[1847], Feb. 24

Feb 24. I find I shall not have time to finish this and write also to Wm & to Torrey both so I will
devote this page to Wm you can read it and then send it to him. Best love to all at home.

Dear William.

Since I last wrote you Liebig has been making some important discoveries
in Animal Chemistry. He has rediscovered the Creatin of Chevreul which no one else has been able
to prepare. It exists though in small quantity in the juice of [illegible] of every kind [illegible]
may be very easily prepared from the same. It is not a base but becomes so by losing 2 atoms
of water and is then (Creatinin). It contains Nitrogen in large quantity. I cannot at this instant
[illegible] but his paper on the subject will soon be published. He has likewise
discovered in the mother liquor from which [illegible]
acid which is not yet named. The acid in muscular substance & flesh is lactic acid
as long ago stated by Berzelius. This is for the first time proved by analysis and is an important
point. There is a great deal of work good bad and indifferent performed in Liebigs Laboratory.
Animal chemistry is the order of the day here chiefly I suppose because the new
edition of Liebig's work on that subject is to appear next summer. The 1st part is already
out. There is much [illegible] suppose that Mulders Proteine cannot be obtained free from
Sulphur and this must if confirmed make a material alteration in our views of animal
physiology. Whitney and I have worked together on the bile but must give the subject
up for want of material. Liebigs view that the bile is essentially a compound of soda with
an organic acid is probably correct. At least the whole of the bile may be transformed into a mass
of snow white crystalline needles. The acid in question (bilic acid) contains Carbon hydrogen Nitrogen
Sulphur & Oxygen. We found in sheeps bile 5,4 percent of sulphur. Ox bile contains 3 per
cent. Swine's on the other hand none. The quantity of sulphur in Albumin Fibrin & Casein
has been found much greater than was formerly suspected - it is equal to 1,5 per cent. About
the real existence of phosphorus as such in these substances there is much uncertainty
at present. I will attend to your wishes about the balance & porcelain as soon as
possible, but as I am now so far from Berlin this may take some time. George will tell
you when the things arrive. I shall in all probability be with you again in September
next, having accepted an appointment in New York - I shall order some things in Berlin for
myself and Dr Torrey and yours will be sent at the same time. Your platina I will

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