19

Papers, September 1878

Waterford Conn.
Sept. 1st 1878

My dear Sir

I write to tell you of some steps I have taken lately which will probably necessitate my being relieved from duty at the Institute so soon as my successor is in readiness to relieve me. It will be with much regret that I sever my connection with you all at the Institute & with the many kind friends of Mrs. Nutkell & myself in Boston but am impelled to do so for the following reasons — In the first place the Army bill passed by the last Congress made such reductions in the pay of officers on duty where there are no public quarters that it cut me down three hundred dollars a year. Officers with their requirements only suffer from the abolishment of fuel allowance which will only affect me about $50 a month. This item unless an officer is possessed of a private fortune is one

that will render the College details not so desirable as they were –
The principal motive however influencing me is the fact that two companies of my regiment have been sent to Governors Island N. Y. Harbor – N. York is my home, or I should say my fathers & sisters, & it is so rare a thing for an officer to have the offer of being near his relatives that I feel bound to embrace the offer offered me by one of the officers stationed at N. York who wishes to exchange with me, my battery being at Newport – Our mutual application for the transfer has gone forward, approved by our respective Captains, disapproved by the Colonel, approved by Gen. Hancock Dept. Commander, & I have every reason to expect that the Secy. of War will approve & expect the result to reach me in about ten days, when I will at once inform you – I said nothing about being relieved from duty at Boston in my application, but it was with the understanding with my new Captain that I was to make application to join if the transfer was granted, that he approved it – I shall when I apply to be relieved request that I be permitted to remain with you till my successor reports for duty so as there shall be no break in the instruction –
In the meantime it may be well to determine about my successor – Lieut. Barber of my regt. expressed to me a desire for the place – He is a graduate of the Mil. Academy Class of 1867, & was seven years on duty there as Asst. in French – He has since been on signal duty in Washington & is now at Fort Adams – He married a niece of Mrs. Matl. Thayer & Mr. Thayer would probably be his chief friend when he applies for the place – He has recently come into a very large fortune, but whether he ~~would~~ has the proper qualifications for the duties of our Mil. Dept. I am free to confess I cannot say as for the past eight years I

have never served at the same post with him - I know him however to be an honorable man & a gentleman -
Lieut. Jefferson 5th Artly. graduate of 1875 is strongly recommended to me by a classmate as possessing the tact & disposition for successfully coping with the somewhat peculiar military problem presented at the U. S. T.
Bridgeman of whom you spoke I have never seen & know nothing of personally - I understand he is an able fellow somewhat airy in that, but he - young & may soon think less of himself.
Will you please in your reply tell me what day the term commences - addressing me as above where I have been spending a pleasant summer -
Present my kindest regards to Mrs. Rumkle & hoping soon to meet you I am

Very sincerely yours
N. W. Hubbell Jr.

Prof. G. D. Rumkle
Mass. Inst. Tech.
Boston

Amherst Sept. 1st 1878

Dear Prof. Rogers

Niles came to see me about matters of mutual interest with regard to our teaching at the Institute and I desired him to give you my views on one point of interest to both of us.

For fear that he may not have seen you I write this note.

He very reasonably expects, that a student coming from my class to his will know at least the enough to recognize in a general way the fossils he uses in his course on Historical Geology.

This preparation cannot be given as matters have stood.

A student devoting thirty hours to lectures, however fully these may have

been illustrated gets no such knowledge.

In Chemistry, Mineralogy, and every other branch they do not expect a young man to acquire any such knowledge without a certain amount of time devoted to familiarizing himself with ~~the~~ substances by actually handling them many times over in the Laboratory.

There is no other road, as you well know, in our branch.

The actual state of the case is this.

My fellows know nothing when they come to me, not even what a Vertebrate is — This is no exageration but a fact I have proved.

Then they get thirty hours of practical work on specimens during which I endeavor to give them an analysis of the types of the Animal Kingdom.

I have been very successful with this method and the results have been satisfactory, but the time is altogether too short to do anything beyond the giving of a cursory acquaintance with the types of the Animal Kingdom ~~upon~~ from Protozoa to the lower Crustacea. All Crustacea, except Trilobites Insects and all Vertebrates have been left out. If I had given lectures merely it would have been easy enough to have gone over the whole Animal Kingdom, but without Laboratory work the men would have known nothing. Therefore I preferred to give them a substitute for Laboratory work and lectures as little as possible, only what was necessary to illustrate ~~the~~ and explain the specimens they had in hand. Lastly I worked the matter down to the smallest number of types which could be used and we have never succeeded yet in getting beyond the Trilobites.

I do not now know whether I am still in the Institute corps, but suppose this to be the case since I have received ~~not~~ notice to the contrary. I have also heard that the Zoology has been abandoned for the coming year and so on, but nothing definite

If this is so and I am to prepare students for Prof. Niles course I beg that a fair chance for the Paleontology may be given, or that it may be abandoned altogether. There are two ways open, one is to give Lectures with a large amount of time devoted to Laboratory work and another is to continue the old course but double the number of ~~Lectures~~ lessons. As things stand the students will go to Prof. Niles entirely ignorant of the whole Animal Kingdom above the Entomostracans and in fact can only get those when my lessons are not cut short by a single holiday. A young man who has been with me for a couple of years and was last year a special in the Institute wishes to enter for the regular course in Natural History this fall. He tells me that Kneeland and Nichols both discouraged him from attempting this saying that there would be no such course in all probability. I have told him directly the opposite and also young Loring, who enters his third year next term and hope I have done right. It seemed to me that this course would not be abandoned, as long as we were able to turn out such men as Crosby without expense to the Institute. Though there is only one a year

With regards to Mrs Agassiz & Dr Hagen
Very truly yours Alex. Agassiz

Boston Univ.

