This is not a very agreeable place, there are no young officers here except married ones and but few ladies. The posts are at a distance, and we do not see many of the officers from them. The country in no particular is equal to or compares with California, and besides is extremely destitute of water. The drinking water both of the wells and streams is of limestone, and is very disagreeable to the taste until one gets used to it. The face of the country is generally prairie, interspersed with post oak ranges and mesquite thickets, and on some of the streams are found pecan and cottonwood; but the average are nearly destitute of anything but much, which is [illegible] It seldom rains except in the rain [illegible] and the streams are [illegible] with great [illegible] and go down as quickly; while they are up the roads of course are impassible. The Indians are gradually disappearing and going farther back, and as they do the posts are moved forward so that once retired they never can return. There is a great abundance of game, even more plentiful than in California. I have seen thousands of deer in a single day, antelopes, bear (black and brown but no grizzlies) geese ducks, quail &c. There are three kinds of the latter here, the common brown quail the tufted California quail, and another kind which I have not yet seen. They are very abundant, a single sportsman having killed 123 the other day all flying and single shots. The fish are but poor, no trout; the trout by nature is too much of a gentleman ever to have emigrated to Texas, and not being obliged to do like Army officers, they have no reason for being here. I expect to have a pretty stirred time of it this autumn, as all my guns, rifles, shooting apparatus &c was lost in the wreck of the vessel in which my baggage was destroyed, and I am too hard up to buy more at present. You never hear of me frequently from home; but I wish you would write at least every two months, and I will do the same, direct to me here, care of Gen. P. F. Smith. U.S.A. Take good care of yourself and remember that you have got a good start and it depends on yourself to keep it. Mother writes that you have orders for Shanghai, where you will be much more pleasantly situated. When your five years are all out, you and I and George will all meet and have a good family time of it. Till then we shall be separated considerably