

Recd. Feb. 8th 1851. (no date)

and - 10th -

My dear Sir



I promised to write you how
we progressed in botanical affairs - but
I found it not within that will admit
you. I came through some in detour
with an advance party on a great
march & consequently was unable to devote
much time to the new plants that the
country around seemed to exist - The
begin of our route - the middle road is a
most barren one & except in the mountain
passes there was but little variety in
the vegetation - I have collected all
about the rapidity of the march would
allow & shall be glad to find that there
are any good things among them -

We have not seen any thing of such
value. I am sorry to find that there
is some misunderstanding in regard to this
I never heard of this until my visit to you
at Princeton - you must therefore acquit
me of all intention of displacing him -
The position which I hold in the expedition
is one which I have used neither influence
nor management to obtain - a place which
I supposed at the time was without other

to be better investigated than they can
be in the dry - please direct my
attention to them - We have a most
capitulated draughtsman whose services I
can command & I hope for a series
of plates which shall not be inferior to
anything yet published - It will
truly give me great pleasure to hear
from you - With assurances of esteem &

believe me truly

George Thurber

Secretary of Boundary Commission
Passo del Norte - Texas



100
100
100
100

And. Nov. 8/53



Rosidence Nov 3/853.

My dear Sir

I have picked out the *Eriogonum* from the portion of my collections that I have rec'd. & hope there may be something new among them. I have sent them all & would thank you to name them according to their numbers - If they are of any use to you you can keep them. as I have duplicates of all but one - marked I think "E. inflatum?" If this should prove to be that species I should like to have you save it for me as you already have it - I find I have but two specimens of *Megarrhiza* Cal. - of which I send you one - I am confident about the fruit opening when fully ripe as I had difficulty in finding ripe seed - the squirrels carrying them off as fast as they drop out - I sent an allied individual 951. which may be of interest. also no 1002 a fragment of the only specimen met. I take the *Louguiera* to be *F. spinosa* H.B.K. from the description in Wislitz Rept. - it is a rather meagre specimen but it was just commencing to flower & accordingly difficult to find fl & leaves on the same branch - I carried the "red flag" into the fernery & green house of -

neighbors + procured some ferns for Herbert's
Ward's case. The masses of roots without fronds
are *Adiantum pedatum* which with *Sygodium* +
Acrostichum will look quite pretty - the polypods
being put in for sake of company - In the
same box with the ferns is a small package
of the minerals promised -

Upon consultation with my friend I have
concluded to apply for the position in the Assay
Office. more with a hope that it may lead to
something more remunerative than for its immediate
pecuniary advantages - as a reference I enclose
a note from Hon Philip Allen, the head of the Demo-
cratic party here. U.S. Senator + a wealthy man-
ufacturer - should any others be needed I can fur-
nish them if you will indicate the character re-
quired. I do not hold any estimation with regard
to experience in chemical matters as you did not
seem to think them necessary but I am at liberty
to refer to Dr J. P. Shepard our principal chemist here -

If the salary is not fixed by law but is arbitrary
with the Secy of Treas. I could probably have it al-
tered through the influence of Mr Allen -

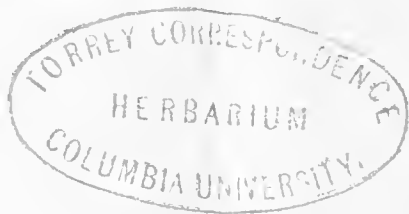
I should like to know as early as practicable if
the situation can be obtained as I shall not take
any measures to procure employment until I hear
from it - should I be needed to assist you

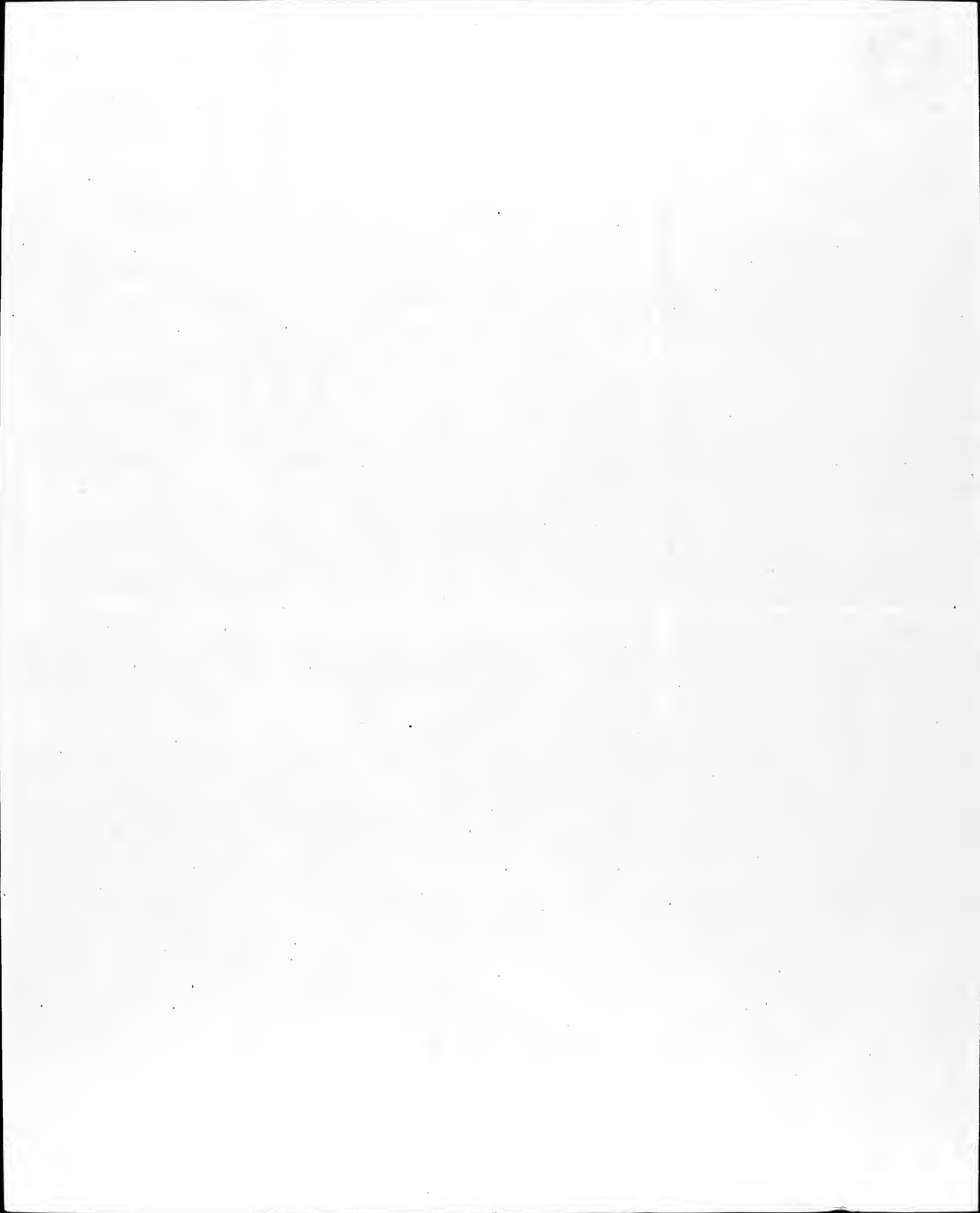
before the completion of the building I could go
on at short notice -

Hoping to hear from you soon I
remain Very truly

George Thurber

Dr. J. Torrey }
New York. }

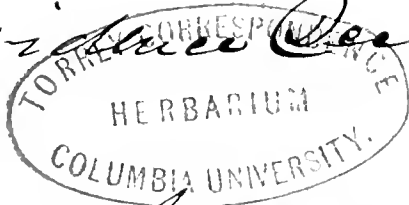




Am. probably
at Boston

Long 200 27 Providence Dec 22 1853.