Copy

Mass. Institute of Technology.

CHEMICAL LABORATORY.

Boston, Sept. 3, 1878

Professor Ordway, President pro tempore of the
Faculty of the Mass. Inst. Technology:-

Dear Sir: I inclose herewith a copy of the last year's agreement with reference to the Boston Univ. class in Chemistry.

The following is the statement of the actual disposition of the fifteen hundred dollars ($1500) received as compensation from the Boston University.

	Class of 76-77	Class of 77-78
W. R. Nichols	500	500
Mrs. Stinson	100	100
Assistance	102.79	100
Turned into gen'l funds of Institute	797.21	800
	1500.	1500

I would remark that the amount for "assistance" was much less than allowed me [the amt allowed was $250], owing to the fact that I employed for the purpose my private assistant and charged the Institute only for the time which he actually employed in the work of instruction. This, as I informed Prof. Trimble, I did not feel under obligation to do in the future.

It thus appears that the Institute has been able to increase Mrs. Stinson's salary, which in view of long service was not felt to be unreasonable, and at the same time the Institute has received say eight hundred dollars per annum for general purposes. The actual expense to the Institute for gas, water and chemicals I estimate not to exceed, at the very outside, two hundred and fifty dollars, leaving a

net advantage to the Institute of five hundred and fifty dollars per annum. If the Institute should consent the coming year to receive only $1250 for the chemical instruction, the estimates would be as follows:—

W. R. Nichols	500
Mrs. Stinson	100
Assistance	200
Actual Expense gas &c. / Outside Estimate	250
Net gain	200
	$1250

The item of "assistance" might be reduced if I were allowed to employ my private assistant. If I am obliged to engage a separate person it cannot be done for less than 3 mos. @ $62.50 per month, provided a suitable person could be found for so short a time.

In conclusion, I would say that it was originally intended, as I have been informed, that the surplus ~~fund~~ this fund should be at the disposal of the department for apparatus and collections. No such disposition has, however, been made of the funds heretofore and it would be greatly to the advantage of the Department of Elementary Chemistry if two hundred dollars could be so used the present year.

Yours very Respectfully,

Wm Rupert Nichols

Professor of General Chemistry.

Lowell. Mass Sept. 3d 1875.

My Dear Mr. Atkinson;

I have delayed the answer to your kind letter of July 9th much longer than I intended, because I wanted to send you some survey about this time, and also because I thought of sending you some ideas about the Engineering Courses at the Institute, which may not be of any value whatever to you, but which I thought you might perhaps like to receive. The improved financial prospects of the Institution (if the rumors I hear are correct,) may make possible some changes that could not have been made before.

I offer these suggestions with extreme diffidence, knowing both how young I am and how narrow has been my experience, for all of which I hope you will make due allowance if the ideas advanced seem to you unwise, but while certain changes already resolved upon are being made, it would cause less annoyance than at any future time to make the others herein suggested if they prove to be needed ones.

The catalogue shows that the students can make choice of ten different courses of study, for any one of which he may receive the degree of the Institute at his graduation

It seems to me that it might be wise to cut off at least three of these, viz. Those in Metallurgy, Natural History, and Philosophy. These courses have few or no students, and the studies belonging to them, (those which are not already taught in some other course) could be taken in the course of "Science and Literature" which might be thus extended to cover them all without being over-crowded, its very purpose being to cover a ground not taken by the Engineering courses, or those in Chemistry & Physics. The courses proposed to be cut off only had one student last year, he taking a course in "Natural History", while the course in Science and Literature only numbered 6 students. This course could be made more largely elective than at present, thus leaving the student free to ~~choose~~ follow the bent of his inclinations in a great degree, with the simple restriction that he shall do himself and the School credit in whatever he proposes to pursue.

It seems to me that a few subjects in which this school shall be the foremost in the country, and acknowledged such, would be better than the ten courses which serve to pad the catalogue but which have no students and some of them no professor, the work being divided among several professors.

Students could still study anything the Institute now teaches, and there would be saved the almost unavoidable popular impression that a school which spreads itself over so many

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things, must be thinly spread over them all, and the known past financial condition of the Institution, would tend to confirm that impression, however false it may be. I think some such change as this would enhance the value of the school in public opinion to a very great degree.

The series of instruction shops, are as yet so much a matter of experiment that perhaps they ought not to be alluded to, but some things may be suggested, though, having been put in operation since I left the school, I can, of my own knowledge, say very little about them. Two things seem to me worth mentioning (1) They should be guarded against the fallacy of teaching that a few weeks at forging, filing, turning, moulding &c, one after the other, ~~teaches~~ communicates any of these subjects with thoroughness, and a two-years course at one selected subject, supplemented (proposed in the catalogue to be given,) by appropriate study, would I think put the student in a ~~position~~ way to occupy a better position in that one thing which his taste led him to follow, than a smattering of them all, without proficiency in any. This smattering may do however, very well for the Civil or Mechanical Engineer, who does not propose to follow any one of them as a business, but who can very profitably know a little of them, sufficient to do any small piece of work with his own hands, if for ~~any~~ reason, a skillful workman should not be at hand. (2.) Whatever is taught should be in the method of the best shop practice of American industries.

