

# ANNALS OF SCIENCE

A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SINCE THE RENAISSANCE

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VOL. 17

December, 1961

No. 4

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(Published January, 1964)

## THE DARWIN-INNES LETTERS

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF AN EVOLUTIONIST  
WITH HIS VICAR, 1848-1884

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GENERAL interest in Charles Darwin, the naturalist, the student of evolution and the author of the *Origin of Species*, continues to grow even a hundred years after the publication of that epoch-making work. In consequence of this, more and more attention is being directed towards Charles Darwin, the man, the husband and father, the squire of Downe. His simple nature, his straightforward honesty, his humble reticence, his famous invalidism have all helped to endear him to people's hearts. Despite numerous biographies, personal recollections and analyses of his published writings, further insight into his personality can be gained by studies of his personal correspondence.

A man's true character is often revealed in personal correspondence. This is particularly true if the correspondence is voluminous and extends over a long period of time, if the correspondents are close personal and family friends and the letters are impromptu, impulsive and unstudied, and if they deal with personal and family affairs. The correspondence of Charles Darwin and the Reverend J. Brodie Innes is of this character and is presented here in its entirety: 27 letters by Charles Darwin; 9 letters by Emma Darwin, his wife, many written during Charles's lifetime; and 6 by Francis, Charles's son and secretary and biographer. These letters demonstrate in the most convincing manner Charles's innate qualities of modesty, charity and honesty, and all the tenderness of a sensitive family man. The letters cover a period of 35 years from 1848 until his death. This correspondence is supplemented by 38 letters of J. Brodie Innes to Charles Darwin, Emma Darwin and Francis Darwin. Letters to and from Emma Darwin and Francis Darwin include those written while Charles was still alive, although sometimes indisposed, and a few letters after Charles's death continue the discussions, so to speak.

The Reverend J. Brodie Innes was curate of the adjoining parish of

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Farnborough when the Darwins moved to Downe in 1842, and he became the vicar of Downe in 1846. Innes held this living until he moved to Scotland in 1862. The men and the wives became close and intimate friends when they first met and remained so throughout their lives. Nothing more has been discovered so far about Innes, where he was born, who his parents were, where he was educated or anything else about him. He is mentioned several times in the *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*. Innes told Francis Darwin about Charles's efforts to stop using snuff and how he frequently dropped into Innes's garden study to borrow it (vol. i, p. 122). Innes is also quoted about Darwin's kindness, the mutual affection between the men and Darwin's interest in parish affairs. There are also several quotations of letters which are indicated in this text by enclosing them in square brackets. One citation in *More Letters of Charles Darwin* tells the story about Innes's calling at Parslow's cottage for bread and cheese. Parslow was the Darwin's family butler. Innes does not appear in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. According to an entry in *Alumni Cantabrigienses, 1752-1900*, John William Brodie-Innes, his son often mentioned in the letters, was born at Downe on 10 March 1848, received his B.A. in 1872, was admitted at Lincoln's Inn in 1872 and called to the Bar in 1876. He gained First Class Honours and was prizeman in Scots Law in the University of Edinburgh in 1888. He practised law and wrote novels and died at Milton Brodie, Forres, in 1923. His father was John, clerk of Milton (or Melton) Brodie, Moray, Scotland.

The 27 letters of Darwin to Innes are part of a lot belonging to the author. They were purchased from Scribners and Sons in 1933. They had been sold at auction many years before by Gabriel Wells, well-known American book-dealer. They had belonged to Alan Krause. The Innes letters to Darwin are the property of Mr Robin Darwin, C.B.E., and are deposited in the University Library, Cambridge.

The letters are transcribed as accurately as possible except that many of Darwin's favourite contractions are spelt out. If the stationery is engraved, the heading is in capital letters. If the heading is written out, it is given in small letters. If the date is shown on the letter, it is given as written. If it is not on the letter but has been adduced, it is shown in brackets.

Everyone familiar with Darwin's letters knows that many of them are not dated at all and some give only the day and the month. The years have been ascribed as accurately as possible by internal evidence, by context, and occasionally by the postmark when the envelope has been preserved. The first letter, thought to have been written in 1846, probably shortly after Innes came to Downe, explains why Darwin may have to cut his subscription to the Sunday School because of so many other obligations. It has a familiar ring even today.

RMS (1) (1846)

Down Monday

My dear Sir,

I enclose my £3 subscription for your Sunday School, and I am much obliged to you for informing me it was due.—I was sorry I was unable to see you the day you called and were so good as to leave the Coal Club Papers, but I have had an extra amount of illness of late.

As you will probably like to know beforehand, I take this opportunity of begging to be allowed for the future to reduce my subscription to £2 per annum to the Sunday School: my motive is that we subscribe altogether to five schools and I find the amount is rather too much for my means.

Pray believe me  
My dear Sir  
Yours sincerely  
C. Darwin

Rev. J. Innes

(A note on the back) Mr. Darwin's Sunday School  
May—14

The second letter, two years later in date, discusses the toothache and quotes advice on the subject from Darwin's wife.

RMS (2) (1848)

My dear Dr. Innes

I am extremely sorry to hear of your toothache.—You must not put, I think more than *one* drop of Chloroform on the tooth.—I send Tincture of Arnica which smartens the skin (*deadly Poison*) to put *outside*. Mrs. Darwin finds hot fomentations are best.—Many find cold water applications best.

I have found two or three drops of Alum and [illegible] Spirits of Nitre (in bottle with a label) *sometimes* do my teeth great good. I was not in when your note came.

Yours  
C. Darwin

I send my bottles which you can return afterward I send *Creosote*, some find a drop of this do much good.

On outside of envelope, Rev. J. Innes  
respecting toothache  
Mr. Darwin

Since both men lived in the same neighbourhood and probably saw each other frequently, there was little or no occasion to write. At least,

no letters have been found for this period. Ten years later, Darwin wrote a letter of condolence to Innes on the death of his mother. This letter is written on black-bordered stationery. The paper is watermarked 1858.

RMS (3)

Down.—March 4th [1858]

Dear Innes

We were much concerned at hearing yesterday evening of the death of your mother. I never heard of a more merciful release from suffering. In your sorrow you must have the satisfaction of knowing how excellent and attentive a son you have been ; and one cannot have a higher satisfaction. I hope Mrs. Innes has not suffered from the suddenness of the shock. With our united sympathy, pray believe me, Dear Innes

Yours very sincerely  
Ch. Darwin

The next letter was written on 18 July 1860. The date is revealed by the postmark on the envelope. The stationery indicates that this was written at Miss Wedgwood's, Hartfield, Tunbridge Wells. It is addressed to 7 Wellington Esplanade, Lowestoft. It has to do with coal bills and other matters and is the first of many to mention Henrietta, the second Darwin child, usually referred to as ETTY. ETTY was born in 1843 and so was 17 years old at this time.

Henrietta was an outstanding invalid in an outstanding family of outstanding invalids. She is charmingly and colourfully described by her niece, Gwen Raverat, in *Period Piece*, with all her foibles, idiosyncrasies, and invalidism. Despite the despair her parents had of her even growing up, she lived to be 86 years old.

Apparently Innes's son, John, 12 years old at the time, was also sickly.

RMS (4) July 18th [1860]

at Miss Wedgwoods  
Hartfield  
Tunbridge Wells

Dear Innes

Thanks for Coal-bills which I will pay as soon as I get home in about 10 days time.—I am sincerely sorry to hear so poor an account of Mrs. Innes. We moved ETTY here with much difficulty a fortnight ago, and she has improved very little, but thank God she has improved a little. She can now quietly sit up for about 1/2 hour twice a day.

I have been a good deal knocked up of late and have had to resort to Water-cure ; but all our anxiety with Etty ill for 12 weeks has been enough to knock us up. But my wife has stood the incessant nursing wonderfully. Women are so good and unselfish, that helping others seems to do them good.—Our plans are utterly uncertain : we have to take Etty to sea, whenever she is strong enough ; but where and when are both quite unknown to us.—What a wandering life you have been leading ! We shall be very glad to see you at Down.—I inquired (not alluding to you) about Mr. Ainstie's house, but can hear nothing whatever. Parslow asked Mr. Baxter, but he knew nothing. Farewell with our kind remembrances to Mrs. Innes—believe me

Dear Innes  
Yours very sincerely  
C. Darwin

I hope from your note that Johny is tolerably well.

The next letter, dated 6 September, is addressed to Innes, Thrale Rectory, Reading. This and the next one mention Etty and there is discussion of donkeys. The stationery is watermarked 1860.

RMS (5)

Down Bromley Kent  
Sept. 6 [1860]

Dear Innes

Many thanks for your kind enquiries about Etty. I am glad to be able to give a decidedly better account, though her progress is excessively slow. She now sits up several hours every day and has taken two or three very short drives. What is best of all is that the Doctors are convinced there is no organic mischief.—We have had an unhappy Summer ; but I hope the worst is over.—I am glad to hear a pretty good account of your son ; and I hope Mrs. Innes is fairly well. My wife joins me in very kind remembrances to her.—I hope you have not given up thinking about Down ; though what house you could get I cannot tell. I hear dreadful reports on the state of Mrs. Ainstie's house.—We were away from Down for an unusual time this summer, namely, six weeks ; and I have hardly seen a soul since our return ;—except J. Lubbock to talk Natural History with. Every thing goes on much as usual. . . . Mrs. Phillips . . . [The letter has been mutilated by cutting out the signature] . . . my hobby of striped asses. I must say that I am a complete skeptic about the powers at work,—curious as your stories are. What stories one hears about the spirit-tapping now-a-days—the old saying to believe nothing one hears and only half of what one sees is a golden rule. Farewell. With every good wish—

RMS (6) Letter No. 6 is watermarked 1859.

Down Bromley Kent  
Sept. 11 [1860]

Dear Innes.

I am sorry to say that I fear we shall not see you when you come to Keston, for we have almost made up our minds to be off next week to sea-side for a month to see what the change will do for Etty,—though I have not much hope. Your account of the Donkey has interested me much and would you be so kind as to have another look at it and observe whether its eyes are pink ; but as you say it is rather cream-coloured than white, it probably is not an albino.—Did the owner rear it ; if so please ask him whether it was born of same colour and had then no stripes.—Anytime will do for an answer.—I am sorry to hear about your house difficulties.