My dear Sir



Your favor of the 20th is at hand - Unless something happens to prevent I will fill the place in the assay office. Though I regret that the time for commencing is so long postponed.

You ask me if I have no report to make or other work to do for the Commission -

It was decided that the concern expired on the 1st of January last & as I have received no reappointment I see no way of being remunerated for labor - I have done about a months work for govt since I returned for which I shall not get a cent & shall consider myself very lucky if I receive what back pay is

due me - I agreed with
Mr Bartlett to furnish the
commission with one suite
of any collections I thought
make. And feel at liberty
to do what I please with
the remainder - it has always
been my intention to give your-
self & Dr Gray what you wished
& distribute the rest where they
would be best appreciated -

That portion of my collections
made in Sonora came to hand
entire & I also shipped suites
of a majority of the rest by
a conveyance by which they ar-
rived safely. But the bulk of
duplicates are still missing -

I rec'd notice a few days
ago that the vessel into which
they were transhipped was ex-
pected daily but I have no
positive information that my
packages were among the
things landed.

Of such plants as I have to,
I hope you can have duplicates
at once & of the others when they

arrive - I suppose Dr Gray
has told you that several new
genera have turned up among
those I sent him -

I sent Dr Engelmann the
materials of *Cereus giganteus* &
he has prepared an article for
Silliman's journal. describing
also a new *Cereus* as *C. Thurberi*.
it grows in town with *C. gig* -
about 10 or 15 ft high but very
different from the latter -



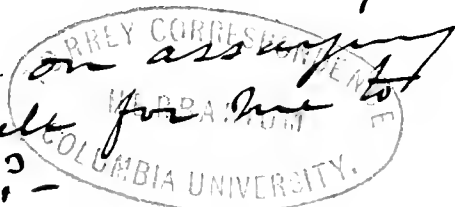
This is something new
shape of the thing.

Could you give away
any of the seeds of *C. gig*?

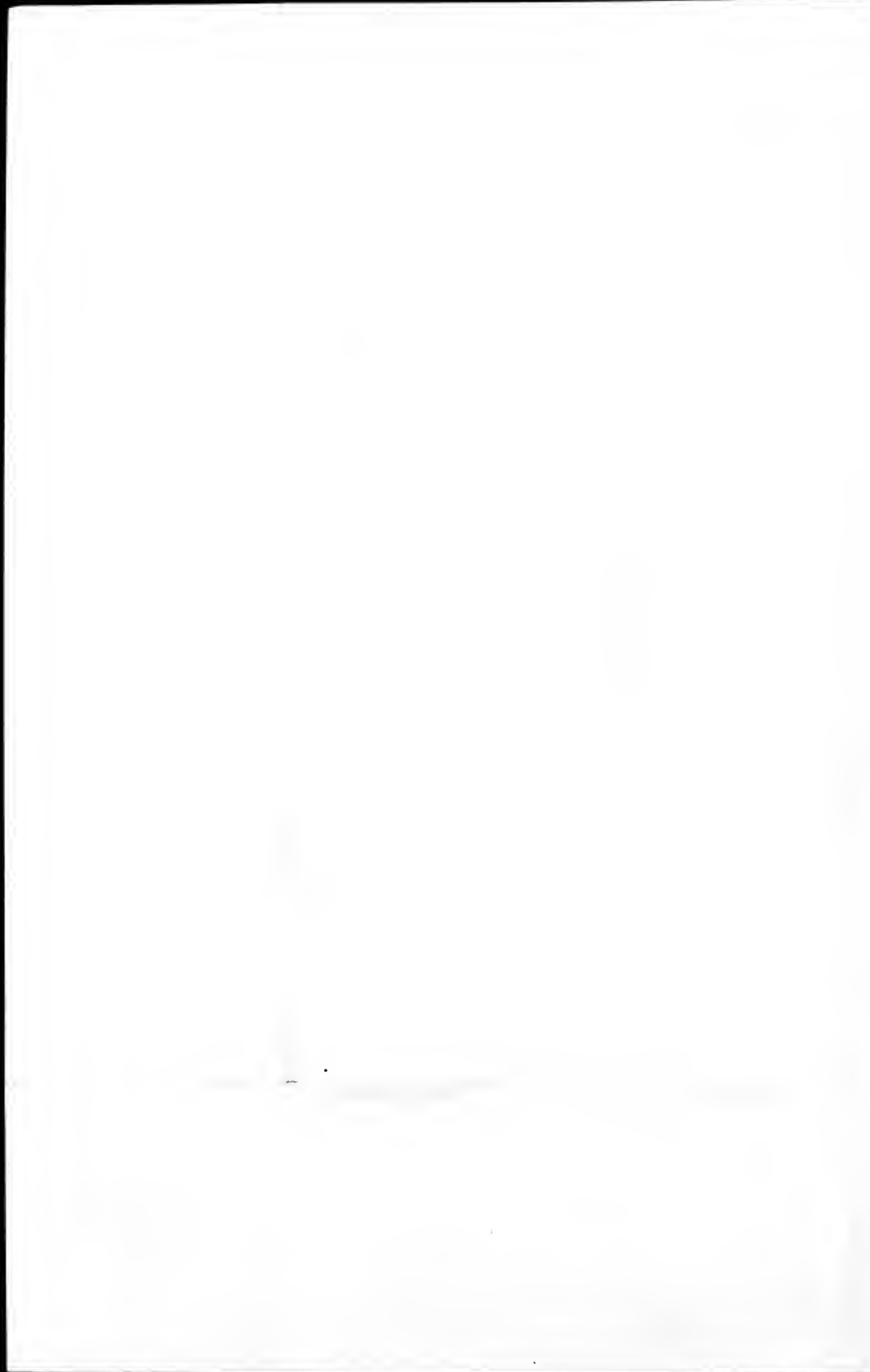
Dr Gray has sent some
to Sir Hooker & I should
be glad to distribute

the remainder before they get
too old - I will try to run
down to Cambridge while you
are there -

Is there any work on *assosiphia*
that it would be well for me to
be familiar with? -

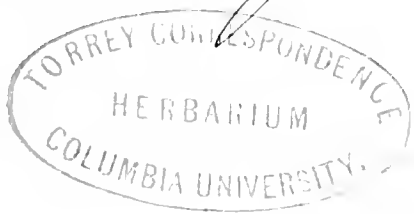


Very truly & gratefully yours
George Thurber
or John Torrey }
New York }



Ans Feb. 3rd

Providence January 30th 1854



My Dear Doctor

After many delays I have at length obtained possession of my delinquent packages - There seems to have been a conspiracy of the fates against me - for the steamer which brought them from New York broke down, of course, & was two days behind her time - never ship merchandise in the same bottom with anything of mine if you wish to get it in a hurry - You may imagine the interest with which I opened the parcels to learn their state & the pleasure with which I discovered that the specimens were not much injured - With some few exceptions they scarcely suffered from dampness but the principal injury is from rubbing, though considering that they have been shut up about for some eight months this is not as great

as might be anticipated -

Doct. Gray writes me that the angular drup
which yourself & he set down as a Superannu-
ated Sedum turns out to be a new relative of
your favorite Eriogonums - After you left Cam-
bridge we found that it was not a Sedum.

