



Kew

Nov 26 1911

Dear Sir,

I am unable to thank you sufficiently for the great kindness and for the infinite trouble you have taken over the search for the types of Chrozophora Brocchia, Vis. and Croton obliquifolius, Vis. It is indeed sad to think that these are no longer available. It is, however, a most fortunate circumstance that De Visiani has provided us with figures of his two species and I shall hope to make it clear to which of the known forms of Chrozophora these figures really correspond. In the case of Croton obliquifolius this is comparatively easy but in the case of Chrozophora Brocchia which is a member of an exceedingly variable and much composed group the problem is not so simple.

I do not recollect to have ever had so much difficulty with a small and at



first sight so simple a genus, and the loss of Professor De Visiani's types is not the only instance in the genus.

The younger Burmann figured two species in his Flora Indica and these figures have been cited in the past in a bewilderingly confusing manner. They were both figured from specimens collected by Garcin and given by him to Burmann. Yet although Burmann's herbarium was acquired by De Lessert and though Dr Niquet has kindly lent me the De Lessert collection of Chrozophora and though that collection contains a considerable number of Burmann's specimens there is no trace of the two that were needed to settle the doubts as to the identity of Garcin's plants.

There is an even more vexing case in connection with the genus Lepidocroton

Presl which Baillon has reduced to Caperomia
and Benthams has reduced to Chrozophora.

Presl founded this genus at the same
time that he established the species
Caperomia serrata. But Professor Junken
Beck and Dr Pascher, who have kindly
searched in Presl's Herb. propr. at Prag
on my behalf have been defeated in
their search. They have found, and have
sent me Presl's type of Caperomia
serrata written up by himself. But
there is no trace at Prag or anywhere
else of the specimen upon which Presl
founded his genus Lepidocroton!

All that we can hope for is that
the workers of our day are more
mindful of the possible difficulties
of their successors that Burmann
and De Visiani and Presl have
succeeded in being! There are many
men whose failure to preserve their
own types would not have astonished

one. But these three men were all
so careful and so exact that one
is left in astonishment and in sorrow.

Again thanking you for your great
kindness and with very warm regards

Believe me to be

Yours sincerely,

D. Prain

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