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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.

from Gayr

B. I. SS. Angora
Bay of Bengal
16th March 1922

Dear Prain,

Having escaped yesterday from the time wasting and distracting subtleties of office work as it now is in this reformed land, I am enjoying a welcome freedom from it all and an opportunity of acknowledging your letter of the 26th December.

It is clear from the above papers that people in England generally speaking have not even yet grasped actual conditions in India. The state of affairs is very bad indeed and as far as I can judge little short

of a miracle now can prevent a series of disturbances all over the country. In fact they are already in

evidence in some of the provinces. In Bihar and Orissa - as the acting Governor Le Mesurier, whom you will recollect as Magistrate of Hoarah in Mysore & Duke, has plainly stated, there is practically a minime disregard of law, and its replacement by mob rule.

The isolated European communities are in constant danger of assault, and the police force quite inadequate to afford them protection. In the Punjab a movement called the "Akali" movement has started.

Its aim is the raising of regular rebel forces and no
secret is made about it. Bands of them are being
drilled, and enrolment is going on as if for an army.
There have been several cases of secret insubordination
amongst the Sepoys, in one regiment a lot of the
men appearing on parade in black caps. This regiment
has been sent elsewhere, but this expedient is likely
to cause only greater dissatisfaction as the families of
these men are then entirely at the mercy of the non-cooperators
who hang with them cruelly.

Assam according to all accounts is also in a state little short
of open rebellion. The fall of the fear who has done so much
to bring all this about, and the arrest of Gandhi may tend
ultimately to improve matters, but I fear they will get worse
before they can become better.

The services are pretty hopeless. They are all taking
the convenience clause in the conditions as regards retiring
on proportional pension very badly, and quite rightly too.

There is no convenience clause on the Government side, and
it is unfair to impose one on the servants side.

The limitation of choice until 1924 is an iniquitous
provision, for judging from what conditions are like
and how they are developing in 1923, there is no hope

of any improvement after 1924, so far as European officers are concerned. Rather the reverse. Yet this previous report says that if an officer does not choose to retire on preferential pension before 1924, after that year, he will be entitled to no pension if he finds he cannot continue in Government service, and retires therefrom. Europeans are pouring in from all the services regarding these points, and service associations are being formed in each Province to fight for their rights. Apart altogether from the question of preferential pensions, there is a general fear of repudiation of all pensions a few years hence if the present political trend is allowed to continue. This may seem to folks at home, who are being kept in ignorance of the real state of affairs out here, an absurd fear; but we out here do not think so. It is not enough to have become ~~the~~ a topic in the Imperial Legislative Assembly. Anyhow streams show how the wind is blowing. During this last session of the Binque Legislative Council - which is overwhelmingly composed of Bahis - a resolution was brought forward that the next astronomers in pay - that were long overdue - should be cut down by half.

This resolution was lost only by 13 votes! Another proposal was that Transitory allowances hereafter should be only on a second class basis.

The U. S. Club gave a farewell dinner to Lord Ronaldsday the other week. He made a straight-forward speech - which unfortunately could not be reported - and the general impression was anything but optimistic. As regards repatriation of persons all he could say was that he did not believe the British Parliament would so far stiffen its traditions as to allow such a thing to occur.

In these days this is not much of a security, for after all a handful of opponents of the press policies have no voting power, and that almost seems to count. You will understand now how I am anxious to get out of this country and get a job at home, no matter what it is, so long as I am not to depend entirely on a pension, which may cover some years hence. It is to be hoped of course that things will not come to such a pass as repatriation but the possibility has to be faced. Whether happens about Edinburgh I shall apply for long leave - I am due 28 months - presently

& retirement.

The financial condition of the country is the worst in the history of British Rule. The Munro Finance Commission that went out in 1920 to form a scheme of distributing the revenues was rash enough to state that a deficit in its opinion was unthinkable, and in regard to Madras in particular, the only difficulty the Commission would see was how Madras was to achieve her huge surpluses. The wisdom of the wise has indeed turned to foolishness, for all the Governments are bankrupt, Madras being one of the worst! Although one would have thought that the fall of the rupee in 1920 would have alarmed the Govt. of India, yet for the revenue for 1921-22 they actually estimated on the basis of an average rate of $1/8^d$ for the rupee. Of course the uncoined coin - except for a week or two when it reached $1/5^d$ - has been below $1/6^d$ and still is. As if the financial state of the country were not bad enough, a politically engineered strike has been paralyzing the E.I. R. for a month and a half now, and the Govt. of India does, what it is now an expert in doing, nothing.

One effect of the hopeless financial outlook is that

all hope of expansion of any scientific department or work has gone for an indefinite period. On the contrary, there is to be a drastic cutting down of scientific departments, and I have been warned to prepare myself for a cutting down of the Botanical Survey, although how one can cut down a Dept. that scarcely exists is not very clear.

Inducement of the natives is going on in fact as far as possible, and by all means say I for as conditions are developing I think it little short of criminal to induce Europeans to come out into Government service. Certainly our European gardeners should be induced to come out, unless it is explained to them very clearly indeed the risks they are running.

The agreement then made with the Sec. of State is not now with the paper it is written, as there is no longer a European Gardeners Service, there are only Provincial Gardeners Services. The agreement with the Sec. of State is not now accepted by the A. G. B. as authority for pay, and the "appointment" has to be "sanctioned" by the local Government before they can draw pay. Further the pay of Gardeners is "retard", that is, unless the

Bahm Parliament of Bengal votes the money, they may find themselves strangled. This is no imaginary contingency. The thing has already happened, although not in a Garden's case. The Government of Bengal appointed a Major Storey, as Director of Publicity, to counteract the lying and malignant propaganda of the socialists. He took up his duties, and then the Bengal Legislative Council refused to vote his pay, and the poor man was cast adrift. He is dead since.

