

Cambridge, Mass. - July 17. 1882

To Capt. Wilkes, U. S. N.

My Dear Sir

On proceeding to work up
~~the~~ Botany of the Exploring Expedition for the
printer, I experienced great difficulty from the
want of all information taken from the living
plants, such as notes about their size, part, &
mode of growth, & of the color of flowers, and
other points seldom to be ascertained from the dried
specimens themselves, and also the particular
stations of the plants; the labels attached to the
specimens or bundles usually giving only
the name of the Island or district where they
were gathered.

On application to Dr. Pickering I found
that he had kept, with Mr. Breckinridge's
aid, a pretty full, and to us invaluable record,
of these very points, as respects the botanical collec-
tion in almost all of the places visited (after
Madeira, Cape Verde Island, & Brazil); and he

Kindly lent me the several MSS. volumes
containing these among other more voluminous
MSs.

As these MSS. volumes could not long be
afforded by Dr. Pickering, I had no other
course but to cause the botanical notes, lists,
and memoranda relative to me, to be ~~the~~ ^{the}
transcribed by an amanuensis. The greater
part of this copying has already been done;
and I shall have to pay for it about twenty
dollars.

I would respectfully solicit your permis-
sion to forward the bill of the copyist, approved
by me, for payment by the Library Committee.

I wished to have laid this MSS. before you
when you called here, yesterday; but I was
prevented by my unavoidable absence at the
time you happened to call. I can send
this MSS. to Washington ~~for~~ ^{by} express, or by
mail, under cover to Mr. Pearce, if you
desire it.

I have the honor to be
with much respect

Your Obedt. faithful servant
Asa Gray



Gray, Asa. 1852. "Gray, Asa [to Charles Wilkes] Jul. 17, 1852." *Charles Wilkes letters related to the United States Exploring Expedition* –.

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