Dear Mother and Father,

There has been a

enormous change in San since I wrote you

two days ago, it was on yesterday! The

Commission has decided, wisely as I think, to

decide more wisely by spending

three weeks in the Bitter Root Mountains

than by going to Alaska with John Muir. Of

course the Alaska trip would be the most

pleasant, but I hardly think it would show

much better to help the general cause, as to

put one in a knowledge of the forests. The plan

is now as follows. On Sunday, having a

tall, fine snow called Hamilton, so the

clouds from here, with a break being a cross

the mountains, which California, with its

deforestation, is going with us. It is enough

fortunate that this, as so frequently I would
he indispensable to select a belte companion for a mountain trip. As his lab. told me, he is just master in all that relates to mountain travel. He has done a great deal of exploring, and from his great success is evidently a skillful & prudent woodsman. He is also an enthusiast for freest, and has been instrumental in getting the agitation started for a great area which he first explored, of which I believe will some day be realized. So I am greatly delighted that I can have his company. Besides all his other qualities, he is a very pleasant companion.

The region where we are going is one of the most interesting in the country. We shall cross the mountains about 60 miles South of Missoula, and then down the Clearwater, traveling westward, until we reach the neighborhood of the Nez Percé's Indian Res.
and then return through elk city and the reg pelee's pass in the bitter root mts., reaching missoula again in 25 days. graves arrives here tomorrow, and I suppose we shall start early monday morning from hamilton. we have the man recommended as the best in this region for head pride; the man he prefers, he tells me, will probably go as second man, and then will bring a man of his company as cook. this men are all colored. do we shall be fitted out in the most beautiful style, and as to provisions, we are going to take five pack horses, not to mention that this country is famous for elk and beef. so I don't think we could be much better fixed. this a good bear country too, but mostly black & brown. also, as the berries are not yet ripe, we shall probably not get any bear.

I am finishing this, beginning with this first page.
in the 24th. The party has just left for
Shreveport via the lower O'Blanc region. I
shall miss certain things I would like to see if
staying here, but expect to meet the line in
Portland & see the Cascade Reserve, and all
of California, with them. So what I miss will
be nothing compared to what I shall gain.

This morning I shall spend settling my
accounts in shape to transmit to Washington,
but in the mean time I must ask for
another deposit. This trip will cost about
$500., and I shall have to try for it when
I come out of the woods. The line says Itany's
expenses while in the woods,
I am as well as possible, & weigh 181, which
is six pounds more than usual in the woods.
If that untested fibregant had only made plans in
advance, this would have been an ideal trip
for a man. But I can't tell anything about
my movements, even a short time ahead.
so far as the plans of the Commission are concerned. If Almos could join me here, or better in Portland, for he would not be alone there, if I were a day or two late, & I wouldn't have to wait for him, & we could get into the woods in Oregon and California, & have a delightful time.

Please address letters to Middletown. It shall be back here on until the coast as soon as I come out of the letter.

With much love to you all,
your loving son,

Gifford.