

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF CANADA,

A. P. LOW, DEPUTY HEAD AND DIRECTOR.

Ottawa June 16th 1906

Dear Mr. Fernald

When I re-read your letter of June 1st a few minutes ago it hardly seemed possible that two weeks had gone by since I received it. Therefore that after all no immediate reply was necessary but all the same I feel guilty. That I am working with my 1905 collection but when towards the end of May I found that a revision, Pygmy and because all mounted were were material in particular groups, the chance of getting a lot of my last year's stuff sorted up was too good to be lost and I have given all the time I could spare to the work they were making at. In America, Antennaria, Senecio and the Rosaceae it has been a great satisfaction to me to find that I named most of the species correctly and where I could not give specimens a name they have been added to the list of undescribed species.

Before going into details I think I should answer the queries with which you close your letter numbering them as you have done.

(1). As regards salary, I should make no definite statement now. My own

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Salary at present is \$2000., my father \$2800, I think, but when our new museum is built we expect that these figures would be almost doubled. I have quite made up my mind to devote my energies to the geographical distribution of plants and animals in Canada so that if things went as we might hope to arrange them your salary if you were to come here would be the very first be greater than mine, we no longer have pensions here. Five per cent of all officials salaries is retained by the government which is compounded at 4 per cent every six months. This money may be withdrawn at any time, when on official leave the government service or goes to his family when he dies.

(2) The opportunity for field work would be unlimited, in other words you could, if you were here, go wherever you liked and for as long as you pleased. My father and I have always placed field work ahead of office work that we never manage to get our collections worked up. We shall get them distributed, however, and others will do the special work.

(3) As to monographic work; it is to have this done and done as it ought to be, that prompted me to write you. There is no limit to the opportunities

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for publishing. all that kind of thing - printing, plates, etc - is paid for out of a general government fund and each department tries to make as good a showing as possible. You know how little we do botanically and how much must be done.

4. The "fetty correspondence" must be looked after by some one and this takes up a great part of both my father's time and my own. Anyone who works with us must have to take his share of that but their names always to be on exhibit & strengthen ourselves to make things easy.

5. As regards medals & work, you know that both my father and I have no must take our final position are with you Cambridge botanists, in the meantime we are in a worse position than anyone else because we must work with the extremes of all sections. Otherwise we should get nothing done.

6. As regards freedom to visit the large herbaria I have always had a free hand in that matter, though when it came to a trip to Europe there must be objections.

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(7) As regards the library, our Director told me this morning that I might order any books I pleased after Oct. 1st and asked me for a list. I shall ask you to help me with this later.

(8) Our <sup>Office</sup> hours are from 9.30 to 4.30 with one hour at noon but we come and go as we please in this department.

9. As to holidays - we have three weeks annually and two weeks sick leave.

Now from all this you will see that at present we have nothing to offer you that is nearly so good as your present position, especially as regards salary. This does not mean, however, that in the future, perhaps the near future, things may <sup>not</sup> be different. We have so far written confidentially to one another and all that you have written me will remain confidential. So if it is necessary to talk to Mr. Low about this next winter I shall send you letters & give it back to you with some suggested changes so that I may show it to him. I will, however, say to you

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freely, and you may use this in any way you please, that if we cannot get you to come to us we shall continue to do the botanical work ourselves with whatever expert assistance we can get here. I am writing for my father as well as myself when I say that we look forward to the time when you will be "Dominion Botanist" and if that can't be arranged to our mutual liking one of the Macouns must "hold the job" for a while yet. I thank you very sincerely for your full account of your position at Cambridge. Though it may not be easy just now to have an offer made you that will tempt you from such congenial surroundings be assured that "the price" does not frighten me. With the re-organisation of our staff all salaries will go up and it may then be possible to make you an offer which you can accept.

Yours sincerely

J. H. Macoun.



Macoun, James Melville. 1906. "Macoun, James M. June 16, 1906." *Merritt Lyndon Fernald correspondence*

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