It is largely true today, and is becoming daily more so, that every sort of work formerly done entirely by hand, is now done by machinery, and it looks like a waste of time and money to teach the student how to do by hand what can be better done by machinery, and what he will always himself, in practice, do by a machine, about the proper care and use, advantages and defects of which, his Institute shop-course has taught him nothing. If he has brains and dexterity enough to follow any mechanical business with advantage, he will be able on occasion to do what little he may require when machines are not accessible.

If I have not already wearied you, it was of the Engineering courses I meant particularly to speak, and first I would suggest some changes in the Civil Engineering course, of the needs of which I know (though perhaps very little yet—) more than any of the others. I think the school needs another professor of Civil Engineering, either in addition to, or as assistant to, Prof. Henck; a man well skilled in the modern practice of that science. It does not seem to me that the Institute can fill Prof. Henck's place as a teacher of the theory of Engineering, without the expenditure of a much larger sum than they pay him, but he has had little or no practice personally in the building of important Engineering works, and in much of the "practical" instruction

he attempts to give, is sadly behind modern American practice, and should therefore resign the field work to some one better qualified to carry it on in the best manner of conducting the work for actual structures, and who should with the student make a study of the best examples (and there are some here unsurpassed by any in the world,) this country affords, and explain the reasons for their adoption in their present form rather than another. Prof. Henck's attempts to do this have been of no practical value as studies, so far as I know. Some twenty (?) fellows in my class went with Prof. Henck & Mr. Hoyt during one vocation to see the best American Bridges at a cost of two or three hundred dollars each. They made a few measurements, sketches and tracings, and some few did during the next winter complete a single drawing showing a general view of one span, but many did not get so far as that even. As the trip took place before we had any instruction whatever in bridges or other structures, and could not calculate the strain in a single piece of a truss, its value in an Engineering point of view was much more in the recreation and pleasure it afforded, than in any professional benefit; and the great advantages which were to accrue to the class in their next year's course, from the information and material to be brought home for future use, - they were still born - and never saw light, - in my day at least.

The Institute owns a fine collection of models of German bridge construction, purchased with its own money, which have, so far as I am aware, never been made the slightest use of, and are deteriorating and suffering injury in some instances, for the want of proper care. Their only value at present is to be mentioned with praise in the catalogue. There are some other models of which the same things can be said. (For some ideas of field work in general, I refer you to my letter of Feb. 27th 1877, as giving in the main, some points I should copy here if I had more time. Subsequent observation and thought have only confirmed the opinions I expressed at that time.)

This new professor should also have charge of the Engineering Drawing, the drawing in general being in the hands of a competent professor of that specialty. (another important feature the Institute lacks at present.)

It would of course be far preferable if these two men could be replaced by one good live man who was well versed in both the theory and practice of Engineering, but such men are difficult to find, and would be expensive, because they are worth just as much in proportion, in the profession at large as they would be there. I call to mind no man of my personal acquaintance so well fitted for the Prof. of Civil Engineering in the Institute as Mr. Edward S. Philbrick, but I doubt if

he could be obtained for that position. (though if that could be the case I should almost want to take my Civil Engineering course over again.)

The change of all others at present which seems imperatively necessary, is in the Professor of Mechanical Engineering. I am very sure — and sorry too — that a very limited investigation would show that the present incumbent is totally incompetent and unfit for the position, and while the difficulty presents a new phase now, matters were but little, if at all improved by the change 4 or 5 years ago. They lost — and very properly — a man who knew something and could not teach it; and gained a man who knows next to nothing about the subject, and teaches next to nothing. — The character and professional standing of his successor should be like that of the ideal professor of Civil Engineering mentioned above.

If I have not bored you too much already, and with ideas worthless to you, permit me to state one more thing wherein I think a wise change can be made, and I have done. This is in the tuition, which I think can very properly be reduced to $125, per year or to at most $150. — per year, and it seems to me there would be an actual increase in the receipts after this year, from what the school will receive at the present price of $200. — For instance there appear in

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the last catalogue 267 names as students. Deducting 25 students in "practical design", 13 "special students in Chemistry" and 9 "graduate students", all of which if they pay at all, the amount is unknown to me, there remain 220 students, of whom 45 can be put down as in the shops at $125.— per year, making $5625, leaving 175 students at $200 per year or $35000, and the two together make $40,625. (Mr Cummings stated before the Committee on Education last winter that the students fees amounted in 1876-77 to about $43,000 but I have not a catalogue at hand to show how many there were.) To obtain this sum at a price of $125 per year would require 325 students which number, it seems to me, would be more than reached if a man could have tuition for $500.— which now costs $800 and some who now must deny themselves of the course there, (or think they must) could then have it. At $150.— about 278 students would be required to bring the receipts up to $40,625, counting 45 of them at $125 as at present. This however is merely a suggestion, — in fact they all are only I feel a little less sure about this than of some others.

