICK A. POTTLE