Dr G. says that he sent it to you to forward
to Mr Bentham & throws himself upon my
generosity for more - I have enough to
supply you both & I enclose a small one
& will sure you a letter to forward by stage -
What is his name? or is that left to Bent.
This plant comes from a region which I
regret I had so short a time at - San
Felipe - it is just where the proper California
vegetation - that of the Coast - ends & we enter
upon the border of the desert - within a short
distance of each other I found the Zizyphus
(Xylocarpus?) Simmondsia - a new *Cyodius*,
the *Butea* or *Thamnesma* / This rose by
any other name would smell as sweet)
& some other things - Near here, coming eastward,
we fall in with *Algarobia*, *Prosopis* & the
everlasting *Sarcocolla* - Apropos de Larrea - Gray.

Ernory is mistaken in saying that it can "hardly
be made to burn". ~~At~~ El Paso it is the most
common "oven wood" The Mexicans use it for
heating their large clay ovens & it used to be
a common saying with us that we could always
tell Saturday by the smell -

It is, as you may suppose, quite a job to
unite the different divisions of my collection
& get the materials in order - I have gone
through with the Polypets & Compositae but be-
yond there is a "terra desconocida" which I
am timid about entering -

How shall I know what to send you? ...
of course you have a large majority of the
plants from other sources -
What do you make of the Spragueish thing
sent by mistake among the Ervigs? - I find I
have four specimens of it left. but they all
look very young -

I have beautiful specimens of *Calea spinosa* -
and of the *Roemerlinia* looking bush I find good
fruit -

How do you progress in chimney building &
other assay office matters? - I think that
I stated before that after I had taken out a
set of plants for the Govt & one for myself. ~~After~~

were at liberty to forage upon them -
with sincere regard

Truly yours
Gorge Thurber



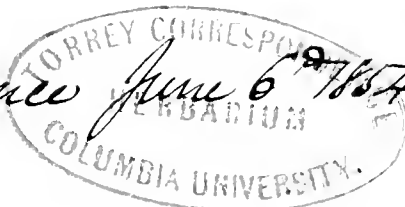
What is this?

from the *Polypodium* all.

Stenotaphrum

My Dear Sir.

Providence June 6th 1854-



The illness and decease of a dear mother have so engrossed my mind for some time that I have hardly given a thought to anything else. My attention has been called to a list of appointments in the assay office that has been published, but as it contains but one assistant in the Assayer's department I infer that the place I am looking for has not yet been filled.

My desire to remain near home is now stronger than ever and I hope that the new Superintendent or whoever it rests with may be disposed to give me the situation.

Should any question respecting character & antecedents arise I can bring

satisfactory testimonials, meanwhile
I enclose to you a letter which was
sent me by Prof. Bailey when I was
about leaving in the Boundary Comm.
I value it especially as it came
unlooked for and unsolicited.
I hope you will not consider that
I am pushing this matter beyond
propriety. I should have waited
patiently until I heard from you
had I not been requested to make
an engagement which would oc-
cupy me a week, beginning the 20th.
Of course I do not wish to promise
my services without first ascertaining
if there is any probability of my
being called off before or about
that time -

Mr Olney has recently returned from
the South & is at present presiding
over the Blue Pot - For the sud

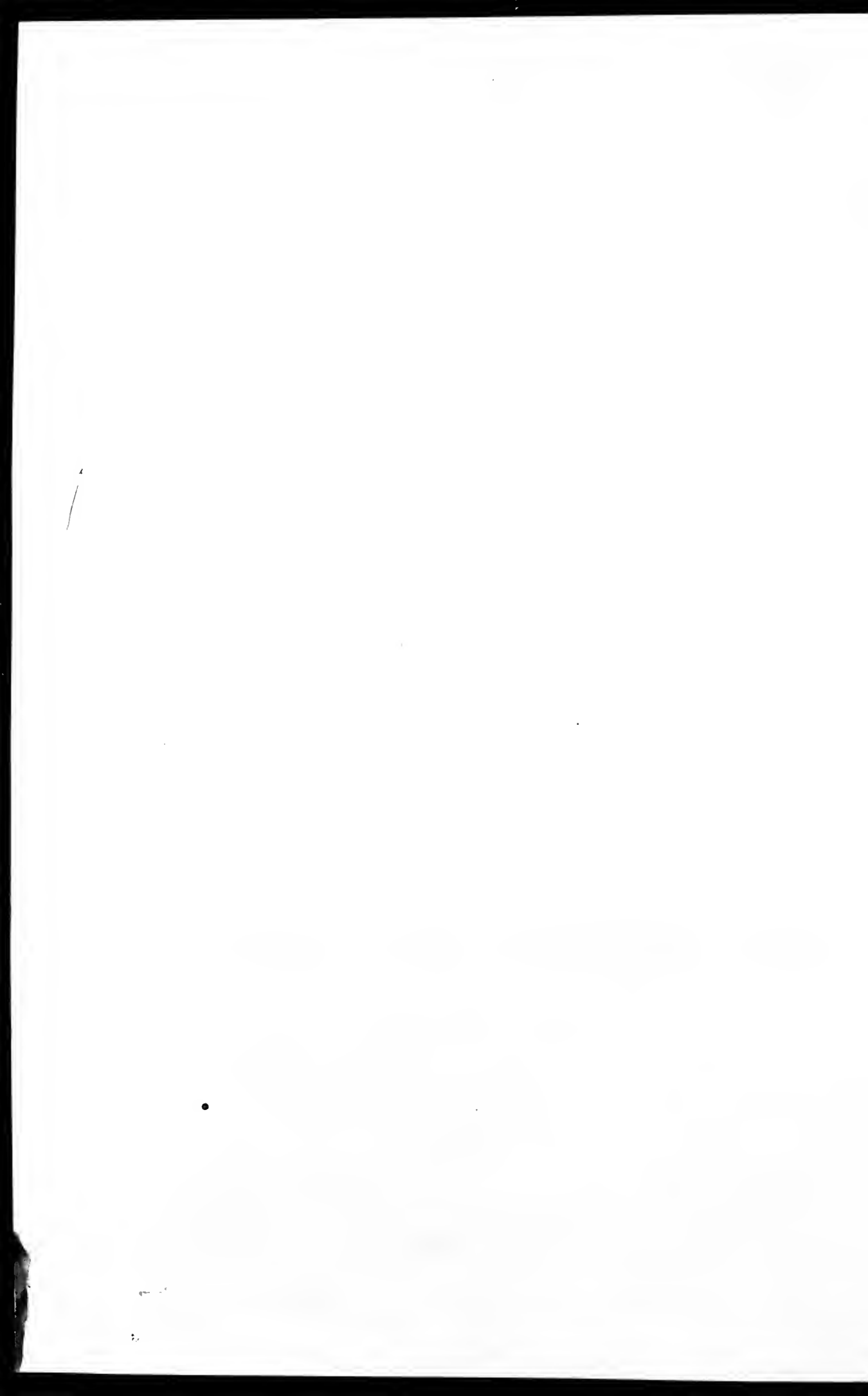
reasons above given I have botanized
none myself.