Now I have briefly and hurriedly criticised several things wherein I have an idea a change would be an improvement. In some of these opinions I have the sympathy of some of the best of the Institute graduates. I am however personally responsible for all herein contained, and think it better for the Institute to

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teach half as many things in such a way as to put it in the front rank of Technical Schools in this or any country, than to teach every subject of human knowledge without doing any in the best and most thorough manner. There is not in this country or through a school of science as some of the German universities; but the Institute could become the nucleus of such a school in the future by likeness to them in the intense thoroughness of its teaching, and when its means enable it to do so, as they sometime will I feel sure, like them in the variety of its teachings, but let the thoroughness of one thing be assured before two things be attempted. So I have indicated as desirable changes, in my opinion,

(1) Diminish (in the catalogue at least) the number of courses,

(2) Enlarge the scope of the course in "Science & Literature"

(3) Concentration of the work in the instruction shops and follow latest and best methods.

(4) A new Prof. of Civil Engineering either additional to or in place of Prof H.

(5) A new Prof. of Mechanical Engineering

(6) A better administration of the Drawing department.

(7) Reduction of tuition fees to as low a point as practicable.

I have written the above in no other spirit than that of the sincerest desire to see the school proper and speedily take the place in the rank of such schools where

(over)

I think it belongs i.e. at the very head. In many desirable things already it is not surpassed, if equalled by any American school. –

I almost feel that I ought to beg pardon for writing you at so great length when I remember what a busy man you are and how much you have on your hands, but I trust you will excuse me.

Enclosed please find check for $20.00 – I wish it were larger. This I think pays the principal of your kind loan to me, The interest I will pay as much as you are willing to receive along as I can. – I hope not to be very long about it. My brother and myself have had a talk of going into business together, and it seems as though we might succeed, but I hardly know if the times are not too hard to warrant the attempt. – I have no news of a personal nature to write. Accept my kind wishes for your health, happiness and prosperity & of your family as well.

I am Sir, most respectfully,
Yours,
Geo. W. Blodgett.

Mr. Edward Atkinson,
Boston,

X

Mass. Institute of Technology.

BOSTON, Sept. 7 1878.

Dear Prof Rogers:
With this I send the letter of Lieut. Hubbell.
Our advertisement in the "Nation" had run out, and there were no funds to continue it - $18, I think, being required.
Prof. Conway thought that the money would do us more good nearer home & in a paper of wider and less select circulation.
Our weather here is what the English would call "beastly", cold, cloudy, rainy, with East wind.

Yours truly
S. Kneeland

Newport Sept 9. 1878

Hon. Geo. W. McCrary
Sec'y of War.

Dear Sir

I have been informed that Lieut Henry W. Humbell of the 1st Reg U.S. Artillery is about to be withdrawn from Boston & therefore from his connection with the Mass Inst. of Technology where he has for some time served very acceptably as Professor of Mil. Sc. & Tactics, & I beg leave in behalf of the Corps of the Inst, to request that you order as early as convenient a detail and competent officer to take his place.

As the ~~letters are per~~ date,

As the duties of Inst.tr in the Dep.t of the Institute involves much tact & experience as well as zeal in administration & it is deemed expedient that he should for the time being be a member of the Fac.y of the Institute I have been accustomed to suggest to the appointing power the name of some person believed by them to be well adapted for the position.

I therefore take the liberty of naming to you Lieut. Barber of the 1st Reg. Artillery U.S.A. as in our opinion well ~~fitted~~ qualified to succeed Lieut Hubbell & I most respectfully request that he be detailed to take charge of the ~~Dep.t~~ of Infantry dept in our Inst.n, for such period as you may assign, to commence at the opening of our session on the 1st of Oct. next. And I would further beg that the present incumbent Lieut Hubbell be permitted to remain at the Inst. until his successor, whenever it may be your pleasure to detail, shall have been instructed into his work in a manner to maintain the proper consistency of instruction.

Relying on your wonted zeal & consideration in

Mr. Acting Master
Subject Duran
Boat Officer
Gun Det.
William B. Rogers

William B. Rogers
Pres. Mass. Inst. of Tech.

To Lieut. H. W. Hubbell
Sir: ~~Albany Oct. 11~~ I have the pleasure to report that I learned last week through your letter of the 1st ult. to Prof. Rankine, that the Institute had to have your very valuable services in the Dep't of Mat. Sc. & Tactics, & I was then hoping that we might still be able to retain you. But yesterday I received Prof. Rankine's letter, stating that I had in his interview with Mr. Thayer, that you would be exchanged for N. York, ~~[illegible]~~ that Lieut. Barbour whom you mention in your letter was deserving of the exchange, & I have known Barbour well & have felt your influence strongly in the matter, ~~[illegible]~~ and now writing by Friday's mail to request Lieut. Barbour as your successor, should you be detached, which we do not regard, have consented — & further requests that you be allowed to continue until we shall procure some one who can take Barbour's place. We may have to take the duty in the meantime into his hands, & letter the pleasant business fully & to do it faithfully, but I intend the ~~[illegible]~~ [illegible] personal qualities & that last in the [illegible] letter I have ~~[illegible]~~ [illegible] Barbour at so valuable in many

Mass. Institute of Technology.

