AllegheNY College
Meadville, Pa.
May 11th, 1866

Dear Friend Marsch,

Your letter of the 22nd. came duly & I have certainly have been answered earlier. I sent you an J. [illegible] catalogue to indicate that your letter had reached me. As soon as I could for a little time I looked among my papers for the design for a scientific building which I had partially prepared some after you left Berlin. I received my
Call and a little later my electric loth place to a professorship. I then laid aside everything not directly and immediately important and had given me more time to the working of the deeper though I have kept it in mind as a plan I would like to work on.

I am now working up the results anew as there are many points that need to be changed somewhat in order to have a really fine effect. As soon as it is ready, which will be in a week or ten days I will send it to you. It will only contain of course a general view, as the task is too small for this details and my time will not now permit me to work them up. Had it been possible I should have been glad to send it sooner. But a few weeks I had met in the other society as well as the other and the changes (more artistic than standard) accord.

It is important that it be read 2 to 3 pages. I will give you full particulars when the drawing is ready.

I need not say that it was much to the greater relief that I left Berlin (Germany) (indeed Europe). I felt that I came to America was to me (in my department faculty) like coming to a client. And I felt that the five years stay in Europe had just prepared me to derive advantage from my stay there still, yielding to the strong adm of friends I accepted a call to a chair here. I arrived here on Sept. 23 - from Allegheny College, to be an A.P. institution with a long university history, but by the help of wealthy and generous patrons, just rising to a vigorous and healthy growth.

I am well by the catalogue that the American subscription is pretty well sustained. They have just told me that Sayre Head has just returned from Europe having purchased $8,600 of materials for the new geological cabinet. The prog. of Natural Science is in an excellent
investigator, but is a most skilful instructor and a good thinker. Of the scientific departments, there is a classical one in competition with the classical one. In the latter, the same course is taken as in the former, but the same degree is given for graduating in either. The great trouble of the college is its preparatory department. Still it seems quite necessary in order to complete one's education. The past has done preparation for many students. Many students also have advanced much more in science and mathematics than in the ancient languages, and thus can rank themselves for a year or two years prior into the eighth year.

I have a fine classic German and French and attended in Rome — and am delivering a course of lectures upon my travels, treating of the works of art as they occurred to me rather than chronologically. As I shall in the future, Madison is beautifully located. The college grounds are ample and magnificently located. The new forest has a boarding hall as broad...
Ends not to be had in the city for love or money. Fifty students have left us for lacking a boarding place. The school is magnificently located. My rooms in the best house of all and command a fine panoramic view of the city and all the surrounding country, looking along four fine valleys.

About three weeks after I was settled here at my work, I found a tendency to a determination of mind to the head as apparent that it was necessary to give up my classes. I went to the Cheltenham Springs Water Cure (N.Y. State) - probably the best in America. There a stay of ten weeks gave me such a command of my difficulty that I deemed it prudent to return to my duties here. Thus since Jan 21st I have been here and now find myself - though not by any means quite well - still able, by Providence, to attend to my duties. Many duties of course have accumulated during my absence.
The failure of Calvea, Rome. 5.

New York city. Wholly all the banks in this region are endangered—nearly—and wholly several more under threat to be a severe blow to our college. But in New York last month for the first $300 worth of articles for our museum of archaeology and art history. It was but a small beginning of course but the money was so distributed as to bring a large number of very valuable articles. I found and corresponded as to be able to draw to the very best advantage, and quite as well as those pressures myself to select the articles. Indeed I have directions when in Berlin, Rome & elsewhere which my needs to be filled as I get the best articles in Europe out at the lowest rate.
Me in just in the border of the oil regions. Would you like a collection of oil in all stages of its production and preparation for the market, for your Museum?

I can come Saturday, if you are able to get them for you, in line orders for their collection. I can also get fine photographs of the oil regions, illustrating the several interesting points of the territory, and the operation of production. — Can also send you a book lately published, containing all the particulars of oil finding, its history and methods — thus giving you all that is known of petroleum as found in these regions.

I don't think I shall be glad to do so. If you would like to exchange for any articles you may choose, I am willing. That would be interesting to a collector — for any of its Cabinet Museum or libraries.

1869
great gratification and pleasure to me the remembrance by you of the European resumption. And you may be assured that I will spare no pains to serve you in any way with reference to the architectural designs of your Museum—so far as may be in my power to do so. I feel my studies has even my own choice department. During the short few years of my stay, I did what I could to prepare myself for my very difficult task in America. I feel my studies in the election to Corresponding Membership of the Archæological Institute of Rome. I valued the appointment for mine for the delicate judging them by the distinguished men who had made my stay and study in Europe as pleasant as possible. In my opinion Prof. Lipsius had something to do with the nomination. It is esteemed quit-
an honor, as I was informed that there am no other American members, and no other member is so young. At least, I assure you, it will make an
impression on my zeal in my wish to introduce the study of Esthetics, Art,
and Archeology into the system of liberal education in America.

