

Sierra Valley, Cal. July 19th 1874.

My dear Dr.

Yours of the 25th of June was put into my hand just at the close of a week's tour, and upon the very moment of departing for another, - so has not yet received attention. Now I am at home with a wagon load of flowers, but tired all out and quite sick - yet feeling glad and triumphant. I have met with wonderful success in finding nearly all the new plants again - the Cheilanthes only I cannot place.

My first tour was down the east side of Sierra Val, about 25 miles then over into a neck (East Channel) & thence through Beckworth's Gap into Long Val. The vegetation is everywhere so abundant that one of any enthusiasm is on the spring almost every moment. I gathered 7 or 8 kinds of Astragalus (including the one you honored me with) in one day. I was too late to get the Ivesia Webberi in bloom, but secured quite a quantity of seeds. I discovered another smaller patch of it in Long Val, opposite the first and at about the same elevation. That val, being a thousand feet lower is much diff^t in flora, but I was too late,

I ^{injured} ~~fractured~~ my finger so gathering a thorny plant there that I have suffered terribly since - preventing writing and almost stopping me from collecting. On my return among other letters came one from Bolander announcing that he cannot come this season, - severe illness of his wife, - so I have lost his valuable assistance - and also the opportunity of repaying favors already received.

My second tour of 11 days just terminated, was made with my little wagon (and, unfortunately, a ^{first} forage) and extended through Red Clover val. & Genimfoe to Indian val. where joined by Abert & where I ~~me~~ ^{new} made a hasty trip up to the Big Spring finding the *Corydalis* in full bloom and more magnificent ~~than~~ ^{new} anticipated. I did not notice its odor two years ago, and now am overjoyed to find that it is as delicious as the sweet pea. Parting with my valued friends the Anas, I then turned homeward, ^{via American val.} but when near Quincy made a detour to the west and visited the region of the ever wonderful *Salix* *tenax* in Butterfly val. There lives Mrs. Austin - a lady of some culture and anxious to know plants by name. Having previously visited her she had collected several plants of interest to submit on this visit, including a beautiful *Geum* ~~perhaps~~ ^{perhaps} the *Crucifera*, and a species of *Parnassia*. From thence I came through Quincy stopping a few miles this side

and climbing the eastern slope of Clermont Peak. Several novelties were met with and two plants I never saw before in Cal, a *Eriogonum* & a *Urolina*. But it was in a canon of Mahaback valley only 16 miles from home that I made a most welcome discovery, - a fine patch of the new *Corydalis* *Cassana*! Parties living near it have been attracted to it for years by its sweet fragrance - one lady had it ^{grown} transplanted to her yard last season. - I found it both in seed & flower. The seeds are thrown by the bursting pod with great violence, upon the slightest touch. By the utmost care in approaching the plant and enclosing the spike of pods ^{with my hand}, as if catching a butterfly I secured a few dozen seeds. I will enclose some and will try to make up packages of novelties at once. My excellent friend Prof. Carr having vacation now, has kindly consented to assist me for a few days. I will take my boxes of flowers over to his cool school-room to mow and proceed to the tiresome business of selecting and packing. The weather is very hot and I am so tired and sleepy that it is almost impossible to do anything but collect in the mountains. The plants on hand now which I wish to have determined will make several postal packages, and though I begrudge the time taken

To make them up now, yet I suppose you wish to be studying them, and of course that is the objective point to get on with the Cal. Flora. I see you are much overworked and write discouragingly about it. Would there were more collectors and workers to assist you. When the Lick donation to the Cal Academy of Science is received, perhaps an impetus may be given to scientific research, not now suspected. Speed the day! By the way I see by the papers that I was elected a member of the Academy lately, so now I shall have an intellectual home! am blessed with the fellowship of genial minds! Bloomer writes me that I must work now for the glory, the aggrandizement of the Academy. He urges me to request you to describe my novelties ^{in future} for our Academy — rather than the American, a matter about which you will do as you think best.

About my collecting, perhaps you would prefer that I do not undertake so long tours, but the fact is there is such a dead sameness about vast regions of our country that only long journeys will bring variety. I seem only to have commenced to botanize this valley. One needs to take a pony, provisions, blankets, drying papers &c, and follow every stream to its high source in the snow banks, and thence to, at different seasons of the year. Like David Thoreau in his opinion of his native home, I believe that every desirable product of the earth can be found within the lofty rim of Sierra valley.

As soon as my packages to you are despatched, I go for a long cruise over the west side ^{of Sierra valley}, and up Haskell's peak beyond, I shall find there the Darlingtonia and no doubt the new Corydalis.

Brother Case and a few other charitable friends assist me in my mad career, so I am as yet, neither quite naked or penniless.

This is of all seasons the most fruitful. So I have large quantities of seeds, — from which I must expect a revenue. A long letter with a dozen almost innumerable questions awaited me from Canby inquiring about the Darlingtonia. I have just been slicing up leaves, bottling the secretion, pressing the flowers, preparing the pericarps &c for him, intending to forward to-morrow, if dry enough.

Promising to send packages ^{with} ~~some~~ copious notes soon I beg you will excuse this scrawl and always be pleased to command Yours truly J. S. Loomer.



Lemmon, J. G. 1874. "Lemmon, John G. July 19, 1874." *John Gill Lemmon letters to Asa Gray*

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