Boston, Sept 9th 1878

President Rogers

Dear Sir

We have few cases precisely like the one which you mention, but college graduates can enter the third year without examination. Common courtesy would require that one coming from a respectable college with a certificate of good standing should come to our first year without an entrance examination; especially if he comes for a special course. But if he wishes to take any but the studies of the first year he must satisfy the several professors that he is prepared to enter on the studies of their departments. I think we might say that there will be no objection on the part of the Faculty and yet it would

for the young man to make a special application before the 20th and then it can be brought before the Faculty in form and settled before the regular time of examination. I think we ought to have a definite rule relating to such cases, but we have none as yet. Special students in chemistry are sometimes admitted without being examined in all branches.

It would be as well perhaps to tell him to make application to the Secretary and send his certificate and the Faculty will probably vote for admission without further question. But if he wishes to take studies beyond the first year, it will be necessary to see some of the professors personally.

I have had a bad cold since last Wednesday and have had to ease up a little on business matters, but hope to get to work again in earnest this week.

Respectfully yours
John M. Ordway

Rev. Otway

No. 123 East 23rd St.
New York Sep. 11/78

(X)

My dear Sir

I am just in receipt of your letter of the 7th inst. & thank you very much for the kind manner in which you speak of my performance of my duties in connection with the Institute.

I assure you that it is only from motives of an imperative nature that I am led to join my regiment before the ordinary term of my detail is completed. Since I last wrote, my transfer to a battery stationed in

Navy Dept has officially
reached me, & within a
few days I shall
apply to be relieved on
October 1st or as soon
thereafter as my successor
shall report to assume
charge of my department.
Lieut. Morris who you
mention as the candidate
of Gen. Devens I have
but slight acquaintance
with. I know him to
be however a pleasant
gentleman, a graduate
of the Milty Academy
class of '65.

He comes of an old
Navy family & I believe
will creditably fill
the position of Milty
Instructor at the Institute.
I shall arrive in Boston
September 25th & shall
be happy to give you
any information you may
desire. I think you
will have no difficulty
in making the Milty
Dept. run along as smoothly
as it has done for several
years past.
Mrs. Hubbell joins me
in kind regards to
Mrs. Rogers, & believe

me

Very sincerely yours

H. W. Hubbell Jr.

Prof. Wm. B. Rogers
Newport R. I.

Trinity College,

Hartford, Conn. Sept 13th 1878

Prof. Wm. B. Rogers,
Boston, Mass.

Dear Sir,

It is my pleasant duty to inform you that at the St Louis meeting of the A. A. A. S. you were appointed Chairman of the Committee of Finance. The other members of the Committee are:

> *1. Committee to obtain Permanent Funds for the Association, and to advise with Treasurer and Permanent Secretary on financial matters.*
>
> Wm. B. Rogers, of Boston; J. Lawrence Smith, of Louisville; Lewis H. Morgan, of Rochester; Alexander Agassiz, of Cambridge; Robert H. Thurston, of Hoboken.

You were also appointed on the Committee on Membership as shown in the Extract from the Minutes enclosed.

[9/13/1878]

Extract from the Minutes of the St Louis meeting of the A. A. A. S.

The following resolution was introduced by Dr H C. Bolton and recommended by the Standing Committee:

Resolved that a Committee of five be appointed by the Chair, to be styled a Committee on Membership, the President, Permanent Secretary and General Secretary to be members ~~of~~ ex officio. It shall be the duty of said Committee through systematic efforts to effect an increase in the membership of the Association by presenting to the Standing Committee the names of persons interested in the advancement of science.

(over)

The resolution was adopted and President Marsh appointed the following:

Dr J. S. Newberry of N. Y.
Prof. Simon Newcomb of Washington
Prof. W. B. Rogers of Boston
Prof. J. D. Dana of New Haven
Prof. J. L. Smith of Louisville

President O. C. Marsh
Perm. Sec. F. W. Putnam } ex officio.
Gen. Sec. H. C. Bolton

I have also the pleasure of announcing that by vote of the Association you were placed ~~on~~ the list of Life Members, this being but a small recognition of your generous donations.

Very respectfully yours
H. Carrington Bolton
Gen. Sec. A. A. A. S.

EDWARD ATKINSON,
131 DEVONSHIRE STREET,
BOSTON, MASS.

Boston Sept 13. 1878

Dear Sir

I have all the circulars prepared for Prof Richards to send to graduates –

As the circular states that the alumni are to be called upon to nominate a candidate for the Government, I suppose they had better not be sent until that request has been made –

I understand that you are to make that request as chairman of the committee on nomination –

Yrs truly
E Atkinson

Prof Rogers

Sept. 14, 1878

(1)

Dear Prof. Richards
Ch. of the Advisory Bd.

At a meeting of the Corporation held some months ago it was voted that the Alumni of the Institute be invited to nominate one of their number as a candidate ~~to~~ for membership in the Corporation. As chairman of the Committee Nom.ns of the Corporation, I therefore ~~beg to~~ request that you ~~announce~~ vote this vote to the Alumni, ~~at their~~ with the request that they ~~send~~ other name ~~to~~ to the Bureau a choice in the premises as they may deem best.

Yours very truly
William B Rogers.