But I commenced to stop men up will stop now, asking you to
remember me Most kindly to Mr. & Mrs. Blake & to believe in

Yours most truly

E.S. T. Comfort

I hear that Mr. Mead, in letter & others that
there is a large & very pleasant company of
Americans now in Berlin. Mr. Mead returns
here in June. Please tell Mr. Blake that
S. Jachmann returned to Berlin this fall. I had
a letter from him a week ago—perhaps I think
Allegheny College
Meadville, Pa.
May 26th, 1866

Dear Friend Marsh,

You will probably have read before this reaches you, a packet by express containing the design for the facade of your new scientific building. The design for the other wing is drawn, as you will notice, with a considerable care. I have just matched a men of one of a series of photographs of Rembrandt's paintings. And as I wish to preserve the drawing especially if you
do not run it. I enclose it in the frame to keep it from being spoiled.

The drawing for the certain jagged contains the two wings—similar to each other—and a central part, drawn in to show how the wings will compare in the finished building than as a matter, composition of itself.

I will now say a few words in detail about each drawing. I showed the sketch you saw in Berlin to a number of the local art critics then. It met with general approval, and in some cases with very much enthusiasm. A number of criticisms, most of which I think were justly expressed by different persons, concerning certain parts of the composition. One point has since occurred to myself. All of these I have endeavored to take advantage of, and to incorporate them as to form a facade.

Symmetrical and harmonious in itself, and at the same time so that will "compose" well in a large building, of which it will form a part. This last is not the least part to be considered and has largely increased the difficulty of the composition. I have endeavored to keep in mind the spirit of your remarks about the object of the building, and the desire to make it a landmark in the history of American Architecture.

It has been my effort to keep the design somewhat severe in style, and at the same time to give it grace and even elegance.

This severity is shown in the long, continuous lines of the façade, the general simplicity of the outline, and above all in the complete subordination of the building to the purpose for which it is to be used—making the ornament structural and not the structure ornamental.

I have sought to give grace in the arrangement and lines of the arches, in the gradual swelling of the tops of the windows, from the
first story upwards—ending up with the round windows of the attic,—and in the breaking of the perpendicular lines of the rather slender pilasters by the horizontal lines which divide the stories.

Then endeavored to gain a certain richness and elegance by massing the ornaments in the middle of the building,—the slightly projecting balustrade gently breaking the plain surface of the front, and giving a certain air of lightness which is still more enhanced by the elaborate corinie and the balustrade surrounding the whole edifice,—the panels of the balustrade forming a rather solid base for the three groups of symbols of the sciences that ornament the entire building (including the correspondence).

Corresponding groups of other sciences will ornament the other wings of the central building at the two (unrepresented) ends, and an eagle will rise over the top of the central dome.
The three groups of symbols are designed only as samples of what is designed to be carried out in the other part of the building.

The statues will be placed under canopies and on pedestals attached to the external surface of the walls; thus — not in niches set into the wall.

Statues of deities and allegorical or symbolical figures have been in ancient and modern art — placed on the tops of buildings; portrait statues, never. But the propriety of even placing statues of any kind on the tops of buildings is questioned by many of the best critics. Placed slightly above the level of the roof — not higher than the first story when they can be seen with clearness — and when they are in perfect subordination to the architecture — they will not be open to criticism from any, and will be a beautiful and highly interesting feature.
While the design of the entire façade, as given in the large drawing, has some merits (I think), it would not do to adopt without more mature consideration than it has been possible for me to give it. Indeed, before passing a final decision with reference to all of the points in the drawing for the wing, I should wish to confer with you further.

Permit me now to make one or two suggestions with reference to the internal arrangement. The heavy lines in this simple drawing of the plan are all that had been made as integral part of the construction—thus giving a hall and three large rooms on spaces that can be made into rooms of pleasure. Subject to rearrangement as the enlargements or other changes of the building may require.

In the Museum at Berlin, as heavy articles as are placed in any Museum in cabinets are placed in the attic and third stories. For strength, the heavy walls are absolutely sufficient. The basement windows distinctly very much the front of any such museum and preventions building as yours will be. The appearance of the building, especially when completed, will be very much enhanced by their suppression. Still you must decide whether it is feasible to run the basement only for workrooms to be lighted from the rear and by saw.

The building will look like a large city building from with as many basement windows.

