

Scho lg.

Feb. 26. 1815

Sir!

I avail myself of the earliest opportunity that has offered me. I had the pleasure of receiving your letter from Mr. Shaker...

I beg leave in the first place to assure you that I shall be most happy at all times in endeavouring to procure information on such Botanical subjects as may interest you: I have at the same time to regret that I can add so very little to what you already know of Mauritia Apolloniensis. Of the specimen in the London Herbarium I know nothing; but a request addressed by Sir Joseph Banks to Sir James Smith has procured the enclosed fragment, & Sir James states to be "one of the 4 or 5 miserable ^{crusts} of the only specimen" in the collection. ~~It~~ Having been once preserved in spirits is so much changed and so extremely brittle that it may possibly be reduced to a powder before it reaches you. And even if this should not

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happen to it is but little calculated to give
any information whatever. The badness however
of the specimen will serve at least to confirm you
in your intention of adopting for your Morichi
the Linnæan name Mauritia as no confusion
can result from it even if they should be different
the Linnæan genus being connected with no specific
knowledge whatever. Your conjecture respecting
the origin of Linnæus's name for the genus appears
to me extremely probable the colonial name
Mauritii-Boom with which Linnæus ^{is perhaps the source} had the specimen
from Surinam being most likely compounded of the
native Morichi or some very similar sound & the
Dutch Boom. No additional information however
was to be obtained on this subject from the Linnæan
manuscripts. Your description of the male
flowers of Morichi agrees very well with that of
Mauritia unless as you have no doubt remarked
in the single circumstance of your plant having
Hammi instead which ~~is~~ is certainly rather an
unusual anomaly in the male of a flowering plant.
You are perhaps not aware of there being a
figure of the fruit of a Palm from Guyana
in Cat. Exot. p. 25. which is all probably is
that of Bachi & consequently of your Morichi.

I rejoice to learn both from your letter & more recently still from the Prospectus of the work, that your Nova Genera et species Plant. is likely so soon to appear. I am very anxious to see the first part in particular as containing two orders of plants Gramineae & Ardisceae to which I have paid some attention. With respect to the former of which your letter lets me to expect pictorial improvements in arrangement.

It is most gratifying to me to have obtained for my botanical essays your approbation for I think of several of the most eminent botanists of France and especially to have received so distinguished an honour as that w^{ch} I learn the Acad^{my} have done me in electing me a corresponding member. If this however it is perhaps proper to observe that I have received no official intimation.

It was with great pleasure that I learned that my excellent friend Mr Hooker was in possession of your valuable Cryptogamic collection in the publication of which I have no doubt he will exhibit his usual accuracy & give you consequently complete satisfaction. Yours

2. There are several points connected with these
botanical enquiries in which I am now engaged
in which I should be glad to have your assistance
but for this I must apply to you at a future
opportunity. The very little time left for availing
myself of the present, permitting me only to
beg you will excuse this very hasty letter
and to believe that I am Sir

With the greatest respect
and regard

Your most obt^d serv^t
R Brown

Baron Humboldt