

SIXTEENTH LETTER.

A WORD IN CONCLUSION, AND A PROMISE FOR THE FUTURE—ERRATA
—CONCERNING ILLUSTRATIONS—“O. B.’S” PORTRAIT.

RICHMOND, VA., October 16, 1883.

Dr. John P. Phister—My Young Friend: I send you by this day's mail the book I promised you, (Medical Student in Europe.) You undoubtedly secured a copy of it years ago, and the reading of it may have given you as much pleasure as the copy I send you gave me. If your library is already crowded I beg of you to present the book I send to the historical society, with such inscription written therein as may in your judgment seem fit.

You have determined that the book shall be published. You must assume the literary responsibility for it and look to the city council to reimburse you for any financial deficit. Book-making is a serious thing to the author, the reader and the publisher. I hope your introduction to a work of its standard character will be full, fair and explicit. Such an introduction will hide the defects and bring out in strong colors the innate truthfulness of the work. Please look out for typographical and other blunders, especially all such as I may have fallen into myself. I wrote of the “peril” of Vicksburg and not of the “period.” I did not write about “hotel clubs,” but I did write of “hotel clerks.” Hotels were not known in my day in Maysville; they were *taverns*. As that the people of Cabin Creek would have thought, etc., instead of *so*. I charge you to watch closely that the blunders I have made be wiped out and that others do not creep in, and that the introduction be more entertaining than the original material.

I think you had better illustrate the book. I fear the reading will not be attractive. I almost know it won't. Illustrations, my young friend, are what you want. The market house, Pap Middleton and his faithful dog, the old soldier Mike McGraw, the old gun Tip, a Sabbath school procession, the log cabin, John D. Edwards the orator, a steamboat, and such other things as may occur to you will help out wonderfully and go a great ways towards showing the march of improvement in the city.

Illustrations, my friend, illustrations are wanted for success. I would have the gunboat *Helen Mar* by all means. The illustrations would cost

a little more, it is true, but pictures go a long way towards recommending erratic composition. You would be surprised to know the number of persons who only look at pictures in a book and from them get a very good idea of the contents—a kind of kindergarten. The illustrated periodicals are evidences of the value of pictures. The pictures don't have to be true to nature. As to the vignette, just have an elderly gentleman with gray hair seated at a table writing—of course you don't see his face. This will fully represent your sincere friend, "O. B." If a copy should chance to fall into my hands I will review it for the benefit of Sunday schools. I wrote a note to-day to my old friend, Colonel Richard Henry Stanton. May I ask the favor of you to call and see him and his estimable wife, and in person extend to them my congratulations on their having safely arrived at the fiftieth station on the matrimonial road, and express my wish that the last station to be reached by them may be the happiest.

When I shall determine where we will spend the coming winter, and when we get settled down for the winter I will try to open a budget of reminiscences by the fireside in which there will be some *not* twice-told stories of early Maysville life. Until then and ever after the peace of God be with you.

"O. B."

In spite of the adjurations given by my friend "O. B." as to errata, there has a few been overlooked, for which we crave the pardon of the reader and "O. B." Many of them explain themselves, and the obscure ones will not mar the sense in reading or interfere with the general historical accuracy of his details. We have sent his picture, drawn by his daughter, Annie Gordon, to the engravers in Cincinnati, but have, as yet, received no positive promise as to whether it will be ready in time for this edition. But in the second volume, which we hope to have serially during the winter, we will be fully supplied with necessary illustrations.

P.