And now, in conclusion, I will say that if you should decline me to carry out the details and complete the working drawings for the building, it would be possible for me to devote several weeks of my long vacation—extending from June 21st to July 20th.
to that work. I have been called upon to prepare designs for the buildings in the new Drew Theological Seminary, and also for the new Court House and Soldiers Monument to be erected in this city. Part

Of the Rochester Museum has been the drawings I sent you and was much pleased with them, and asked me to

set myself in readiness to prepare a design for the large Museum building they intend soon to erect at Rochester.

As you see, I am likely to have my hands full of business, if I accept all that is presented to me. I shall try to

do some of it.

I am just now busy preparing an "inaugural" in the opening of the new branch of art in my college to be delivered at the evening commencement.

My kind regards to Mr. and Mrs. Stedman.

Most truly yours,

Geo. F. Comstock
Alleyburg Castle
Meadville, Pa.
Jun 2 - 1868

Dear Martha,

Your last letter came only to hand.

I will say a word about the advice of the builder and the other building. The cost of the interior will be the same - whatever joint may be - and will depend upon how highly finished one will propose to have the Carpenter's work. Then after this is decided.
In the third place, the forms adopted for the statues can be added at a later date.

Perhaps one would prefer to make a suggestion. The Library has very great rooms, and will be continually having new rooms, so that it may therefore be well to take care in the disposition of the parts of sculpture available, as may not be altogether the most advantageous to the present generation, at least during the present five years. A building once built should never be changed, and must be altered in modified forms. Thus it would seem to me to be very desirable to have liberal initials of names of donors painted in the buildings. They will be filled by patrons later. Here grounds on the buildings are offered to Cambridge. Their subscriptions contain very great degree some time after these buildings were built.

At King's College (Princeton), and at Vienna they

Bartholomew at all places on the continent
When new buildings are being erected for universities, in many cases within a few years, this is the principle adopted—to spend large sums on the buildings, and to wait for future supplies to be added to them, if they are not now large enough. Your building will stand for centuries, and fifty years from now the successors might not be in the same places they are now. Suppose the buildings left us just a fifty years ago. We must not build with reference to what the future is going to be, with reference to what it will become.

I shall be interested in seeing your article on the antiquity of Man. Archaeology will be an invaluable assistant in settling this question. But as yet it is too early from this the Archæological Stand Point to give an intelligent and satisfying answer to the many phases of the question that touch this great subject. Archaeologically it is very difficult to tell the age of even a city 2,000 years old. As Roma, Egyptian, Archæological—
Bunyan, differ thousands of years in their estimates of the dates of certain monuments.

Passing this — as all historical sciences must do — from the known to the unknown, it will be necessary to adopt certain principles for establishing the dates of monuments or remains of any kind — of cities and peoples within historic times, before it will be possible to ascertain into what dark-prehistoric periods of the different races of men

Probable doubt philology will be able to throw light upon the age of man. It seems will be able to give any light as to whether the race of the man — at least as the best minds in Germany think — as M. R. P. Prof. R. is just meeting a point in connexion with the Hebrew language, which if established will utterly change the at present accepted biblical chronology.

Again some philosophers ask how long it ran must have existed before the toiles et
come to that degree of abstraction she  be able to use the verb "to be" — they then ask how long the race must have existed to be able to develop the wonderfully empirical and complete systems of vocalism of the ancient language!

These and other questions must be settled by further investigation, and longer discussion, but they show how the different branches of investigation can enter into contact and interlock with each other.

But I am writing too long — it is the custom for new professors now to deliver major addresses at the Commencements preceding their taking of their duties, so I am briefly at work in mine.

I am sorry to hear of Mr. Carter Goodrich's health. It does not surprise me as he seemed to be on his way to a Consumption, given when he is Berlin.

Most truly yours,

Geo. W. Comstock

S. 18
Allegany College
Meadville, Pa.
Jan. 23rd 1866

Dear Friend Marsh

Your favor of the 20th inst. came duly to hand. I am very sorry that illness called us caused me any trouble in continuing my books.
They did it without my order or knowledge and it was at least an oversight in having my books duly entered and paid for. I am greatly obliged to you for the trouble you have taken and hope...
In the able to repay you even though in some ways.

On an idea on my commencement. 

I mean to a progress in which I have lost little time to write a careful reply to the question you ask as to the construction of this building, but will still say a word or two.

The decision of the statues will not require me in the improve of the architectural appearance of the building. The symbols should be composed with the elements of the particular sciences taught, as they can be kept as a term or omitted altogether. In planning them out the statues I suppose them to be

In accordance with the general plan, where there had a building. That I would make the design highly monumental.

One certainly is well to have the design fine from first to last and not make such errors, as especially in a city, that be not situated being as in a small town.

As to the cost of the building, I can give no estimate, as I do not know the prices of material and labor accurately enough.

