

Cambridge. Feb. 19th 1854

My Dear Wright

Sinner that I am. I have 4 letters of yours unanswered; the last from Simon's Bay, Nov. 4th. The fact is I do not find time to write half the letters I ought, and those, like yours, which are not to be despatched on some particular day, I am sure to postpone and neglect interminably.

It seems so vague, too, to be writing to a man, you know not where - somewhere on the other side of the world, and you know not when the epistle may reach him. - Say 6 months hence.

Now is it easy to reflect and remember what I have been doing, so as to tell you. This however is pretty simple. Excepting one or two little articles, and the preparing of 2 popular lectures, my whole time since you left has been devoted to the Botany of the U.S. Expl. Expedition - of which I have just finished the MSS. for the Umbelliferae. I expect this month to finish also the rest of Odypetalaceae (v. Araliaceae & Romaneae). It will make a 4th vol. of 740 pages, of which 512 pages are already printed, and the rest is getting set up pretty fast. I have read proofs up into the Myrtaceae. There will be 90 figs plates to the vol. - but only $\frac{2}{3}$ are yet drawn by Sprague, and hardly $\frac{1}{4}$ yet engraved. So that the text will be out a good while before the Atlas of plates. As soon as the letter-press is all printed - say in 6 or 8 weeks, I

meant to send you a copy of the sheets - night-bound
especially in view of Sandwich Islands Botany - in which
you will see there are yet many points to be cleared up.
I suspect it will be ready & forwarded to the Sandwich
Islands against your arrival there. Then, I have
written out for Torrey an account of Emory's (Parry's) Calis-
fornia trip, and have to do the same for
this New Mexican one. Emory expects to bring out
a Report soon, in which these things will go.
Through Torrey, Emory solicited that I would write
a little before going on with Pl. Wright. - on the
ground that when I did it would pick up almost
all they had that was new. As I had as
lives came after them as before them, I intended that
I would delay awhile. - more by taken Ex. Exd. work
pressed so hard that I had not a chance for much
else. Meanwhile, I am trying to get my papers
in better order by sorting & laying out plates
at evening, which Miss Hayden gives the next
day.

I forgot to tell you, too, that Thurber called
on me and offered his plates collected under Bartlett.
I have written out the greater part up to the end of
Comptonia - my old sticking place. - a number
of new things - mostly from deeper down in
Sonora than you went, and in S. W. California
Beyond Torrey will work up a part. I shall
mainly finish characters & det. remarks to Thurber
& let him do all the rest of the talk. Bartlett is

still in hopes that the Senate will print a great
Report for him - I greatly doubt if they do. If
Dr. Thurber's Botany will go as an appen. If not,
he will make a memoir for the things up to Com-
ptonia, and the striking things beyond, and after-
wards I may pick up the rest in the general
Continuation Pl. Wrightian - etc.

I have heard nothing from Mr. Graham for a long
while, not since you went away. I do not think now he
will get any Report authorized.

Meanwhile the U. S. Minister at Mexico has
been making a treaty - now before our Senate
for buying a further slice of Chihuahua & Sonora -
to take in Lake Guzman & the Sonora country
surrounding it, of whose you want, i. e. below San Pedro.
So there will have to be a new survey, if this
treaty is ratified, and a chance of more Botany.
I wish you were to be here to attend to it; - only
you have already taken off the cream of that
country, and can now do more, & find more novelty
in one of the regions you are going to.

From Mr. Stevens party - from Minnesota
to Washington Territory (north of Oregon N. of
Oregon), hundreds of plates are set home to David
by him forwarded to me. Watched specimens,
- and nothing new among them!

After a long while, Torrey got out last fall,
his Pl. Armatum, 60 plates, his Pates. plates,
& Calceolaria Pitcher plant of California - 1 plate.

Hearing he had forgotten to send them to you. I have
sent ~~the~~ a copy of each, - along with a copy of
Linnaeo-Jamaica Correspondence by the late A. R. Jussieu.
printed here by me. an account of N. gen. Expl. Exped. by ~~myself~~
& a pamph. by Silliman on new Mones of Expl. Exped. South
Mas. - - I sent all to Baird for him to forward
the parcel, as he said he could, thro. the Navy Depart-
ment. He had it early this month.

Mr. Baird sent me the \$86 you sent thro.
Mr. Ames (who did not come here, when I would have welcomed him:
gladly). - But, on settling my account with
Mrs. Bridges at the end of the year. I found that
there was a good handsome balance due you by
me. - even \$186.23
- 18.50
\$167.73 - } I at once remitted the sum
to your brother - to be used for you - that intent be not
lost, along with a part of this balance.

I have now, it appears \$128. of yours. I mean at
once to pay over half of it to your brother. The rest will
be abundant, I think, for all books &c - you will want
me to get for you while away.

At the time the \$86. was sent, I had no advices
from you as to what books you wanted. Your letter of Nov.
4 has at length apprised me, and I immediately ordered (tho'
are not in the country) the 9 vols. of Walpers. Müller's Spec. Museum
Storke's Genera Filicum, Pl. Prot. v. 14 (not out yet) & Lindbergh's
Orchidaceae. When they come, they shall be sent on.

I hope you get the Nov. of Silliman's Journal, - which the
Publishers inform me they send on, as directed by Mrs. Ringgold.
as fast as published. Perhaps I may soon
think of something else to get for you -

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Feb 19, 1854

Captains at sea are very apt to get a little crusty - which should be minded just as little as possible. I expect to hear, that after getting well settled and at home in the Vincennes, you find yourself comfortable & all pleasant. Gentlemanly conduct and devotion to one's pursuits will at length make any one respected anywhere.

When you return, I trust you will yourself prepare the Botanical Report of your cruise.

I hope so - for your own sake, both scientifically & because your doing so will keep you on pay, some years longer on shore. I will aid you, if I live, most willingly, as Dr. Britton & H. - perhaps would like to do certain families, - further than that, not, if you will take hold of it yourself - as you ought to do -

I suppose you will have found nothing new at the Cape: though the vegetation there must have been novel to you.

It will be pleasant, in the long cruises, to study yourself the plants collected at the last port. Did you get any nice Algae? Look out for them hereafter.

When you are on surveying ground, you may probably be transported back to the Steamer again. —

Possibly your letters will be coming to me via
California. I hope to continue to hear much
good accounts of your health and activity - Do
not measure my interest in your letters by the
number I myself write, - though I mean to write
often in future. No news here, scientific or
other. Mr. Carey, you know has gone
back to England to live - I has married a
young wife there moreover.

They made us a pleasant visit at Christmas.
It is very well - as is his family.

My wife, Miss Pierce (Aunt Mary) & Miss
Hayden all write in sending their best regards

Ever, my dear Wright

Yours faithfully

Asa Gray

Charles Wright. Esq
Notarial

U. S. Ship Vincennes
Riggs



Gray, Asa. 1854. "Gray, Asa Feb. 19, 1854." *Charles Wright correspondence with Asa Gray*

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