

on two questions of some difficulty
which have ~~some~~ immediate practical
importance at the present moment,
and as to which you have not pronounced
a ~~decided~~ ^{decided} opinion in your recent article
in Silliman's Journal - You are aware
that a new edition of Steudel's nomenclator
is now being prepared by Mr Dayman
Jackson Secretary to the Linnæan Soc^y.
Mr Jackson is next to nothing as a botanist
but a painstaking man with a taste
for bibliographical research and, I dare
say, will do his work well - but he properly
feels that he is not the man to decide
difficult questions - After a little
preliminary discussion it is I believe
settled that a small committee (of which
I am to be one) is to consider & endeavour
to solve the difficulties

The first has been for some time
pressing, but ^{its urgency} has been very greatly
increased by the publication of the
Genera plantarum - and under
the general heading come several
special cases.

10 Southwell Garden

Chrus

My dear Dr Gray

I will not let this
without sending our
and good wishes to you
with the hope that we
you both in the course

I suppose that you are
your project of going
in February & as the
advances working up
along the west side of
For my part I have a
to see your Pacific reg
think myself too far
could find myself there
company - But intense
desire to accomplish it
the difficulties are too great
health is not strong - Ever

Journeys in Europe fatigue her very much and it is quite out of the question her undertaking a journey to the far west, while on the other hand she cannot bear the idea of my again going so far & being as she says out of reach in case I were laid up. She has offered to cross the Atlantic with me & to remain in some quiet sea-side place on the Atlantic side - if indeed there be such a thing as a quiet place in your go-a-head country -

But on my side I cannot see my way to leaving her so far from home in a strange place - even though to us there is little or no difference between the U. States & England. If it were possible for one of my sons to cross the Atlantic at the same time the case would

be different - but of that is little chance - & it is likely that I shall resign to crossing a few weeks meeting of the Brit. Assoc. at Montreal, & seeing some vegetation of the Atlantic. I suppose that a visit to the Mountains in New Brunswick would be without interest. I say that you can refer to some botanical friends who would direct me how to spend short time to the best

But in any case I am anxious to know how you will get on with you during your absence. As I suppose you will be in letters forwarded from me I shall be glad to know. Secure that mine reach the member. -

I am anxious to know

will agree that the multiplication of synonyms
has already become the plague & opprobrium
of natural history - & will grow worse if effective
means be not found to arrest it. Experience
shows that good advice is no check - There is
nothing to prevent any ignorant not only from
publishing as his own all the species transferred
from one genus to another by B. & H. ~~from~~ but
further from coining new specific names
for each of them, unless botanists agree to
recognize the absolute claim of the older
specific name -

I shall be much indebted to you if you will
put your opinion on these points on paper -
— a separate slip which if you allow it
I may show to others - Perhaps Hooker
has written to you on the subject. I don't
think you will agree altogether with him -

I have seen Bentham to day - extremely
weak - confined to one floor - his head clear
but fearing the least exertion - He may
tally a little but the sand is nearly run out.
With my wife's kindest remembrances & good
wishes for you & Mrs Gray

Always sincerely yours

John Ball

I quite agree with you as to the names of
natural orders & tribes in the Gen. Plantarum
but it is now too late -

Where ^{a genus} ~~genera~~ previously
has been united to some other ^{older} ~~of~~
established, how are you
names of the species of which
Take for example the Species of Lig.
by B. & H. to Senecio - & a sp.
of which the specific name has

I admit all that A. Delandolle
not make B. & H. say what they have
& write Senecio mongolicus B. & H.
other hand there is something
in proposing that in this and his
thousands of similar cases ^{Mr Jackson} ~~he~~

to write S. mongolicus D. Jack.
Cases out of ten Mr Jackson writes
species of the genus if he saw
the entry in the new Standel w
the reader to any work in which
find the plant under that name
is whether any alternative could
be found - In spite of all that
against lengthening the name -
that the name of a plant is a binomial

of the name of a genus & that of a species
to think that the least inconvenience
in citing (within brackets) the name
of the species, with or without the
genus to which he referred it - The
first named Cineraria mongolica
then Ligul. mongolica D.C. in Prod. - In
Senecio mongolicus (Turcz.) w



Ball, John. 1883. "Ball, John Dec. 25, 1883." *John Ball letters to Asa Gray* 1–4.

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