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About the Institute

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

C. F. Meisner
10' Oct 6
1829

~~Monsieur~~
Monsieur Wallich M. D.
Directeur des Jardins Botaniques de Glessen
Londres.

Basil, Switzerland the 10th. May
Rec & answer to 13th Nov
1829

Sir

On presenting to you my essay on the genus *Polygonum* which I would wish you to accept with indulgence, I have at once two different purposes, which, I hope, will make it superfluous to apologize for my intruding upon you. The one of them is that of doing my duty towards a Botanist so highly deserving the thanks of every admirer of the science, for having, with so much activity, with such talent, contributed to forward it, and ⁱⁿ whose numerous discoveries I am particularly interested by the number of new & curious species of *Polygonum* he has gathered in the rich Nepal. The other of my purposes is, to make you acquainted - if ever my very imperfect dissertation be capable of doing so - of those species of *Polygonum* from Nepal which I took up, three years ago, in my prothymus, partly upon the examination of the specimen with which you have enriched Mr Le Coudré's herbarium, and partly upon the authority of Mr Don in his *Prod. flor. Nepal*. As you are, at present, engaged with the examination & arrangement of the precious stock you brought from the East Indies, it may perhaps be useful to you to consult

my memoir, however weak it be; - were it only to avoid the de-
basing the same plant under different names and as a new species -
an inconvenience to which Botanists are so frequently obnoxious,
when writing on the same subject without knowing from each
other what has already been done, and which has already
brought such an unhappy confusion into the Synonymia of plants.
Perhaps I have myself stepped, though, indeed, entirely against
custom to my endeavor, into the same fault, in account of
some *Polygona* from Nepal, which I have, as they did not agree
with any of Mr. Sonch. names rather insufficient diagnoses,
proposed as new, but - would it be so - then I should be very
glad to receive better information from any competent judge,
and readily correct my errors. As I consider my memoir only
- what its title-page intimates - as a prodomus of a more de-
tailed & complete Monography, not only of the genus *Polygonum*,
but of the whole Order of *Polygonae*, which I intend to publish ere
long, and for which I have already been favoured with recom-
mendations by Mr. DeCandolle & other Botanists, I venture to beg
you, if it be not too presumptuous, to assist me with specimens of the
different species of *Polygonae*, as far as your treasures can supply them
as duplicates. I need not assure you how much your kind assistance
would make me happy & thankful, nor how readily I should

exert my power to render you any service you would do me the
favour to ask from me. If, for instance, Alpine Plants could
be of service to you, it would be a very great pleasure to me to send
you of them what you would happen to ask.

When I had, two months ago, the pleasure of Mr Robert
Haydon's visit, he told me of a more interesting species of Poly-
gonum, described in Mr Don's prod. fl. Nepal. as a new species of
Rumex - may I ask, whether you could procure me this plant
to sell, if course, be of greatest value - if this
your kindness will perhaps afford me, more
as much as possible, after Mr Don's proposition, and accompanied
with notes & descriptions of your own. If you wish to publish
your new species yourself in your very estimable Flora Indica,
which, I understand, you are about to continue, I shall, cer-
tainly, not presume to interfere with your right of their first
publication, but, on the contrary, communicate to you, at your
request, my own observations on these plants.

Have the goodness, Sir, to excuse this intrusive letter
and its still less modest content, and believe me

your most obedient & humble servant
C. F. Meisner. Med. Dr. & Prof. at the
University of Biele, Switzerland.