Dear Innes  
Sin your  
C. Darwin

The next letter, dated 26 October, is addressed to the Rev. J. Innes, 1 College Hill, Reading. The year 1860 is shown by the postmark. It is about Etty Darwin and Johnny Innes.

RMS (7) Oct. 26th [1860]

15 Marine Parade  
Eastbourne

Dear Innes

Very many thanks for your kind note and also the trouble you have taken for me.—Etty progressed very well here for 4 weeks, but I am sure that you will sympathise with us, when you hear that she had a terrible attack of sickness on Monday and which has not yet ceased. She is much prostrated and what the end will be, we know not.—My poor wife is much knocked up.—I am very glad you give a good [report] of Johny.—

Yours most truly  
C. Darwin

A long letter follows about Etty and personal matters in the parish. Darwin is happy that Innes is pleased with his book, presumably the *Origin of Species*, which was published the year before. Darwin discusses his critics, including the Bishop of Oxford. This is Bishop Samuel Wilberforce who wrote a stinging criticism in the *Quarterly Review*. The date is given as 28 December and it has been ascribed to 1860. The *Origin of Species* first appeared on 24 November 1859, but the article in the *Quarterly Review* appeared in July 1860.

RMS (8) Dec. 28 [1860]

Down Bromley Kent

Dear Innes

Many thanks for your kind and pleasant letter. I cannot give a very good account of poor Etty, who had a relapse a week ago, which threw her a good deal back and she has hardly yet got up to her standard of a fortnight ago and that was not high.—It is enough to make one despair.—I am very sorry that you have such poor success in building ; I am sure you miss a home of your own with your various animals and pets. I had heard that Ainstie wants £4000, which is impossible to believe he will ever get. The rogue must be cleaned out some day and have to sell at a fair price.—As for news we have none. I daresay you heard that Christopher Osborn is dead—the third death this year in the Friendly Club ! You will have heard of the new Doctor, next door to where Mr. Edwards is now staying. I have not seen him yet.—

What you say about my Book pleases me and I *do* look at it as high compliment. I never expected to convert people under 20 years, though fairly convinced now that I am in the main right.—For a week hardly passes without my hearing of some good judge coming some little way with me. And those who go an inch will surely have to go a yard with me. By far the greater part of the opposition is just the same as that made when the sun was first said to stand still and the world to go round. I am now passing through the press a new Edition.—Did you see the Quarterly Review, the B. of Oxford made really splendid fun of me and my grandfather. On account of Etty we lead a more retired life than ever, though this seems hardly possible. But tonight Emma and some relations in the House are going to a Ball at the Lubbocks. I see John [Lubbock] occasionally but have not seen any other members of the Family for an age.—I am heartily glad that you can give a pretty good account of your son and Mrs. Innes, to whom pray give our very kind remembrances and Believe me Dear Innes

Yours very truly  
C. Darwin

The next seven letters concern Quiz, Johnny's pet dog, who came to live and die, alas, at Down. No year is given or watermark shown on the first two letters. The third letter, dated 2 January 1862, shows a watermark 1860. There is no watermark on the letter of 1 May. The years are assumed to be correct because the following letter is addressed to Scotland and the date is shown by the envelope. The letter, if any, asking Darwin to take Quiz, has not been found.

RMS (9) Dec. 15 [1861]

DOWN  
BROMLEY  
KENT, S.E.

My dear Innes

I have got to go out and do not wish to miss a Post so write in great

Hurry, to say that we shall be delighted to have Quiz, who shall be taken good care of, and never parted with and when old and infirmed shall pass from this life easily.—

Most truly yours  
C. Darwin

RMS (10) Dec. 19th [1861]

DOWN  
BROMLEY  
KENT, S.E.

My dear Innes

I hope Johny's heart will not fail. We will take much care of Quiz. If he comes pray thank Johny. If you will see that the Dog is at London Bridge S.E. Railway Station by one o'clock, I will see that Snow, who is up as usual on Thursday, calls for him and brings him here safely.

I had told Snow that he *might* be at Nags's Head this day and gave all sorts of Instructions in case he came later, after he had started.—

I suppose you will very soon be off to Scotland; most heartily do I hope you all happiness in your new career as Scotch Laird or Chieftain, as perhaps I ought to call it.

Pray give my kind remembrance to Mrs. Innes and believe me.  
Dear Innes

Yours very sincerely  
Charles Darwin

ULC (11) To Coley Hill, Reading, Christmas Eve [1861]

Dear Darwin

We have concluded that our little party shall remain together til we are near the time of our departure and that Quiz must celebrate my birthday here. Johny wants his portrait taken before he goes so we will arrange to send him to you next week, that is on Thursday, 2nd January 1862. He shall go by the South Eastern train, hence at 9:50. He will arrive at the London Bridge Station at 1. This will be quite time to secure his conveyance by Snow to you. I will direct him fully. He travels in a hamper. Thanks for all your kind wishes to us. I shall certainly not be anything like a chieftain, hardly to say laird. A small house and a little land hardly makes any . . . . I retain my . . . . where there are . . . . recollections and . . . . Be lightly par . . . . It is by no means . . . . that after a look . . . . we may return . . . . specially if I can . . . . to get a house . . . . one. But I do not . . . . to disturb the present arrangement, it is so desirable to leave Stephens in peace? It has been the greatest comfort to me [the rest of the letter has been destroyed].



ULC (12) To Coley Hill, Reading 2nd, n.d., no year. [Jan 1, 1862] C.D. wrote Jan. 2, 1862, "Quiz arrived last night."

Dear Darwin

I hope before this reaches you you will have received Quiz. He left here at 10:00. John and I saw him off and said goodbye very affectionately. He has been used . . . . . all parties comfort.

We are preparing for our start on Monday. I wish the journey was either over or not coming but it is too late to shirk now.

With every good wish for a Happy New Year for you [all]. The prospects of cross . . . . . lantre look a little . . . . . today than yesterday. [This letter has been mutilated by mice].

RMS (13) Jan. 2 [1862]

Down Bromley Kent

My dear Innes

I am heartily glad to say that Quiz arrived last night safe and sound (but with a cough) and has been running about the house quite happy and very polite to every human being, including Cats.—Hearty thanks for your present.—Also for your two notes.—We most sincerely wish you all the happiness which can be expected in this world. Very glad we should be to see you here ; but I think you will find yourself so well suited to your new career, that you will remain. We are a sick house with 3 Boys in bed with very bad feverish colds, so no more at present, except kind remembrances to Mrs. Innes and Johny, the young Laird—

Ever my dear Innes  
Yours very sincerely  
Charles Darwin

RMS (14) May 1 [1862]

DOWN  
BROMLEY  
KENT, S.E.

Dear Innes

I have bad news about Quiz ; perhaps you had better not tell your son for a time. He has been killed ; it was done instantaneously by a gun. We were forced to do this, for he would fly at poor people, and one day bit a child and two days after a beggar woman and we had an awful row about it. There was another reason we could not stop him having fearful battles with Tartar : I had such a job one day separating them both streaming with blood ; and this was *incessantly* happening. Poor little Quiz had also got so asthmatic that he could not run, so that altogether we had no choice left us, though we were very sorry about it. I hope the world goes well with you all ; it has not of late with us, for we have had our youngest boy strangely ill, with singular involuntary movements, for two months ; but at last he is decidedly better. We

feared much that there was mischief in the Brain, but it now seems clear that it was all sympathetic with irritation of stomach.

I know of no news of any sort here : we all go on exactly as usual as quiet as mice.

Dear Innes  
Yours very sincerely  
Charles Darwin

A letter follows about Quiz, about the children's health and about bees and honey (written in somebody else's handwriting, but signed by Innes).

ULC (15) Milton Brodie, May 5th [1862]

Dear Darwin

I was sorry to find by your letter that you have had so much trouble with Quiz who I hoped would have been an acquisition. Thanks however for the trouble and patience you have had with him and for so entirely doing as I asked you. I did not anticipate his biting humans improperly and believe he would have at once succumbed to Tartar's prowess. Very likely as he had pluck enough to fight his temper got roused. Anyhow I am glad to know the end of the little animal and that he had so good a chance of a happy life had he been virtuous.

We are very sorry to hear of your boy's indisposition. Now he is on the mend it is to be hoped that he will be all right again very shortly. I told Stephens the other day to ask you if you have tried any of Tegetmeier's beehives and if you find them answer. The general trouble with boxes is to get them not to split and warp. There was a good straw hive made by Milton, Gt. Marylebon Street but I find by a letter from him that he has given up apiarian dealing and he does not tell me who makes on his pattern. My views are not scientific but regard honey for which I want an improvement on the common cottage which is the only article in use here. We are all pretty well and have real Spring. The trees are in full leaf and bloom and all looking well at present. I am in much want of a good pony which seems a hard thing to find here about. Mrs. Innes unites with me her kindest regards to you and Mrs. Darwin.

Believe me, dear Darwin  
Sincerely yours,  
J. B. Innes

The next two letters are most interesting and worthy of discussion. There is a letter from Innes, the first written from Forres, where he had settled and where he lived for the rest of our contact with him. It is

presumed that the Innes family had to dispose of Quiz because of this move.

Despite an unusual amount of sickness, 'Sixteen members of the household with influenza and six in bed at once and the inherited poor constitution of Horace', Darwin's youngest child, Darwin was quite light-hearted and facetious about the butcher and his love-life.

ULC (16) Milton Brodie, Forres, February 19th [1862]

Dear Darwin

You must not suppose we only think of you and yours when some fact of natural history turns up for indeed we often think and speak of our kind friends in the South and sometimes Stephens gives us a bulletin. We were sorry he last reported some of your party indisposed. I hope you have forgotten all about this long ago.

My gardener has got a bird, the offspring of a male mule between a canary and green finch, and a hen canary. He says he is quite sure that papa was a mule though he is not quite sure whether it was half greenfinch or chaffinch. It was reared by a labourer who was then in this garden and he persisted in putting it with the canary in spite of all assurances that they would not breed and this bird is the result. Probably you know plenty such cases but it is new to me. If you want anything looked after here in earth, air or water, tell me and we will do our little utmost.

We have had very mild weather, no frost to Johnny's sorrow as he wants to skate and has only had them on once for a short morning when rain came. Today it has been quite warm.

We saw the announcement of Mrs. Langton's death. I know you were prepared for and expecting it and believe she had been in much suffering. We have been all as well as usual. Johnny has not tired of his home pursuits yet and looks forward to some swimming in the sea when hot weather comes. He likes his tutor and works pretty willingly. Eliza is much as usual and has been once out to dinner, a mighty feat for her. But I fear she will not repeat it very often. You will be all gay with the Exhibition. We hear so much of it, that I suppose some of us at least must struggle up to see it before it closes.