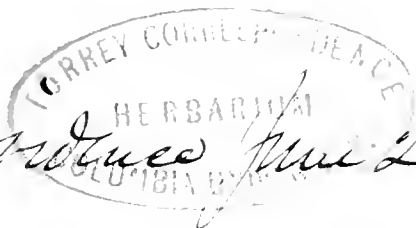
Very truly yours

George Hurst



Dr John Torrey
New York





Providence June 24th 1854

My dear Sir

Your kind favor of
21st was duly received -

I regret that you should meet with
any opposition in carrying out your
wishes respecting the appointments of
your assistants - You were kind enough
to offer me the place in the assay
office and I very much wish to
get it, but, I wish you distinctly to
understand that if it will embarrass
you to appoint me or if it will
~~stand~~ at all interfere with your
relations with the higher powers, that
you will not prep any case to your
own injury - Of this you can of course
judge for your self & whatever may
be the result I shall ever feel ob-
liged to you for the disposition you
have shown to aid me -

It is not easy - as you suggest -
to find many here who are in
favor with the administration. The
most prominent Democrats, such
as Dr Wayland & others have taken
ground in open opposition to the re-
voked bill & their good word might
in the present instance prove an
injury - I will send early in the
coming week testimonials from
the few whose influence would
avail anything - but unfortunately
there are but few outside of the
Post office & Custom House who are
not offensive in the eyes of the
present powers -

I rec'd a letter from
Dr Gray yesterday - he wishes to pub-
lish the new genera & species in my
collections - I shall be governed by
the advice of yourself & him -

Very truly yours

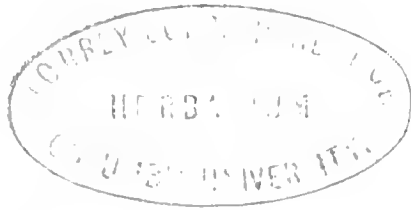
George Thurle



Ms. A. 1. 1. 1.

[1854?]

Doct. Torrey



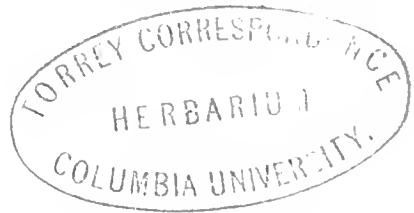
Dear Sir -

You will perceive by the enclosed prospectus that our Society gives a course of lectures this winter - We have nearly completed our arrangements looking but two lectures - Thinking you may be able to assist in supplying this deficiency I take the liberty to inquire if you know of any popular & entertaining lectures who we could engage to give two brilliant lectures upon some ~~abstract~~ chemical subject capable of striking illustration - This being our

first experiment with a course
of this kind it is desirable to
season it a little in the manner
referred to - If you can put us in the
way of engaging some such person
to come sometime in January - perhaps -
you will greatly oblige

Very truly yours

George Thurber



Philadelphia
July 20th 1858

Dear Doct. Torrey.

I must tell
you what a capital time
I have had since I have
been let out to graze.
Durand has been over all his
grapes with me & he has
- to use his phrase - perused
a portion of the Herbarium of
the Academy. He gives me
desirable things where they
are divisible & when not
he loans me the specimens
bodily, whether his own or
the Academy's. All my
greetings about Nuttall's Gambel

Things were correct, & he will
have but one of his several
new genera left - I fear
your *Vilfa utilis* will be
inutilis - (I recollect I am in
Phil.) for Nutt. is ahead of
you - He. (Nutt.) is a great
fellow to double on himself
& I frequently find the same
thing marked as two or three
different species with an *.

I begin to think that we
know quite as much about
grasses, as anybody. This
evening went to the Academy
& met a number of the
working members thereof.

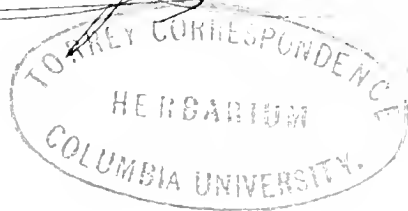
Le Conte Jr. - visited to be
remembered to you, he goes
tomorrow to Cambridge and
will call & see you as he
returns. Somebody here is
reproducing Michx's *Sylva*

with an extra volume
by one Smith.

Tomorrow I go to see Dr.
Jurlington & as I have
not finished at the Acad-
emy, will not be able to
return before Friday

Very sincerely

George Thurber

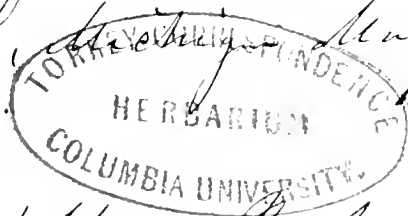


Prof John Tracy D.D.
New York

Recd May 17.

State Agricultural College
Lansing, Michigan May 12, 1860.

My dear Doctor Torrey



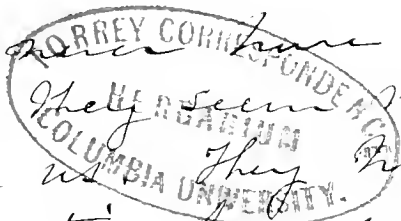
I suppose that you think I have been rather remiss about writing you. My silence has not been because I have not thought of it, but because I saw that things were approaching a crisis here & I hoped soon to be able to write you a more favorable account of my situation than I could at any former time or can even now. My position here has its pleasant and its reverse side. Its unpleasant side has been & is now the great uncertainty about money matters.

The State Treasury is absolutely bankrupt. The present administration in order to stand well with the people acted upon the very unsafe principle of large appropriations and small taxes. The result, which might have been foretold, is, that there is no money. As the means for carrying on the College come from specified sources & those taxes not coming all due till next spring we have no money. The Treasury refuses to advance from

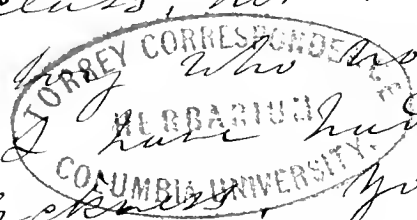
other funds & we have not a
dollar for any purpose whatever,
I managed to get part of the freight
of my things paid out of the treasury,
as was agreed upon before hand, but
not a cent of salary & have been
obliged to borrow for the current ex-
penses - You may imagine that this
state of things is not calculated to
make one very joyous. A meeting
of the state officers will be called to
see if they will authorize a loan
& if they will not the thing must
"rust up" & stop. The state administra-
tion is in the hands of the Republicans
who being anxious for a re-nomination
will be very timid about incurring
a debt - & it will be a question as to
which will most favor their political
interests in the coming state convention.
We are all in doubt & await the
result with interest, so much for
the dark side of the picture, as to
the other - I can say that my asso-
ciates in the faculty are all that
I could desire, gentlemanly & genial.
We work together most harmoniously
& I see no chance for any conflict
of interest (until perhaps they put a
president over us -). All the former

faculties have been quite the reverse of this, split up by quarrels to the degree that it was seldom that all hands were even on speaking terms.