(X)

123 East 23rd St.
New York Sept. 15/78

My dear Sir

I forgot to mention in my letter to you that Lieut. C. L. Best Jr. 1st Artly now Milty Prof. at Union College Schenectady, would like a transfer to the Institute - I know him to be an officer of ability & a good man for the place -

I am
Very sincerely yours
H. W. Hubbell Jr.

Prof. Wm. Bridges
Newport
R. I.

Boston Sept. 16th 1878

President Rogers

Dear Sir.

Now that the Gymnasium has come into our hands there are some matters to be settled respecting the use of it. The Channing Hall School have paid $300 for the use of it and President Runkle said they were to pay half the running expenses in addition. There seems however to be a little indefiniteness in the arrangement. Mr Cushing makes out that the original understanding was for $300 and the addition was a rather unfair after thought. It really looks as though Mr Runkle was getting impatient to clear off the debt and so put on all that he thought Channing Hall would bear. It seems as though the $300 was a fair rent and it may be best to set the rent at that

or some other definite sum, leaving no chance for a dispute as to what the running expenses are. The city of Boston has paid $800 per year, and the Institute has paid $300 per year. There are boxes for clothing which let at $2 or $3 each, I know not how many of these boxes have been let.

The running expenses are for coal, gas, water, janitorship, and repairs, but I can find no books which give exact statements as to the cost per year. There are accounts which need the explanation of the accountant and he is not at hand.

The Committee on the School passed a vote by which every student of the Institute is to be taxed 50 cts a term whether he uses the gymnasium or not. Surely this vote must have been passed rather hastily, and it is calculated, if carried out, to cause not a little petty irritation. There would be no great impropriety in charging the frequenters of the gymnasium a small fee for the use of it, but I believe it would, in the long run prove most advantageous to make no charge except for wanton damage. The little extras tend to create dissatisfaction and to excite a little of the feeling "the Institute squeezes all it can out of me, and I do not care how much damage I do." Such a spirit of antagonism is mischievous. Whatever irritation may have occured in the past would doubtless be forgotten, if we could now exercise a little liberality, and let the tuition money cover everything except breakage and general damages. If Chauncy Hall and the City continue to rent the Drill Hall three or four years more, the whole will be paid for without additional charges. As the building now belongs to the Institute there seems to be no valid reason why it should not be as free to the students as the reading room or the play ground. – But I am anxious to have money made and saved by every legitimate means. And there is one item which is perhaps worthy of consideration. We have paid $40 a month for the care of the reading room from

9 A. M. to 2½ P. M. Now there are occasional applications from worthy young ladies who would like to take our Chemical studies but cannot afford to pay the tuition. We can probably find two such who would relieve each other in the reading room and keep it occupied from 9 A. M. to 4½ P. M. and the actual money cost to us would be only for the gas and water they use in the laboratory. We should not have them at all unless they can pay their way. Such a plan would of course deprive one worthy woman of $40 a month, but on the other hand it would help two aspiring women to a more advanced stage in their education.

The Faculty hold their first meeting on Friday morning at 10 A. M. Mr Atkinson tells me that you propose having a meeting of the Committee in the School on Friday too. If I can be of any service at that meeting, a later hour than 11-30 might suit you perhaps.

Respectfully yours

John M. Ordway

Universal Exposition of 1878.
Paris.
United States
Section of Education.

Paris, Sept. 16 1878.

William B. Rogers LL.D.
Prest. Mass. Institute
Boston, Mass.

Dear Sir.

Requests have been made by the educational Commissioners of various countries for such portions of the articles comprising our exhibition of education as can ben spared by their owners, to be placed in the pedagogical libraries and museums which have been established by their respective governments.

It is my hope that the greater part of the materials of the exhibition will be given for these purposes, and especially the books and the scholars' work. And I would say that, in my judgment, France has the first claim for these gifts, Japan and England coming next in order.

Will you have the kindness to inform ~~my~~ me by return mail, if possible, as to the disposition to be made of the articles contributed by you, and much oblige.

Yours respectfully,
John D. Philbrick.
Director of the Section of Education.

From J. D. Philbrick

X

Institute of Technology
Boston Sept 17 1878

President William B. Rogers

My dear Sir.

Your letter of Sept 16 notifying the Alumni that the Corporation of the Mass. Inst. of Technology had passed a vote inviting the Alumni to nominate a candidate for membership to the Corporation is duly received. In answer I will say that I will make it my duty to inform the Alumni of the fact and to see that systematic measures are immediately taken to obtain one or more names to serve as suggestion to the Committee.

In behalf of the Alumni Association I will say that it will be a very great gratification to them to receive the notification.

Very Respectfully
Robert H. Richards

Glen House. Sept. 19. 1878.

My Dear Mr Atkinson –

There is one consideration which, among others, may well be borne in mind by the gentlemen who have it in hand to raise money for the Institute, and may with sense to what their purpose if it is in the way of being planted.

Of course the present time seems unfavorable, and the disorganized state of the administration may make it seem as well to run on as at present until some new departure can be taken. The school, it may be said, is not a thing of this year only, or next year, and so that it is ultimately set on its feet, it makes no difference in the long run, whether the present unsatisfactory performances continues five years longer or not. The main thing is to seize the proper moment when it arrives, and meanwhile not to spoil the chance

by impatience, and premature and unreasonable efforts.