With all our best regards to your circle, believe me, dear Darwin,  
Yours faithfully  
J. B. Innes

The following letter is on black-edged stationery but the cause of mourning is not apparent.

RMS (17) Feb 24 [1862]

Down Bromley Kent

Dear Innes.

Many thanks for your friendly note. You seem all very prosperous, and we are very glad to hear of it.—I have heard of the mule from the

Canary and other finches occasionally breeding ; but it is rare (except with the siskin when the case is not so rare) and there is hardly one quite well authenticated case of two such mules breeding together. I will not forget your offer if I should wish for any observations or enquiries made in the North.

Life rolls on, as you know, very uniformly in Down, and we have no news. Yes, we know, the Butcher has jilted his old love, and is going to be married to a new one ! We went a few days ago to lunch with the John Lubbocks and they evidently seem thoroughly to enjoy their new home and freedom. They gave us a good account of poor Montague. We have had the Influenza here very badly—16 were sick in this house and at one time six in bed. Etty keeps capital ; but now we have Horace failing badly with intermittent weak pulse, like four of our other children previously. It is a curious form of inheritance from my poor constitution, though I never failed in exactly that way. —I am glad to hear that Mrs. Innes (to whom pay our kind remembrances) has been out to dinner : this beats me, for I have not ventured on such a bold step for an age.

Believe me Dear Innes  
Yours very sincerely  
C. Darwin

There now follows a series of sixteen letters from Innes to Charles and Emma Darwin from 1862 until 1868 before the next Darwin letter was written. Some of Innes's letters are long and detailed and concern matters in which it might be thought that Darwin had little interest. The contents indicate that Darwin did answer at least some of them.

No year is given but since the Innes family moved to Scotland in January 1862, this year is most probable.

ULC (18) Milton Brodie, Forres N.B., December 18th [1862 ?]

Dear Darwin

When I left Down, I could not find Johnny's Savings Bank book. It had been put away with other papers and has only now turned up. Will you be so kind as to have it made up and returned to me. I hope its absence has not increased the trouble you and the other managers are so kind as to take on behalf of depositors. I am glad to have a reason for writing you and to be able to wish you and yours a Happy Christmas and a New Year. Stephens has not mentioned you in any very recent letters, wherefore I conclude you are all well. Hope William continues to like his occupation and finds it as golden as he could anticipate. Henry Lubbock seems to hang on in the paternal nest very firmly at present. John must be a great loss to Lady Lubbock, but his own party increased too fast to remain with comfort. I am sorry to hear Ring's wife is so ill. She has been a good wife and brought up

her children far better than most. I had a very cheerful letter from Knight Bruce a few days ago. He is still without a house and has just returned to his Father's at Roehampton from Versailles where he has been all the summer.

We lead a very quiet life here. My wife is quite as well as she was in England and has several times gone out to dinner some 4 or 5 miles which she could not or would not do at Downe. Our change has been of the greatest advantage to Johnny's health. He has grown quite stout and robust as well as tall and has not had an hour's illness, indeed I am thankful to say that we have had no need for a doctor in the house since we have been here. We want a cook very badly but it is not much use to ask you as I don't think they grow abundantly in your soil. There is no special natural history that has come under my unscientific observation except that I saw a white rabbit with black tips to his ears on a muir [moor] where only brown and occasionally black ones commonly dwell. What do you say to wheat being grown from oats in the second year? Do you trust it enough to try it for yourself. With all our best regards. Believe me, dear Darwin.

Yours faithfully  
J. Brodie Innes

A long letter about many things, personal as William and banking, parish matter, Darwin's new honours, the Duke who is ill, probably the Duke of Argyll, and the mysterious appearance of toads, a discussion of support of schools and mention of his wife and son. Yet Innes said that 'he had not much to tell—'.

The reference to William's banking employment is interesting because the Lubbocks, father and son, were unusually successful bankers.

ULC (19) Milton Brodie, Forres, 29 August [1863 ?]

Dear Darwin

We often speak and still more frequently think of you and yours but my friend Stephens is too much occupied with parochial and family matters to send me many Gazettes about friends though he does write fully of all important parish matters so I have not had particulars of you for an age and am determined to address a line to yourself to ask how you all are. How your son [William] likes his Banking employment. I hope he will find it as profitable as the Lubbocks seem to do and not so conducive to gout as I hear it (or something else) is with them.

The idea of a cottage shew of garden produce was a capital one and from the report seems to have been quite a success. I suggested that an addition of cottager's flowers to enliven the scene and encourage the ornamental but it was not time to be carried out this year.

I have to congratulate you on accession to your honours that your natural history researches should have caused a number of the lower animals to be called by your name was in the natural course

but I did not look for a Duke *Darwinii* but there he is. By the way I hear he is very ill. If he dies, you must get Owen to stuff him for you. I do not think I have any natural history for you but that I lately saw a second instance of a donkey without a stripe. What do you think of the toads? My friend and neighbour, Sir A. Gordon Cumming has written about them being found in the cuttings of the new railway in large numbers. I cannot find that there is any good evidence of their being found actually in the stone but it seems that they turned up no one seems to know whence in very queer places, and though one here and there might be found in some deep hole with very little opening for air and food, it is odd that so many should appear, and I am sorry that no real scientific observer should have taken pains to make out where they really lived. I believe Dr. Innes of Forres or Dr. Gordon of Birnie would have been trustworthy but I think they both laugh at the notion and did not care to investigate.

You and I have often had small arguments about rating for schools. If you were here, I think you would come over to my side. We pay in this parish about double what the Downe school costs. The education is not good and the behaviour of the children and moral conduct of the adult poor is very sad indeed. The abuse has crept in to make the schoolmaster's post a step to the office of preacher in the establishment, so the master who gets probably £120 and a house puts in an inefficient substitute and goes off to Edinburgh to keep terms. The result of all this is that some clever boys get on and learn enough to go to college or get good situations and the general run who can only be at school a short time learn little. The moral condition is bad enough and the illegitimate children are in swarms and don't they lie and cheat with a vengeance.

As to ourselves I have not much to tell you. Mrs. Innes is much as usual, not even as much up to walking as she was, but seldom really poorly. She dines out at rare intervals, which is a gain. I dare say you heard we had a small run to Kent in the spring. It was a fine contradiction of your theory that all goes well when the wife is master of the events. I thought Mrs. Innes would want to see her invalid sister and offered to take her up and make arrangements for her to be in England for two months which she firmly declined, then suddenly got a worse report of her sister and must go at a couple of day's notice when I could make no comfortable arrangements, could only stay a few days and was obliged to come back, leaving all undone. I especially wished, chiefly to see you and other friends at Downe. However, happily, the sister is better and I am able to give Johnny a week in Paris which pleased him. He works on pretty steadily with his tutor, is vastly grown in stature and breadth and has been quite well since we have been here. I should have preferred his going on at school but think he suffers less than many boys would from being at home. I wish you would come down here and take a look at the red sandstone and other interests of the North. Our kindest regards to Mrs. Darwin and your family.

Believe me, dear Darwin

Yours faithfully

J. Brodie Innes

Another long letter follows on several subjects. It now appears that it was the Duke of Argyll mentioned in the previous letter. There are some very frank remarks about the Scotch people. This letter is an answer to one from Darwin.

ULC (20) Milton Brodie, Forres 8, 4 September [1863]

Dear Darwin

I must write a line and thank you for your letter and enlighten you as to what seems an enigma. The Duke of Argyll lately made a speech at an agricultural meeting wherein he made large reference to your theory of the origin of species by artificial selection and improved the occasion by showing how new and valuable varieties of stock had been bred, exhorting to further efforts. Hence, some of the papers have named him the Darwinian Duke.

I heard somewhere before it got public that one of our Dukes was very ill somehow I mistook which one and thought it Argyll whereas it is Athol & I made a rare confusion, which I thus interpret. I hope your trip to Malvern will do you much good. You had better have come North and next year should we be here I hope you will be tempted to come in a body. There is a fine hydropathic establishment now being built on a beautiful spot at Forres and with our famous climate, the vicinity of the sea and good opportunities for excursions to many interesting places I have the conviction that it is the place will come on you. I am afraid I can hardly tempt you and Mrs. Darwin so far toward the North Pole now, but I shall be very glad if I can.

I do not shoot much. The harvest is not in yet and the birds are small. In this country there is not much lowland shooting before October. I persecute rabbits as enemies and knock over a bird occasionally now.

I am sorry to hear Smith is ill. If he should die, I would like to get Down Hall for a parsonage but likely the property may go to some one as unwilling to sell as he is.

The Scotch people have continued to call themselves the most moral in Europe until they not only seem to believe it but persuade others who don't know them. The proportion of bastards is larger than in any country in Europe and the morals in this respect tally exactly. They are certainly far from honest but they are all as full of pious talk as an English Dissenter. What can I say more? Our kindest regards to all yours.

Faithfully yours  
J. Brodie Innes

The next letter gives advice to a worried parent whose son seems to have school trouble. It might have been Leonard who was 13 years of

age or Horace who was 14 at that time. The same may be said for letter number 22 of 17 December from Keston.

ULC (21) Keston, 1 September [1863]

Dear Darwin

I found out the name of the tutor I mentioned to you about whom you may think it worth while to enquire. I only know him by reputation, not personally, Rev. C. Bradley [?] Hatfield.

I am not sure of his parish but it joins on Colney Hatch. Eastward and is a short walk from the C. Hatch station. You will find it on a map at once.

I am off to the North tomorrow night and hope to be home to lunch on Tuesday. I hope Horsman will stay quietly, at least for the year he has promised and that you will continue to like him.

Faithfully yours,  
J. Brodie Innes

ULC (22) Milton Brodie 17th December [1863]

Dear Darwin

I sent this to Malvern duly and you see the fate it has met with. I send it off again as I write so little it is a pity to lose what I do. And as you are in some perplexity about your son, let me tell you that the Rev. I. Gresson who is a most charming fellow and who I hear has a very nice sister is just starting a small establishment for young boys before they go to public school at Worthing. You will know all about the sanitary condition of Worthing. If you want such a place, it may be worth while to ask about this. I can answer for Gresson being a most agreeable man with boys as well as grown folks. He has been second master at Bradfield for many years and Stevens can [tell] you more about him. My best regards,

Faithfully yours,  
J. Brodie Innes

The next two letters refer principally to the closing of the Bromley Savings Bank and to Johnny's deposit there. The death of Mrs Levan, Mrs Innes's sister is mentioned.

