

San Francisco, California, U.S.A.
 Monte Leno, June 30, 1859

Dear Dr. Hooker,
 Day before yesterday I went to town, mainly
 to look after the shipment of my plants, also to do a
 little shopping & some botanizing by the way. The
 plants are shipped on the tug? La Grange. Capt Dearborn
 but I could not leave the names & places of business of
 the consignees. I shall send this letter open to Capt
 G. C. ask him to put into it the bill of lading or such
 information as will enable you to send for your
 freight as soon as the vessel arrives which you will
 doubtless have ample time to do before she commen-
 ces discharging. On my return here I found your
 welcome letter of May 4th.

I trust some of the difficulties in the way of our
 correspondence are removed & that we will now have
 intercourse if not uninterrupted at least more regular
 than heretofore. There seems to be but little in your letter
 that requires a special answer as I have recently written
 so fully. As to Bentham's application for tree, Leguminosa
 flowers, fruit & foliage, all from the same tree I have to
 say it is much easier for him to make the request, than
 for me to comply with it. For instance, soon after my
 arrival here I found a tree in fruit on the foot of the creek
 close by here. I climbed it & cut a fine specimen
 which I hope you will soon have in possession. But the
 tree has yet given me nothing but fruit & foliage. Suppose
 in the next package I should be able to send you the
 flowers now am I to prove to Bentham that these
 flowers belong to these fruiting specimens without going
 to Cambridge to make affidavit to that effect. Or then

excessively thick woods it is difficult for one on the ground
to remember after the lapse of a few days to say nothing
of weeks & months when he gets a certain kind of flowers
as I think after I do the best I can in the woods in the
clearings. Bentham will have to trust a good deal to
the names perhaps somewhat to guesswork for the
identification of flowering with fruiting specimens
I have not been in writing. You see I was
they are a calamity - not one in a dozen will probably
reach me. You may however order to be sent to Mr.
Frederic Descaulle the "Courrier des Etats Unis"
(French) if you please. There is an edition published expressly
for the West Indies that will be the one. Charge the
subscription to me.

On my way in town I collected a good number of
Vet. anthem. etc. I have pretty carefully examined what
appears to be a good capitulum. I am satisfied that it is
not Swartz's plant. Cordence. I can't find any trace of
"Crucifera 4-5 lineal or ciliatis acutis". The male plant is
not 5-6 ft. but 4 ft. Number of flowers not given. I find
but 4-5 the anthers are immovable held by a calyx. The female
plant has a pedicel & is not "5-dentate". The achene
were too young for me to determine anything from them & I
have it time to look for mature ones I don't know how many
species there are here but which fails me altogether. In fact he
seems remarkably deficient on Compositae. In my examination
of this plant I find that the whole subside is divided as given in
and which is a matter except this man. Helianthus, Galium,
Antennaria, Alchemilla, Geranium, Echinops, Petal.
Pectinaria, Euphorbia. I am inclined to think that in passing
with that ^{work} you done a double bargain - sold the
books ^{me too}. However, I find now & then a crumb
of comfort in it.

I don't know but I shall be glad to have you visit me at
I will grow in my back of the nice things. I was finding
at La Certe in the clearing. I don't recall
talks of cutting down a piece of timber. I don't
think I can leave before I have a glance at that.
I had the good luck again to hit upon a dry weather to go to
town - dry road & no rain. Today I just had enough of dew
sunshine to heat my dries a little. However though I
have a good number of plants in press they are not suf-
fering.

I was as to the naming of plants. It is natural that I
should desire occasionally to give a name to a plant where
there seems a reasonable probability that it is undescribed -
especially as it will be done in such a way as to avoid bur-
dening the science with synonyms if the name suggested is
preoccupied or if it is applied to an old or already named species.
There are not many families or even genera where I can
easily do so. I thought the nettle would be about as good a
field as any to work in especially as that family has been lately
worked up & put in rather a compact form. It was partly with this
view that I asked you to send me that work. But you headed
me off on that course with not even a "proque" nothing
but a "guess". There are probably new things among the
Melastomaceae but the latest monograph is scattered along
through several volumes of the *Annals de Bot. Nat.* & would
be too bulky for my use. The Compositae are ^{not} very numerous
but it is a family too difficult for me to venture in. So of the
orchid though I have described one little chap. However
I don't like writing well enough to dabble much in des-
cription & then I wouldn't get a Latin Dictionary in my
"valise" to offer me the right word just when I want it.
So I have sometimes just put down what I thought would
be a good name without any description. It however I

may, do in this way shall have at least one merit that of
appropriateness & shall not such jaw-crackers as those
Russian & Polish ones appear to an English eye!

Give my sincere regards to Mrs. G. & my hope to see her
in Cuba soon. I am, very sincerely yours,
Charles Wright

I was in the morning of June. It is natural that I
should desire occasionally to give a name to a plant where
there seems a reasonable probability that it is undescribed.
Especially as it will be done in such a way as to avoid
decreasing the science with synonymy of the name suggested
pre-occupied or if it is applied to an old or already named species.

There are not many families or even genera which can
supply the list. Therefore the matter must be done in good a
field in way to work in especially as this family has been lately
worked up but in rather a compact form. It was partly with this
view that I asked you to send me the work. But you have
me off on that course with not even a "proposed" nothing
but a "guess". There are probably new things among the

Microthomaceae but the latest manuscript is scattered about
through several volumes of the *Chimale* as Dr. Clark & I would
be too likely for my use. The description are not very numerous
but it is a family too difficult for me to venture in, as of the
or what though I have recorded one little shape. However

I have like most my work in the matter much in com-
position & then I don't get a Latin Dictionary in my
"library" to offer me the right word just when I want it.
As I have sometimes put four or five I thought I
in a good name without any real basis.



Wright, Charles. 1859. "Wright, Charles June 30, 1859." *Charles Wright correspondence with Asa Gray*

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