Washington Feb., 1886

Dear friend:—

Hall took the report in this morning.

I have seen a copy of Agassiz's letter to Mr. Allston's commission which is not yet published.

It criticizes the Government survey on several points, and says, of paleontology:—
"That is just one of the things which private individuals and learned societies can do just as well as the government. They will do it cheaper..."

Herbert wants to chop off everything he can, and that seems to be all he cares to do. I think all the rest of the commission favors science. yours

S. Newcomb
My Dear March:

Last night Powell suggested a resolution for the Senate which I enclose. I think it would come in better order from you than from me.

Howley would be a good man to introduce it; but Dawes a somewhat better one, because
it would probably be referred to the Comm.
on Naval Affairs of which Davie is a
member, and Harvey is not.

If you will telephone
me when you are in
I will go over to see you.

Yours very truly

J. Harvey
Monday evening.

My Dear Marsh:—

I think I have "put a lead" on that bill in both houses. When I told Dawes about the Academy report he at once said he would introduce a resolution in the Senate tomorrow, calling on the Secretary for it. So I at once telegraphed...
you to know if you had any objection. I think it very desirable, because it will be much more effective coming to the Senate this way than in the Academy Report, where it may be overlooked.

Afterward I went to Hewitt, who is chairman of the subcommittee in charge of it, and he said he would try to get hold of the Academy report. So I told him it would soon be handed in to the Senate in your annual report, and might be called for there tomorrow. I would have gone to talk with Whitney today, but he is gone to N.Y.

Yours very truly,

S. forsey
Dear Mr. Smith

If you are satisfied with the resolution, I hope you will get it into the hands of Dawes or some one else tomorrow morning, so it can come up to-morrow. Every day's delay is worse for it.

Yours,

S. Nevins
to interfere with the unity of the Coast Survey. This has caused
the question of the future superintendency to stir a little. On this
subject you may have seen an editorial in last
weeks Nation and a long reply thereto by Thorn in the Evening
Post on Monday the 15th. Thorn seems to have mighty queer ideas
of discipline when he encourages his men to go to Chenowith and
Company, Accounting officers of the Treasury, for advice as to
what they shall do in their capacity as assistants of the Coast
Survey.

Yours very truly,

S. Newcomb

I have just been down to see the Secretary
Professor O. C. Marsh,
Professor of Naval Science, the Commissioner to whom I sent my
New Haven, Conn.

post. He said it will not be until late in the spring
that the plans will be ready for the Secretary of the Treasury
I see no reason why I may not be ready to send in the
letter. I will do my best and hope in no way to embarrass
myself in the Treasury Department.

If you get a letter from me I will accept
any suggestions you may make in the Interior Office.
Washington March 21st, 1886

My Dear Marsh;-

Our letter to the Sec of the Treasury asking him that the discrepancy of $11,500 in the accounts of the T.V. Commission be explained has struck a snag in the Navy Dept which I knew nothing about till yesterday. In making out the statement Mr Hatrison included in the appropriations everything that Congress had appropriated for the Transit. But when the statement came here it was found, as you know, that several of the appropriations had never been placed to the credit of the Transit of Venus at all, but to that of the Naval Observatory. So the ground was taken that as the commission had never had any hand in the expenditure of these amounts, it should leave them out of the account entirely, thus reducing the deficit to one half. I fought this view and intend to continue doing so. I say if moneys appropriated by law to be expended by the commission have never been it at its disposal at all, we have a right to have that fact certified to us by the highest authority.

Morely. At this point I left off until today I have a note from Horn who fully agrees with me, and we expect to see Whitney about the matter as soon as we can.

Yours

S. Newcomb
My Dear Marsh:-

I have been expecting to hear from you before this, supposing you might want to know more about the several points mentioned in my last.

I. Secretary Whitney has not sent our letter to the Secretary of the Treasury because the Bureau told him that they had a complete account of the transit of Venus expenditures showing everything to be all right. About those appropriations never placed to our credit they simply remarked that these appropriations were covered under Naval Observatory and expended under that head. In other matters they do not give the original amounts in vouchers as the accounts are kept at the Observatory but only number such and such requisition to various pay officers. I do not think it will be difficult for Hall and Harrison to make the comparison. Secretary Whitney does not want the matter to go to the Treasury Department if he can possibly settle it here.