ULC (23) Milton Brodie, 16th January [1864 ?]

Dear Mrs. Darwin

Thanks for your information about the closing of the Bromley Savings bank. Mr. Darwin will be relieved of much labour which he has so kindly taken to assist the depositors. I sent Johnny's book and



the order filled up. I suppose my signature as witness will do as I am licensed by the Bishop to a Mission at Milton Brodie and a roving commission over the diocese of Moray.

I wish you could give a better account of Mr. Darwin than that he is much the same. You should bring him down to Forres for a hydropathic excursion as well as to see us. The building is nearly completed and is certainly very handsome and will be comfortable. The soil, water, land and sea views are all in its favour. Among other arrivals for it is an equatorial telescope by Dollond. Sir Alexander's home of the toads is close by and much other interest in the immediate neighbourhood so I hope you will come. Johnny and I have had some capital skating and curling last week, this week we have had mild weather again. With all our kindest regards to all your party, believe me, Dear Mrs. Darwin,

Yours Faithfully  
J. Brodie Innes

ULC (24) Milton Brodie, Forres, N.B., January 23rd on black bordered stationery [1864]

Dear Mrs. Darwin

I am very sorry you should have such an amount of trouble about Johnny's money. I fear you must still be plagued to get Parslow or one of the managers to send us a form properly filled up and we will put the money with the Post office Bank at Forres. As the book has been sent, the precise sum can be inserted. We have long been thinking of Mrs. Innes's sister, Mrs. Levan, would not live long as she had heart disease and is in a very weak state. It is very melancholy that her husband who was in robust health has died of pleurisy after a few hours' illness and has left the poor invalid, and children. You may believe Mrs. Innes is much overcome by this sad event. She desires her kindest regards to you and Mr. Darwin, Believe Me, dear Mrs. Darwin, Yours Faithfully,

J. Brodie

If any less trouble, Johnny will give an order of withdrawal simply and a check for the amount can be sent to him here. It appears to me the simplest way.

The next letter is about Sunday School and the importance of a lady's hand in it.

ULC (25) MILTON BRODIE, FORRES, N.B. 16th January (1868)

Dear Darwin

I left you treasurer of the school and hope you are still in office. I enclose check for my subscription for this year. I hope Miss Darwin

has carried out her laudable intention of giving some assistance in the Downe School. A lady's presence is valuable in many ways. They teach so nicely, are so patient and their very presence has such a civilizing effect on savage boys. Mrs. Innes's poor body did what she could while at Downe and possibly I was enough of an old woman to approximate to the other sex by natural selection. I hope Miss Etty may more than supply the lady's place without any variation from her own plan in creation.

If you want mild weather, you should come here instead of going to cold, southern regions. We have had no snow and the young folk are crying out there is no skating. I had a lot over here on Saturday last to disport themselves in a shallow piece of water as no deep water would bear. It rained before they left and we have had quite mild weather and occasional rain since.

Mrs. Innes joins me in kindest regards to you, Mrs. Darwin and your family. Believe me, Dear Darwin, Faithfully yours,

J. Brodie Innes

The following two letters deal largely with parish business and the incumbent vicar Mr Horsman. The addresses, 1 Elm Court Temple, 75 Cornhill and 32 Sackville Street, are well-known. Miss Darwin, Innes's 'minister of education' was Etty, now aged 25 years.

Innes obviously had been interested and worried for a long time about the parish and the living at Downe and his futile attempts to provide a vicarage.

Sir John mentioned in the last paragraph is Sir John William Lubbock and the son is Sir John Lubbock. Ursula Grant Duff, Sir John's daughter, described the Lubbocks to RMS as across-the-road neighbours of Charles Darwin, and her father as Charles's last pupil. This letter is dated 13 June 1868. Webster's *Biographical Dictionary* gives the date of Sir John's death as 1865 (1).

ULC (26) Milton Brodie, Forres, 13 June 1868

Dear Darwin :

You can imagine better than I can explain how much I am grieved at the difficulties Horsman has got himself and others into. It is not often the case that I take a strong dislike to a man at first sight as I did to him and it was with no small reluctance that I gave way to the universal judgment in his favour last August and allowed him to stay. At that time he had not been licensed and I could have got rid of him at once but it was necessary he should be licensed if he remained and he was so. After that I have no power over him, but by the process of reporting any failure of duty to the Archbishop and requesting him to withdraw the license.

The last I heard from him was from 1 Elm Court Temple to say he was on his way to Downe ; would write himself to the Archbishop and resign ; (I had told him I should report him to his senior) and requesting me to pay a quarters stipend due 1st of June to his bankers, 75 Cornhill. I understand he has not gone to Downe and I have not paid. I understand he has not paid the Sunday School teachers since November last. If he has received subscriptions for the Sunday School, I should of course deduct the amount due, also balance, if any, due on account of the boys' school and if I legally could, the sum due to Mr. Humphreys, 32 Sackville Street for providing for services during his absence at Torquay. The School money I should be confident about as cash received ; I am not sure if Mr. Humphrey's is more than a private debt. Can some of your family, Miss Darwin, whom I consider my Minister of Education (non political) and Mrs. Darwin ascertain the state of matters financial in School.

Then as to the future ; for present emergency I have written to the Church wardens and to Mr. Humphreys, who appears to have sent clergymen generally satisfactory, to send someone to fill the gap. I tried to get Mr. Irwin, who is a most able man, to take Sunday and weekly duties also for a time, but he is otherwise engaged ; still I hope there may be no immediate difficulty and permanent arrangements must be made as soon as possible.

Hastened by this embarrassment I am offering to part with all my interests in the living. It would probably have been better if I had done so long ago but I have always had a hope that I might obtain a house for the parish and perhaps as I have so many kind friends about, return and end my days there. But the hope has vanished and I am too old to begin to build a house in a field and plant trees I can never see grow. I hope the parish will be better with a younger man.

I mentioned to you and to Sir John my probable intention of disposing of my patronage and I have instructed my agent to offer it to Sir John and you before anyone else, in case you should have any friend you may wish to put in.

With kind regards to your party, Believe me, Faithfully yours,

J. Brodie Innes

A long and tedious letter continues the discussion about Horsman and his possible replacement. It is obviously written in reply to a letter from Darwin that has not been found.

ULC (27) Milton Brodie, Forres, 18th June [1868]

Dear Darwin :

I am very much obliged by your letter. I shall be truly relieved when the complications about Mr. Horsman are unravelled. I heard

from him some days ago (about 4th but the letters are not dated) that he should write to the Archbishop and resign ; I had told him that it was my intention to submit his conduct to the A[rch] B[ishop]. A later note tells me he had not yet done this, speaks of present ill health and seems to suggest, without directly proposing, a temporary arrangement with a view of his future return. To this I have answered that unless I hear this week at the latest that he has himself sent in his resignation I shall at once report to His Grace.

I go a step beyond you in my opinion of his folly, and my idea if true takes off from his culpability, that he is not quite sane. It is not a new notion but one I formed when I first saw him. I mentioned it in a talk I had with Mr. Lovegrove who seemed to have seen more of him at that time, and which he thought was absolutely unfounded, but I really think he is mad and, if so, I am sorry for him as well as for myself and the inhabitants.

When he succeeded Mr. Stephens, there was a balance in hand for Sunday School for £3.11. I concluded that he paid all to Nov. when Amy Dubarry was paid. Not since, she tells me. If he received the annual subscription at the end of the year, he will owe a balance £3.11-, Subscriptions less payments in November if any—National School balance £8.4.10. Since then it would appear no receipt or payment . . . . [This letter has been damaged.] . . . . I am inclined to think the organ must have been selected for at the time possibly Mr. Lovegrove may know.

Mr. Horsman wrote me several letters about it. The cost was to be £145, less old organ £40 and in the letter acknowledging my subscription he says the whole amount was subscribed, 14th September '67. Under the circumstances, and knowing that the price was paid by subscriptions, Byceson would never have waited for the money.

I have an application from a Mr. Vernon Salin (I fail to decipher the first letter of the surname and copy the hieroglyphic which may be P or E or any other) who says he has been to Downe at Mr. Horsman's desire for a month and wishing to continue. Do you know anything of his acceptance (as Scotch folks say).

I have not at this moment any other application. Indeed I must get Horsman's matters settled before I can positively arrange but whether for a longer or shorter time I should like to send someone who would be acceptable and who would make up for some of the recent neglect.

We are in sad want of rain here and our crops of all kinds are in a bad condition. It has been a most unusual season for wind as well as drowth. The normal condition has been half or whole gale ever since Jan.

With our kind regards, Believe me, Faithfully yours,  
J. Brodie Innes

The honours won by Darwin's son are not clear and the son is not identified. It might have been George, born in 1845 and 23 years old,

Francis, born in 1848 and 20 years old, or possibly Leonard, born in 1850 and 18 years old.

Then there is more about Horsman and a vicarage.

ULC (28) Milton Brodie, Forres N.B., 30th July 1868

Dear Darwin

I heartily congratulate you and Mrs. Darwin on the splendid distinction your son has gained at Cambridge. I hope all his future course may be equally brilliant.

Thanks for caring for my subscription to the school. Mr. Horsman reports favourably of its efficiency.

The proprietor of Fromer Lodge is certainly anything but modest in his valuation. I lost the purchase of the place for a parsonage by Debenham's letter to tell me of the sale being delayed a day and told him to let me know if it should be again for sale. But the price asked now and what it may probably bring would be beyond the Church means. If Mrs. Wedgwood should buy it, I hope she will let us have the part away from the house or a portion of it for a Parsonage. I have tried in vain to get a site.

With Mrs. Innes's kindest regards and congratulations, I am, Dear Darwin.

Yours faithfully  
J. Brodie, Innes

Horsman is still a matter of concern. It is assumed that Langley and Gibbon, 32 Great James Street, Bedford Row, were Horsman's lawyers.

Innes then writes at length about Darwin's new book, apparently *Variation of Plants and Animals under Domestication*, published on 30 January 1868. He expresses admiration, puzzlement and humour. Darwin's fairness to his critics and his pains to deal justly and factually with opponents were always a source of admiration to Innes. Reference to the election is not clear. The Prussian decoration is not identified. Darwin was elected a Corresponding Member of the Prussian Academy of Sciences (Berlin) in 1863 and became a Fellow 1878.