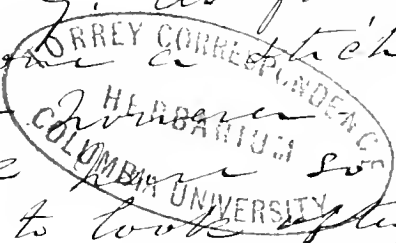
With regard to the boys, they are about 50 - and as unpromising a set, if one were to judge from their looks, as could be congregated anywhere. They are above the average woman in the class room and in my departments I am much pleased with them. ~~They~~ ~~never~~ ~~have~~ ~~any~~ ~~trouble~~ with the boys & they seem much attached to all of us. They have suffered from former administrations the worried & scolded & treated like children - some of the former profs being ex-schoolmaster - but now, being treated as if they were gentlemen, they behave as such. One can in a little while find how he stands in the estimation of his classes & I think I can say (without being open to the charge of self-glorification) that the good opinion I have expressed of them is reciprocated. I have 2 classes in botany, one of 8 in systematic Botany and one of 14 in the rudiments. I think that I have quite a number of the botanists of the future on the stocks - some real enthusiasts. More than half the number are actually



in love with the subject - and this
you must allow is a large propor-
tion for a study that is required
of them. I find that Goudy gave
them nothing in the world but detached
bits of microscopy, both in plants & ani-
mals - having no reference to any
thing - more optical exhibitions. One
of the boys told me the other day that
they used to "cyfangle" (Pishigan for
number) Goudy with all sorts of ex-
cuses to get out of class, but that
now there wasn't a ~~boy~~ who would
stay away. Indeed I have had no
absences but from sickness. You
must not think that I am taking
on airs - I have supposed you
would be interested in my success
and I don't know what else I could
do but say that I am succeeding.
I volunteered to take mineralogy, wishing
to renew an old acquaintance. I
have a class in that twice a week,
and besides this, in order to avoid the
expense of another prof. I have in
common with the others taken a study
out of my department. I have the
Elements of Natural Philosophy - as
there is a very good set of apparatus
I rather like it, but it takes too
much time. Indeed I never worked



Under Man I have done here
I have had hardly time to read the
papers & keep the sum of your hu-
morous Democracy. As for botany
work - I haven't done a lick - I
must begin now. I shall
not after this week ^{begin} ~~be~~ so much
out of door work to look after. The
grounds around the college have
been laid out for my gratification
& I have had to oversee a good
part of it. The boys are rather
surprised to see a New Yorker not
afraid to put his hands into the
earth. The students are required
to work three hours daily. I think
if you could see how well it oper-
ates here your ~~past~~ objections to man-
ual labor colleges would be removed.
They take as much interest in the
work as they do in their studies.
They do whatever is required of them
cheerfully & well. I had the best boy
one who is looked at by the rest as the
leader, carrying manure for me today.
As I am "doctored" here I have to doctor
in return. My practice is of the safest
kind. One boy came yesterday with his
troubles - Prescription - Tigs 1st to be
taken pro re nata - Another who had
been soaking the life out of him with
wet sheets was prescribed dry eyes & a tonic.



As my prescriptions have been thus far attended with benefit I get what falls to most practitioners in the early days of their career - lots of gratitude. Were it not for the uncertain condition of things entirely without our control I should be quite contented. As it is I hope all will result favorably. I hope you will not speak of what I have written of the troubles except to my particular friends. You may imagine from the amount of work I have on hand that I have not been able to collect very largely. Indeed until just now there has not been much that was very desirable. I took a tramp today & found several things that I never saw growing before. *Hydrastis*, *Viola Canadensis* & *rostrata* - *Achillea* - *impubes* - *Smilacina trifolia* - *Dicentra Canadensis*. *Phlox* - probably *divaricata* - &c. I forgot in speaking of the unpleasant features to state that the boys here, with I believe one single exception, are Republicans of the blackest kind - They have a Tribune club & that mischievous sheet is sapping the youthful mind with its disunion doctrines - You would have been amused

at the interest taken in the doings of
the Charleston convention. One of
the mornings when this was in session
I was out in the fields; the smallest
boy in the college came across to
intercept me to ask if there was a
nomination. He couldn't wait two hours
for the news. It wouldn't be safe for
any of the Charleston Chicago delegates
to visit here if Seward isn't nominated.

I believe that I have given you
as much of my delightful Chiro-
graphy as you can decipher in a
week - If you have a failing in
inability to read *Good Copying!*
Remember me with best regards to
all the faithful at *COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, C.*
your family, not forgetting the
quadrumanous portion thereof

As ever very truly

George Thurber

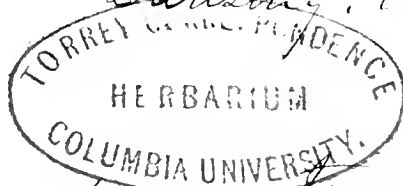
P.S. I reciev a lot of the Proceedings of Cal. Nat.
Societies - I send you one - Tell Miss Eliza
that my transition state prevented me
from replying to her note - I cannot
give any countenance to Miss Shaw until
next fall - Schults shall be attended to
in due time.

Over -

If I don't seal this letter pretty
soon I shall be late for Chapel
in the morning - I would add that
I must put you up to the Dodge
about the liquid glue that is so
extremely advertised - Soak glycerine until
soft - melt in its "water of absorption"
& add $\frac{1}{5}$ of volume of strong acetic
acid - If you haven't tried it you
will find it the best of all the
Genus Stickumtight.



State Ayl. College
Sarasota, Mich. June 16/00.



Dear Doct. Torrey

A day or two after I wrote
you I rec'd your welcome letter.
I hoped to be able to give you an
account of the Ex. Sp. grasses soon
after I came here - but the promised
cases are not made & my herbarium
is about useless. I have extemporized
some shelves for the most needed
things & have given every moment I
could spare during the present week
to them - Please send me the form in
which the other material is drawn up
& let me know how extended the synonymy
is to be. Before the matter is printed I
shall visit you to go over some of the
species but will wait till you can do
a number at a job. If you knew
the disadvantages under which I work
you would not think me neglectful
of your wishes - If I try to do anything
in the evening it takes me half my time
to kill mosquitoes - you cannot go a
half mile in any direction without coming
to an impenetrable swamp where the
stagnant water breeds these vermin with
most carnivorous propensities. They are
everywhere like the frogs of Egypt - Today
(Saturday) I thought I would have a whole
day to myself but running after tick boys
has very much broken it up. This is

a miserably unhealthy locality & though
the "sickly season" has not begun it is often
that I have 3 + 4 absent from a class
of 8, on account of illness. I have packed
two boys off home to recover. I loose about
one day in the week myself & am half
sick the rest of the time - Bilious troubles
prevail & I don't like to think what a
time we shall have here in August -
I wrote you in my last the most in-
congruous account that circumstances
would admit of. I have no fault to
find with the faculty & the students they
are both quite as I could wish - but the
powers above us treat us with absolute
neglect. The Governor was here a few
weeks ago & said that the members of
the Administration would meet the ^{1st}
of this month in Detroit & see what could
be done for us - they met & didn't "see" any-
thing but to see who would get re-nominated.
So we shall know nothing until late in
July when they meet again - Then I
have no confidence in the permanency
of the institution - there is a strong
influence at work against it from
the University at Ann Arbor - If any
money is to be given for such purposes
they wish it - It is currently reported,
with what truth I don't pretend to know
enough of local matters to judge, that
the Supt. of Public Instruction who lives
at Ann Arbor is under this influence
& wishes to break up the college.

