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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.

more proper to defer my answer until then in order to be then able to announce you at once
their receipt. However, as the last month passed away, and nothing was yet come, of which I
attributed the cause, either to your want of leisure for preparing the ^{packet}, or to its having been sent
by some indirect mode of conveyance, which might have lengthened or interrupted its voyage,
I could, at last, wait no longer, and began my letter, which I was just going to send off, when
yours of the 2^d P^{ost} reached me. Though now in this you give me notice that you have, on
the 2^d inst., sent my packet to Mr. Hunsman in London (I suppose on purpose of its being
forwarded to Bate?) so that I may ^{probably} receive it in about three or four weeks hence. I
shall not, however, now can, defer till then with an answer, and therefore come now to ask
humbly your pardon for its long delay, and, on the same line, to thank you most
heartily for your second letter which is full of new proofs of your kindness. Give you my thanks
also for the advice you gave me in both letters, that I should not fail, in a direct way, my thanks
to the most benevolent L. & P. Company; I shall certainly do it, as soon as the collection will be in my power,
even in my answer to the letter of the Fairmount, which I shall, as you will wish to be the way
of sending to you. In expressing my thanks to these great benefactors & patrons of our Science, I do not
only obey your particular recommendation, so I follow the natural impulse of my own feeling, long
ago gratefully acknowledged how many & important benefits Liberty owes the Company, and
how much she deserves the esteem and gratitude of every admirer of that Science. Among now my
self become, by your kind intercession, an object of their liberality, I doubly feel the duty, and gladly
take the opportunity, of showing how sensible I am of the high favour they shower me with.

I am not mistaken, I must have informed you already in my former letter that it is my in-
tention to publish a ^{new edn.} Monography of the whole Order of Polygonaceae. M^r. DeCandolle and other Botanists
have already supplied me with valuable materials, and besides that, the herbaria of C. Becklin
& Luchner (preserved in the Botanical Museum of our University) and much more that of
Lamarck (now, as you know, the property of my friend Roemer) open to me no indifferent sources
of researches & consultations. Still these means scarcely approach those which you, dear Sir,
have the goodness to afford me, and which rise considerably higher in value by the specimens
the different other herbaria you kindly joined to your own plants. I need not tell you that the spe-
cimens in Dr. Roxburgh's collections, as well as his life descriptions, together with Dr. Thunberg's (as
your own notes, which all you offer me for the future, will be received with great satisfaction
and thanks, as they contain no doubt, very important materials. In short, I see you have
and will employ the means ~~of~~ to make me able to publish the most complete now possible account
of the Indian Polygonaceae, and so I may go at work with double pleasure & hope of success.
I beg you to be assured that every specimen which you request to be returned to you shall be
most conscientiously so, as soon as possible, and sent back as soon as possible; that you would entrust me
with such unique specimens, I duly consider as a principal mark of your stimulated kindness for
which I offer you in particular my best thanks. - I wish, I could get the Polygonaceae of other
parts of the Globe as complete as those of the East Indies, - having only a very few of the American,

not a single one of the *New Holland* species. Do you think, Mr. Brown, would be ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~send~~ ^{send} me, for some time, his *Discours* published in the *Revue Flor. Nov. Holl.*, which I should return together with those of your collections of which you cannot dispose in the other way? You would oblige me very much if you would give me your advice concerning this and tell me, to whom of the English Botanists I might apply for the above purpose with some likely hope of success.

Your very interesting letter of the 13th Novr. made me acquainted with the distribution of the other families of your collections amongst Mr. Brown, Lindley, Hooker & Graville, Dr. Haem, Graham, Standolle &c. who will undertake their examination & publication, but you did not mention whether these Botanists will publish the results of their disquisitions in the *Flora Indica*, or separately, & as each of them chooses best? If the former be the case, I should be proud and happy to follow, with you leave, their example, by contributing my share to that immortal work, but then I should request to know the plan of the work, whether it follows any systematic order or not, and whether it is published Order by Order, or Linnaean Class by Class? Having not yet been so happy as to see any part of it, I am completely ignorant of these points. If it could be agreeable to you, and not against the plan of the work, I would be happy to contribute to it, in Latin, English, or French, language, quite as you would require it, a Mss. Monography of the Indian Polygonae, accompanied with drawings of the several species. Though I must avow myself a very indifferent draftsman, yet I should like to make the drawings myself, at least those of the analytical parts of the plants, which, I believe, will be represented with more accuracy by a Botanist, than by ~~an~~ ^{man} artist ignorant of their signification. If this proposal could prove acceptable to you or to the honourable E. & S. Company, under whose auspices, I understand, ~~the~~ ^{they} it is publishing, I should only beg of you, to let me know, in about how much time you would request ~~my~~ to have my Mss. sent over. Lastly I would ask you, whether you intend to continue Dr. Hooker's *Flora Indica*, of which I have seen two volumes (which is, I believe, all that has been published?)—extending until the 5th or 6th Class, indeed, of Linnaeus. In the affirmative case I beg you to dispose entirely of me as a ready labourer. For either of these two works mentioned, I should be glad to undertake, along with the Polygonae, or hereafter, any other small family (— as for instance Lauraceae, Thymelaeae, Malvaceae, Ananthaceae) if they are not engaged by other Botanists. The small Order Begoniaceae has, I believe, no representatives in Asia, except *B. obliqua* (Zunberg, in Japan) else I should particularly desire to have them, as I attach to that curious tribe the greatest interest, chiefly on account of its remarkable affinity to the Polygonae. — But I think, I shall never have done with writing, & I must trouble you,