

Columbia Missouri  
Sept 16<sup>th</sup> 1882.

My dear Principal Dawson

Doubtless you will regard me very negligent or ungrateful for not giving you a written acknowledgment of my thanks to you for nominating me to the Missouri University. However, in the month that intervened between my official appointment (or rather the official offer) and my arrival here, I passed over 5800 miles of railway, spent a few days in Montreal, packed two tons of geological specimens and books (of course with assistance) and was so completely occupied that only pressing business notes were answered. So that I hope that you will accept at

There are no summer courses in the College.

Each Prof. is allowed to give ~~not~~ that of ~~lecturing~~ teaching, ~~and~~ but as the students are not trained to lectures without recitations, I will probably combine the two, and that of course will greatly reduce the number of prepared lectures.

In Physic. Surg. (Physic), Hist. Surg. & Paleont. there will be about 160 lectures and recitations in the year <sup>including</sup> the General Course. There will be about 40 lectures. So the work will allow in Romanic Geology. But the time we have here for study. But the time will be a good amount of ~~time~~ work. The Museum is in a bad condition and small.

The University spends about \$100,000 a year, but the State has ~~not~~ toward \$35,000. So more work is required, and addition, there is an effort to get opened by some few



this late hour my gratitude to

As you have always been interested in me, I will briefly describe some of my first impressions and prospects.

Columbia is situated in a rolling country, with a small tributary of the Missouri River, passing nearly around it, through a very deep valley, like all western streams.

However, it is not to be compared, as far as situation, to Windsor and is not more than twice as large. Then the weather is very warm. Since my arrival on Wednesday I have suffered very much with the heat.

President Laws is a very clever man with good executive ability, but of versatile genius. A Doctor of Divinity and President of a Presbyterian College, at the commencement of the war, he got implicated in the

there are no firms common in the College.

troubles and was banished to  
New York State or Europe. This  
ended his clerical career. Without  
money in N.Y. city he took a  
menial position in the gold  
exchange, but in the course  
of a few months he became president  
with a large income. He devised  
the printing telegraph which you  
have seen in exchange offices,  
and made a million dollars  
out of it. Afraid of seeing so  
much money, he retired from  
office, took the University courses,  
in Medicine and Law, in  
Columbia College, and I am  
told that he has the following  
variety of degrees D.D., M.D.,  
L.L.D., Ph.D. — a combination  
held by no other man in the  
States in all probability. However  
he is considered to have excellent  
~~business~~ inventive ability. A  
number of our professors  
are very able men. One of  
the language professors reads  
35 languages, and could make  
himself understood from  
Iceland to China.  
Now as to my work. At present



hundreds of thousands

Now for the museum  
I will have back for a  
large sum.

1<sup>st</sup> in Zoology, we want  
types of every family in  
the Animal Kingdom in  
(as it were) the Teaching  
Museum (the one room  
at Cambridge); and then the  
best general collection possible,  
especially all the life of  
this state (primarily) and then  
of a America.

In Mineralogy, we want  
as far as possible, a Collection  
of every mineral species,  
and then an economic & bed  
Collection of this Mississippi  
valley.

In Botany, we want first  
as good a general Teaching  
Collection as possible, and  
then a complete sectional

Collection, Dr Laws says  
to ask advice for all we  
need. Doubtless we will  
get a good deal, I think  
that I shall ask for \$2,000  
for the Collection for instruction  
and \$5,000 for the general  
Collection. Inclusive of  
buildings. This work means,  
of course, that I will require  
a good deal of assistance.

Even if my lectures will  
not come hard, yet all my  
time will be occupied.

I occupy a delicate position,  
as the circumstances of  
the departure of my predecessor  
were very unpleasant.

At present, I have only a  
Class in Mineralogy; there  
are 26 young men and  
five young ladies.

build



Of course it is doubtful how  
much money will be obtained,  
but I will likely get a good  
deal. My impressions  
are more favorable since  
my arrival than before I  
reached here, yet I cannot  
say how I will like the removal,  
as so many things are different,  
and I cannot get a home  
being liking, but for all, I  
am glad that I came.

To day the President dropped  
into my room to see how  
I handled my class. He  
always does it with each new  
professor.

I like your museum  
building ~~much~~ and arrangement - very  
much, and I wish it success  
as well as Mc Sill.

I am yours humble student  
J. W. Spencer

Spencer  
Sept 12