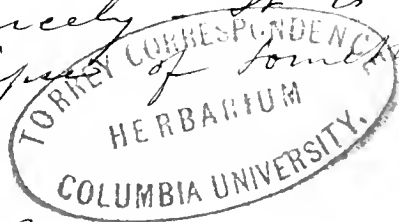
If we had not disregarded his instructions this spring we should not have had ten students. Under all these disagreeable circumstances you cannot wonder that I desire to get away from here as soon as possible. I soiled myself from civilization in the hope of a sure though moderate pay & thinking that I might find compensation in this & profit in a fair share of leisure. Neither of these hopes are realized. I have no time to myself for in the poverty of means & paucity of teachers we all go out of our departments & I don't think I ever worked so hard in my life - Teaching is pleasant but too much is drudgery. If you see any chance where ~~one~~ moderate living can be had within civilization or completely out of it I wish you would let me know.

Buchanan has written to me to ask why I don't apply for a situation in the new Botanic garden. I see that your friend Mr. Stuart is one of the names mentioned in connection with it & you probably can learn of their plans. I am willing to work or travel. I suppose however that an American will stand a poor chance beside a French or German botanist.

Have just received Chapman's book from Gray - It looks very nicely - It is very pleasant to get a glimpse of something from the East.

Ever truly yours

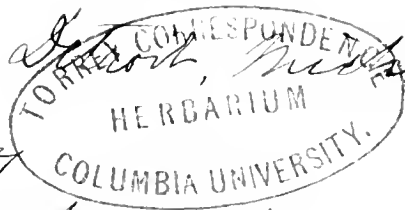
George Thurber



1870
1871
1872

1873
1874
1875

Recd. Aug 22
and. Aug 22-24



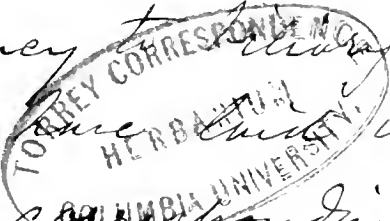
St. Louis, Mo., Aug 18, 86.

Dear Doctor Torrey

You will probably wonder how I happen to be here. We have a summer recess of a week at the college & wishing to rusticate a little during that time, I accepted the invitation of the father of one of our sick boys to make him a visit at his residence, which is about half the distance, & staid there several days and then came on to do up various errands for myself & neighbors. At last that efficient body known as the State Board of Education has had a drop to keep us from absolute want. - Eight hundred dollars to divide among those whose demands are over three thousand! - just enough to pay toward bills & a few dollars over with no satisfaction for the future. The whole thing is so contemptible

inefficient that I have no patience
in thinking of it. For some time
I have had warnings of Fever & ague
& while on the visit, just mentioned,
the thing itself came. As Tomtit says
(supposing you to have read Dred) "I've got a
'sperience on dat ar" - Just imagine
every individual bone in your body cut into
such pieces, with a current of pain, each
thicker than the other, running through
in different directions with a little con-
centration wherever the connection is broken
& you have a fair notion of the
ague. Then you have the fever & the
two are like the Irishman's two roads,
"when you have travelled half way on
either you will wish you had taken
the other". The whole leaves you feeling
like a wrung out dish cloth with a
bushel basket for a head. Excuse
technicalities, if I am not writing
to an M.D. I would try to popularize

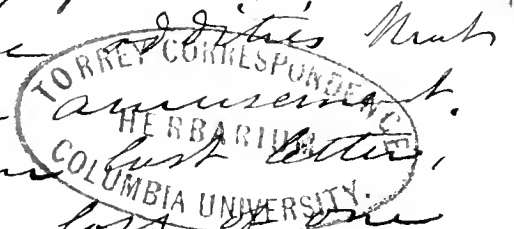
The description. As soon as I was able
to move I came here & consulted Doct.
Pitcher, and fed on quinia. I have
taken enough to make me bark before
long, if I don't bite. The ague season
has just begun & Doct. P. says that from
the indications there will probably be
a large crop - a prospect which I,
with my tendency to ^{bowel} troubles, do
not relish. I have ^{put} in an ounce
of quinia & a ^{corresponding} amount
of the coculean mass, in view of
a state of size. Doct. Pitcher has
been exceedingly kind to me - He says
that I ought to be at Ann Arbor & that
he will see if there is any chance for
a botanist - I wish you could nudge
him on that point. I feel that I
cannot stay permanently at Lansing,
surely not if this attack is often
repeated - The other place is old &
healthy & they have a large endowment.



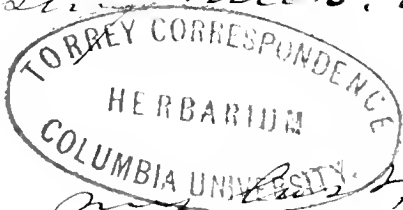
They have a Prof. there who does
the Mineralogy, geology, zoology
& botany - is the State geologist &
is making a State survey & wants
the Chemistry besides! - Doct.
P. says he doesn't know anything
about either of these little subjects.
I should, I think, like much to have
the Botany & Mat Medica there.
Even the slightest glimpse through
the woods gives me hope that I
shall get out of them somehow.

I passed a pleasant evening with
Capt. Whipple & Doct. Bigelow, the
latter is here as a meteorological
observer for the State survey. Both
wished to be remembered to you. It
is the first time that I have seen
Bigelow since the Boundary days,
he seems to be in very good spirits
& has worn off all those ^{additions} that
afforded us so much amusement.
I had a laugh over your
complaining of the loss of one
that I had already safely in my
possession. As soon as I get to the
college & am well enough, will
send some grass notes.

Ever very truly
George Thurber



Agricult. College
Lansing Mich. Aug 27 '60



Dear Doctor Torrey

In my last, from
Detroit I told you that I was
quite ill with ague. Since I returned
I have been quite well till today -
tomorrow is the dreaded 14th day
after the first attack & every "low"
in my body is informing me of it.
I hope I may stave it off for I
have quite satisfied my curiosity
in the ague line. As soon as the
sun is fairly down a dense white
fog comes creeping over the ground,
the strangest fog - extending only 15 or
20 feet upwards but so thick that
you cannot see across the road.
When this is about you can smell
all the vegetation that ever was
smelled. Go out in it & your hair
is dripping & clothes quite moist.
In the morning every thing is reeking
with moisture & one cannot go
about with comfort till the middle
of the forenoon when it is oppressively
hot. This has been repeated every day,
except when it rained, for nearly
two months. I sent you a list
of a part of the Sp. Exped. Grasses.
I have worked at others but

This is as far as the list is con-
tinuous. I wish I had your
herbarium near by for a few
days to settle some things. I would
like you to go over there & see if
you have any better disposition
to make of any of them. In
this new memorandum I of course
did not put by yours. - these I
will include when I write out the
notes finally - Many of the speci-
mens are unnumbered, in these
cases I have quoted the labels,
the originals of which you have.
Our horrid boys are all agog because
they expect to hear the naughty Mr
Seward next week. This irrepressible
man & the reprehensible Cassius
M. Clay together with the audacious
Soveign are to be at Leansing & it
is expected that 50 thousand of
the benighted people will counter-
ancee the doings of these agitators
& disorganizers - I am afraid that
with these influences so near
me I shall fall away from
the true Democratic faith -

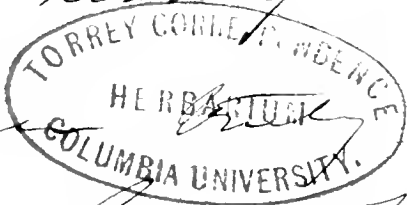
I am getting very uneasy here, I
hear so much that is discour-

aying about the future prospects
of the concern. The people attached
to it think that it must go on,
but outsiders think that the
legislature will not appropriate.

