Dear Miss Tarbell:

A letter from Mr. Putnam of the Macmillan Company suggests it might be desirable for me to send you the original editorial directions which were sent to each author at the period of incubation of the History of American Life. I shall do this, if you consider it desirable, upon my return to Cambridge next week; but I am inclined to believe that there is no need for you to have the instructions. The volumes already in your hands indicate pretty clearly the form and practice of the series.

One or two points in the original instructions, however, it may be well to repeat. Footnote citations are always necessary for direct quotations in the text. They are usually desirable also for any major statements of fact, statistical data, etc. At the same time we do not try to give the amplitude of documentation which one expects in a doctoral thesis. Our plan has been to instruct authors to try to average three footnotes to two pages. In practice, some of the authors have exceeded this limit; I myself have done so, I think. Yet the restatement of the original instruction may prove helpful to you.

As for the precise form of citing books and articles, these matters can be easily gathered from the footnotes in the volumes. One of our practices, however, I should like to call specific attention to, namely, that in the case of a magazine article, our custom is to cite both volume number and the year of the volume (as well, of course, as the exact pages covered by the article or by the part of the article used). It is also our practice to give the full citation (author's surname with initials, full title of book, place and date of publication) the first time a work is referred to in each
chapter. The plan of the "Critical Essay on Authorities" is, I think, self-explanatory. The chief deviations from the usual bibliographical chapter are (1) the essay form with no attempt at bibliographical completeness but selection of works with critical comments; and (2) the inclusion of a section on "physical survivals." In the case of your volume I should suppose that the physical survivals would consist mainly or exclusively of inventions and machines of one sort and another. I think I wrote you in my last letter that the text of your volume (exclusive of the bibliographical chapter) should run from 100,000 to 120,000 words.

There is no need to reply to this letter unless there is other information which you think I should give you at this stage of your writing.

With warm regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

A. M. Schlesiger

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
120 East 19th Street,
New York City.