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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.

September 24, 1924.
Urbana, Illinois.

Sir David Prain,
12 Heathview Garden
Putney Heath, London,
England.

Dear Prain:

Thank you for letting me know that my poor little effort at expressing my very great esteem for the de Candollas stirred some pleasant memories of your own. Before I had seen it I had a long letter from a man, now living in California, who had worked with A.D.C. on Smilax in the seventies and for whom the sketch did the same. To do such a thing is rather presumptuous - even at my point in life; but General de Candolle and Madame Augustin did me the kindness to look the manuscript over, so that I feel that no serious mistakes have crept in.

I wish that I might have written of Madame Casimir and of Madame Augustin, - the earlier generations of course I never knew. The former took more care than I did myself to keep me from suffering from cold floors one winter when I worked in the Com. (San Pierre: and Madame Augustin is a perfectly superb creature as you know. She, too, seems to feel that I got the perspective of the sketch about right, - so it is worth having done.

You tell me nothing of your work but I suppose that you are still enjoying the relaxation of hard new tasks into which you had retired just before we were in England last. I hope that you and Lady Prain are keeping well, and I am confident that you are of a temperament to enjoy the good gifts of today even though you cannot forget the joys of yesterday.

I still am in the harness - but of course am long over-ripe. Some day we shall develop a service-limit system here! Meantime, as I am somewhat younger than when I came here, eleven years ago, I do - and thoroughly enjoy - the work of a man twenty years my junior.

Cordially yours, and with our warmest greetings to
Lady Prain.

Wm. Trelease,