The Democratic papers run it
down - The past management gives
them plenty of capital & the chief
trouble about their charges is that
they are true - on the other hand
the Republican papers say but
little in its favor - It is a one
horse concern any way. You
may think it queer that I men-
tion politics, as associated with a
college, but politics pervade every-
thing here - it breaks up families
& people don't visit their neighbors
if they go to "tother church".

It may be that the above hints
make me a little snarly - so I'll
stop - I only heartily wish I was
out of it.

As ever
yours truly

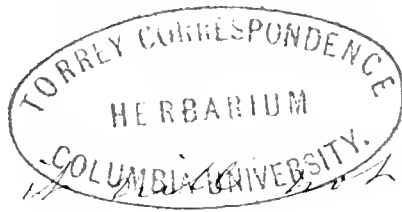


George Thurber

76

Rec? Sept. 14

Cpl. Colleye Lansing,
Mich. Sept. 10. 1866.



Dear Doct. Torrey

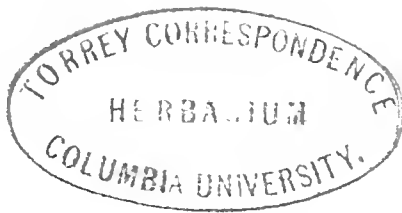
If it will not be troubling you too much about my affairs I would like to consult with you about a matter which has recently turned up. There has been a reorganization of the 13th St. Med. College & I can probably have the Botany & Nat. Med if I wish it. The College of Pharmacy wish me to come back there & if the two classes together would make ~~the~~ pay anything respectable I might be disposed to try it. The College of Pharmacy gave me \$200. last year & probably would do the same this season. Of course I should do as Doernum does & have both classes in one. What I wish of you is, in the first place to tell me if you think the course advisable - whether being connected with an institution that has had so many changes & has not perhaps held the highest rank would be to my advantage. Then I would like you to ascertain from Doernum what would be the probable income & outgo in that department.

Doct. Meredith Reese told Meakin
that I could have it if I wished,
he, Reese, has recently associated him-
self with the college. I do not know
what his standing is in the profession.
It may be well if you have every
consideration upon the subject to have
it distinctly understood that I take
only Materia Medica & Pharmacy with
Botany as an adjunct - treating the
substances as objects of natural history
& in short giving just that which
medical students need & nobody gives.
Therapeutics I have nothing to
do with. It has been my hope
to be able to live quietly in New
York during the coming winter &
finish up the catalogue upon which
I have expended so much time
& work. But I do not see that
our money affairs will here will
materially improve this year & this
winter will probably decide the fate
of this institution with the legislature,
it will either be abandoned or put on
a respectable footing. I regret much
to be obliged to defer my catalogue
but I do not see how I can get

along this winter without doing
something remunerative. I was
obliged to hire money to enable me
to remove here, which would have
been paid had I been paid.

Then I had to give Peter Cooper a
note for \$100 - for rent. These things
must be paid if I can find any
way to do it. If you will see
Doremus or Reese at an early
day & learn what are the pros-
pects there I shall be very glad.

