

My dear Gray

From Emily Kent

May 28

Your kindness with me makes you glad to hear
 that I am nearly as well as I have been
 of late years, though a good deal weaker.
 I have been slowly writing a paper on
 Lichens, & this has inclined me for
 the ^{last} ^{time} ^{of} ^{writing} ^{work}. It has been so pleasant
 doing a little after 8 months inaction.
 Speaking of Lichens reminds me to say the good
 news as are looking very healthy, & Mitchell
 undoubtedly so. Some time ago I received Dr.
 Wright's letter about Orchids: if you write to
 him, beg him to note what attracts insects
 to Begonias? Do they guard a particular
 petals? Also, what I can help, what attracts
 them to Melastomas? Don't Dr. Anger of
 Trinidad, who promised to share, is dead.

Wherever by Lithium paper is printed I wish of
course send you a copy, & I shall like
to hear rather you think it as curious
a case as I do. — I have got another
new sub-class of *Limnospira* plants. —

An Irish nobleman on his deathbed declared
that he could conscientiously say that he
had never thought life denied himself
any pleasure; & I can conscientiously
say that I have never scrupled to
tell you. — So here goes. — Here you
travelled south, & can you tell me,
whether the trees, which *Bignonia*
cappadocata climbs, are covered with
moss, or filamentous lichen or *Pilleolaria*?
I ask because its tendrils show a

simple stick, to which ^{much} simple rough bark, but
delight in work or mof. The others in
various manner, by making little knots at
end of each joint, like the *Almopolis*;
then a thick stick to bundle of lichen, then
filices grow between them & then unite, so
the the ^{fibres of work} ~~lower~~ ^{by} being embedded
in middle: By the way I will enclose
some specimens & if you think it worth
while you can put them under the
simple microscope. It is remarkable how
readily adapted the tendrils are; then
of *Securocarpus* scales so at like a
stick, with here nothing to say to
work; but give them a bundle of
cylinders of grass or bundle of bristles & they
seize them well. —

I have been reading with great interest von Mohl's paper
in Bot. Zeitung on imperfect self-fertile flowers. He
states you that perfect flowers of *Vernonia* are
quite sterile - How is this known, for is it not a
Madagascar plant? I presume you know that wild
plants of *Amphicarpus* are generally sterile, but
I sh. like to have seed to ascertain whether
this plant is sterile when fertilized. - What a
curious androgen case is that of *Leersia*: I
have just got plants of this grass. - I have
remembered, if you ever come across it, seed of the
Compositae *perfoliata*. - Lately (God forgive me)
can you tell me whether any of your Hollies are
in state of *Thymus* viz 1000 plants hermaphrodite
& 1000 Females: I have a dimorphic case
which, I think, will show how this state
of *Thymus* arises. - Do you see the Reader:
it is the best ^{newspaper} ~~periodical~~ for science ever published
in England: there was lately a capital article in
it, by Wallace. He has, also, published lately in the

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Anthropological Review a short, but most suggestive article
on the Natural Selection of Man. - When indicated,
do write & tell me a little about yourself & what
you are doing. As to museum for your Herbarium
settled? I hope sincerely that my former fellow-sufferer
Mr. Gray is quite well again. - What other
misery the stomach causes! - As for public news
I am much ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ ^{sorrow}, for I gave up for months
hearing to newspapers, as I find it more fatiguing
than words. I have ~~be~~ heard during late 9
months an astounding number of love scenes.

What fearful carnage you have just recently
suffered. - What will the end be? With slavery

prick, if is the cost is not ^{too} dear?

Friends of dear & good friend. You will
see that I have regained my ten-horn - interest -
= factory - power: - friends - your most unworthy
C. Darwin

I send a Photograph of myself with my Beard. Do
I not look somewhat?



Darwin, Charles. 1864. "Darwin, Charles May 28, 1864." *Charles Darwin letters to Asa Gray*

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