II. I do not think Hawley has yet reported our printing resolution; your best course would be to write him a note on the
subject or get Powell to look after it.

III. I asked the Chief Clerk of the State Department yesterday whether the Draper medal had arrived. He told me it had not, which surprised me.

IV. General W.F. Smith is here looking after his chances to be appointed Superintendent of the Coast Survey. They are supposed to be very good. An impression prevails that the President has so strong a prejudice against scientific men that he will not select one for that position. Of course it is hard to say how much truth there is in this or whether it is mere guesswork.

V. I fear Hilgard will still bother us. The Philosophical society re-elected him one of its Vice Presidents, which he has been for many years, at its last annual meeting in January. I understand that this fact has been remarked upon in official circles as showing how little the scientific men care for first class characters in their officers. If he is well enough to attend the Academy meetings I am very much afraid he will do so. If someone would only tell him to stay away and keep quiet it would be a good thing for us.

Yours very truly,

S. Newcomb

Professor C.C. Marsh,

New Haven,

Conn.
My Dear Marsh:-

Yesterday the first instalment of the report of the Commission was presented to Congress in the shape of a bill an abstract of which I now enclose.

I judge that in this matter Herbert has carried the Commission with him. It hits what I think is the weakest point in Powells administration; namely, the immense amount of printing he has had done. From what Mr Herbert is reported as saying I fear he has been caught napping; for the printing of the Geological Survey is not done at the expense of the allotment for the Interior Department, but is voted directly by Congress.

Precisely what the bill means I cannot guess, but no doubt it must be a hard slap at Powell. By tomorrow or next day it will be printed in full, and I will then try to get you a copy.

Yours very truly,

S. Newcomb

Professor O.C. Marsh,

New Haven, Conn.
Washington Apr 29/86

Dear Marsh

I have a moment to say that it was a mistake that the committee approved Mr. Hobart's bill. They allowed him to report it, but reserved the right to approve it. Any way, it can hardly have the effect...
of a chance to pass so you need not trouble yourself.
I am sure the C.S. men are too wise to assault the G.S., now, that they have discovered that all to be really their friends in need.

Your in thru

Sincerely
Washington, May 2

Dear Mark:

I enclose you a slip giving what I think is an authentic statement of the main conclusion of the commission. You see they are rather milk-and-water.

Please send the slip to the editor of
Science, 47 Lafayette Place, New York,
So he will get it Tuesday, if pastable. I will write him about it.

No doubt there may be many other conditions that mentioned.

You see all of herAlexander's bill is not approved by the council.

The latest confidential we gesture is that the President does not see why The Court Section is not getting along all right under Mr. Hoover.

Yours

J. Newcomb
My Dear Marsh:—

I do not think there is any reason to be anxious about the action of Congress. Last Monday evening Powell and I had quite a talk with Mr. Herbert. He was perfectly frank and courteous in expressing his decided opinion that the Geological Survey had gained influence by employing professors in various parts of the country, and that it ought to confine itself to the function of making geological maps. I am sure you are mistaken in supposing that there is anything personal in his opposition. I see no reason to doubt his entire consciousness in what he has said and done. Although he has made very one sided statements in his report, he did so as an advocate and not as a judge. There is a little suspicion which you have doubtless heard that he represents the view of the President.

That same Monday Nordhoff showed me proof of Herbert's proposed report, which Herbert wanted him to publish as much of as he could. But he would not do more than was fair, and commissioned me to hunt up reliable parties to show errors if
any existed. I did the best I could and you have seen the re-
sult in the Herald. My own opinion is that when the matter comes
up in Congress Powell will whip the field. I rather suspect
that Randall will not be at all displeased by a chance to
knife the whole work of the Commission.

