New York City = May 20 1853.

Messrs Van Brunt and Howe = Architects =
                Kansas City, Mo. =

            Gentlemen .   ~~Dear Sirs~~

    A copy of your letter of Apr. 20" 93, to Mr.
Rindge, concerning the American University,
has reached me -

    Only preliminary arrangements have been made
with reference to laying out the grounds and the
location of buildings. The ground is 92 acres
in size, 400 ft. above tide water, and within three
miles of the "White House". It lies right at the
head of Massachusetts Ave, extended; - this Avenue
being the chief Street of the City.

    Fred. Law Olmstead has made preliminary exam-
inations with a view to laying out the grounds.

    A Washington Architect has visited the site
and secured the services of a topographer, who has
made a plan in relief of the grounds, for which
he has been paid by me. We have no contract
with the Architect, and the Trustees have not
employed him to make plans for us.

    In a rough way, I have had our main

buildings put down approximately at what would seem, to the eye, a fair distribution. The preliminary studies already made are too vague and indefinite to be of much practical value. I appreciate the importance of having one architectural mind control the location and structure of all the buildings.

The general scheme is in nobody's hands, and as the matter stands, I see no reason why arrangements may not be made for the erection of a building or buildings by contract with any donor of such building or buildings. We are really needing about eight structures, and the first should be an Administration building, containing Chapel, offices, &c. somewhat after the scheme of Wellesley College.

There are many questions connected with the whole matter that it seems to me can only be settled by yourselves through a personal visit. I will be at home until the middle of June, and will be glad to confer with you.

Very truly Yours—