What I want to say is that though the life of the institution is for all time, the lives of the men who have been engaged to do its work are rapidly running away. The school will fulfil its mission as well ten or twelve years hence as it can now, perhaps better; and the next generation of boys is as well worth serving as this one. But ten or twelve years added to the ten or twelve years we have already given to the school means all the best part of our lives; and ten or twelve years more of such work as we have been doing means that our lives are sacrificed. I do not mean that the work we are doing is worthless, it is not. It assures a certain purpose. The school as it stands is a very good school. But it is not the work of school that we were invited to take part in, and the career we are following is not the career upon which we were invited to enter.

It was mutually understood between us and the promoters of the school that a first class establishment was in contemplation; it was perfectly understood that money would be needed to this end; the names of the corporation were intended to be a sufficient guaranty that no pains would be spared on their part to procure the necessary endowments and benefactions, and that their efforts would be successful; they were not men who were in the habit of failing in anything they seriously undertook; with this guaranty we undertook our part of the work, understanding that for a period we must get along with inadequate compensation and inadequate appliances of every sort, but that this should be only temporary; that if a prosperous beginning were made means to accomplish a real success would follow.

Now at the end of twelve years we find ourselves just where we were at the beginning, except that many of us have made meanwhile great pecuniary sacrifices and that we are now, many of us, so committed to the enterprise and identified with it, that no alternative is open to us but to keep on to the end. We have performed our part, but we do not feel that

the other party have performed theirs. They obviously have not. We do not assume to blame or reproach them, or to estimate the difficulties in their way. But the fact remains that we are being sacrificed. This is the consideration which, as I said at the beginning, may well serve to give a present impulse to the efforts now in hand.

My own work is a sample of the whole, unless perhaps the chemical work should be excepted, which was early put upon an excellent footing. One of my assistants is properly paid. My own salary and that of my other assistant are avowedly insufficient, and there has never been any intention of providing means to carry on the department. The question how a school of Architecture should be organized, what equipment it should have, what branches should be taught, and how, has never been raised. It is only within a year that any inquiry has been made at all, and then the question has been how little money would suffice to carry the work along on the present basis of minimum performance. Under the circumstances, of course, this is the only question there is any

[9/19/1978]

sense in asking, and it is satisfactory that even the minimum expenses should be systematically provided for. But, on the other hand it looks like a formal abandonment of the aspirations with which the Institute started. It is profoundly discouraging to find that when at last the authorities are girding themselves up for a supreme effort, the question with them is not what a good school would need, but what reductions the school we have got can endure and yet survive. It seems as if the original understanding were being thrown aside, and ~~we~~ with it.

My work makes a very fair show and in a certain line it deserves the reputation for success it has achieved. This is mainly owing to W. Letang, one of the few persons about the school who is properly paid and who has time enough to attend to his work and do it as it ought to be done. I have myself two or three times as many subjects as I ought to have, or can properly attend to, counting in evenings and Sundays, and my time is so engrossed with actual contact with my classes that reading + study + proper pre-

paration are out of the question. Most of the work that I undertake I am capable of doing very well. But I seldom get a chance to do my best, and as the work grows and added duties are thrown upon me things grow worse instead of better. There is a chance to make as good a school of Architecture as there is in the world; the circumstances are unusually favorable, and we have gone far enough to see our way through. That is what I was invited to accomplish, and I knew I could do it. But the projectors of the scheme, upon whose support I thought I had a right to rely, — I had the right — have from the beginning absolutely abandoned the enterprise into my hands, as much as if it had been a private undertaking. The only difference has been that the fees of the students, which if it had been a private school would have been used for their advantage, go to pay the current expenses of the establishment — to make up that is to say the lack of endowment.

Well endowed schools of architecture are rising in different parts of the country, stimulated by our success. We have a long start, and there is every opportunity to retain the unquestioned advantages we possess. But if the corporation content themselves with providing for the maintenance of the Institute on its present basis, my own department and all the others will be rapidly distanced by institutions whose guardians are able to make better provision for their support.

Others of the professors are turning their eyes elsewhere and longing to get free from these false relations. But for my own part I am so identified with the work that I have no expectation but to remain in it as long as I am fit for any work at all. I am not as young as I was twelve years ago, and have neither the will nor the power to break off and take a fresh start. But the prospect of continuing ten or twenty years more as I have gone on during the last ten years, carrying things on by sheer strength, without any intelligent counsel, and without resources, — the

prospect of spending my whole life in that after all will have been a second-rate work, hardly worth doing, when weighing for the forgetfulness and lukewarmness of my employees, & their neglect of the trust they assumed, stands in the way of real success, is to the last degree disheartening. I have only one life to live, and it is in their hands to make or mar.

Meanwhile the lives of my students are made or marred by what they get and what they do not get in the two or three years, at the turning-point of their lives, that they spend under my care. It seems to me wicked, when there is so much that they need get in these years, that they should be given so little. When they write to ask about the school I cannot tell them not to come, for I know it is, so far, the best thing going. But I feel like a swindler, all the same.

Cannot the corporation be somehow made to feel the responsibility they have assumed, towards us and towards them.

I think this needs no apology, save for its length, which pray forgive —

Yours very truly, W. R. Ware.

Mass. Institute of Technology.

MINING AND METALLURGICAL LABORATORY.

Boston, Sept 20, 1878

My dear Mr. Atkinson

Prof Ware sent me a note which I read and have mailed at his request to you.