ULC (29) Milton Brodie, 31 August 1868

Dear Darwin

I see by a cheque Osborne has sent me that you have returned home. I hope much recruited by your trip.

I have paid the amount due by Mr. Horsman to the Sunday School, £5-3, and am ready to pay the balance for the day School. I had an application from Langly and Gibbon, 32 Great James Street, Bedford row for payment of his stipend, less school dues, but as school dues were not correctly stated, I have not yet paid ; anyway I bear the school clear of loss.

I have been reading your new book with the greatest interest. I don't know that I was ever so charmed with a natural history book. I jotted down a memorandum or two, which I send you and wish I could have done more. It is strange how differently the same facts appear to different people. As I read your book I became more and more impressed with the idea that you had abandoned the theory that what I should unscientifically call different brutes had probably come from a common origin, as every fact seemed to shew, there was not evidence of the least of change from one kind to another but that a horse is always a horse whether big, etc. So it was with no little surprise that I came to your summing up and I was lost in admiration that a man with a theory published a book to upset it, with all facts so carefully investigated and so truthfully told. I have not the book at hand but I think you suggest whales and mice as having a common ancestor. If you succeeded in getting a cross between these Scotch cousins, would the hybrid be fertile? The theological difficulty of the predestination of variation had never occurred to me nor do I think it is really any difficulty. We know we do as we please with what we have and certain results follow. We cause plants and animals to improve or deteriorate. We make corn into bread or spirit &c., the power to do so having been placed in our hands.

We know there must be a First Cause, that there must be infinite space, unlimited time and I begin to understand that my powers of thought are totally unfit to understand what is so far above me, and while I know those things must be, I cannot form an idea about them or how they are, infinite wisdom as far above our best learning as eternity is above a second of time.

I did not mean to write all this when I began. I hope you will excuse my remarks.

I don't know if the election is to bring me up. If I felt sure you would muster courage to go to Bromley, I would offer to pair with you. If you don't go, I sincerely hope it will not be sickness that keeps you at home. I knew Talbot long ago and he was a good man in my views. With Mrs. Innes kindest regard to you all, Believe me, Dear Darwin,  
Yours faithfully,

J. Brodie Innes

We congratulate you on your well deserved Prussian decoration. You must be ablaze of stars when you are in full fig.

There is more of Horsman and the school balance. There is discussion concerning more geological phenomena but a part of the letter could not be accurately deciphered and is omitted.

ULC (30) Milton Brodie, Forres, 28 September 1868

Dear Darwin

I have neglected to send you check for the school balance due by Mr. Horsman. I enclose it herewith. I hope you and the other

parishioners like Mr. Robinson if so I suppose he can stay as long as agreeable. I do not see what better can be done at this moment.

I fancy you all in the ferment of an election and trying hard to get John Bright made Dictator. It is proposed one glass case with company an old lady as the last sample of Tories. Will you have us in your museum? The lady is the mother-in-law of the Chancellor of the Exchequer but we won't have him in with us.

No special natural history notes have turned up lately. Can I look for anything for you about here? By the way a remarkable deflection of the plummet has been observed a little east of us and it is said there is a great bubble in the earth's substance below. If should fall in, we shall be done for, or perhaps we who are near the edge shall be on the border of an inland sea. I have an investigation going on now about it.

With our kind regards, Faithfully yours,

J. Brodie Innes

More long and tiresome details about the parish, tiresome simply because so many pertinent facts are missing. Remarks about the election are interesting even if very puzzling.

ULC (31) MILTON BRODIE, FORRES, N.B., 4th December, 1868

Dear Darwin

I owe you much for many kindnesses, the last, your letter received yesterday is by no means the least and I am indeed very much obliged to you for it. When I tell you my own standing point, you will see how glad I am of a confirmation of my own impressions. Poor Archbishop Sumner, who was not always the wisest of men, led me into the business which prevented my resigning Downe years ago. We hoped long before now we should have got a good Parsonage built on some good site (the site has been the obstacle as the money is ready) and the living further augmented. I had a notion if this could be done that I should have liked to come back among you. Deo aliter visum. No one can more lament the recent troubles than I do, but I justify in saying that, however I have failed, I am the only one who tried to do anything. I tried hard for the restoration of the church, and failed, because people fought for pews and got the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to attend to them. I found money for a house but no one would give or even sell a bit of land to build on, and even a clerical house will not stand on air. With any such help as is often afforded to an impoverished benefice by the layman, these could have been a much more satisfactory condition.

I imagine, as long as Stephens was with you things were pretty straight. I left them in that order, chiefly because I thought I might return if a house could be got. When Stephens departed and hastily let the house he had away from me, I decided to give up as early as possible. I had several communications with the late Archbishop and we had consulted on a plan which would probably have been carried out to the advantage of all, but he is gone and that done for.

How men can get testimonials or how people write in such a careless way about clergymen I cannot imagine. No one could have taken more pains to enquire about Horsman than I did, nor could answers well have been more satisfactory. Robinson seemed from accounts little less than a saint but I never contemplated his remaining longer than I could arrange either to restore the patronage to the Archbishop which I proposed to do and resign immediately, or make some other disposition. I hoped he would have been a hard zealous labourer as he was represented to me and make up for some of Horsman's sins. But he soon wrote me that he was going for a week or two to visit his brother at Dover ; he wrote in terms of anything but satisfaction of the people at Downe on several occasions. As I know Downe and not him, the impression made on me was rather opposite to the one intended, that the Downe people being very fair as times go [and that]\* he is not a desirable curate, whereupon, when he intimated to me that he was to be away for some weeks, I recommended him to resign. This brought an intimation that he should be back before Christmas this I acknowledged, and repeated my recommendation that he should resign at once. This last letter together with one to Sir J. Lubbock on the subject went yesterday.

Of all plans now the best to my mind would be that Arch Bishop Sumner's acts should be simply undone and the Archbishop resume all responsibility but it seems there are legal difficulties or this would have been done nearly a year ago. Next that Sir J. Lubbock as the largest proprietor and a churchman should be the Patron and appoint. If neither of these can be managed, I must find some other plan. It is not any advantage to me to hold it. I have spent thousands in living at Downe while the income only paid house rent and more than I received every year since I left so you may believe I am quite sincere in saying I hope Robinson will take my recommendations and resign and that before his three months' notice has expired, a new and satisfactory Vicar may be appointed.

I paid to Mr. Robinson my subscription of £5.5 for the school. I also sent the amount Mr. Horsman was due for day and Sunday School. I am not sure if I have in former years subscribed for Coal and clothing Club. I rather fancy that when I augmented Mr. Stephens' stipend I discontinued it, but if I subscribed last year, or if you are in want of funds, I shall be happy to give the amount formerly subscribed. I have not time to look into accounts and save posts.

I could hardly congratulate you on the election anyway as if I had not had an excuse for being away we should have been on opposite sides. If I could have voted as from personal feelings apart from politics, I should have voted for Sir John and Talbot. If one on each side had got in I should have desired those two.

Please give Mrs. Innes's with my own kindest regards to your family party. Johnny I am sorry to say, is poorly and I am in doubt whether I may not have to run over to Germany to see about him. Believe me,  
Dear Darwin, Faithfully yours,

Brodie Innes

\* Scored out in original.



There now follow four letters by Innes and one by Darwin in quick succession between 7 and 18 December. The first concerns a possible hybrid of a deer and a cow which elicited a prompt and deprecatory response. There is included in the collection of Darwin letters a newspaper clipping and a statement by a veterinary surgeon with a detailed description of the animal without expressing an opinion. Darwin adds a word about parish problems.

ULC (32) Milton Brodie, 7 December 1868

Dear Darwin

At our cattle shew today there was exhibited an odd looking beast supposed to be a cross between a Highland cow and a red deer or doe. It has much of the deer head and legs it is a dun, the hair curly on body, and nearly bare on legs. I did not see it at liberty but it is said to go with the long trot of the deer and to carry its head looking about like them. It strikes one on looking at it to have as much of the deer as cow about it. All that the owner, Miss McDonald, tenant of Blevie knows about it is that a little cow in the hills who had been in places frequented by deer had calved it two years ago. A veterinary surgeon at Inverness, McLean, bought it and I have told him to ascertain what he can about it and tell me in case you may care to know about it. I have asked him to give an accurate description of its coat, the formation of legs, gaits, habits, to ascertain whether the dam had been put to bull or if the bull was within reach of access when she was running loose. To send a photograph of the beast, a female. If this is a curiosity and anything occurs to you to ask, I will put the questions or you could ask them of Mr. McLean, v.s. Inverness.

McKay, a corn merchant in town, told me he had once before seen a beast of this kind but it was not such an ugly one as this.

Believe me Dear Darwin, Yours faithfully,

Brodie Innes

RMS (33) To Innes on scientific matters in an envelope post-marked Bromley and Down to :

The Rev  
J. Brodie Innes  
Milton Road  
Forres  
Scotland

Dec. 10 [1868]

DOWN  
BROMLEY  
KENT, S.E.

Dear Innes,

I am much obliged for your letter. I do not think the case worth investigating simply because it is so wonderful & opposed to analogy

that no naturalist could believe it unless the animal was most carefully examined by some *well-known*, cautious, & experienced zoologist.—Even then many could disbelieve as the act of union was not observed. A supposed hybrid was exhibited in London between a Deer & Pony ; but when examined by Owen turned out to be a monstrosity of a Pony, aided by some manipulation on the hoofs.—All such cases failed when examined into.—

As I am writing I had perhaps add that rumours are very common in our village about Mr. Robinson walking with girls at night.—I did not mention this before, because I had not even moderately good authority ; but my wife found Mrs. Allen very indignant about Mr. R.s conduct with one of her maids. I do not believe that there is any evidence of actual criminality. As I repeat only second hand my name must not be mentioned.—Our maids tell my wife that they do not believe that hardly anyone will go to church now that Mr. R. has returned.

What a plague this Parish does give you.—

Dear Innes  
Very sincerely yours,  
C. Darwin

ULC (34) MILTON BRODIE, FORRES N.B., 12 December 1868

Dear Darwin

Many thanks for your letter. If I can get any more information on the supposed hybrid you shall have it. It looks an uncommon queer beast to me. There is no suspicion of any tampering. The brother of the woman whose cow was the mother brought him down here as a curiosity and sold him for £10 about her value as a common little brute for meat.

