

Sierra Valley, Cal. Dec. 14. 1885,

My dear Dr. Gray,

Yours of Nov. 12th, relating to the distribution of my this seasons Coll. of plants was received a week ago, but owing to the extreme labor of finishing up my tree-business accompanying it by a full report of labors, etc, I have been unable to write you until now. I congratulate you my dear Dr. on turning the corner of £5 and that not before your part of Bot. Calif. is all in type. And here before I forget it again, let me thank you for various favors received this season such as the notes on Estivation which you kindly send me from time to time ^{which} and are laid away until the leisure of winter.

They are all duly appreciated if not immediately noted.

Now as to my Coll. I ought not to send it to you and I cannot with the

understanding that it gives you such a deal of work and better so did the other. You have treated me too partially, too generously. To be mistreated by me, not only so but you have heaped unmerited honors upon me and my friends for which our gratitude shall ever flow.

I was tempted to ask about my distribution for various reasons, first of course the selfish one of getting some pay for my season's diligent labor and also on account of items dropped from time to time in our correspondence. It seems no one else is competent to determine with certainty, but still you should not be killed outright.

I resolved to write you and withdraw my proposition at once, but Prof. Case hearing of it came over to see me to-day, and after a long and warm discussion of your manifold good deeds I now propose either of the following:

- 1st To keep my plants until such time as some one rises up competent to assume your arduous labors, assisted only by your instruction without the severe labor of your own head and hands.
- 2nd To keep them until some better time ^{when} in the future, the distribution will not be so inharmonious.

2nd Sheet,

Returning from the East in August I would find the Dr. residing at my home, and ready to jump into my wagon and scour the high valleys to Shasta and Oregon.

Now is this ^{trif} at all desirable, in whole or in part? How can I best subserve the interests of science? Do you prefer that I should assist in exploring Mt. Whittier, or to continue working up the new region southwest of here? I know there are many rare things here, and I mean yet to go for them. All the Surprise valley and northern Kern region appears untrodden. I could go out there in April, as well as to go to the Sierras, and much cheaper. The flora of Southern Cal. is very familiar to you, of course. Dr. Parry would be too late ^(Aug. to Sept.) for this region. and if you wish for its early exploration I am your man.

Right here let me explain what I have forgotten I believe, I did not get your letter in time or I would not have gone to the "Big Trees" - and suffered so much since,

I desire your advice always, and strive to obey it,

The way you explain the history of the Cal. Bot. I see no immediate chance for enjoying a copy, hence I feel like asking about a few of my new plants.

Did you describe any of those before the Am. Acad. this season? and are they all named yet? Not receiving any "Contributions" this year I conclude the usual article from your pen was omitted, on account of the pressure of other work.

- If not any trouble I wish to know the final disposition of
- No 215 *Viola* — n. sp. ^(over-looking Angels Canyon) Cal, from Bolson's val, near Sierra,
 - " 209 *Euphorbia* — " from Pyramid Lake, Washoe Co. ~~Nov~~,
 - " 818 *Astragalus* — " Desert, Humboldt Co, " "
 - " 861 *Eriogonum* — " Near Yadenworth, " "
 - " 885 *Thelidodum* — 2 species, new! Grange val, " "
 - " 868 *Glossopetalon* ^{n. sp.} — " Shores of Pyramid Lake, Plumas Co, "
 - " 882 *Asarum* — " Butterfly val, near Lake, Austin, Plumas Co, "
 - " 1043, *Leskelia* — " Big Meadows, near Lake, Austin, Plumas Co, "
 - " 888 *Trifolium* — " Indian val, Greenville peaks, "
 - " 960 *Pommarina* — " Strong-scented, white flowers, from Leesman's Peak, Tehama Co, 20 miles west of Capetown. "
 - " *Astragalus* *Roberti*? in the Indian valley,

My collection of tree-specimens grew to be quite an elephant on my hands. There are six large cases in all weighing about a ton!

My description of them and the shrubs covered 8 pages letter cap. Alas, I think the excellent sections worth all the rest to exhibit the character, size and uses of trees. Prof. Dr. Hays will be satisfied with them as it was an addition of mine. He only called for "sections of young trees, say 1 foot in diameter by 2 ft. x 3 long."

I added six more parts of each species,

I'm sending no more now as I had to cut the wedge sections down thin to reduce weight, a big job!

Mrs. Ames has been sick, now recovered. Always speaks of you with grateful emotion — also Mrs. Austin. I wish the latter could be honored in the first edition of Bot. Cal. she is so worthy.

Prof. Case and young Larsen cherish your kindness with unspeakable gratitude. The school district here have just built Prof. Case one of the prettiest houses in Cal. He goes in to dedicate soon.

I saved some cotton and seed of our Cottonwoods last spring, and have twigs, and full set of specimens. Do you desire such things in addition to such description as I shall give? I can send with plants,

I am still so distracted that thoughts are incoherent. That last letter from me contained names, it seems, of plants & seeds sent Prof. Sargent. Its loss has caused him a deal of trouble.

The holidays will be on before I can hear from you again. So say dear Dr. I congratulate you again upon your 65th year and wish you as many more as you can enjoy.

Weather delightful again. Gathered Ranunculus repens? in full bloom to-day even in this altitude.

Will enclose the seed of Cottonwood now. It may be of use.

Mostly but very sincerely

Yours &c,

J. B. Emerson,

3rd To let them rest in my herbarium until called for. They will take no injury nor decrease in interest for years. You are tired all out by a tremendous preparation of work on Cal., Bot., and Bot. Dr. A., and next year being Jubilee, every slave should go free.

I will try and get along, but whether I do or don't, is no reason why I should impose upon others. I will first select such plants as ^{Dr.} Vasey has desired, then put the rest into a strong box or boxes and hold myself ready for your decision.

Or again, they might be sent by Express pre-paid to you and you could let them remain in your herbarium until needed.

My next heavy task is to put up shelves & make receptacles for all my plants ^{in order}. I am obliged to do this to get out Dr. Vasey's plants & others. The lumber comes to narrow, and will be quickly dried and put into shingles. Then I shall have what I have wanted so much, - a place for everything.

As I explained to you, Dr. Vasey can give me but \$300. in currency for my trees, and \$100. for ^(Gold) my live plants, bulbs, seeds. I paid out \$200. for

needed assistance. The good Dr. has treated me very liberally which I have tried to deserve, and I do not complain, but as no other parties give me a dollar this year, my receipts barely cover expenses and there is no revenue ahead,

However Dr. Webber & Prof. Case are determined that I shall explore or rest next year just as I please. That introduces another topic upon which I wish your advice,

Dr. Parry as you perhaps know, is resting in ^{Cal.} San Bernardino, this winter preparatory to a thorough exploration of the high sierra next year. He first goes early in March, to the lower Colorado, then works along up the sierra to Oregon,

He has corresponded much with me lately. (as also Dr. Englemann,) and now invites me to accompany him next season. As I have little knowledge of desert plants I ought to avail myself of the company of so eminent an explorer,

Then the region around the culminating peak of Mt. Whitney is the very one you desired me some time, to explore, is it not? That could be finished by June perhaps, when as the country from Go-Semite on to Leaven is familiar to me, I would leave the Dr. there and hasten to the Terminal,



Lemmon, J. G. 1875. "Lemmon, John G. Dec. 14, 1875." *John Gill Lemmon letters to Asa Gray*

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