I cannot think that the majority of the Faculty hold such views as those expressed in the note. It seems to me especially unkind not to say impolitic if there is any coolness of feeling in any direction among members of the Corporation to stir it up by such bombshells as this.

I think the majority of the Faculty are sensible enough to know that in these hard times the man, who receives the same salary as he did in flush times, is well off. And that, in such depressed ~~sad~~ state of business as we have now, the most that can be hoped for by any one is to tide over the times.

Very truly Yrs

Robert H. Richards.

Moore on Architecture
Sept 1878

Richards
Ross

Boston Sept 25 78

Dear Sir

The Executive Committee of the Alumni Association, in connection with the request herewith enclosed, have thought it advisable to notify the members of the Association of the changes that have recently been made in the administration of the Institute.

Prof. Wm B. Rogers has again accepted the Presidency. The management of the instruction has been put into the hands of the Faculty who will elect their own chairman each year. Prof Ordway is the first chairman. Mr L. W. Tappan Jr. has been appointed Burser, and will take charge of all moneys and will have controll of the Janitorial force.

These changes we feel sure will renew the confidence of all in the management of the school, and will be a guaranty that whatever donations are made to the School will be carefully appropriated.

In this connection your committee would suggest that however small the sum any person may be able, to give himself, or to obtain from others will be gladly received.

A discussion on what systematic measures may be taken to aid the corporation financially or otherwise, at the present time, will probably form the chief topic at the next annual meeting.

Executive Committee
Alumni Association
M. I. T.

Institute of Technology Sept 25 1878

Dear Sir

The Executive Committee have received a notification from the President of the Institute inviting them to nominate a candidate for a place in the Corporation of the Institute.

In pursuance of this invitation the Executive committee hereby ask you to send by mail before Oct 11 your ballot for the Candidate you prefer, and they send you the names of three Alumni to serve as suggestion. These three names have been selected by your Committee as the most suitable among all those who are available. They have all held places of great responsibility and trust ever since they graduated. The names are

Joseph Stone. class '68
Agent Manchester Mills
Manchester N. H.

James P. Tolman
Supt. of Factory of Silver Lake Co
66 Chauncy St Boston

Howard A. Carson '69
Engineer in charge of improved Sewerage for Boston
City Hall Boston

Please send your ballot on a half sheet of ordinary note paper with your signature below. No ballot will be counted that arrives after Oct 11

Executive Committee of
Alumni Association

Boston Sept 28 1878

My dear President Rogers

The circulars were all sent to the Alumni on Thursday, and the answers are coming in promptly and pleasantly, evincing a warm and hearty interest and a hopeful feeling.

It is said that "a clean and well ordered house makes happy children". The members of our Faculty have never returned from vacation with a warmer zest for work or more encouraged by the state of things than at the present time.

The more I consider the condition of things the more convinced I am of the wisdom of the plans adopted by the Corporation last Spring. Personally I am feeling more than ever before that the school is in a fair way to become in the near future what you originally planned it to be.

Enclosed I send you the circulars. Please give our love to Mrs Rogers.

Very Sincerely Yrs

Robert H. Richards

Robt. Richards

Nomtg the Alamance,

w 7 L Corpl Co g Dist

Forest Hills Home
Sept 27th 1878

My Dear Mr Atkinson

I think as you do that Ware has made a mistake in writing this letter. Richards shows the right kind of perception in his comments upon it, and I think your reply is "a section of the day of judgment" on this department of the school; it looks to me as though Ware has declared war before he is ready to meet the enemy. my advice in the premises is for you to send your reply to him through Richards and for him to advise Ware to ask you to return his letter and then let the whole matter rest for the present. and you not

bring it before the committee on the School, but you may bring up the subject of a change in the ~~[illegible]~~ of instruction ~~[illegible]~~ to be given in the architectural department in accordance with the views you have expressed in your reply to Evans letter. I approve most heartily of the views you have taken of the whole subject

Yours Truly
Wm. D. Ross

Boston Sept. 28. 1878

To the Honble Geo. W. McCrary
Sec^y of War.

Dear Sir

I had the honor on the 9th inst. of addressing a letter to you in behalf of the Corp^n of the Mass. Inst. of Technology, begging you to detail an officer to succeed Lieut Hubbell, of the 1st Art^y, as a military instructor at the Institute.

Having rec^d no reply to this communication, and being uninformed, except by rumor, of any action of the War Depart^t affecting this matter, we

~~are anxious to learn your~~
~~decision or your purpose~~
~~in regard to it.~~ 3 As the
Session of the Institute will
open on the 30th. (next Monday),
much further delay in the
appointment of a successor
to Lieut. Hubbell will cause
us serious inconvenience.

2 Although, in conformity
with our ~~[illegible]~~ usage, we
ventured to suggest the
name of an Officer whom we
thought suited to the place in
question, we had no ~~thought~~ intention
of dictating your choice & we
would be well satisfied with
any selection you might
make.

May I therefore ask
~~Trusting~~ that you will
kindly
~~favor us with a communication to~~ favour
us with ~~as early~~ as early a reply as
may be compatible with your convenience, upon a subject so
your attention demands.

Most respectfully
Your Obt Servt

William B Rogers
Prest. Mass: Inst of
Technology.