Your other communication is serious. I had a hint of the kind too vague, to act on it anyway, a few days ago. It was my intention on the sole ground of absenting myself to give Mr. Robinson notice to go. I could not legally do this but should have to ask the Archbishop to withdraw his licence, but I should not be justified in doing this while other accusations are made which, if utterly groundless he should be able to refute.

I am exceedingly obliged to you for letting me know there are such afloat and only to this extent do I consider your letter goes and it is entirely confidential. But on the other hand it is utterly unjust to the Church to turn loose a dissipated man on the other hand it would be equally unjust in me to refuse to sign Robinson's testimonials and prevent his obtaining another Curacy or Preferment on a mere rumour which for all I know may be a mistake of identity made by some drunken blackguard. So I issue a challenge to the whole parish which I sent to you addressing the cover to Mr. Allen, but you may take it out, and give it to anyone else. I can only say that, though I do not know Mr. Robinson, I would try to protect him from malicious accusations

but if he is immoral, I will do all in my power to get him out forthwith. I am quite sure you will support me in these notions.

How heartily I now wish I had resigned Downe many years ago I need not say. I do not wish I had never seen it for then I should have missed making many kind friends and I hope I have some satisfaction in looking back on intercourse with some good Christians who have gone to their rest.

With our kindest regards to Mrs. Darwin, Believe me, with many thanks, yours faithfully,

J. Brodie Innes

ULC (35) MILTON BRODIE, FORRES N.B., 14 December 1868

Dear Darwin

In my letter of Saturday I omitted to express my hope that Miss Wedgwood will continue her offer of selling some of the land of Fromer for a site for a parsonage. I do not know that any other is available. I am doing all in my power both through an agent and privately to find an eligible Clergyman who will undertake to build, who may be presented to Downe, but as I observed before I cannot build in the air. Every attempt I have made in former years has been met with a refusal. The late Sir John [Lubbock ?] said his land was tied up. Old Phillips was always saying he wanted to see a Parsonage but when I said, then sell me your field and I will build, he could not part with his paternal acres. Phillips Orange Court would not sell a bit adjoining the glebe which would have made it available. Smith could have helped me best but refused under the advice of Mr. Abraham who is now, I dare say, one of the loudest complainers. I wrote again to Smith when Old Phillips died thinking I might prevail on him but got back just such an answer in matter as I should have expected, not quite so as to grammar and spelling, but this was accounted for by its being in a female hand. So at present the only hope seems to be that Miss Wedgwood will let me have land and that some arrangement may be made to deviate the footpath a little. I should not be the least surprised if those who expressed their wish for a resident clergyman's family should offer most strenuous opposition to lengthening by a few yards a path which they may tread once a year. I am now in communication with several Clergymen with this view, and I hope I may say, that as far as the owner is concerned, some land can be had which may be made suitable. Probably but for the vacancy in the Archbishopric I should have settled it before now by resigning and letting the new man build or not as he pleased or could, to get rid of the sad responsibility. Waiting to consult the new Archbishop has caused a little delay and in the meantime I try this other and better scheme.

I was very sorry to lose good Dr. Longley. I had met him several times, and thought of him as I believe everyone who knew him did. His help and advice was most valuable. I do not forget that you have taken, and are taking, a good deal of trouble as a labour of love, having

no responsibility but the desire to do good and help an old friend out of a most distressing dilemma.

Believe me, Dear Darwin, Yours Faithfully,

J. Brodie Innes

Printed note at head of letter (35) from a report of 'Forres shew', *Elgin Courant*, 11 December, 1868: 'Among the extra Stock the most attractive object was a cross, supposed to be between a deer and a common cow, shown by Mr. M'Donald, Blervie, two years of age, and reared at Aitnoch, Ardclach. It is a female animal, dun in colour, without any horns, with thin legs. It is about the size of a full-grown stag, resembles very much the appearance of a hind, and, as might be expected, formed an object of great admiration—quite a novelty among cattle and sheep.'

ULC (36) MILTON BRODIE, Forres N.B., 18 December 1868

Dear Darwin

I sent you yesterday the V.S. letter about the supposed hybrid. I was dining with a neighbour on Tuesday and talking about it. He is a very little more of a naturalist than I, so you may set him very low, he said, "I should entirely have disbelieved such a report but this beast speaks for herself and carries her own evidence on her face." Such is my own opinion, worthless though it is. If not part deer, it is a wonderful natural imitation. You could not possibly have . . . . . [letter torn away] done otherwise than withhold my circular as it is not taken up and I am much obliged by your having communicated with Mr. Allen.

I can do nothing more as the case stands. Of course I cannot suggest such a matter to the Church wardens, saying that I have heard it, and giving no clue for investigation. No doubt if there is any foundation for rumours the Churchwardens would hear it and it is their duty to present to the Bishop. They incur no responsibility whatever by doing so nor could an action be brought against them if the rumour should prove utterly false. Neither can I write to Robinson about it without some ground to go on. I know too much of reports in general and Downe reports in particular to credit anything which people say behind a man's back and are afraid to say to his face. Of course I have no opinion myself in this matter. His leaving the Parish twice in a short time and his own letter to me caused me to think he was not suited for the place and to advise him to resign. This was before I heard a word about him but certainly if it ev[er hap]pened to me as a layman to know or reasonably believe that a clergyman was not moral in his conduct, I think as an honest man there are only two courses open. To say what I know right out, or hold my peace entirely. You and I know nothing, and can only try to excite those who say they know to act honestly. You may not be aware that a vicar has no power over a licensed curate. To cause his removal the Bishop must revoke his license which he can

do summarily without any legal or judicial procedure and would . . . . .  
. . . . . do for such cause as is reported now to exist in Downe. He would desire the Rural Dean to enquire and to act at once on his report. I hope there may very soon be a resident vicar and that the services of a curate dispensed with.

Very many thanks for your kind invitation. I could do no good by coming up on purpose just now or I would at any inconvenience to myself. When I do come, I hope it will be for a more satisfactory reason and it will, if you happen not to be full at the time, give me the greatest pleasure to avail myself of your hospitality.

With our kindest regards, Believe me, Dear Darwin, Yours faithfully,  
J. Brodie Innes

[The letter referred to in the opening sentence of Letter 36 reads as follows :

J. Brodie Innes, Esq.

Mill Burn Cottage  
Inverness Dec. 15 1868

Sir,

I beg to be excused for being so long in answering your letter of the 8th which I duly received.

As for the query whether the cow was sent to a Bull or whether there was a Bull going along with the cow I can not in the mean time anser. Mr. McDonald told me that the woman had only one cow—in the neighbourhood of a deer Forrest.

The head of the animal resembles altogether that of a deer. The teeth are differently set from those of a cattle beast. The Eye is distinctly that of a deer. In short the head and ears are quite different from that of a cow, the ears are perfectly bare of hair. The Ligamentum is much stronger than that of a cattle beast of the same age. The cervical vertebra is also peculiarly that of a deer.—the general construction of the trunk is such as a cattle beast of the same age would have with the exception of the dorsal spines which are much longer. The extremities again differ completely from those of a cattle beast. The bones being much finer, the muscles being harder. And much more of tendinous construction. Showing a peculiar adaptation for speed there are several parts of the body in the mean time perfectly free of hair particularly the extremities. My own Impression is that when the animal casts its coat in Spring it will be almost bare of hair. The gait more resembles that of a deer than that of a cattle beast. The hair in the mean time is soft and silky. Any more information I will gladly give.

S. McLean.]

The following series of six letters deals largely with parochial matters. These letters demonstrate again Darwin's deep interest and continued attention to such affairs. They all contain reference to other topics :

Johnny, at Cambridge, had entered Bradfield College at Easter 1869 ; the threatened suit by Mr Horsman and the possibility of testifying in court upset Darwin very much ; Innes is embarrassed at his part in it ; nothing serious seems to have come of it.

ULC (37) MILTON BRODIE, FORRES, N.B., 15 October 1869

Dear Darwin

It seems sad to lose sight of old friends and this perhaps, is one chief reason for my taking up my pen with a line to you today. We are often reminded of you by our admiration of the most beautiful photograph you were so kind as to give me, which hangs in a post of honour in the drawing room looking at another good friend, now gone to his rest, Archbishop Longley, the photograph being however far behind that of yourself. I have just been reading a paper about you which has given me much pleasure by Mr. Hutton at the Liverpool Church Congress. I hope you have seen it.

I wonder how you are getting on in Church matters at Downe. I do not hear much from Powell. Perhaps he thinks I have not helped him as I should in the matter of the proposed parsonage. When Sir John asked me about it, I could do no less or more than simply say how the case actually stood. I conclude you saw my letter. It would be a great advantage to restore and re-seat the Church and for this I should gladly contribute, and probably had the parsonage question been disposed of as I hoped this would soon have been undertaken.

We jog on in a quiet humdrum sort of existence here. Mrs. Innes violent headaches being rather less frequent of late, but distressing when they come. Johnny is off again to Cambridge after a short holiday. He spent the early part of the vacation in College and had less outdoor amusement here than he should, having been laid up with bronchitis caught at the opening of the Inverness Cathedral on a wet day.

I think I told you I had one milk white partridge last year. This year I have seen four among brown ones. If they should escape guns and other enemies, it is possible a race may be established. I avoid injuring them myself. I wish I had something of interest to tell you. With my kindest regards to your party, Believe me, Dear Darwin,  
Faithfully yours,

J. Brodie Innes

RMS (38) Oct. 18  
69

DOWN  
BECKENHAM  
KENT, S.E.

