

My W^r Gray 59

Dear Brnly Kent

+

My dear Gray

I have to thank you for 2 or 3 little notes.

The last I was glad to receive on Lyle,
& wish told him, when I write, what you

say on species - portion. I am pleased at
it; but cannot quite agree. You speak

of Lyle as a Judge; now what I
complain of is that he declines to be
Judge. It put me into despair, when

I see such men as Lyle & you
incapable (as you think) of deciding: I have
sometimes almost wished that Lyle had
pronounced against me. When I say "me";

I mean only change of species & descent.

That seems to me the turning point.

I am only, of course, I care much about

Natural Selection; but this seems to me wholly
unimportant compared to question of function
or modification. - Like a huge ass I
have written two stupid letters to Attenborough;
the letter to show effect. - How clever
& original & candid your remarks
about Language & Design. -
Your little hypothesis on length of Divergence of
bees in a species has almost driven
me mad. My 2^d Bg Group is a good
matter of course, & when I showed him the
function, he said to find a convincing
series; & I see them perfectly, by
as all could end on point. I have
been tracing all the real angles & would
angles on a spire, & I see the angles
which do not occur in nature, are just



as symmetrical in position as to real angles.
If you wish to save me from a miserable
death, do tell me by ^{angles of} $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{2}{3}$ $\frac{3}{5}$ & so on series
occurs, & no other angles. - It is enough
to make the greatest men mad. -
Did you & some mathematician perhaps know
more on subject; Hobbes says you did. Where
is it? I have been visiting for a fortnight
houses of relation to try to get a little better
from my youngest Bg (the Natural Selection House)
& self; with very poor success. This has led
me to muddle of brains over the angles
of beehives. - Do you know of any plant in
which angle is fluctuating & variable?
I often keep science; for when tracing I
forget of hiving & do in other time
and I am patient for two successive hours. -
Remembering your statement I have been

looking at *Platanus lanceolata* - it is a
^{which is rather rare}
Female Dichogamy, (i.e. perfect mature & perfect
long before anthers of same flower mature)
; fertilised by the wind; and a few plants
have imperfect anthers, containing little
pollen & a part of this imperfect -
^{amygdaloides}
Euphorbia I find, is also a female Dichogamy
monocotyledonous plant, & which is diocious in
function at any one period. But as I
bother you with these trifling facts, I know
not what else I have nothing to do, & writing
to you makes me forget of our old self -
farewell of kind & good friend. If you can
send me one on De Coudelle.
Farewell - your most truly
C. Darwin



Darwin, Charles. 1863. "Darwin, Charles May 11, 1863." *Charles Darwin letters to Asa Gray*

View This Item Online: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/225921>

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/254368>

Holding Institution

Harvard University Botany Libraries

Sponsored by

Arcadia 19th Century Collections Digitization/Harvard Library

Copyright & Reuse

Copyright Status: Public domain. The Library considers that this work is no longer under copyright protection

This document was created from content at the **Biodiversity Heritage Library**, the world's largest open access digital library for biodiversity literature and archives. Visit BHL at <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org>.