

Santa July 24th 1865

Dear Dr

Just got yours of the 4th & 12 inst with inclosures which have been read and the letter to Dr. Hooker is written but I was a little too late to send it today to Matanzas by mine boat who only stayed a short hour and returned to the city. I have found another San Marcos only more so. I had heard of the "tetas of Canarioca" since I have been in the island. I was told by Lundack that it was a place of strange vegetation but I did not imagine that it was so similar to San Marcos. But it is not at the foot of Cajalbana with its pines. ~~But~~ yet it gives me additional oddities. Randia with its rectangular ramification and other like Rubiaceae. Leornitium idem Rheedia with leaves like a penknife - low stiff little-leaved *Maripighias* similar to tie together all these rectangles and how is a body to get through it? True it isn't very tall climbing to go over it but then it tangles the legs tears the ankles prickles the fingers and even scratches the face. I have only once been in it and once on the edge of it - an ante-breakfast job. Today I have been drying and resting and writing letters.

I came here only five or six days ago. But perhaps I had better begin at the beginning. I don't remember even if I wrote to you from Matanzas. Well I was some days detained there a prey to mosquitoes and heat. At Palma Sola fresh air & sea-bathing ad lib. to offset good eating without stint. We feasted sumptuously every day. When it all comes from I can't see only on the sea-side. That was plain enough. I had all the other side to botanize in - not so much botany as work. But I got some novelty - an *Sonidium* - one of the rectangular sort and multiangular too if ramosississississississimum can make it so. An Aristolochia looks newish. You shall have enough of *Lithophilis* too - if it be really that which I think it is though I don't quite

agree with Grisebach's description. I shall probably have means to upset if they are not already, down some of the sp. of *Scaevola*. But I got in *Mitrasac* & *Potulaca* not in *Epia* nor *Rick* though agreeing very well with a sp. in Dr. Brit. (I can now recall the name). And what is queer is *Chenopod.* abounds here reported from New Jersey and fr. Mexico also from Siberia - *Delonix aristata* so far as I can make it out without fr. (ripe or well-grown) - cranes only *Morales* has made a new genus of palms or *Acrocoria lucinipathia*. He calls it *Epistemonia armentalis*. I may send you his character some other day.

I stayed sometime at Mexico with Don José Garcia at Palma Lela and with Poy a jolly old soul who takes short strolls when the walking is smooth swinging about his semi-paralytic arm and leg. His right side is partially paralyzed. He writes with his left hand and strings down the page like the Chinese or he turns the paper sideways to him - the lines running up & down. Yet he has done a great deal to illustrate the nat. hist. of Cuba. His forte is fishes. Butterflies & shells have also received considerable attention from him. But he felt the effects of the good living at Palma Lela. He found it hard to resist the temptation of any new dish set before him and went to sleep soon after eating - whether pretending to study or surrendering like a man. Mephisto ascertains his claim.

The day after my arrival here mine host Don Felix Garcia went with me to the bushes and I gathered hastily a good many things for examination. We returned to breakfast & the next day I went alone and spent a good half-day. My paper is full but I can take out some dry plants tomorrow and I mean to go for another load. There is one minute succulent bush quite new to me and to my regret I have not seen in it no fl. or fr. and I fear I must defer to another turn a supply of specimens from it. The little *Rhodia* has

nothing but leaves. At San Marcos I got it with fr. It I have not yet seen. A *Rhamnus* is here again in fr. if indeed it be the same which I got in S. Marcos though this has one important character which I do not remember as belonging to that. Our little-leaved *Bumelia* do not agree with those in Fl. Mex. & little Comp. quite new to me cost me a long search and I have not yet enough. An *Echites* looks new. It is queer that I can not determine hardly any of the Cuban *Echites* by the characters in *Epia*.

I should not be surprised to learn that the Cuban gentleman in negotiation with Grisebach is Mr. Sawalle.

I have a pet project in hand. I have made a proposition to Bonpland, Bory de Saint-Vincent, Bland, deCandolle, Cresson &c and others whom I have received presents of shells, birds, insects &c from Grisebach to contribute each something to be used in the purchase of a small library to be presented to him as a token of respect for his character as a man and for his industry in the cause of science. I headed the subscription with fifty dollars and authorized any one of the subscribers properly qualified by the rest to act for them to call on you for my subscription.

I dare see him. I can possibly send plants as you suggest to Grisebach. The box is in Matanzas I should not throw your spacious room to distribute in and to make duplicates numbers. It would be a tedious sweetening task and I dare not undertake it. I have been thinking that when I return to Matanzas I will send to you all I have <sup>They will be superior from industry and order</sup> say. There will be a good many novelties and it would be well he had them. But I can not ask you to take upon you the task which I so much dread and then with it not delay for half a year his catalogue which I so long to have. And after all then must be supplement of the supplement before the *Flora* can be any thing like complete and not, worry ourselves to finish at once a work which from its very nature and the few laborers engaged

in it must be progressive and arrive slowly at perfection

I am among excellent kind people and what is more to the purpose rich and able to help along a poor fellow and tho' I little thought to stay away from Retire and Friend Blain so long here I am and I suspect I shall stick a while yet to these briars.

I have been looking at Villandries and wondered that I couldn't make them out. *Grisbachs* first sect. has one character which I suspect is <sup>(just now discovered)</sup> wrong & so it is the cause of my failure. "Filaments spirally twisted" I suspect should be "stigmata sp. tw." Running over the sectional characters and seeing that one and not seeing in any sp. the stam. twisted I went on & through with the idea "well! it is not in *Gris*". I have just collected *Pisonia inermis*? I got it at Guantamaro and it went home in the <sup>second</sup> ~~first~~ lot of plants from Cub. Or. I got it at Laguna de Sanamar - Mr. Reels. I got it at Guajabon and now I have it again. Why is *Gris* so reticent about naming it? There will be enough of this anyhow.

29th Got another Villandria yesterday - Stam not twisted. These thickets have a *Plumieria* which differs in some respects from any one in *Gris*. They all have a very similar general appearance but the texture of the leaves and their perfect smoothness and want of prominence of the veins with some slight floral difference in the flower may serve to distinguish it specifically.

Wishing you much enjoyment on your summer excursion and a return to duty with recruited health and strength both yourself & Mrs. G. I close

Yours cordially

Charles Wright



Wright, Charles. 1865. "Wright, Charles July 24, 1865." *Charles Wright correspondence with Asa Gray*

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