Dear Sir. Your letter of recent date to the effect that your proposition to me in regard to the Homer was acceptable to the American Book Co. was received. I am ready to go ahead on the lines already laid down, in fact, I have been working all week collecting material. I may say first, that I am in favor of publishing the Odyssey first. I give some reasons for my thinking that it would be better to do so.

1. The general fact that the Odyssey is coming to be recognized by teachers in this country as a better book for use with beginners than the Iliad. The English and German, I believe, have long acted on this theory.

2. The first twelve books of the Odyssey comprise a story of much more sustained interest than that told in the Iliad Book I-XII. The Odyssey has, in this respect, a greater similarity to the Aeneid.
3. The Odyssey is used in all good colleges and in some preparatory schools. In our own University the course in the Odyssey is considered as almost a prerequisite to the course in the Iliad. The Iliad is harder, I think, and is best interpreted by selecting Boons from the whole twenty-four, rather than by a straight course of twelve Boons. These points I mention, because I believe that the book will have to aim to secure the purposes of preparatory and early college classes.

4. As a last consideration, I may mention the fact that, from a business standpoint, the opening for a good edition of the Odyssey seems just now brighter than for one of the Iliad. Petrin’s two volumes cover but eight books and are comparatively expensive. We have to use Morley for our University classes, in order to secure enough material for a quarter’s course.

If you agree with me in this, I should like to be notified that I may continue the work already begun.

You and I have had no discussion of the features which you wished to have embodied in the book. Of course, I am familiar with Miller’s Virgil, and presume you would want the inductive study of cases, modes, etc., and the
literary references etc. Please give me some indication of your desire in these matters!

The matter of a vocabulary seems to me to be very plain. There is no question in my mind that the Homeric vocabulary is the most difficult thing about Homer, after one has become acquainted with some of the stranger forms. The choice therefore lies between an elaborate vocabulary giving root, word-formation, cognate words etc., and a simple vocabulary. The compass of the book in question would point inevitably to the latter. I have sometimes thought it might be as well to omit the vocabulary entirely, yet I believe it would not. On this point also I should like your opinion.

Several matters in regard to the business aspects of our contract occur to me. I should like you to name a definite number of hours that I ought to give to this work weekly in order to abide by the spirit of my agreement with the A.B.C. Of course, I understand that some of this kind cannot be estimated by hours' work. But I can feel my obligation fulfilled when I know at the end of each week that I have done all that could be fairly asked of me, and all that has been asked of me. The first three months of my work will be the hardest and most decisive and yet will show for the least. Suppose that I should fix them?
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois

[Handwritten text on the page]
I fear the Company would have little return for the money. I shall, however, strive to put my material in as accessible form as possible. You see I want to know when I am living up to the spirit of my agreement. One thing more. It would be a great convenience to me, if I could be paid the agreed sum on the 1st of each month, beginning Nov. 1st '94.

I began about a vacation reading for parallels. I shall read Virgil, Homer, Milton and Spencer entire and much of Ovid. I am teaching these very books of the Odyssey at present. I take note in class of the difficulties experienced by pupils and hope thus to meet actual and not fancied needs of the going scholar! As a change of work I expect to spend some time each day on the vocabulary.

These are all the points that occur to me at present. I should like to hear from you as soon as possible. If you prefer and will name the hour, I shall be glad to call upon you.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
The University of Chicago

[Handwritten text not legible]
Chicago, Ill. Nov. 3d '94

Dear Sir: The letter from the American Book Co. was received. I was disappointed to learn that the arrangement was to hold out ten months while the understanding between yourself and me was that it should be for fifteen months. I do not think the company can appreciate the circumstances of the case. I certainly cannot undertake to write that book in ten months and perhaps the best thing for all concerned is to secure some man who can. The question has so many sides that I feel I must see you again when I am sure we can make arrangements satisfactory to yourself and me, whether to the A.B.C. Co. or not and whether I write the book or not. In fact, I am all at sea as to my work for the months following April 1st. Professor Shory seemed to think there would be no need of me after Oct. 1st 95 and thought I need not send courses to be printed for the next year, beginning July 1st '95 (except for the summer quarter). I spoke to Prof. Castle about going to Europe. He has some idea of going next...
April or July for a stay of six months. I suppose I should be needed in his absence, but, as Prof. Shroyer seems to view it, not after his return. In short, he seems to think that Prof. Shroyer, Castle and Capps can do the work of the Latin Department without me, so long as Prof. Sarbell does half work. If this be true, then I must be ready to go abroad Oct. 1st 75. This will have the greatest influence in determining the use of my time during the next nine months. You will remember that the conditions under which I began work as an instructor (conditions named by yourself) were that I should teach one year (9 mos.) as a tutor, spend the next year abroad and return as an instructor. Last summer you suggested that I remain another year before going abroad and said you would later decide whether as a tutor or instructor, I told Prof. Shroyer of this at the time and he seemed pleased as he thought Prof. Castle would go in the meantime and very likely himself also. The other day his views seemed to be as stated above. I do not mean for a moment to convey the impression that Prof. Shroyer does not want me on the Latin Department. He expressed himself plainly to the contrary. But he thinks the Department will have become large enough to require the services of us all by the time I should return. Before I should or could be ready to
sign a contract to write the book. I should have to know definitely these things: First, whether I am to go to Europe April 1st, Oct 1st next or April 1st '96. Second, if I remain here another year, am I to remain as a tutor or an instructor? Third, the amount of time I am to be given for the completion of the book ready for the press.

I hope you will not misunderstand me. This letter is not written as a complaint at all. I simply want to know the conditions under which I am to work that I may not attempt the impossible. I am ready to go abroad or to remain at home for a reasonable time, in whichever way I may that increase my own efficiency and serve the interests of the University. I have no preference to express. I simply want to know definitely and finally as to what I shall be expected to do.

I shall try to see you at your office Wednesday at the proper hour, unless informed otherwise by you.

Sincerely yours,

Wm. T. Cown