

Gill Coll. Somerset East; Cakey Good Hope.

July 24

My dear Dr Gay,

I have just received your welcome letter of Apr. 26th.

It is most kind of you to remind me of the long interval since last dates, but in truth I have only recently heard of your return, and I was desirous not to add immediately to the formidable heap of accumulated correspondence which must have met you at home. By last and going on air, however, I forwarded a little bag of Mesembryanth seeds, and by the "Surprise", Capt Mickelson, a box of 3 of our most curious Dwarf Euphorbia was sent last week. These were just meant as a token that not altogether - "no more separat in gens."

Our *Id.* succulents deserve praise for their tenacity of life; it is indeed a wonder that the last unlucky consignment did not turn out altogether blank. Aided by an intelligent Karroo farmer, I am now setting together a living collection of these Goshes & Van-Dals from flora, establishing them fairly in boxes that to await the descent of them safe & a safe opportunity of travel. Mesembryaceae do not seem to bear confinement well; the light is perhaps necessary in a greater degree than anovisium. As they grow most readily from seed, that method will best enrich your garden. The children of my Karroo friend have collected all those sent, - they can be trusted to keep different sorts apart, to dry them faithfully in air & shade, but from such sources obviously the nomenclature is the difficulty. To distinguish two Mesemb. by capsule only would be a feat like that of the epicure who could tell Portuguese oysters from Lucerne by the taste!

Thanks for your introduction to Dr Webb. I will write by this or next mail to him. Already I have seen a few of his excellent & conscientiously prepared plants from Wren's Hall & Canby. But it will be some months before I can send him a parcel of any size.

Mr. J. R. Holland

well known to the Kemper Agents, will always receive for me. He has taken much trouble to get favourable terms of freight, or even free transit for botanical

material. The London Dispensary here, & Mr. Stevenson, also an amateur

botanist, in civil society. He has even engaged his office for putting

herbals in order, & has a great evening in his study and library. He has

collected, & has both the name and name of them. In May one very hard about

night, and very cold, but it is so much, it is an amazing weather

falling all round.

May I remind you of an old legend? - It said one of Plato's scholars

of himself. The same climate condition appeared keep me a prisoner

of the island in a cage, or at least in a prison, and the name

of the island was the name of a man. I shall be able to give you only a sketch of the

island, but I think it is not some place from which you have been

of the island. I think it is not some place from which you have been

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MacOwan, Peter. 1838. "MacOwan, Peter July 24 [no year]." *Asa Gray correspondence. Senders McA-Ma*

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