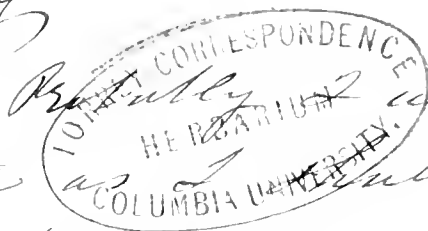
Very truly
George Thurber





State Ayl College
Leaning Mich May 1/61

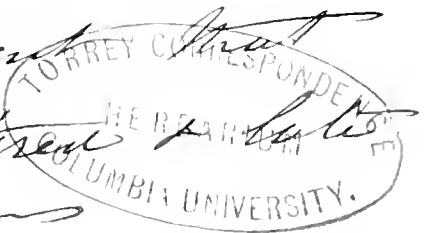
Dear Oct. Torrey

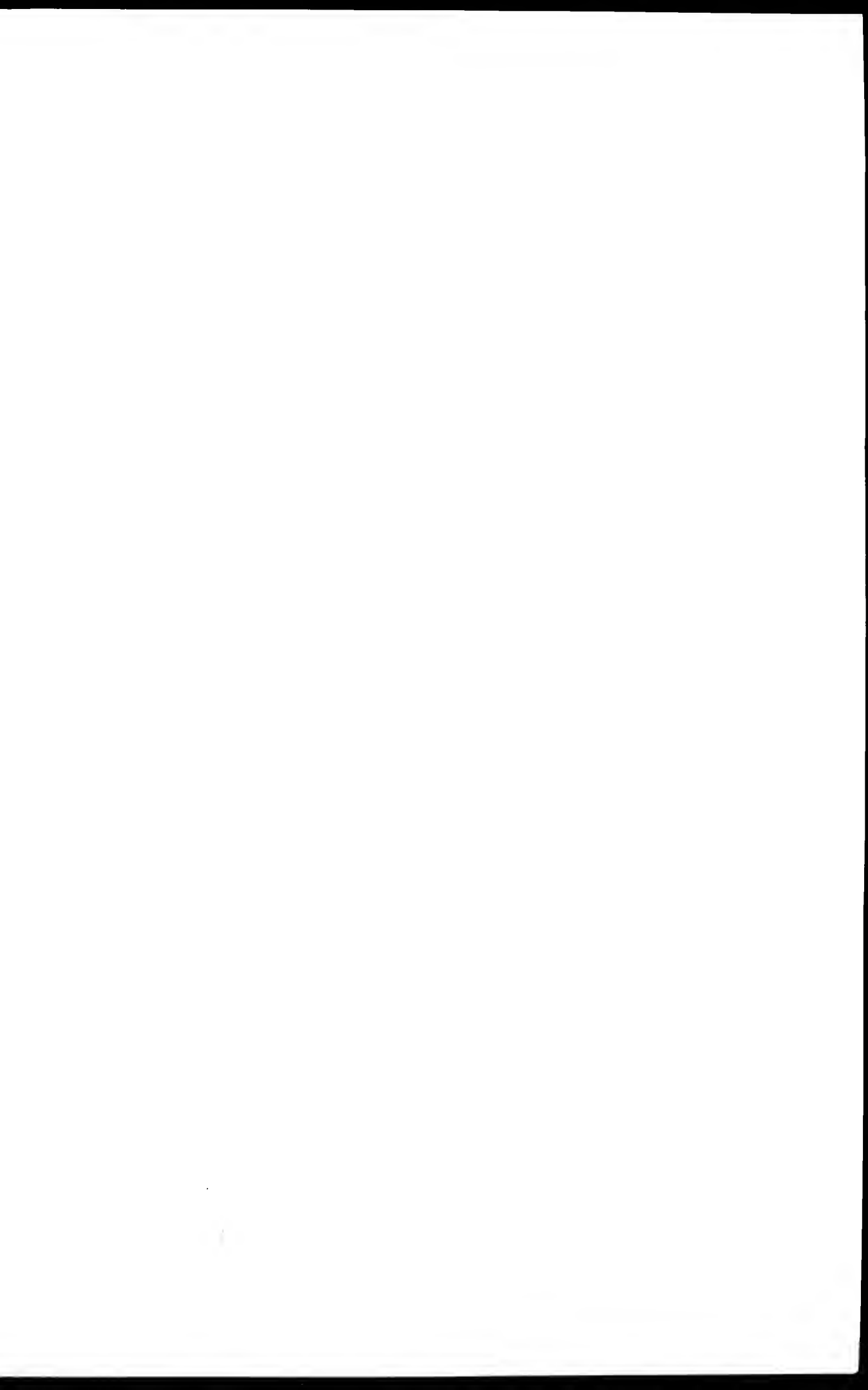


Practically all as
much settled as I shall be.
Have 60 students & more are com-
ing. Shall not know how we
will fare for money until the
Board meets, which will be in
3 weeks. The Horticultural Dept.
is placed under me & that with
one class daily gives me just as
much as I can attend to. I
have one of the seniors for an
assistant who serves me a great
deal. Am making experiments of
perennials in germination of peas
beans & others of your favorites.
On Saturday I was sitting in a cellar
on a pork barrel seriously dis-
cussing with my agent, which & how many
potatoes should be planted that
day. The thought came across
me that if you were to look in
upon us & see the scene you
would be highly amused & I broke
out into a hearty laugh, must

To the other's dismay - Horrible
weather cold winds & killing
frosts - Have a letter from
Mr. Meynard concerning the Asst.
Assayship of San Francisco -
I have asked him some ques-
tions about it. It strikes me about
half favorably - I would like to
know if he is as peculiar as he
was when he held the place before.
The most that I know of him is
from a strange address that he
published - When he was there
before I believe they worked in
the assay Dept. till late in the
evening - If this is the case I should
not go - I don't care to give up
voluntary pay for more pay.
Write me what you think of the
matter - Tell Herb. that the
trees are here & planted - Ask
him if he has the bill, as I don't
think that all were sent -
Very truly
as ever yours

George Thurber

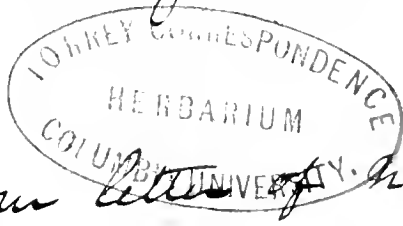




Geo. Thurber
May 9/61

Agricultural College
Lansing, Mich. Oct. 5th 1861.

Dear Doct. Torrey



Your letter nearly two

months ago has been laying on my
table waiting for me to feel like an-
swering - or what is more to the point
to find time to write. I have determined
that it shall not go over another week
& though I don't feel much like
writing I will follow the advice of Mrs.
Chick & "make an effort". Saturday is al-
ways a busy day with me - having boys
at work in some six different places it
takes all attention & no little travel to
keep all strings pulling at once. We
fared in frost and have been securing
some tons of hayashes. I unfortunately
nearly disabled my right hand by a
burn & have not been able to use
it freely for some weeks. It is now so
that I can write slowly without pain
which is a great comfort. To begin
at the beginning - I believe that I
told you that I should have the de-
partment of Horticulture on my hands.
This involves the working of some 30 acres

of garden. requiring not only constant personal supervision but much study & thought. Rather a new position for me to be placed in - but despite the long droughts the garden has been a success - I work about 20 boys, have their work to lay out & this time to keep accounts of & all sorts of loose ends to gather up. As if this were not enough for one person, ~~some~~ change in the course throws botany out for this year & I have two classes in subjects which I care but little about. Natural Philosophy & Mineralogy. Each of these require study & preparation of illustrations - I take them up at night & often fall asleep with my book in my hand. Things monetary went along smooth in the early part of the season. but now, that so much is required for the war, all in that quarter is uncertainty. We are told that we must wait. Before I ascertained this state of things I was appointed to by the College of Pharmacy to lecture this winter. I told them that I would give them two & a half months out of my three months vacation. They concluded to engage some one who would give them the full course of four months. So I am thrown

out of that source of revenue & of course feel a little anxious to know how money matters will result here. I had quite made up my mind to try & be contented here. There are so many things which attach me to the place. I have such good friends in the faculty - get along so smoothly with the students & so much work of my own hands has been depended here that I should hate to give it up. But then the money! - We shall see how it will all come out. If they pay I shall be able to pass my vacation in New York where I can live in a small way & do up my enumeration of the grasses. I find that I must do this before I finish the catalogue. Here it is just impossible to do any botanical work. From seven in the morning until late at night I am thoroughly occupied. We have had quite a sickly season & Dr. Nile & myself have had to give a great deal of time to the hospital department. We usually make our visits together & I keep a private apothecary's shop & dispense at my own expense. I have had to stop while writing to answer two calls for medicine. We neither of us make any charge as that would give the people claims upon our services. We have had abundant dysenteries &

one typhoid fever - Ague is so common
that we do not count it - The let alone
treatment is splendid in most everything
but ague - Nothing short of Quinine will
stop that - We get daily our news through
the Detroit papers - I just skim them &
wait until I get a two days old Trib.
before I make up my mind - Michigan
is doing far more in proportion to her
population than New York. Our little
community has given up nine of its best
boys to go under Fremont - I lost some
of my best friends thus - I get the
kindest & most touching letters from them.
In addition to other things I drill the
students twice a week - revising my
old military knowledge which had long
ago been laid by as useless - I am glad
that Herb. has a place in the assay office.
I infer from your letter that Mr. Deering
is superintendent of the Assay office - If
so I am surprised that he did not make
me an offer of a place - I should
not have accepted it, but after all
the trouble I have had with the thing
it would have been rather gratifying.
When one acts from principle he
must get his own reward in so
doing as he need expect little beyond
that - I have recently taken out &

put up a fine portrait of Fremont
which I have had for a long time
in my drawers. I don't know yet
whether to put it back or not. I
can't help believing that he will come
out all right yet. Engelmann about
two months ago wrote me a most gloomy
account of affairs in St Louis - He seemed
to think that the military politicians
were quite as bad as the secessionists.
He says like yourself that study is all
out of the question. Besides cultivating
"garden sass" to a large extent I have
done a good deal in floriculture.
Once in a while some one comes along
who appreciates such things. I was
quite delighted - before I knew who
they were - by a visit from Gov. & Mrs.
Seymour of New York - both of whom
seemed to know a deal about flowers
& botany - I regretted that I did not
know who they were until they had
gone - Such people take me back
into the world once more - The plants
I put out this spring did very poorly
on account of the severe dry weather
which followed the planting - A
little *Forreya* which I bought from
Survival - like its namesake it likes
hot weather - I hope I shall make

it live through the winter -
You find so much satisfaction in
making fun of my writing that I
console myself for the difficulty of
writing with a cooked finger in thinking
of the great fund of amusement I
am providing you with - with re-
membrances to all your household
I am most truly

George Thurber



[1869?]

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186

Dear Doctor Torrey.



Your enclosing grass came duly - but I was unable to look at it until this evening. It is Bouteloua aristoides Thurber.

Desibra ——— HB. K.
Eutrochium ——— Kth -

a very small and underdeveloped specimen - It is also Wright's 751, Col., 1848 - & 2017 & 2019 Col. 1851 - you probably have it under one of these numbers - if not I can give you specimens collected by Hayes - I had heard of the death of Martins -

Very sincerely Yours
George Engelman

"Oxy Graminis"
vide Torr. Mus.

