

Aug 4th From Bony Kent

My dear Gray. Thanks for two letters of
 July 7th & 21st, full of interest to me.

I am heartily glad to hear that
 you are so thoroughly refreshed & your
 short holiday; for you seemed to be almost
 worn out & weak. It is capital news about
 your legacy: I only wish it was five or
 ten times as much, & then you could
 give up all your time to new work.
 How goodnatured you are to my little man
 about stamps: those enclosed in two last
 letters were in effable treasures. Many
 thanks for *Specularia*; ah, good Heaven, I
 fancied it was a specimen to show me the
 flowers & I put it in warm, not boiling,
 water: I then discovered my mistake &
 hope I have not killed the seeds. Was not
 that a misfortune? — With your friendly

letter came a most obliging & kind note
from Mr. Brace; if you have any communication
with him, pray thank him; I will
not write, as I had previously written
to thank him for his kind present of
his book. What a pleasant took his way on
Hungary. — ^{to you} After I had written ^{to you} ~~to you~~
Hess' lecture of sudden changes, I suspected
what you would say: what, I think, ought
to give you the secret "cold chill" is the
case of Inter, Fartail-figures &c: were
not their variations accidental as far as
the purpose man has put them to? Still
I said he could grapple with this, but I
suspect he found it would be most prudent
to shirk the question. In my present book
I have been comparing variation to the shapes
of stones fallen from a cliff, & not at all
artificial selection ^{to} the architect; but

I cannot at all work a metaphor like you do. —
That seems a very pretty case of the orchid with
prominence on labellum. — I have lots of
Holly-horses at present, particularly of pale
flowers & especially of "Homorphic" seedlings,
which I suspect will throw much theoretical
light on Hybrids. — I have worked Lytium
like a Trojan & have just finished 134
copies, no slight labour; but the case seems
to me worth any labour, for I declare
I think it about to attract some of the best
= Quinta men noticed. — a trifling marriage
between these homophytes. — I am so
glad your heros are, after a sick infancy
are growing splendidly! But my present
chief Holly-horn I owe to you, viz
Lendia; their virility is beautiful, as
beautiful in all its modifications as
anything in orchids. About the spontaneous

movement (independent of tendrils) of the tendrils &
upper internodes. I am rather taken
aback & your saying "is not it not
well known?" I can find nothing in
any book which I have: neither Hooker
nor Oliver knew anything of these movements.
The spontaneous movements of the tendrils
is independent of the movement of the
movement of the upper internodes, but both work har-
moniously together in sweeping a circle
for the tendrils to grasp a stick. So with
all climbing plants (without tendrils) as
yet examined, the upper internodes go
on night & day sweeping a circle in
one fixed direction. It is surprising
to watch the apogee with short 18
long, beyond the supporting stick, steadily
reaching for something to climb up.
When the shoot meets a stick, the motion

at that point is asserted, but ⁱⁿ the upper ^{part} is continued,
so that the climbing of all plants get examined
is the simple result of the spontaneous circulatory
movement of the upper internodes. - Pray tell me
whether anything has been published on this subject:
I hate publishing what is old; but I shall
hardly regret my work, if it is old, as it has
much amused me. - If I do publish my paper, it
will be too long to send you; for I am (or
shall) examine very many plants. -

I am very glad you are going to review Bates' paper
& I must say I enjoy anything which tells of going.
He seems to grow brighter with increasing years; I
once saw him years ago, & was charmed with him.
Depend on it, you are unjust as to merits
of my beloved Drosophila: it is a wonderful
plant, or rather a most sagacious animal.
I will stick up for Drosophila to the day of my
death. Heaven knows better I shall ever
publish my pile of experiments on it -
How profoundly interesting American news is - I deduce
almost more 10 news to us than Chinese

new. — Do not hate you & England too much.
Alas! He is the mother of like children all
over the world. I declare no man could
have tried to wish more sincerely for the

death that I have done. — My reason tells
me that perhaps it would be best, — of
course best if it would end slavery,

but I cannot pump up enthusiasm.

The boasting of your newspapers & little

men, & the abuse of England, and the
threats of to free colored populations, and to
not freeing Maryland slaves stops all my
enthusiasm. If all the States were like New

England the case would be different. —

I find a man cannot hope for intervention.
You will think me a wretched outcast.

Farewell. I do not hate you much.

White Devils to let Irish men forced
themselves in New York. If you compare to South
you will know on Ireland fastened to your

tail. — Good night & Farewell
C. Darwin

May 83



Darwin, Charles. 1863. "Darwin, Charles Aug. 4, 1863." *Charles Darwin letters to Asa Gray*

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