Apart from this the looking now is to dispense with European Gardeners altogether. The assistant-director of the Eden and other Calcutta Gardens is now an Indian, and I fancy the next assistant-director of the Botanic will also become, as also the director of the Herbarium.

Before any man comes now out to India, he should if possible at all consult someone who is acquainted with present conditions. The opinion of a man who has been out of India for more than three years is valueless, so great is the change in so short a time.

Even for the Amcham Plantation in Burma, I have
 been told that every effort should be made to
 train Indians for the posts of Superintendents
 and Assistant Dits. This in Burma of all places
 where Indians are loathed and despised. The
 suggestion of course emanated from a Madras
 Imperial Commission, who have never been in Burma.

Of course all these developments are interesting to
 watch, but I have paid too big a price for
 the experience and I want no more of it. So if
 I do not get the Edinburgh appointment on one of
 them if it is to be split into two, I should be
 glad to try for anything else that may be
 going, before it is too late and I am too old.

So if you hear of anything, I would be grateful
 for the information. I have inflicted a long
 screed on you, but in view of the fact that you
 will still continue to consult regarding Indian
 conditions, I think it as well to let you have
 my ideas. They may not of course be sound,
 they may be unduly pessimistic, but if they
 are, then at least there are many pessimists

& keep me company. Letters in a less dark
 tint from others may help you & arrive
 at a more concluded judgment than I fear
 is possible for men and many more like me at
 present.

In a few more days the mighty frost will
 for a little time shelter me, our snow, and
 after the exhausting struggle ~~with~~ already
 spent & it will be a haven of rest
 and peace.

You now will be now be free of office
 harness, and not I suppose entirely sorry for it.

My wife tells me that Miss Thomson's condition
 has improved to some extent. By the time this
 reaches you no doubt you will have settled in
 your place at Putney, with all the way of
 sitting behind you. I hope Lady Prinn and
 you are well.

With kindest regards to both.

Yours and
 A. 1922

TELEGRAMS
TRURO.

LANILEY,
N^o TRURO.

23. X. 1923

Dear Prain For your fine philosophic
epistle, the good wishes therein and
the Lucasian aid to Tapleyism
accompanying it, my best thanks.
One certainly needs some philosophy of
the Stoic school in these days, when
uncertainty is the only thing one can
be certain of.
As frogs are said to get accustomed to being
skinned - although I am rather sceptical
of this statement having ever been proved
by the aforesaid amphibia - so we may
get used to worry much about our
financial flying. Something worse

FAMILY
IN TRURO

may yet prove to distract our
attention, and in any case Hope has
a habit of triumphing over experience.
It will be interesting to see what
mess will develop next year.

Having now had about a year's
vegetables, I feel much more like
fit, and my wife's health is decidedly
better since she has been undergoing a
course of vaccine treatment for her bandy
trouble.

My wife joins me in sending our best
wishes for Lady Home and yourself.

Yours ever
S. H. Gage

from Gayr

recd
9.5.24

TELEGRAMS
TRURO.

LANILEY,
N^o TRURO.

3rd May, 1924.

My dear Brian, my best thanks to you
for your two letters of the 25th and 29th
April, and for the trouble you have so
kindly given yourself on my behalf.
after thinking over the situation, I have
decided to apply for the post advertised.
It would of course be an exaggeration to
describe the salary offered as fabulous. Still
it would about compensate for the drop in
my income when next year I change over
from half average pay to pension. The appoint-
ment also would give me the opportunity
of escaping from this
confined county of Cornwall and its people,
for which and for whom I find great difficulty

JAMILEY
OF TRENO
in developing my living. Here I am
as if on a desert island, and spend or mispend
my days in trying to keep this particular
place from falling into greater disaffection
than it already is. I seldom meet anyone with
similar intellectual or other interests, and the
life of a combinal errand boy and "era bon"
I find irritatingly futile. Rust is accumulating
fast upon me. In the chance of abrasion with
a moderate amount of oil, appeals to me, and
so my name goes before the olympians.

As in your first letter you say that you
had already mentioned my name, I have
given you as one of the two Referees, & named
in the form of application, so I again make
a demand on your benevolence.

to Prain 3-V-1924 (3)

TELEGRAMS
TRURO.

LANILEY,
N^o TRURO.

I have mentioned about as the other
refers, as it was for that let me know
about the probability of the post being
vacant.

we are coming up to London in June,
whether happens, and hope to meet there
Meanwhile our kindest regards to
Lady Prain and yourself.

Yours ever
S. H. Gage

TELEGRAMS
TRURO.

LANILEY,
N^o TRURO.

24th April 1884

My dear Sir,
I have heard that the
General Secretaryship of the Linnean Society
is likely to be vacant ere long.
If this be correct, do you think it worth
any while, I mean in the way of having
any chance of the appointment, applying for
the post when it does become vacant.
I presume there is a moderate salary
attached to the post, but how much I know
not.
I have had more than enough of this place,
where one leads an isolated and rather
solitary existence, and would be glad to get out
of it. Any how any advice you may have

LAMILEY,
NO. 1000

a minute & give me, will be received
with thanks.

I trust Lady Owen and yourself are
well. With kindest regards to both,

Yours ever
J. H. Gage