

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF CANADA,

A. P. LOW, DEPUTY HEAD AND DIRECTOR.

May 26th 1906

Saturday Afternoon.

Dear Mr. Fernald

There will be no proof until Monday but I hope to get it into the mail in time for it to reach you Tuesday morning. So possible please mail your reply to me Wednesday or don't to get the numbers out as soon after June 1st as possible.

I hope you have not forgotten our conversation a year ago about your coming to Canada. The time is rapidly approaching when we must have a good man here who will work as an assistant botanist while my father continues in harness, or for part of that time anyway, and who may look forward ultimately to being the Dominion botanist. We have a new director here now, my oldest friend, and he will agree to anything in reason, in fact he has already said that he would appoint another assistant botanist whenever we asked for him. His idea, however,

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was that a graduate from a Canadian university whom we could train would be appointed. This is of course not at all what my father and I want and I shall explain this fully to Mr. Low when I am sure of having an uninterrupted hour with him. To "train" a new man no matter what his ability and willingness would only add to what we have to do now. I dare say you know my father's and my own limitations as well as we do and would know that our needs are (1) a botanist, a man with a good knowledge not only of plants but of botanical literature and one capable of describing new species or monographing a genus without any assistance from us. (2) a man of whose work we know enough to feel safe in handing over to him all our notes and material with the feeling that he will stay permanently with the work. When the time comes to settle this matter with Mr. Low we shall tell him that you are the only American botanist we know who will fill the bill. As to what can be

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offered to you, providing Mr. Low falls in with our plan, is not
 sufficient inducement for you to come to Canada we shall have
 to apply to Kew. I have told you something of how we work here
 but to make things clearer I shall tell you just what we have on
 hand for the future. My father is naturalist and assistant naturalist
 for the Dominion. As my father finishes one section of natural history
 it is handed over to me. For example I do most of the botany
 now and as the edition of the Bird Catalogue is exhausted I must
 get a new one ready with ^{an} addendum for the early winter. As my
 father gets his Catalogue of mammals, Fish, Reptiles etc. off ^{his}
 hands the general work of keeping things up to date will fall
 on me. In the meantime we are bringing in thousands of
 botanical specimens every year which I must work up in a
 sort of a way as things now are. In next autumn we are
 supposed to have ready for the press.
 (1) new edition of the Bird Catalogue. (2) Catalogue of Canadian Mammals.
 (3) Hudson Bay Flora. (4) Flora of the Rocky Mt. Park. (5) Flora of the

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Ottawa district. (6) What must be done, a flora of the Prairie regions
 and what ought to be done, a flora of the Yukon district based on
 a magnificent collection of plants made there by my father. Of course
 you understand that the word "flora" as I have used it does
 not include descriptions except of new species. In addition to all
 this I must begin next autumn my report on the country along
 the International Boundary which will cover all branches of
 natural history. I think I should have authorized
 to have 100 figures of plants made, similar to those in the H. B.
 Flora. It is, of course not possible to get all this done.
 Now if Mr. Low allows us to have one our way, this is
 what we can offer you. Ample time for monographs and
 revision which would of course be published under your own
 name alone. Your name to be used in conjunction with
 mine in all botanical publications of the kind referred to above.
 That is, I intend to just the work I am doing now in botany
 but instead of having to send material away for determination and careful

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study it would be done here by you. I doing the preliminary work.
What you could be certain of would be that neither my father
nor I should ever want credit for work we did not do ourselves.

As you know, a million dollar museum is being built here
and it is taken for granted that my father will be curator of
the Natural History section, to be followed by me. It is expected
that the museum will be completed two years from this autumn,
my father already talks of making my father & me before that time
but we shall not allow him to quit work while he enjoys the
health he does now. Instead of "us" I should have written "he will not
be permitted to quit work". With a great country like ~~the~~ ours and
the government realizing the need of more scientists unless you
must see that the prospects are good for a botanist. As regards
salary; if an offer were made you which did not seem good
enough and we could not meet your terms, that would be the
end of the matter. What I wish to know now, confidentially of course,
is whether you would be willing to come here if my father
and I could arrange to have an offer made you. If not, you

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will perhaps be able to keep us secure the right man later on.
 All we need want to know now is whether it is a suitable
 offer we made you next autumn it would be possible for you to
 accept it. Please consider all this as for yourself alone and be
 certain that whatever you may wish will be seen by no one
 but my father and myself

Yours sincerely

Skellern.



Macoun, James Melville. 1906. "Macoun, James M. May 26, 1906." *Merritt Lyndon Fernald correspondence*

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