Hall has just been in and tells me that the Fourth
Auditor has given him the required statement about transit of
Venus appropriations so I suppose that matter is all settled so
far as we are concerned:. But I think it would be a good thing
for the public if some authority would officially find out what
the Observatory did with that money.

So far as I have seen, the Academy Printing resolution
has not yet come up in the House.

Yours very truly,

S. Newcomb

Professor O. C. Marsh,
New Haven,
Conn.
June 1, 1886

My dear Marsh:—

The geological survey will be all right so far as the majority report is concerned, and I don't have the slightest fear that Morgan and Herbert will get their minority views through Congress. Mr. Allison told me he expected to submit the majority...
report today. As you know, they are agreed not to disturb the Coast Survey.

The observatory question in the Naval bill is likely to come up next week. It may go by default unless several people are on the alert. For what it's worth, I had a first-class meal carefully prepared, and now he is gone off to the exercises at West Point. The best man is Hewitt; will you write to him? If you don't I may see him myself, but I don't want to be prominent in the matter. Our task is the very simple one of letting Congress know that not a single professor of nautical science is prepared to make the appropriation made in its present form.

Yours very truly

S. Neevett

(200)
R.S., Who are the good men and who the best ones on the list of Trustees to be elected for Yale College.
Dear Murt:—

Here is the U.S.N. Obs. book. With all the professor done down when it I don't think it stands much show of life.

Yours very truly,

S. Needham

P.S. Hell has not yet been in for that report, which still lies in my desk.
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

JANUARY 11, 1886.

Read twice, referred to the Committee on Naval Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

Mr. JOHN R. THOMAS introduced the following bill:

A BILL

Authorizing the building of a new Naval Observatory.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
That the erection of a new Naval Observatory upon the site
purchased in pursuance of the act of Congress of February
fourth, eighteen hundred and sixty, be, and the same hereby is,
authorized, upon plans to be approved by the Secretary of
the Navy: Provided, That the total expense to be incurred
for grading, for roads, for fencing, for moving instruments and
erecting them upon the new site, and for the completion of
the said Observatory and buildings according to the approved
plans, and for all expenses whatever in connection therewith,
shall not exceed the sum of six hundred thousand dollars;
and for the purpose of beginning the erection of said Observa-

1      tion and buildings the sum of two hundred and fifty thousand
dollars is hereby appropriated, out of any money in the
A BILL

Authorizing the building of a new Naval Observatory.

January 11, 1886.—Read twice, referred to the Committee on Naval Affairs, and ordered to be printed.
Nautical Almanac Office.
Bureau of Navigation Navy Department.
Washington July 5, 1886

Dear Mark:

I have just got the report from Barker, and it goes by this mail to Gibbs for signature. If you want to see it yourself, write Gibbs for it. I told him to send it to Wright.

W. B. Herald says
or Platt know that we don't believe in the affair as it now stands. I read almost daily I sent that record when you say how it concerns you. But, just think how complete a victory after all the ill-informed statements! I think you ought to be delighted.

Yours very truly,

S. [Signature]
My Dear Marsh:

You and the Geological Survey have been so completely victorious in the late fight that I hope you are now very happy over the matter and ready to promote a little measure of reform which I think is needed in the council of the National Academy. You remember that on last spring, on motion of Professor Baird, Colonel Gilder was invited to entertain the Academy with an account of his proposed plan for reaching the North Pole. You may have seen in yesterday's papers that Gilder has been arrested in New York on the charge of embezzling a $1,000 bond the accuser being a woman supposed to be "his girl." Comment is superfluous. If Baird has any more suggestions to make about inviting people I shall want to know more about them.

The river and harbor bill has been long delayed and the Naval bill has not yet come up in the Senate, and it is not likely now that the article referred to in my last will be reached before next Monday. I do not know whether you wrote to Hawley as I suggested. Possibly this may have to go out to the Rockies to find you so I shall merely remark that there is nothing of
special importance to say.

The report on the Draper medal, signed by all the members of the committee, arrived this morning, and I shall send it to Hall immediately.

Yours very truly,

[Signature]

Professor O.C. Marsh,

New Haven, Connecticut

To the Secretary.

