

Pauhi June 2nd/49

My Dear Dr

I wrote you so recently that if I were not full I would keep silence. But the steam is so high that if I do not blow off fearful consequences may follow. Yesterday morning we had a violent norther cold and accompanied with rain after which and when ready to start my baggage paper &c was distributed about into three or four waggons. It was so packed that it was not much injured. This morning about daylight we had another more severe accompanied with hail. My collection were nearly all wet and I have had no time to dry them so they will be much damaged. My paper is nearly all wet. I should not wonder if we have another storm tonight.

Now these are misfortunes attendant on my dependent situation and I can not prevent them. The officers care nothing about my affairs and the waggons have a little curiosity to gratify by looking on while I change my plants and care no more about it or rather would be pleased if they were sunk in the river and their load would be lightened.

You will recollect I suppose a suggestion made to you that I should be equipped with a waggon and horse from which you dissented instancing the labors of other botanists who had made large collections. But I venture to say that Drummond did not attempt to save 12-15 specimens of each species or if he did he had an art which I do not possess.

The outfit which I proposed seemed to you perhaps large but I am sincerely of the opinion that the entire cost of the outfit might have been clear saved the present year. I would rather have a horse and carriage and ten dollars in my pocket than have five hundred as I am so far as it facilitates my operations.

I have money in my pocket but it does me no good I can buy nothing with it I sit uninvited and see others eating and it is a severe trial to my feelings to thrust myself among them The men have their rations and often none to spare and how I am to get along to El Paso I know not If I had consulted my own feelings alone I should have stopped at San Antonio and turned back But you & Mr. Spence had expectations which would not have been realized and I felt reluctant to disappoint you You write to me of working like a dog I know how you live - then call your situation dog-paradise and mine hog-and-ass-paradise combined and you may realize my situation - sleep all night if you can in the rain and walk 12-15 miles next day in the mud and then overhaul a huge package of soaked plants and dry them by the heat of the clouds

I have been now three or four days in such a state of uncertainty about the possibility of going on that I have had no enjoyment and to day I have not saved a specimen - have merely collected some seeds as I walked along the way As for studying the plants I have not attempted it so long that I have almost forgotten how I have been used enough to cry or swear when thinking that I have the pleasing prospect of being dependent ^{for life months} on a parcel of men who call me a fool and wish me at the bottom of the sea

There is a man who is bound for California in our company - provided with a carriage and mules provisions and cooking utensils - independent as a wood-sawyer and depends on others only for safety against enemies If I had such a one my expenses would be very trifling I could collect twice as many specimens of twice as many species and twice as well preserved I could attend to them at any time I pleased in wet or dry weather and have the assurance that the rain at least could be prevented from coming to them I could also

take them to Houston or other seaport and put them on shipboard myself and then I would know they would depend for their forwarding on no careless agent I am fully resolved that this season will close my botanical travels on horseback or on foot if I can not operate to better advantage I'll give it up and turn my attention to something else

I can own only hope that when Capt. French arrives in camp by situation will be improved by an appointment or in some other way

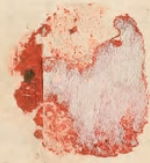
I have no expectation of hearing from you till about the beginning of winter of course the arrangements for the next year if I spend it in the boundary must be attended to by you so far as shipments of paper &c are concerned What I write in my last about money I recall as I know not what to do with that which I have You now know my sentiment on the mode of botanizing in this country & if you wish to continue it on my plan I am ready to do all I can

It will facilitate the saving of bulb-seeds &c in large quantities which if they sell as well as some seeds Houston would go far to pay my expenses

I am in good health Give my regards to Mrs. and all enquiring friends

Affectionately Yours
Charles Wright

Dr Asa Gray
Cambridge
Mass





Wright, Charles. 1849. "Wright, Charles June 2, 1849." *Charles Wright correspondence with Asa Gray*

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