

Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan.  
April 22d, 1877.

Dear Sister:

By our last mail, received ten days ago, I received your letter of Feb. 19th, and you may be sure I was very glad to receive it, the only fault that I can find is, that it is too short. I hear nothing about home affairs, except by letters, and am interested to learn all that takes place.

A week ago last Thursday and Friday I went on horseback from here to Otaru and back, making a ride of about fifty miles, to get a box of things which I needed very much. I went without any interpreter, and managed to find the box, get it unpacked and the contents loaded on to pack-horses and brought up here, so you see I have learned a little Japanese. The road for about half of the way runs along close to the sea, between the water and a very precipitous rocky shore, and the scenery is very grand. The people along the shore, men, women and children, are at this season, engaged in herring fisheries. They catch millions of bushels yearly. I saw many piles of herrings eighty feet long, forty wide and five or six feet deep. In many places they were so thick in the water that the people just stood in the surf, and as a wave retired, would seize a few and throw them up on the rocks beyond the reach of the water. I saw places on the shore where the chaff of herrings which had been dashed in pieces upon the rocks had been landed by the waves in piles a foot deep or more. Herrings, herrings everywhere, men women and children wallowing in herrings and bedaubed with herrings from head to foot. These are most of them, that is the herrings, cured in a miserable manner, with little or no salt because this is scarce and expensive, and used by the Japanese for food. Some however are used for the manufacture of oil and fish guano.

Last Monday, Pres. Clarke left here on his way home, and the entire college, including the professors accompanied him on horseback about twelve miles. He said that he should be glad to visit my folks and that he should try to do so. I think you had better write him when you hear of his arrival, which will probably be in August, inviting him down to the Vira's, offering to meet him at S. S. station if he will let you know when he can come. He would probably wish to come out of Boston on a morning train, and return the same day. I think that he will come out here again next fall, bringing some of his family; but don't mention this. I give four lectures a week now to the students, and am very busy preparing them, correcting the notes of the boys and superintending the farm. Hoping to hear from you again soon, I remain, Your ever loving brother.

Wm. P. Brooks.

P.S. The weather here is very fine now, thermometer 69° in shade yesterday.

I am very much obliged to you & Sam for your kind offers to assist me in my correspondence; but think I will try and conduct it without assistance a while longer. I got an invitation to attend Cousin R's wedding from Uncle Andre. It reached me only seven weeks after the event had taken place if the program was carried out.