

four fine Golden Eagles passed  
in "full sail" very near to us,  
— a most interesting sight.  
We were about 5000 ft above  
the sea level, "cruising"  
among the sharp crags of  
the ridge & botanising to our  
heart's content. Saxifr. <sup>others</sup> Cotyledon,  
Rosa alpina, Scilla lilio-hya-  
cintus, Globularia <sup>pyrolas</sup> hana, &  
host of other interesting things  
made it quite "a feast" in its  
way, & a remnant of snow-  
to sit down by, & eat, to cool  
ourselves, was most accep-  
table! I sent many 100's of  
roots of alpine plants home, &  
hope that some at least will  
prove treasures. With love  
from our circle to W<sup>rs</sup> Gray  
& yourself. Believe me  
Yours very sincerely  
J<sup>as</sup> Backhouse

West Bank,  
York.  
1-1-1884

Dear D<sup>r</sup> Gray

It was indeed with no  
small gratification that I  
read your kind & sympathising  
letter, which was laid on  
our table this very morning!

M<sup>rs</sup> Backhouse & I both  
feel your kindness very much  
at a time when I think I  
may truly say that the sym-  
pathy of our friends is speci-  
ally grateful. For, though  
the shock we have sustained  
has largely passed away,  
in its immediate physical  
effects, yet I think that we

realise our loss now, almost more than we did many weeks ago.

I am glad that you are able to give a good report of your own & Mrs Gray's health, in fair degree.

Your tendency to do too much, I can quite believe in; as well as in Mrs Gray's: but I do hope you will <sup>both</sup> be careful, for the sake of others, as well as your own!

I work on - in botanical matters, mainly as "a business necessity" - & in archaeological matters as a recreation, attractive because of past remembrances, & yet sad from

this very cause. It often feels as though it would be impossible almost, ever to be really "happy" again: and yet when I look at what many others have to bear, I feel that in very many ways, we have been "mercifully dealt with"; & that, in time, a calm may come, after the storm.

We all had great delight in the grand Pyrenean flora last spring & summer.

James (my son) & I were revelling, on one occasion, among Gentians (vars of *G. acutulis* & *verua*) on a very sharp calcareous "arête" to which we had climbed in a melting sunshine, when



Backhouse, James. 1884. "Backhouse, James Jan. 1, 1884." *Asa Gray correspondence*

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