

Dr. Thomas F. Wood,

WILMINGTON N. C.

Mar. 30 1887.

Solidago verna, MacC, which Dr. Gray says in his great work is dubious, he has since determined to be a veritable good species, after Examining a large bundle of living specimens sent him in '85.

Dear Mrs. Owens:

I was flattered that you could take so much interest in our "Flora". The notes were collected from time to time, but not until I came to bed nearly a year ago did I seriously consider its publication. I needed the diversion and entertainment, but found that I was laboring under many disadvantages. I could not examine herbarium specimens lying in bed, because the small collection I had was not in order. Mr. McCarthy is a deaf-mute technically, although he has been taught to speak. He came to me as a tramp botanist - a veritable Rabinowitz as so uniquely described by Prof. Gray. He was and is a student at the State Deaf Mute Coll., Washington D.C., and an employee now in spare hours under Dr. Vasey or Prof. Ward in W. He was very enthusiastic, and his labors and privations in our swamps and savannas were very remarkable. He would



Spend weeks at a time in the solitary  
swamps, Enduring hunger and <sup>living</sup> when he  
got it mill-prepared food; Enduring in-  
sect bites particularly ferocious mos-  
quitoes; Enduring fierce suns and  
drenching rains, and coming back  
to me with blistered feet, and wearied  
limbs, and <sup>such</sup> mud-begrimed clothes,  
that to call him a dirty tramp would  
have been no Compliment to the genus.  
We worked together sometimes, and especially  
did we get into the ballast plants of  
our river front. I think we got together  
near a hundred new plants, but as far  
botanists care to study these, he is  
waiting patiently the opportunity of  
studying them. It would have swelled our  
list to have pursued the study & completed  
it before we went to prep. McCrue  
knew of his name being used in joint  
authorship, but he really did the dredging



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and as a young botanist he deserved all the bits of Encouragement I could give him. His Enthusiasm is unbounded, and has led him into Errors, but that must of necessity be with young botanists. The Error, for instance, of putting Schizandra Coccinea as new to this Country, when it was made a special study by Dr. Brickell 3/4 of a Century ago, described by Elliott in his botany, and afterwards by Chapman, and its habitat run down from S. C. to Fla. & Westward. (Dr. Gray & Mr. Conkey, of course, will smile, but none the less does it interest me. For as I lie here in bed, and turn over the pages of my interleaved Copy, and discover mistakes, I find great Entertainment in correcting them.) Therefore I am led to say that the Earlier you set your catalogue go to press, the Earlier you will discover Errors - that is, after they are irrevocable they will appear prominently.

I am glad to learn from you what you have written to me about your work of press



aration for the Mandschuk Flora,  
for I am sure it will be quite a  
surprise to those who have never heard  
of its unique plants. I hope that you  
will not adopt the style of our pam-  
phlet until you have seen the superb  
work of Dudley? Prof. Bot. at Cornell  
Ithica N.Y. I believe I have the items right.  
In my interleaved copy I am adding notes,  
photographs of botanists, peculiar plants,  
and such things, so that it will be a curious  
Compilation should I have pursued it for  
a few months.

I now I ought to ask pardon for detaining  
you so long with this letter, but your kind  
words led me to indulge my spare <sup>half hour</sup> in thus  
entertaining myself, and this will be my  
apology.

I am yours very truly,  
Thomas M. Wood

If I did not send you my sketch of Dr. M. A. Curtis' Life  
I will be pleased to do so.



Wood, Thomas Fanning. 1887. "Wood, Thomas F. Mar. 3, 1887 [to M. L. Owen]." *Asa Gray correspondence*

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