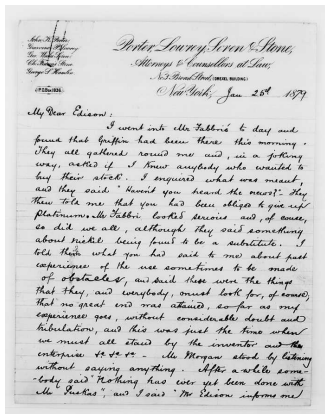


-1671-

From Grosvenor  
Lowrey



New York, Jan 25th 1879<sup>a</sup>

My Dear Edison:

I went into Mr Fabbri's<sup>1</sup> to day and found that Griffin had been there this morning. They all gathered round me and, in a joking way, asked if I knew anybody who wanted to buy their stock. I enquired what was meant, and they said "Haven't you heard the news?"— They then told me that you had been obliged to give up platinum. Mr. Fabbri looked serious and, of course, so did we all, although they said something about nickel being found to be a substitute. I told them what you had said to me about past experience of the use sometimes to be made of obstacles, and said these were the things that they, and everybody, must look for, of course; that no great end was attained, so far as my experience goes, without considerable doubt and tribulation, and this was just the time when we must

January—March 1879

50

all stand by the inventor and the enterprise &c. &c. &c.— Mr Morgan<sup>2</sup> stood by listening without saying anything. After a while somebody said “Nothing has ever yet been done with Mr Puskas,” and I said “Mr Edison informs me that he has called, or will soon call, upon Mr Puskas for \$1800 more for patent fees &c and perhaps you will not care to take Mr Puskas’ place in these expenditures, if you are losing confidence”— Mr Morgan spoke for the first time and said that he had been looking with some anxiety for just such a time as this, because this was the time to settle with Puskas on fair terms, and he (M), Wright,<sup>3</sup> & Fabbri all said they were perfectly ready to go on<sup>b</sup> as had always been talked about. I tell you this because it produced a very pleasing impression on my own mind for I saw that there was a true ring in it and that these gentlemen were likely, in a stress, to turn out—as I always supposed they would—not to be very easily frightened away from a thing they once made up their mind to. All they, or I, shall ask from you is to give confidence for confidence— Express yourself, especially when you come to a difficulty, freely. You naturally, having an experience of difficulties and of the overcoming of them, in your line, (which none of the rest of us can have,) may feel that it would be prejudicial, sometimes, to let us see how great your difficulties are, lest we, being without your experience in succeeding, might lose courage at the wrong time. This will be true sometimes of all people; but every active mind greatly interested in a particular subject works in its own way when a difficulty is presented in finding out the causes, and reasoning against the probability of their being insuperable; and with our friends I think that would be the result in almost every instance where you yourself should show that you still believe in a possible success.

With this in view I would like to have a talk with you right down to the bottom of everything and would like to have Mr Morgan join in it if I could; but I could not get him out to Menlo now, and I do not want to take your time a moment. I may perhaps go out to Menlo this afternoon at 30’c, but more likely not. In that case I may telegraph you this afternoon to see if either you or Mr Upton could come in tonight; but again I fear taking Upton from you at a time when you may need him, as well as of interrupting your studies and of fatiguing you by the journey, for I can well understand that you are at the highest tension just now.

I have an engagement on Monday which will prevent my getting out,<sup>4</sup> and very soon I hope to get away to the Hot

Springs.<sup>5</sup> If nothing more convenient presents itself I will send Mr Griffiths<sup>6</sup> to you on Monday and ask you to state to him carefully, (and he will take it down in short-hand) what the present situation is; whether the experiments which you substitute for those in platinum require so large a force of men &c. &c. Very truly Yours

G. P. Lowrey

P.S.<sup>c</sup> Since the above was written your letter of the 24th<sup>7</sup> is received— One embarrassment which you no doubt feel is that the public has been taken into confidence in this matter too early and the opportunity is afforded for those who do not believe to make capital because of the certainty with which your friends have always spoken as to what you had done— Be sure you are right about Nickel and everything else before having anybody know much about it— Naturally, our people while not at all blaming you or me, will say that we have been rash in setting up expensive buildings ~~wh~~ while it was uncertain whether the minor details were yet secured— In other words that so large an engine was not necessary, for the ascertainment of what you now know about platina— But on the whole I think they will be reasonable; ~~an~~ but they will withhold their opinion on nickel until it is completely proved<sup>d</sup> L.

LS, NjWOE, DF (*TAEM* 50:232; *TAED* D7920Q). Letterhead of Porter, Lowrey, Soren & Stone. <sup>a</sup>“New York,” and “187” preprinted. <sup>b</sup>Interlined above. <sup>c</sup>Postscript written by Lowrey. <sup>d</sup>“me . . . proved” enclosed by brace at right.

1. Egisto Fabbri, a partner in Drexel, Morgan & Co., was among the original directors of the Edison Electric Light Co. Drexel, Morgan & Co.'s offices, like those of Lowrey's firm, were located in the Drexel Building on Broad Street in lower Manhattan. *TAEB* 4:592 n. 4, 621 n. 5.

2. John Pierpont Morgan (1837–1913) was a co-founder and principal partner of Drexel, Morgan & Co. *ANB*, s.v. “Morgan, John Pierpont.”

3. James Hood Wright was a partner in Drexel, Morgan & Co. *NCAB* 33:443.

4. Lowrey instead arranged to visit Menlo Park on Tuesday, 28 January. Lowrey to TAE and TAE to Lowrey, both 27 Jan. 1879, DF (*TAEM* 50:239–40; *TAED* D7920T, D7920U).

5. Hot Springs Reservation, established by Congress in 1832, was a region in the Ouachita mountains of central Arkansas noted for dozens of hot mineral springs. It became known as “The American Spa” and attracted both wealthy and indigent health seekers; at this time more than 50,000 people visited each year, most of them enduring a day-long stagecoach ride from Little Rock. Though each of the bathhouses constructed there was devoted to the cure of a specific disease, these springs were known generally for the relief of muscular and skeletal afflictions (Lowrey suffered from gout; see Doc. 1711). In 1921, Congress desig-

nated the area Hot Springs National Park. *WGD*, s.v. “Hot Springs”; Altman 2000, 45–47, 124–25; <http://www.hot.springs.national-park.com/info.htm#esta> (a site maintained by U.S. National Parks Net, a private enterprise).

6. E. W. Griffiths was probably a clerk in Lowrey’s firm. Porter, Lowrey, Soren & Stone to TAE, 19 Feb. 1879, DF (*TAEM* 49:115; *TAED* D7903ZAW).

7. Not found.