

zoological portions already printed or
printing, as closely conforming to them, perhaps,
as Botanical matters can ^{well} be made to con-
form to Zoological - This, I have reason to suppose,
was perfectly satisfactory to all the parties
concerned, & it is from petty & needless inter-

and in doing it, I supposed I was only
attending to what was required of me, &
I could have no conceivable end in view
but that of contributing to the greater perfection
of the botanical work as a whole, by guarding
against blemishes & discrepancies that were
otherwise sure to occur - Now unless I have
misunderstood, through, through second-hand
communications (as Capt. Milnes intimates,) it is
from needless & petty interference, - as I cannot
but consider it from my understanding of the
case, - on the part of Capt. Milnes since I left
the country, that all this very unpleasant con-
troversy with Dr. Torrey, & indirectly with my-
self, has arisen -

~~myself would be very improper, as I am since
with the contract under which I am engaged.
(I fear it is necessary for me to beg you to apprise
Capt. Milnes, that I am not a clerk or petty
officer under his command, subject to naval~~

To the Hon. the Chairman
of the Library Committee
of Congress
Dear Sir,

Read near London, April 2. '57.

I send enclosed a copy of a
letter of Capt. Milnes to Dr. Torrey, com-
municated to me by request of Capt. Milnes.
As I am only incidentally concerned in it, & indirectly & perhaps
imperfectly acquainted with the circumstances

As I am only incidentally
indirectly & perhaps
imperfectly acquainted with the
circumstances which have led Capt. Milnes
to write to a gentleman of so high standing
& character in so extraordinary a tone, I
only feel called upon to offer to you such
brief ^{as may be requisite to place these matters upon a proper footing}
of explanation, & to decline to take
as far as I have become involved in them, & which the manner as
only fear to ~~in any indirect or vague way~~ ^{as I have become involved in them, & which the manner as}
well as the form of the letter of Capt. Milnes, precludes my addressing
you - to him

I may first ~~be~~ be allowed to say
that I became engaged in the duty of pre-
paring the botanical account of the collections
made by the U.S. Expl. Exped. (excepting the
portions previously assigned to other individuals)
at the solicitation of Capt. Milnes, made
first through my friend Mr. Sullivan, &
afterwards personally ^{to me,} - that I undertook

zoological portions already printed or

To the Hon. the Chairman
of the Library Committee
of Congress
Dear Sir,

Read near London, April 2. '57.

I send enclosed a copy of a
letter of Capt. Wilkes to Dr. Torrey, com-
municated to me by request of Capt. Wilkes.
As I am only incidentally concerned in it, & indirectly & perhaps
imperfectly acquainted with the circumstances

As I am only incidentally
indirectly & perhaps
& ~~but~~ imperfectly acquainted with the
circumstances which have led Capt. Wilkes
to write to a gentleman of so high standing
& character in so extraordinary a tone, I
only feel called upon to offer to you such
brief ^{as may be requisite to place these matters upon a proper footing}
~~and~~ explanations, & to ~~decide to take~~
as far as I have become involved in them, & which the names as
only ~~part~~ in an indirect & original correspondence
with as the form of the letter of Capt. Wilkes precludes my addressing
you - to him

I may first however be allowed to say
that I became engaged in the duty of pre-
paring the botanical account of the collections
made by the U.S. Expl. Exped. (excepting the
portions previously assigned to other individuals)
at the solicitation of Capt. Wilkes, made
first through our friend Mrs. Sullivan, &
afterwards personally ^{to me} that I undertook

I should state, however, that I have not
^{was yet} seen Capt. Wilkes letter to Dr. Torrey of Dec.
23rd. the latter having by some inadvertence
omitted to send me a copy of it, as Capt.
Wilkes desires at the close of the letter, the
copy of which is herewith returned. This is
of no consequence in the point of view in which
Capt. Wilkes puts it at the close of his letter;
^{it is not proper that I should}
for ~~be governed by instructions~~ ^{be governed by instructions}
addressed to another person; ~~nor do I consider~~
~~myself bound by any instructions or appearance~~
~~with the contract under which I am engaged.~~
(I fear it is necessary for me to beg you to explain
Capt. Wilkes, that I am ~~not a clerk or petty~~
officer under his command, subject to naval

at no small personal inconvenience,
the task solely from a sense of duty
to the science I cultivate & to the country,
which, under the circumstances would
not allow me to refuse it, although ~~it~~
obliged ^{thru} ~~me~~ to interrupt other scientific
undertakings which would most fully
occupy all my best working years, render
it necessary ~~for me~~ to provide a substitute
to discharge part of the duties of my pro-
fessorship at Cambridge, & to reside for some
time abroad, where alone the necessary
facilities for the proper performance of
this duty could be obtained: ^{and that} ~~for this~~ I
purposely named a sum (which ^{was} ~~left~~ Wilkes
at once accepted) as my remuneration,
which I felt would show that I was not
induced by ~~any~~ considerations of pecuni-
ary ^{gain} ~~advantage~~ to undertake this onerous task.

I am now occupied in ^{disputing} ~~the~~ performance
of this duty ^{of this duty} simply under the terms of a
written contract, to which I am con-
strained to appeal as ^{precluding} ~~alone~~ ^{being} ~~by~~

in as much as) duties & obligations, ~~because~~ ^{because} various under-
standings, details, arranged in conversation
between Capt. Wilkes & myself, as I under-
stand ^{and recollect} them, now appear to be forgotten
or ^{difficultly suggested} ~~difficultly suggested~~ by Capt. Wilkes. Of these verbal
arrangements that which has led most
unpleasantly on my part, to this ~~subject~~ ^{unpleasant}
correspondence, ~~was~~ ^{is} that I agreed to take
a general supervision of the whole
botanical matter, so far as to arrange
with the other botanists concerned the
particular ^{literary} model & details, ~~as~~ ^{as} to secure
a sufficient uniformity ⁱⁿ for the various
parts of the botanical reports, and ^{I was} ~~to~~
revise the M.B. ^{with} ~~in~~ this view. I under-
stood also that ^{it} ~~it~~ was desired ~~that~~ I
should ^{to} ~~look~~ over the proof sheets of the whole
— Accordingly & at Mr. Sullivan's request,
I proceeded to arrange ^{some of these} ~~these~~ details with Dr.
Torrey & Mr. Brakenridge, adopting a form
essentially agreeing with the technical.



Gray, Asa. 1857. "Gray, Asa [with overlay] [draft] [to James A. Pearce] Apr. 2, 1857." *Charles Wilkes letters related to the United States Exploring Expedition* –.

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