Smithsonian Institution
Washington D.C. April 5. 1861

Dear Mother

I have not written you for some days not only because I was very busy, but because I have nothing to tell that the papers do not already give you in better shape. I try and keep clear of all politics as nothing I see satisfies me, & I can do no good, but on the other hand lose my temper. Raymond's article of day before yesterday, "Wanted a Policy," exactly expresses my opinions & those of most that I meet. This government is a failure & we have got to suffer the consequences.

Mr Prime is here with his son and one of the older daughters and came over this morning to look at the collection. Dr Suckley is here also and has taken a room at the same house with me. He is going to work up some of the natural history of the Boundary Survey & will probably remain a week month. I find myself with more to do than I like to think of. I allowed myself at first to attempt exercising some influence on the nominations for the Territory, but became disgusted at the loss of time & the necessity of hanging round & dogging the Departments & have refused absolutely to have