

Monte Verde, May 14th 1859

Dear Sir

Yesterday came a letter from you headed Feb 24 "Here again" says I "that diablito has been fingered my letter." But a few lines down you acknowledge the receipt of mine dated Feb 26. which with other circumstances corroborating satisfied me that the date was a "lapsus penna" for Apr. 24. But today came some of the diablito's work in the shape of yours of Feb 20 & 21 & no lapsus penna this last is so old (it is the 4th I have got up to this date) that there is little in it which need to be noted. Since I got Sullivan's letter I am in a very good humor. And so tell the truth a good deal of my grumbling — well I can't think of the French word by which I wished to express it — but gas! well do. I believe I have done an honest part with the mosses & hepatics & if they don't bring me some credit & money too I shall be sadly disappointed.

You ask when I got the name *Amegris lineata* Why you simplest when other folks get their names. I couldn't find any thing like it in Dietrich (rather poor authority for any thing positive as to negative?) and as the leaves were full of little lines I stuck down the name just to ~~be~~ call it something. I believe however that is not a peculiarity of this species.

A word as to the address of letters. When I was here before I got, I have reason to believe, all my letters. Several were directed to Salvadora. This is the old name of the place & is generally used all over this part of the island. It is not however the legal name which is Santa Catalina de Guaymasano or S. C. de Guasco as I see it in books. Now the Post office incumbents may think that they have done their duty by duly forwarding such letters only as are

direct to the legal name of the place and may have
no consideration, principle, in consigning to oblivion such
as are addressed to its popular name. I have thoughts this
might be the reason of the failure of my letters. Perhaps they
have been opened & mislaid in the process - they were not
then be probably intrusted to the fire for safe keeping. At all
hope they will come more regularly in future.

When you come on here in the fall for Mrs Gray we
will strike off north into that forest "that I have only
just peeped into" till you cry out peccavi - But how
are you going to any plants there when you can make
get a bit of sunshine bigger than a dollar & every
thing is saturated with water. The savanna region
is more accessible & I am going to seek information as to
the best locality at which to settle down - temporarily.
I had no idea I should remain here so long but in fact I
don't know how to get away. I am finding new things every
day & now the atrocious vegetation is coming in to season.

I found several new things today - a Gomphia, an Achille
& some queer things that I can't make out. It has some of the char-
acter of Gomphia but the connective of the anther sticks
out as in Hymenocallis but with a sharp point, lateral bracts
5-leafy, long, corolla, stamens numerous, ovary 2-celled with three
ovules hanging from the top of the dissepiment a tapering simple
style small oval revolute coriaceous leaves - And I found
a beetle bringing to mind its Texas associations. Yesterday
I found a new fern - scant in specimen but it is near as
new & I hope to get more. I have turned schoolmaster too
I volunteered to teach Noble English giving her lessons at
night & as I have opportunity I don't like to quit just
after starting. Till within a few weeks I was hanging on
waiting for letters - and for a vessel bound for Boston
by which to send my collections. I am informed that there

This sentence was given to the bluebird

is no probability of having this season a chance of sailing
direct to Boston - so I intend to embrace the first oppor-
tunity of dispatching my things via New York. A
vessel is expected to sail the last of the month & next
week I propose to take what I have already dried
to Savannah & box them up snugly, direct them
plainly and give them in charge to Messrs Brooks
& Co. Then I shall feel a little more at liberty
to branch off if I see any prospect of doing better
by it.

You have a way peculiarly your own of dictating
to me how I shall spend my time - stick to the work &
money! Let the books alone. You guess. I'll have to
string the riddle after I get home I. I. What'll be the
use after they are all shure up name & distribute
Well I guess I'll get satisfaction in some way when
I get home.

No less true than your remark that "Mr Geacille
do not grow on every bush" is it that Monte Verde
are not found at every squirrel's jump. Here I am
within two or three minutes walk of the virgin
forest in every direction & do not have to go far
miles over off-fitted overgrown with grass & domesti-
cated weed & bushes before I can reach good botan-
ical ground. So long as I am finding new things every
day within a mile it would seem almost like running
away from good luck to leave it - it is at a very rate
at least a certainty for an uncertainty. If I believe
I will be in no hurry - just now at least. The mass
of the fern harvest is gotten - but there is some glean-
ing to be done yet. There are some of which I almost despair
of ever finding fertile fronds. Shall I get them any how
I have accumulated between 24 & 60 specimens of wood

of wood of various kind some doubtless interesting & could easily increase the list to 100. I would like to serve Hooker in this way if he says the word. Most of these I have cut with my own axe & my own elbow grease & all I have seen cut. I have carefully numbered them & specimens to correspond (the first two or three numbers of wood have been lost by some means but that will not lessen the value of the others) I will not send them on at present. You, as you distribute the specimens, can take note of such things as you would like & those at any rate shall be sent to you.