The report on the Draper medal, signed by all the members of the committee, arrived this morning, and I shall send it to Hall immediately.

Yours very truly,

[Signature]

Professor O.C. Marsh,

New Haven, Connecticut

To the Secretary.

The report on the Draper medal, signed by all the members of the committee, arrived this morning, and I shall send it to Hall immediately.

Yours very truly,

[Signature]
My Dear Marsh:

I think you did a very good thing in writing that letter to Mr. Herbert. As I have told you before, I regard him as a fair minded man in intention, though, of course like everybody else, who has a side to argue, he is apt to get things twisted a little and to overlook what tells against his side. But I wish you had let Herbert read it in the House. It would have put a very nice finish on the matter in which you are already so victorious. I return you the copy of your letter as you request.

I have just telephoned to Hall to send you Barker’s report. I would have altered the reading in a few points had any opportunity been offered, but as Barker himself is abroad I did not like to do so without consulting the other members of the committee especially as the alterations I should propose are not vital.

I expect to go to the Buffalo meeting.

There was no attempt to restore the Observatory appropriation in the Senate so that nowhere is nothing but the
Conference Committee to look after.

Yours very truly,

S. Newcomb

Professor O.C. Marsh,

New Haven, Conn.
My Dear Marsh;

I enclose you a slip from last night's Star showing the views of the Senate Appropriation Committee on the Coast Survey thinking that you would be interested in it.

I suppose you know that the appropriation for starting the new observatory got through at last. I did not feel like fighting it all alone having plenty of my own business to attend to.

I expect to be at the Buffalo meeting with Anita.

As I do not know where you now are I need only add that everything is going on here pretty much as usual. The only trouble the Geological Survey has met so far as I know of is a reduction in their appropriation for rent which may necessitate a removal to less commodious quarters.

Yours very truly,

[Signature]

Professor O.C. Marsh,

New Haven, Conn.
My Dear Marsh:

Glad to hear of your safe return and of your escape from railroad accidents. I certainly expect to be at the Boston meeting of the Academy.

Everything here in the scientific line is perfectly quiet except the Coast Survey. Personal quarrels between the employees of that establishment are brought to the Treasury officials in such numbers that it is hard to see how the administration can escape the necessity of some change in the management. So far as appears, when two men in the office get dissatisfied with each other, they do not appeal to the Superintendent but proceed at once to either fight it out with their fists, or to prefer charges against each other to some Treasury official. But an absolute silence still prevails respecting candidates for the Superintendency. From all I have heard I think the President holds that your humble servant does not possess the necessary executive ability and that if the new superintendent is appoint-
ed he will be selected purely as an executive officer.

Yours very truly,

S. Newcomb

Professor O.C. Marsh,
New Haven,
Conn.
My Dear Marsh:

I understand your letter of December 14th to refer to the appointment of a delegate to represent the National Academy of Sciences at the International Conference in Paris next summer. There are two purposes for which such a delegate might be sent.

I. As an expert in the subject, to discuss the questions which will be submitted to the Conference, and especially the twenty one questions mentioned in the letter.

II. The delegate might be one who expected to cooperate in doing the work.

For the first object I should be inclined to prefer Gould, because he has had a great deal of experience in photographing at Cordoba, and would carry great weight at the Conference, and would no doubt highly appreciate the honor of receiving such an appointment after his long absence.

For the second purpose Pickering would be the man, for the reason that, so far as I know, he is the only member of the Academy in possession of the facilities for taking part in the
actual work. If he could only go as a member of the Academy, and if he really contemplates taking part in the work, he should be preferred on urgent practical grounds.

But if I rightly understand the case, the delegate would have to bear his own expenses, so that his appointment by the Academy would be purely honorary. Such being the case, Pickering can go as a representative of the Harvard Observatory just as well as a delegate from the Academy. Hence I think that the best course would be to tender the appointment first to Gould, and should he decline then to Pickering.

I have sent your letter and paper to Hall as you requested.

Yours very truly,

[Signature]

Professor O.C. Marsh,

Yale College,

Conn.

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End of document.