gent and comprehensive treatment of what I like to call the language of science. Especially does this seem desirable in the general dictionary, as distinguished from the many technical glossaries accessible to—and often understood only by—trained specialists. In my personal files, as well as in the master files in the Funk and Wagnalls reference department, are hundreds of cards dealing with this field of knowledge alone. The material, indeed, is so rich, and it accumulates so rapidly, that I have been encouraged to compile a sort of annual glossary of new (or relatively new) scientific and technical terms, the first modest instalment of which appeared in the 1943 edition of the *New International Year Book*.

I hope that some of your readers with a flair for the terminology and nomenclature of the sciences may feel prompted to comment on the points raised in this letter, possibly even contributing such new terms as they consider important for the proper understanding of new developments in their own fields. It is true, as Faraday sensibly remarked, "that names are one thing and science another"—but was it not Faraday who gave us *electrolyte, anode, cathode, electrode, ion?* And, despite Mr. McDonald's plea for *radionics*, how large is the language-debt of science to Johnstone Stoney's fertile neologism, *electron!*

HAROLD WARD

NEW YORK, N. Y.

NATIONAL LEARNED SOCIETY GROUPS

IN my article "National Learned Society Groups" (SCIENCE, May 7), by some slip of the pen, I inadvertently mentioned the Geological Survey, intending to cite one of the Government Bureaus specifically mentioned before a House Committee by Secretary of the Interior Ickes. Actually the Survey is one of the few departments requiring of its staff, I am now told, a written statement of freedom from any paid connection with private corporate interests. I have been assured that this measure is strictly enforced, requiring rigid devotion in scientific matters connected with geology to the national interest. If all scientific departments of the nation and of the separate states, together with all colleges, universities and technical schools had this freedom from any private corporate connection my proposals would be superfluous.

Permit me to say that I have had scores of letters of approval and a score of interviews with supporters of my propositions; these include men in practically all the larger Eastern institutions as well as many in state universities, government bureaus and even from the far-off Oriental Institute of Oriental Studies in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

There have been four letters in opposition. I note that none of the objectors mention whether they have such paid connections with corporations.

LOUIS C. KARPINSKI

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

SAMUEL F. B. MORSE

The American Leonardo. A Life of Samuel F. B. Morse. By CARLTON MABEE. 32 and 380 pp. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1943.

FROM the brilliant introduction by Professor Allan Nevins to the final of the 380 pages by the author the reviewer found this to be a highly interesting and informative book. The 1875 "official" biography by Prime (nearly 800 pages) is very largely filled with long letters by or to Morse and with copies of documents bearing on the story of the telegraph. But in this book the author has seized upon the salient points of many letters and documents even more than were known to Prime and, with occasional quotations, has painted a portrait rich in color, accurate in detail. Every important statement concerning Morse is documented; that is, a reference to the original source is given so that the reader may, if he wishes, verify its accuracy. These references (40 pages at the back of the book) number about 740, but one reference may contain a list of several sources so that the total number of documents to which the reader may refer runs into the thousands. However, there is unity, continuity, alluring appeal and literary excellence in the body of the book.

This is more than a biography of Morse; it is a story of his time. For here we get glimpses of many of the prominent men with whom Morse had contact: His father, the Reverend Dr. Jedediah Morse, the stern, just Congregational minister, the author of the first American geography, a founder of the American Board of Foreign Missions, projector of the Andover Seminary; the foremost painters Stuart, Copley, West, Trumbull; the foremost scientists Silliman, Day, James Freeman Dana, Oersted, Ohm, Henry, Wheatstone, Arago, Ampere; the writers, Coleridge, Bryant, Cooper; the inventors, Whitney, Fulton, Daguerre, Steinheil; the statesmen, President Monroe, many members of Congress, Lafayette. We follow Morse as a struggling painter with a great ambition to paint historical scenes but compelled by poverty to paint portraits, at times, 14 hours a day. In the book there are sixteen excellent reproductions