

FORDS, HOWARD, & HULBERT,  
PUBLISHERS,  
No. 80, Lafayette Place.

NEW YORK, *Apr 6* 1889

*Mr. Wm. T. DeWitt*

Dear Sir,

You would not have construed it into a compliment for us to have either accepted or declined your attractive proposal in haste; and, indeed, we are not yet ready to do either the one or the other. But yet feel that your letter should be acknowledged.

The first impression of the plan of your proposed book is that it runs too nearly along the line of James Bryce's already famous work on "The American Commonwealth" to attract attention as a "none-such"; and perhaps it would really be too nearly on the same ground to gain the patronage of those who have already bought and are continuing to buy Bryce by the thousands — they being in fact the very class who would be interested in your book had it come first. And in reading your scheme

we find it not easy to know whether you intend it for the instruction of the young, to whom you allude in one part, or for the interest & convenience of lawyers and reading men and political thinkers ("workers" don't care much about any facts but human nature & how to capture it than you refer to in another part as those who would be likely to want it.

We should like to have that question cleared up, for pretty much every book has to seek its buyers in a limited sphere, and we want to compare your plan a little more carefully than we have yet been able to do with Dryden's.

Were the book written we could judge more rationally. That is your idea as to that, - time necessary to prepare it, or? As it stands we have a personal prejudice in favor of the proposed author, and a hereditary commercial prejudice against the proposed book!

Yours faithfully,  
A. Howard