

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

January 18, 1932

Dear Miss Tarbell:

I am glad that you are going to revive the name of Eugene Bolles. I could tell you many things about him and about his generation of collectors, including my good friend and his partner, Charles Tyler. But the story is too long and should be told with care. I hope it may be some day. I shall content myself with answering your questions, though I shall be a bit personal in doing so. It was I, in fact, who suggested to the late president of the Museum, Mr. de Forest, the reasonableness of collecting our own American work of the decorative arts. I had heard that Mr. Bolles wanted to sell his collection, and it seemed to me to be a great opportunity. I proposed that we should show such things on the occasion of the Hudson-Fulton anniversary. The idea was approved, and I borrowed from many of the well-known collectors, among them Bolles. The show made a real hit, and afterwards I got Bolles to write offering his whole collection for sale. The upshot of it all was that the collection was bought entire, Mr. de Forest having proposed to Mrs. Russell Sage that she should pay the bill. She did so, and it became her gift. This was in 1909. There were over seven hundred pieces in the collection, chiefly furniture, but embracing also metalwork, etc.

Charles Tyler was collecting at the same time as Bolles, though in a