I believe I wrote to you that not finding Dintley's *Lauraglossum* tenue I was induced to suspect its identity with my *S. lampyrophylloides*. If so it is so badly described that I could not recognise it. And in this connexion I send you a scrap of his *Pleurothallis rubrovirens* that you may judge whether or not I was right in saying "I was afraid he had been careless in the descriptions." I send also what I take to be a second species of *Luxaria*. I have got only two specimens, & therefore send only a small scrap of a raceme with a leaf. The racemes are 3-4 inches long. I have seen but one small tree with perhaps a dozen racemes, still, for the most part, in the bud.

I have distributed into their natural orders all but the plants last collected so that you will find every thing according to the best judgment I could form in its proper order & your labor in distribution will be somewhat lightened. There are some specimens of *Equisetum* that I can not find & I suspect they have by some carelessness got away among some of the lower crypts. Look out for them.

I am rather sorry that you take such a fancy to personal names as *Wrightii* an untasteful sort of monstrosity especially in a genus of a single species when you are not, as in *Carex* or *Senecio*, hard run for names. I hope to the name of the new plant you appended my account of the rather strange locality in which it was found.

Mr. L. will not ask for any nick nacks or Boston notions, but I will. He is rather observant of the temperature & the weather as well as of the stars - the lingering habits of his seafaring life. If you please, therefore, send him one or better two good thermometers (his was broken a few days ago) and an atlas of the heavens, charging them to my account & prepaying if possible all expenses.

A word more about those specimens of wood. You know I wrote to Sir William just before I left. It is possible that he has answered my letter writing to me as he did before through the British consul at Cuba. It was a long time before I knew of the fact & then I learned it through Brooks & Co. who (or one of them) had the letter. They have a branch of their house here at Santa Catalina de Quantanaro and most likely would have sent me the letter if they had it. It may be too that he has written & that the letter has shown the fate of so many others. You could easily ascertain Sir William's wishes. I am by no means anxious for chopping logs & packing them on my back & still less do I want to appear so. But I am willing to do a fair share of labor in promoting the cause of science in any of its branches.

I am enjoying at present very good health. In fact I suppose the little ailments of which I speak, to any one else, almost, but me, who have all my life enjoyed such general good health, would be but little more than a flea-bite. I don't mean Monte Verde fleas; I mean oldtime ones, whose tickling was their worst annoyance. Ha! I've just caught one & smashed up his biting machinery.

In looking over your letter it seems you must have written to me about the beginning of Feb'y - a long letter you say. That I have not got. You directed it to Monte Verde - that accounts for its failure. Monte Verde is nothing more than a coffee estate &

the Post Office employees would know much better than a Laplander where to send it.

If I had a kindred spirit for a companion nothing would please me better than to take an Indian or two and some negroes & strike into the wood in a north or other direction & penetrate to any reasonable distance. I have thought too of a way by which the plants might be saved. Each days collection could be sent back by an Indian the next day & with some one at home to take care of them a good business might be done. It is an arduous undertaking however for a single man with a very limited knowledge of the tongue of his servants & companions & with but little confidence in their trustworthiness. Well I will try it however when you come on.

I have found a little orchid which ~~is~~ certainly belongs to ~~my~~ genus in Endlicher. In this one instance I have trespassed on Lindley's province so far as to make a genus! It is very inconspicuous & probably scarce. All my specimens have been gathered from two Guava bushes & from time to time in small parcels as they came in flower. Formerly I found on a coffee bush what I believe to be the same plant, ^{It was sent to me among the living plants which pushed by the way.} & lately I found on some other tree a single specimen. I have called it serotella aphylla from the rather remarkable serotiform spur & because it has not the semblance of leaves. You will find it scattered along in little parcels among the orchidacea. I have given what I believe to be a good description from the fresh specimens. It might be called megalocarpa if the first ~~part of the~~ component could properly be applied to any thing so small, for the full grown fruit is larger than all the rest of the plant put together. If it should prove to be new my name & description ought to stand as being probably as good as any that can be made from the dried specimens—probably better—if not new there's no harm done. I intended to send to Lindley specimens but kept putting it off so that now they will all go together. Well I have about exhausted my stock of talky talky & filled my 3^d half sheet, so adios yours ever

Charles Wright



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