My dear Innes

I was wishing to hear some news of you & had thought of writing, but I get so many foolish letters from foolish people, that I seldom

have the heart to write to my friends. There is hardly any news to tell you of your old Parish.—Mr. Punch has taken Mr. Engleheart's House & this I am very glad of, as he will now be able to look after the Parish & school, & I daresay he will be active & kind ; but I rather doubt whether he is above the average in sense.—We suspect on very slight grounds that he is going to be married ; for he has given notice to Amy Dubarry that a Lady will soon teach in the Sunday School.—Possibly it may be Mrs. Lovegrove.—I hear of no chance of a parsonage being built ; Mr. Punch wished to get up a subscription, but I doubt whether he will succeed.—I offered 20£ which he seemed to think very small, but I shall not increase the amount ; for I see no reason that the Parsonage should cost 16 or 1700£ as he proposes. Mr. Engleheart's lungs (& I fear purse also) failed him ; & he is to us a fearful loss as a doctor. I have neither seen nor heard anything of the Lubbocks for an age—but this is not true for I often hear their harriers in the morning. Mrs. H. Lubbock finds Downe so dull that they intend taking a London House, & coming occasionally to the Farm for the hunting in the winter ; & I suspect poor Henry Lubbock is ready to hang himself at the thoughts of his London life.—

I have not seen or heard of Mr. Hutton's remarks on me at the Liverpool congress ; & this I regret, for I suppose it is Mr. Hutton, editor of the Spectator, who is a very clever man, who feels a deep interest in religion & thinks he could be considered by all churchmen as highly latitudinarian.—The newspapers have lately been abusing, praising & chaffing me at a great rate.—

[Signature torn away.]

ULC (39) MILTON BRODIE, FORRES, N.B., 20 October 1869

Dear Darwin

Many thanks for your kind letter. I find that the Guardian which contains Mr. Hutton's paper has not yet gone to the fire so I send it to you by this post with this line to say don't send it back as I make no use of papers but to burn.

It will be an advantage to have Mr. Powell in Downe rather than at Bromley. I had not heard of any matrimonial intentions. Perhaps he has been visiting you and allowed your example to keep out of sight all the awful warnings ; poor Henry Lubbock dragged to London when he wants to hunt ; myself tied down when I want to go and see the Sultan with the Empress, etc., but if he really contemplates the rash act he will surely build a parsonage, £200 ready to buy land, £700 pounds from Eccles. Commission, probably £200 from the Church building Society, leaving £500 for him to pay beg or borrow, the extreme rate of interest and insurance being no more than he would pay for a bad cottage. I do not think there would be any economy in reducing the size and cost, a very comfortable small house would be well built for £1400 and as the Commission gives half up to this, every £50 saved to Powell would be a 100 pounds off the building. You are aware that he first agreed with me to provide the £700 at once and when it

appeared his available means were not equal to doing this immediately he engaged to do it as early as possible. I have no doubt of its being done, my dread is that somehow the site may be missed as was so often the case with me. If Miss Wedgwood will take the £200 from me, I will buy it at once and hold it till wanted. It seems to me so much to Powell's advantage to proceed that if he does not, I shall agree with you that he is not above the average in sense. It is rather Irish, but one fancies the large majority are rather below an average. Anyhow please do you and Miss Darwin, who are engaged as counsel on my side look out that the site does not escape the Church. We have a sudden outbreak of cold and the hills are covered with snow. It will not be pleasant to look on at my tenant's plowing match today in the cold North wind, but we hope the Indian summer is to follow.

With our kindest regards to you all, Believe me, Faithfully yours,  
J. Brodie Innes

RMS (40) On parochial matters.

Jan 18 [1870]

DOWN  
BECKENHAM  
KENT, S.E.

My dear Innes

I am truly obliged for your kind & extremely pleasant letter. I was at first awfully annoyed : I really think being examined in court could half-kill me.—I have had no communication with Mr. Horsman ; but my solicitor from what I had told him, thought the man could never be such a fool, as to bring the case into court. He advises me to take no trouble till he hears from Mr. Horsman's solicitors that he is in earnest.—I have already heard of 3 unpaid debts in this village. If things go on I will apply to Lubbock for chance of his having preserved the letters to which you refer.—If I have to defend myself, I will push things to extreme. I heard that he bolted from Hotel at Torquay, after leaving Down, without paying his bill.—I suspect that Mr. Robinson is the informant, as he is now in this neighbourhood—curate of Brastead, & is a friend of Horsman's. If he is informant, it is too bad, for I remember explaining to Mr. R. why people would not pay subscriptions for School etc to him, only to me, and why persons did not call on him, as his predecessor had been a mere swindler. Poor little Mr. R. will look like a fool, if asked in court why he left Down.—I believe & hope that you will prove right, & that the case will never come to trial. Certainly we have been unfortunate in Mr. H. & Mr. R., Mr. Powell is, I think, a thoroughly good man & gentleman. Does good work of all kinds in the Parish, but preaches, I hear, very dull sermons. I should be a wonderful brute, if I had one single unpleasant recollection of or association with your name. We often differed, but you are one of those rare mortals, from which one can differ & yet feel no shade of animosity,—& that is a thing which I shd feel very proud of, if anyone could say of me.—Farewell with my kind remembrances to Mrs. Innes & your son

Yours very sincerely  
Charles Darwin



ULC (41) Milton Brodie [Jan.] 21, 1870

Dear Darwin

I was right glad to get your letter yesterday, and to see that you are jolly under trying circumstances like the immortal Mark Tapley and I am very glad too that you have no grudge against me for the share I had in sending you two such bad lots. I do not acquit myself, for I feel I ought to have stuck to my own post, or given it up at once to the Archbishop and the result has made me very much lament I did not take a more correct line of duty. Certainly you and I never were like to quarrel over our differences, thanks mostly to your kind forbearance with some hot headedness, etc. I am sometimes amused at the look of wonder which follows my statement in the midst of a Darwinian theory discussion "Mr. Darwin is one of my very most valued and dearest friends." I always think so, and say so when occasion offers. Dear me ! if some of your naturalists, and my ritualist friends were to hear us two saying civil things to each other, they would say the weather was going to change, or Paris to be relieved, both which I wish might happen. Nobody can tell what that mad fool may do or say, he can do no harm anyway, and I don't see how under any circumstances you could be had up for examination. I have not the least doubt that everything you said was true and only part of the truth, but you could not be had up for examination. I have not the least doubt that everything you said was true and only part of the truth, but you could not be called to prove or disprove. I may be, and I don't care in the least if I am. It would not bore me, and even if it did I should accept it as a penance for my bad care of you lambs in the choice of a shepherd. So have no hesitation in saying I am quite willing to be called if necessary. For your guidance and that of your Solicitor I put in a sort of a form, that is separated from gossip and rubbish what I could really say about the Arcades Ambo. I am glad to hear matters have been better of late. When we get a house built, and a Lady in it, all without asking for subscriptions, I hope the Parishioners will come forward liberally and restore and enlarge the Church. I am afraid our sermons are dull that is perhaps our misfortune. It is a wilful sin if we make them long as well. I cut mine down now to 10 or 15 minutes and everybody says "they are so glad when I preach because they are sure of a short sermon." Can anything in the world be ruder ? But I bear it like a Christian.

With our united kindest regards to you all, Believe me, Dear Darwin,  
Yours Faithfully,

J. Brodie Innes

RMS (42) On parish matters.

Jan. 26 [1870]

DOWN  
BECKENHAM  
KENT, S.E.

My dear Innes

I have had two very bad days & am shaken & must be very brief.—; but I cannot delay thanking you heartily for all your trouble.—I will

keep all your documents for a few weeks & then return them.—I have not heard from my solicitor, he cannot have heard from Mr. Horsman.—A Q.C. with whom my own George is reading, tells him he is convinced that H. could have no case, as it makes all the difference what is said only in contention in the same Parish in which parsons reside, & I cannot remember that I ever uttered the man's name out of this Parish.—

I read your letter aloud to my ladies, & they all laughed heartily, but it also excited other & higher feelings in all of us with respect to you.—By the way Henrietta exclaimed (& I can assure you she is the deepest critic I know in the World) “how unjust he is about his own sermons, why they were the only ones I ever heard in my life, to the whole of which I always listened,” I believe her words “I could not help listening too”.—You are a bold audacious man to tell your clerical friends that you [are] a friend to me.—I read the other day a story of a Scotch minister who said “now let us pray for the poor devil—for he has no friends”—or some such words—The application is evident.

Ever yours most sincerely

C. Darwin

The next letter with a clipping illustrates again Innes's interest in natural history and his alertness in informing Darwin of all significant facts.

ULC (43) No date. It was obviously written after January 28, 1870.

Dear Darwin

The above is from the Elgin Courier 28th January 1870. I have not seen the animal. It is satisfactory to know that the former one, which I told you of before, and which seemed if not a hybrid, a wonderfully good imitation of one has gone to a menagerie where perhaps in life or death the truth of its origin may be tested. Some old red deer seems to have taken to erratic courses about the ancient haunts of the Wolf of Badenoch. Faithfully yours,

J. Brodie Innes

The clipping is as follows :

#### HYBRID COW

There is at present a hybrid cow among the herd at the home of Beaufort—cross apparently between a deer and a cow. Except in the colour which is black, the animal is identical in appearance with the one lately sold by Mr. MacLean V.S. to the proprietor of Wombwell's Menagerie. Strange to say, both animals were bred in or near the same parish, Ardelach, and in many respects bear a similar history. Mr. Lawson, manager at Beaufort, bought the cow last autumn among a herd of cattle and it has since been seen and admired by many. The hybrid cow in Wombwell's Menagerie was calved at Lochindorb, and was

exhibited by Mr. M'Donald, at the Forres Christmas Cattle Show in 1868.

A long and philosophical letter follows about the *Descent of Man*, which appeared on 24 February 1871. Innes's 'great sorrow' causing him to abandon his farm is not identified.

ULC (44) Milton Brodie Innes, NB

Dear Darwin

I have today finished reading your charming book, for so in truth I have found it as all that have come from your pen, full of the most interesting facts of natural history. I am not a convert to the theory you found on them. I hold to the old belief that a man was made a man though developed into niggers who must be made to work and better men able to make them, if those radicals did not interfere with the salutary chastisement needful, neglecting the lesson taught by the black ants slaves to the white. Also that a horse was made a horse though perhaps my old cart mare who is peacefully grazing before my windows and the Zephyr colt may have had a common ancestor in the dim distance.

What a dolt you must think me ; if you ever succeed in tracing our pedigrees back a few years further than we go, even in Scotland, I hope you will be merciful to our prejudices. I heard that Sir B. Burke offered for a consideration to give Lord Seafield a pedigree from the Plantagenets so a good deal may be done. I have an abhorrence of an ape, but in my boy days had a very favourite little ring tailed monkey, and I should much prefer one of that kind as my immediate ancestor. Please think of my request favourably. In the meantime one or two little notions crossed me as I read. I have heard the story of the retriever and wounded birds and am quite convinced of its accuracy. Here is another for you. My mother at her house at Hythe had as a pet a very wise old setter, who had been long my companion, crossed the Atlantic with me and held a certificate for having been to Termination rock under Niagara. A hundred yards or so from our house was another occupied by Mrs. Quihampton, a widow lady, the grounds being separated by a five foot wall. One day, walking in the garden with a friend, we saw Bob jump over the wall in great haste, deposit something, and jump back in a hurry ; he had brought over four mutton chops, put them down on his own side, and gone back for four more with which he quickly returned. He had found that Mrs. Q's kitchen door open and the dish standing handy ; he could not carry all at once, and must have reasoned that, if he was not quick about it the cook would be back, so he would secure all on his own premises before he ate any. I fear it did not say much for the cultivation of his moral sense, nor perhaps for mine, as in appreciation of his talent, I allowed him to enjoy the fruits of his raid unmolested.

