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Jacksonville Florida,

Jan'y. 18th 1876.

Prof. Dawson.

My dear Sir.

Your letter of the 13th. inst., was forwarded to me from the Smithsonian Institution, and reached me this morning.

The paper I sent you on the Alleghony plants, was, as you will see, read before the Philosophical Society, in 1872, and accepted for publication. I also at the same time had the plants very carefully drawn on stone by a first class artist, who made the drawings at my room, in the Smithsonian Institution, where I could see that they were done accurately. They were not at that time just ready to print the descriptions; and the matter was delayed for five or six months. When they were finally ready, however, the manuscript could be no where found; and of course the printing of the plates was delayed, until the manuscript could be found.

Finally, the lithographer, supposing that the plates would never be called for, rubbed the drawings off of the stones, and I had given up all expectation of ever seeing the paper

published. Recently, however, the manuscript was found in a fire proof vault, where some officer of the Philosophical Society had placed it for safe-keeping, and afterward forgot all about it.

It was then sent to the printer, with instructions to put it in type at once. I had also requested that some extra copies should be sent to me, as soon as they had it paged. This was done, and I sent some of them out before noticing that the pages were only printed on one side, as in the copy I sent to you.

The plates have been redrawn on stone, but as I could not superintend the work, I am afraid they are far inferior to those that I had at first had drawn with great care. It will appear as an appendix to the Transactions of the Philosophical Society; and I have ordered extra copies, with the plates, in proper form, one of which I will be pleased to send to you, as soon as I receive them.

I thank you for the offer of suggestions, and will be glad to use them ^{in a note} that I can have appended to my extra copies at least.

You will remember that you long since sent

me some additional information in regard to one of these plants, that you had derived from the examination of specimens forwarded to you by some one from the original locality. This I had intended to use; but for the reason already explained, I had given up all expectation of ^{ever} seeing the paper published, and consequently had mislaid your letter so that I could not find it in time, as the manuscript was sent to the printer in a hurry, after it was finally found.

My *Upper Mo. Palaeontology* is now in type to about the 440th page, and I am receiving and reading the proofs here. It will run up to about 550 pages quarto, I think. The plates are all lithographed in good style; but the lithographer printed the whole edition of fourteen of the plates so badly that I rejected a considerable part of the whole; and have caused him to redraw on stone, a part of them: ~~that the~~ ^{the} stone being too much worn to print another edition of the rejected plates. I see nothing now to prevent this work from coming out early in the spring.

Several other reports of mine will go to press now as soon as that above mentioned is all stereotyped - these are (1), one on the fossils of King's Survey of the 40th.

Parallel, with 17 quartz plates (2); one on
collected by Capt. Simpson's exploring Expedition in
the far-west, with five quartz plates; and (3) one on
the Collections of Capt. Meade's Survey in New
Mexico: also another on the Collections of the North-
West Boundary Survey, with six plates. The lithography
for these Reports is mainly done. Another Report of
mine on the Ohio Palaeontology, will, ^{also} probably be
pointed this winter.

These reports include a large part of my work
since 1860. It was my great misfortune to break down
in health, just at the time that the ^{final} revision of the
MSS. of all of these Reports, and also that of the
last vol. of the Illinois Reports, was pressing upon me.
I have struggled along with this work, under greater
difficulties, than will perhaps ever be known, or at any
rate properly appreciated, by even my contemporary
laborers in science. Still, I now have strong hopes
of living to see the whole published - not, it is true, with
the degree of completeness that I intended, had I been
helped with a continuation of good health; but I hope in
a reasonably creditable form.

This is my third winter in Florida. I came
here winter before last, in a very feeble condition,

after a terrible attack of hemorrhage from my right lung. I have, however, been, on the whole, steadily improving ever since, in general health. Indeed I think I could have remained all this winter at Washington, without inconvenience; but supposed it more prudent to come here. I always bring many books, papers, drawings and specimens, and continue my work.

The climate here is delightful. Everything is as green and blossoming as in mid summer in the north. Last winter I did not even see a speck of frost; and this winter they have only had here a few light frosts, with a temperature one or two nights low enough to form ice about as thick as common window-glass. Even those nights, however, were followed by bright sunny days, warm enough to walk out without an over-coat. Yet this is northern Florida, where I am. A large number of northern people come on here to spend the winters; causing the towns to be as gay as northern summer watering places all winter. Yet thousands of other invalids suffer and die each winter in the north, who might recover, or at any rate, live out an average life-time, in comfort, by spending their winters here. Northern people—even feeble invalids—scarcely ever take cold here; though resident citizens who pass the whole year here, are subject to

light colds in the winter.

The climate here is exceedingly uniform, the year around. You will perhaps be surprised to learn, that the temperature here seldom rises to 90° in summer. I am told that not infrequently it will often stand, for weeks at a time, at about 85°, night and day. The Atlantic on one side, and the Gulf on the other, of so narrow a belt of land, soften and equalize ^{of the air,} the temperature the year around.

I will send your note to Hayden, as a reminder of his promise to you.

Very truly yours
F. B. Meek

P. S. I received a copy of your report on the fossil plants of the Canadian Survey, for which I am greatly obliged. I believe it was on Lower Carb. and Devonian plants. If the one you speak of is a different Report from that I read some time back, I would of course be much gratified to have a copy of it.

— F. B. M.