

stead in Independence Hall. I am satisfied that there is no authentic portrait of Morton." Mr. Stauffer adds: "There is no portrait extant of Morton, save one through a mediumistic source—the family have none; every branch having been diligently interviewed."

The late B. B. Thatcher, of Boston, a noted *litterateur* and autograph collector of his day, declared, over fifty years ago, that the formation of a set of autographs of the signers of the declaration of independence was the *ne plus ultra* of American collectors—many having attempted it, and but few succeeded. Brotherhead, in his monograph on his visit to Mr. Dreer's collection of autographs, in 1857, speaking of his full set of the signers, adds: "We know many industrious collectors, and they find it very difficult to collect even those that are considered the most common. In a few years, such a collection will bring an extraordinary price;" and in the first edition of his *Book of the Signers*, 1861, he says: "Both at home and abroad, every document, letter, or signature from the hand of a signer, has become valuable; and the autographs of some of these worthies, it is almost impossible to obtain. A complete set is of the extremest rarity"—adding, that autographs of Heyward, Ross, Harrison, Hall, Livingston, and Hopkins are scarce; while those of Lewis Morris, Stockton, Hart, Morton, Taylor, Wythe, Penn, Hewes, Lynch, Middleton, and Gwinnett "are almost impossible to obtain, even a signature; and that others are becoming rare, and bear a high value in proportion to their scarcity." Mr. Burns declared, in 1870, when the supply was less exhausted than now, that a collection of autographs of the signers was by no means easy to be brought together; while the late Mr. Sabin, a year later, said that "the formation of a set now is excessively difficult."

It is, therefore, no small marvel that our Society should, at this late day, have succeeded in completing our collection, after a quarter of a century's efforts—aided by that prince of autograph collectors, Charles De F. Burns, of New York. Our set is as yet unbound, purposely delaying that final completion of the work, with the hope of possibly substituting full letters for some of the five signed documents of