

90
matter. Now in *yr* *Drosera* the
filaments are not sensitive to
a rough touch or to any prepare
from non-nitrogenous matter,
but are sensitive to solid or
fluid nitrogenous matter. Is
it not curious that there sh^d be
such diversified sensitiveness in
allied plants?

I rec^d a very obliging letter from
Mr Morgan, but did not see
him, as I think he said he
was going to start at once for
the continent. I am sorry to
hear of rather a poor account
of Mrs Gray to whom my wife
I both beg to be very kindly
remembered. - By her Gray
Yours affly
Ch. Darwin

Beckenham <sup>John.
Gower.
Kent. S.E.</sup>

Dec 7 . 1870

My dear Gray

I have been very glad
to receive *yr* letter this m^d -
I have for some time been wishing
to write to you, but have been
half worked to death in correcting
my uncouth English for my
new book - I have been glad
to hear of *yr* cases of appearing
like incipient disorphism. I
believe that they are due to mere
variability, & have no significance.
I found a good instance in *Nolana*

prostrata, & experimented on it,
but the forms ~~pres~~ did not differ
in fertility. So it was with *Amsinckia*
-ia of which you told me. I have
long thought that such variations
afforded the basis for the develop-
-ment of dimorphism. I was not
aware of such cases in *Phlox*,
but have often admired the
arrangement of the anthers, causing
them to be all naked by an inserted
proboscis. I am glad also to hear
of your curious case of variability
in ovals &c.

I said that I had been wishing
to write to you, & this was

about yr *Drosera*, which after
many fluctuations between life
& death, at last made a shoot,
which I'd observe. The case is
rather interesting; but I must
first remind you that the
filament^{of} *Dionaea* is not sensitive
to very light prolonged pressure,
or to nitrogenous matter, but is
exquisitely sensitive to the slightest
touch. In our *Drosera* the filaments
are not sensitive to a slight
touch, but are sensitive to
prolonged pressure from the ^{smallest} ~~slightest~~
object of any nature; they are also
sensitive to solid or fluid nitrogenous



Darwin, Charles. 1870. "Darwin, Charles Dec. 7, 1870." *Charles Darwin letters to Asa Gray*

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

Permalink: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/partpdf/254388>

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>.