

Phil. Oct. 31st 1863.

Prof. Asa Gray, Cambridge.

How do you do, my very laborious friend?
How do the puzzling *Astragal* do? As for me, I do
not do at all; I feel extremely fatigued, just returning
on foot from a new Isoetes-locality, 4 miles from Camden,
on the Atlantic City R.R. These Isoetes are the largest
fellows at the root that I have seen - $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch diameter.
They may be the same as our Pennsylvania & Iowans are
friends, but the leaves are shorter, stouter and more
abundant - the base wider than long. As to the spores,
I can say nothing about, my eyes and glass do not per-
mit it. I sent a specimen, 2 weeks ago, to Durieux -
which specimen had been given to me by Prof. Leidy,
the discoverer of this new locality. I have some aside
for you. Those that were in deep water, had their
leaves spread flat on the ground, forming a beautiful
rosette from 8-10 inches in diameter; those in shall-
ow water, were almost erect and in a flatter.

You will see in the Proceedings of our Academy for Oct.
that I have denounced the humbug Am. Tea Company,
who announce to the public that they have discovered
in the mountains of Pennsylvania the true Thun
chinensis, growing indigenously, luxuriantly and abund-
antly. Whilst we, poor blind botanists, have never
seen it. By steeping that tea in boiling water, spreading
and parting the fragments upon paper and drying the

same with genuine China tea, I have proved that they were different from each other and their trashy American tea was nothing more than the old revolutionary Jersey tea.

Good Mr Canby has brought me my share of his Eastern Shore of Maryland Collection. I have recognized at once the Alnus maritima, Muhl. - which Dr. Pickering collected in the same district, some 25 years ago, and of which I had only a small branch of 5 leaves, without flower nor fruit. I showed him also the figure of the same in Nuttall's Sylva, made upon the unique specimen now in the general herb. of the Academy. As to his Desmodium ochroleucum, Curtis, I resorted to my herb. and the Acad. Herbaria to see if I could not find the like. Nothing in mine; but in that of the Academy I found, under the label of D. humifusum, 3 different specimens:

1st Desmodium humifusum, Muhl? N. England, in Dr. Bigelow's Writing, I believe - With quercus and anemone. Yes! Z. (Meaning Zecharias Collins.) But it has no long stipules, and looks more like a glabrous specimen Vireo diffl.

2^d Evidently decumbent - Leaves very much like those of Canby's specimen - Marked Salem. Hand writing of Dr. Pickering, I believe.

3^d A specimen of Nuttall (miserable wretched specimen) without flowers nor legumes, scarcely more than a few top leaves, but also evidently decumbent, marked as first herbarium rotundifolium, although the leaves

are not rounded - Then D. Greenii, Massachusetts. Stem hijrid and the few upper leaves remaining, also like those of Canby's Spec. No 2 & 3 have conspicuous broad stipules. I would not be astonished if D. humifusum & D. ochroleucum should prove to be the same.

But a ^{more} important discovery! In the Acad. Herb. was a specimen labelled, if I recollect right, by Dr. Torrey D. Scaberrimum, Ell. Alabama. Beautiful specimen with the superior stem-leaves simple - Evidently the D. Floridanum of Chapman! Who refers the Scaberrimum of Elliott to D. Canescens, DC.

The Scirpus of Canby is most likely a new species - Nothing like it in our Philadelphia herbaria, and it is a curious one.

The Treasurer for the special fund for the purchase of new books having been absent for some months, I have not been paid as yet for the new genera; nor have I paid the bill of the printer, but it will be right and in the course of next week all will be settled.

Have you an answer from Dr. Short's heirs? I fear that our Curator have been too much hurried. They have already disposed of the herb. &c. for that herbarium. Considering it as already acquired.

Yours very cordially with respects to your lady

E. Durand
I think you are wrong in your manual to say that D. humifusum resembles D. rotundifolium



Durand, Elias. 1863. "Durand, Elias M. Oct. 31, 1863." *Elias Durand letters to Asa Gray*

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