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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.

classification & description of the American species of Characeae; by B. S. Halsted.

The paper is chiefly relating to the American Characeae appeared in the Journal in 1873, viz: the "Brief notes of the Charae of North America," Prof. Wm. Braun, communicated by Dr Engelmann. Two years later a notice of American Charae appeared in a note to *Plantae Lindheimerianae*, published in the Boston Journal of Natural History. Since that date we have only scattered references to Charae in local lists & reports, of different expeditions, until within the last few years when the attention of botanists has been more frequently turned to the species of the small but interesting order. The task of determining native species will be much facilitated by two books which have recently appeared. One by Dr. J. J. Abbot entitled *Characeae Americanae*, an illustrated work of which two parts have appeared, has already been noticed in this Journal. The other, originally presented as a graduating thesis at Harvard University in May 1878, by B. S. Halsted, is now published in part in the proceedings of the Boston Society of Natural History. There is a short introduction, giving a general account of the structure of the order, followed by detailed descriptions of the 13 species known to the writer from an examination of the Herbaria at Cambridge and a number of private collections. of the species 8, belong to *Stettin*, 1. to *Polyphello*, and 9. to *Chara*. one new species *C. Robinsonii* is described. among the more interesting species, we may mention *C. gelatinosa* found by Kennel in the Baiter Canal & the beautiful *C. Gymnopus*, var. *elyans*, which was first found & called in Essex County, Massachusetts, where it has recently been rediscovered by Mr. Robinson; & it is now known in other localities as a variety. The paper shows indications of careful study, & there is only one portion which we would criticize.

The group of the *Gymnopus* in which *C. Gymnopus* & *C. Robinsonii* should be compared with *C. Polyphello* var. *Michauxii*, Braun, which as it seems to me, may have been compared with what Mr. Halsted calls *C. Michauxii* & the type of *C. Gymnopus*.

It should also be compared with *C. Sejuncta*, Braun, a species certainly approaching *C. Robinsonii*.

The literature of the old *C. Michauxii* & *C. Sejuncta* is very obscure, & these two species figure unpleasantly in the footnotes of inaccessible articles, but we hope to have eventually from Mr. Halsted a further elucidation of the *Gymnopus*.
W. G. F.