

I am a little impeded also by a return of
sciatica brought on by the bitter cold
of the early part and middle of this
month - and even now I find my
daily visits to Rees almost too much
for me. Mr Bentham I am happy to
say has had a better winter than
usual. The Hookers are very thriving
and active Mr Hooker very busy
with the translation of DeCandolle's
Le Mont's Traité Générale - and Dr
Hooker's ~~Descriptive~~ ^{Sketches} British
Flora is far advanced. It will I
think be a most useful work and most
probably supersede all other British
floras from Withering's to Robinson's
and my own all of which have still a
certain sale.

Ever my dear Gray

Your most sincerely

George Bentham

London
25. WILTON PLACE.
S.W.
Feb 27/70

My dear Gray

In writing to you I have two
objects in view - in the first place I do
not like interrupting our friendly intercourse
which has now gone on for so many
years and we want to know a little
about yourself and Mr Gray - how the
return to a North American winter has
agreed with her - at any rate I trust
it has not been so trying a season as we
have experienced here. How is it also with
reports I hear of your wishing to give up
your position at Cambridge. I sincerely
hope that such is not the case - unless it be
that you are making arrangements by
which you can devote yourself more
exclusively to science.

Another object I have - of less
consequence but which has been the
more immediate spur to my writing you

the pen is to be the favor of a few memoranda to assist me in my annual task of an Anniversary Address which by constant repetition becomes more and more difficult instead of easier. Reviewing a few of the principal points which have made progress within the last two years, there are two which appear of special importance as connecting the present with the past the deep-sea dredgings showing the actual survival of representatives of organisms elsewhere long since extinct - and the investigation of the Arctic fossil flora showing extinct races there extinct but now represented in more temperate regions. In both these researches, and especially in the former your countrymen have done much and you would much oblige me if you would give me some hints as to which of the most important papers published on the

subject by Americans and how you would estimate their labours as compared to those of our own naturalists and of the Scandinavians - and any notes on anything of importance in Zoology or Botany published within these two years by Americans would be most thankfully received.

In the meantime I have been plodding on at *Flora Australiensis*. Chenopodaceae Amarantaceae Laurineae and especially Monimiaceae were slow and tedious work. I am now getting on quicker at Proteaceae which have already been so well worked up. Have you ever observed in this order the very curious variations in what is generally called the stigma but which appears to be more frequently an apparatus for impeding the access of the pollen to the real stigma of the same flower? - I have begun printing, but I have & Co (W. Pope) have quarrelled with the excellent printer they had and in new hands the printing seems to stick fast.



Bentham, George. 1870. "Bentham, George Feb. 27, 1870." *George Bentham letters to Asa Gray*

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