A firm builder will give you an estimate of the internal construction and appointments. Did I write to you and had I time to draw all the specifications for the interior fixtures, I would in a short time by consulting with master builders and masters make.
an estimate that wants not vary at
$300 in the erection of the wing from
the actual cost--(I mean not including
the change in the price of labour or material
while building--which itself can prove).

As to the ornamentation, the
general plan can be retained and
the ornament be made rich and
impressive--as shown in the facade in
the wing which I sent--or the ornament
may be made very simple--even in
the capitals of the pilasters.

The pilasters were made purposely
clustered to give lightness and grace to the
facade. They can be made wider or thinner
if desired. They can be the arches resting
upon the pilasters, shifts of course--
reinforced to a corresponding degree.
If I were only with you awhile as to get your views men accurately, I shant attempt to embody them in the design even if it involved a great modification of the one sent.

To have a mass in building (especially) rather narrow streets, instead of a broad open square is always a great evil— one hard to be overcome. To have the main part our back from the ways thus enables the city and the square to be seen much better from the opposite side of the streets, and in the immediate vicinity. But by this plan a por-

case of a or any where on the square (or park) with in the angle measured by the cone be-

points an nothing at all of the main front. which wont be a serious loss. Also, have
As to the construction of the roof, I have proposed to have it set in or quite flat. Then are several ways whereby a very strong and flat roof can be made economical, light, durable and cheap. The best probably is to use the (as termed by carpenters or builders) 'fish' beam bridge. The beam bridge is then made as follows: the frame of the roof thus consists of cross beams joined by struts running lengthwise of the building. The cross beam may consist of an iron of timber or of several (or it may be iron). Each iron joist joins over the ends. An iron rod runs over two plates (b) so that nothing is impossible. Thus very great lightness is granted. The roof may be made as flat, so that the side turns on the front wall will be...
Inconsiderable airs can be easily overcome by
transmitting

I need not say that it was not by
any means cause or any disappointment
expressed by any other you may find
more touchful or uncommon. But it is
wont only be possible for me to encompass
all the wants of the building and to have them
as arranged or disposed as to meet your pleasures
and means by any consultation or much study.

Your "brochein" in the Mount Vernon reached
my sight. Please it much, in account just
Confidence of your assuming new grounds. This is
certainly the true method, unless we expect our
views to be expressed when mere facts or falls
I am particularly gratified to hear that you have
interest yourself in the establishment of a Museum of
Archaeology in America. Nearly any branch of general
Culture of equal importance is so neglected north of
America. We have just started here to the
amount of 5000 in establishing a Museum.
Archaeology in Allegheny College: The box (I am no) will be from Monday. I will read a few of the articles to illustrate my view that which is to treat of the importance of the study of aesthetics and of the fine arts (practically and historically)—and their place in a system of liberal education. Several of my best European friends have accused my efforts most kindly of efficiency. The chief director of the Museum at Berlin presents some very pleasant fine originals.

But I must close to wait upon your visitor.

Most truly yours,

Geo. F. Comfort
I presume, on reflection, you mean the Archaeology of American Antiquities, rather than General Archaeology in America. Both are very important, the former being the more important for the advancement of human knowledge, the latter for the culture of our own people.
Allegheny College.

Programme of Commencement Week,
JUNE, 1866.

Examinations Commence on Wednesday, June 20, and Close Monday, June 25.

Sunday, June 24—10 1-2 A.M.
Baccalaureate Sermon.

Monday, June 25—7 1-2 P.M.
Address Before the Literary Societies,
By Rev. Samuel H. Nesbit, D.D.

Tuesday, June 26.
9 A.M. First Meeting of the Board of Trustees.
10 A.M. Prize Declamations.
3 P.M. Inaugural Address, by Prof. Geo. F. Comfort.
4 P.M. Meeting of the Joint Boards of Control.
8 P.M. Concert, by Leland's Band.

Wednesday, June 27.
9 A.M. Anniversary of the Biblical Literary Society.
2 P.M. Business Meeting of the Alumni.
3 P.M. Anniversary of the Philo-Franklin Literary Society.
7 1/4 P.M. Semi-Centennial Oration Before the Alumni,
By Rev. Bishop Calvin Kingsley, D.D.

The Festival and Reunion of the Alumni will occur immediately after the oration.

Thursday, June 28.
9 A.M. Commencement.
8 P.M. President's Levee.

Leland's Celebrated Band, of Cleveland, O., will Furnish the Music for Commencement Week.
May 6th, 1854

Prof. O.C. Marth
Dean Sir:

I refer to your letter of May 5th, in which you informed me of the list of articles of Mexican Antiquities belonging to General Skillett, and I wish to state that I have been among my papers and have so far failed to find it. I was informed about six years ago, by an entirely unproved person, that General Skillett had in his collection a diamond which I may have seen, but I have no recall of it.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

R. F. Comfort