I see you state that pigeons of other colours are not liked by the blue ones. I do not find it to be so here. I have a dovecot of domesticated

blue rocks where there are hundreds of them, and among them a few white and occasionally brown ones, but they live in perfect peace. Probably the white would become more numerous but that when a hawk takes one it is almost always a white one.

I think I told you I had an albino partridge two years ago. I had it very carefully watched, it paired with a brown one, and there were four white birds and six brown ones in the covey. One got away and was killed on the next property but four survived the season ; I allow no shooting on the farm where they lived and I saw at least three of them paired, each with a brown mate ; but whether they changed their plumage, or were all killed in some way I cannot tell, for not a white one old or young was about last autumn.

In my great sorrow I have given up and let my home farm. I had got it into capital order and had a little herd of fine beasts but the wretched farm servants drove me to the verge of insanity. After some worse specimens I had a groom for two years with more than the average amount of honesty ; but the most sulky pig headed man in Europe ; however, I would have kept him had he pleased, but he chose to go, and of others I heard of, this one was always drunk, that one a thief, etc., etc. They all shift about every half year, or year at most for no reason but folly, and are a thorough bad lot and ignorant to an extent you can hardly fancy. The schools rate supported where they ought to be taught are given up to Latin and Greek for the Ministers and others children, and the poor clan possibly sit and are not taught. I wonder what they will develop into. I am in a state of despair when I think of all my fourfooted and feathered two footed friends which were sold last Wednesday and am only consoled by thinking I have no more trouble with the unfeathered bipeds.

Another dog story of a still earlier date occurs to me. I had a favourite white terrier at Hythe bred at home which had never lived elsewhere. I went in my father's carriage to a tutor's some 25 miles. Tartar jumped in and went with me returning the same afternoon in the carriage. He had never been more than 5 miles from home in his life. He stayed at home a week and then ran away and came to me preceding my mother's letter to tell me how distressed they were that Tartar was lost. He must have waited some days to see if I came back. Then it passed through his little head that my luggage and general look indicated I should stay where he left me and he would cut off and see about it.

I think on consideration I had almost rather have a dog for an ancestor than even a ring tailed monkey. At any rate they have more attachment, more sense and nearly as much morality as a good many of our labourers.

With our kindest regards to Mrs. Darwin and all your party, Believe me, Dear Darwin, Yours Faithfully

J. Brodie Innes

RMS (45) May 29th 1871

DOWN  
BECKENHAM, KENT

My dear Innes

I have been very glad to receive your pleasant letter ; for to tell you the truth, I have sometimes wondered whether you would not think

me an outcast & a reprobate after the publication of my last book.— I do not wonder at all at your not agreeing with me, for a good many professed naturalists do not. Yet when I see in how extraordinary a manner the judgment of naturalists has changed since I published the *Origin*, I feel convinced that there will be in two years quite as much unanimity about man, as far as his corporeal frame is concerned.— Anyhow my views do not lead me to such conclusions about negroes & slavery as yours do : I consider myself a good way ahead of you, as far as this goes.—

Thanks for the very curious story about the dog & mutton chops. They are wonderful animals, & deserve to be loved with all one's heart, even when they do steal mutton-chops.— I am very sorry that you have been compelled to give up your farm, for I am sure it must have been a great amusement, & that you would have managed it very well.—

I have seen no one for a long time & heard no news of Mr. Powell.— The Friendly Club, which flourishes, meets tomorrow & I shall read aloud the account on my lawn in the usual way.— You proved right about Mr. Horsman, & I never heard a word more from or about him ; so I returned all the documents, which you were so very kind as to send me, & which I should think it would be worth while to keep for some years, in case the scamp should again turn up.— With hearty thanks for your letter with all its interesting details. Believe me Dear Innes

Yours very sincerely

Ch. Darwin

ULC (46) Blessington House, Lee, Kent June 5, 1871

Dear Darwin

Your kind letter has made a round by Milton and back here. I am only in town for a very few days on business and have left the wife at home. She writes me she has put up Horsman's documents safely and you should have them again if wanted. After I sent them to you I found the one from Hale at the time Horsman was in prison saying that Chapman doubted his sanity.

I have not heard lately from Powell. He had an idea, some time back, of exchanging with one Mr. Ffinden which required my consent. I gave it, rather unwillingly, first because the transaction between Mr. Ffinden and Mr. Gilman, the patron of the living he was to get, did not quite approve it self to me and because though I heard all good of Mr. Ffinden's moral character, his clerical ability was not stated as very high ; he had, however, capital testimonials to his wife's qualifications, and I consented, but it fell through and as I do not choose to have Downe hawked about, I do not consent again and I suppose Mr. Powell will stay until he gets something better.

I should have liked to get a day to see you but fear I shall not manage it, as I have more places to go than days to go in. I leave this afternoon I think for Berk's Knight, Bruce down north of me at a fishing at Durness and who says he is to look me up on his way south.

I expect Johnny from Cambridge today and suppose we shall go north together soon. With kind regards to all, Believe me,

J. Brodie Innes

There follows a letter to Mrs. Darwin devoted largely to financial problems of the Church. Innes here refers to his son as Jack for the first time instead of Johnny. Jack received his B.A. degree in the spring of 1872.

ULC (47) Milton Brodie, Forres N.B. 8 March 1872

Dear Mrs. Darwin

Reversing the usual practice I will begin with business. If it is not too much trouble would you tell me about Downe Church restoration, on which subject I am mystified. Some time ago Mr. Ffinden sent me a report and plan of certain improvements and additions. A chief part was to be done to the church (apart from its chancel) for about £1100, and he asked me to give £50. I agreed on condition that not less than 1000 should be laid out. Hearing that the subscriptions were liberal and much interest taken, I hoped all proposed, and perhaps even more might be done, and sent our offer having promised £50 to £1000, that I would give £25 toward additional £500. I have a letter today from Mr. Ffinden to say some objections and difficulties were raised at a vestry, that no apse, organ chamber, or other addition can be made, that the sum will be only £700 and to know if I will still give £50. So I ask for information and as orators say, pause for a reply, asking you to tell me what is the matter and what the hitch.

If you have had as mild and pleasant a winter as we have had, Mr. Darwin will have rejoiced. We have had very little wet, only two days' ice when we were slow, and did not get ice houses filled ; no snow and a succession of warm days when even my wife has been out without much wraps and preferred open carriage. The Apricots and peaches on the open walls are in full bloom and I expect no fruit in consequence, for frost must come.

I hope you have had good reports of all your family, especially of your daughter. I think she is in London, it must be a great change from the bracing air of Downe. Jack has also favoured us with his company for some time. He was in for examination at Christmas and only got away for a week or two. He proposes to be here at Easter. I hope to get South when the butterflies come out and see some of my friends. I vegetate here until I get as immovable and crusty as an oyster. I hoped to have seen the old Church restored. Did you see the Architect's report ? I had no notion it had been quite as good before it was modernized.

With our kindest regards to Mr. Darwin and all your party, Believe me, Dear Mrs. Darwin, Yours Faithfully

J. Brodie Innes

RMS (48) Page 1 is in Darwin's handwriting, second in another's. The signature is Darwin's.

Feb. 7th [1875]

DOWN  
BECKENHAM, KENT  
RAILWAY STATION  
ORPINGTON, S.E.R.

Dear Innes

I am sorry to trouble you ; but the Registrar of Friendly Soc. seems to have got into a fine muddle & informs the Post-office that he has no records of any Trustees for the Down Friendly Soc. Although quite lately he sent me a form for Mr. Pearson, which was properly filled up & returned to the Registrar who communicated with the National Debt Office. Nevertheless we must fill up the inclosed forms. Will you therefore be so good as to sign your name in the two places where I have marked with pencil. One of the signatures requires witnessing and I should think the witness had better give occupation & place of residence. Will you kindly let me have the papers back as soon as you can.

Yrs very sincerely  
Charles Darwin

RMS (48A) To Innes from Emma Darwin. This letter is ascribed to 1874 because that is the date of Frank's marriage and of Leonard's voyage to New Zealand to observe the transit of Venus.

DOWN  
BECKENHAM, KENT  
RAILWAY STATION  
ORPINGTON, S.E.R.  
Oct 12-[1874]

My dear Mr. Innes

It is some time since I have sent you any parish news ; & as we hear a rumour of an important change, & will give you the first information of it ; though I have not much hopes that it will prove true.

It is said that on the death of Mr. Ffinden's uncle Mr. Sketchley, vicar of Deptford, which has just taken place, his son is to come here & Mr. Ffinden to take the Deptford living. This would certainly be a great blessing to this place, as Mr Ffinden has no influence here & has excited general dislike. The chapel is so crowded that it has been enlarged. I do not mention this as an evil from my point of view, but only as a proof of Mr Ff's unpopularity. You will not think me an impartial person perhaps as he cuts every member of our family when we meet ; but as I said before the scheme of exchange sounds most improbable.

Frank & his wife are settled in your old house & like the place very much. They have bought up old carved chests & cabinets in Wales,

(her native country) & have made the rooms look very well, & the garden is certainly beyond the average in prettiness and snugness. Frank helps his father & I hope will save him a good deal ; but I am afraid it will always be against Mr Darwin's nature to sit idle & rest himself. I am afraid Lady Lubbock's health is failing in a way to cause great uneasiness, though we cannot hear of any specific disorder. Some people are afraid that the Railway accident some years ago has left some mischief which has been in abeyance hitherto. Pray give my kind love to Mrs. Innes. I hope she & you will come & see us again, & with Charles's very kind regards

Yours very sincerely  
Emma Darwin

P.S. I obeyed your directions about *Aquilegia*, but it has not come up, neither your seed, nor some other of the same kind. The gardener however hopes still that it will appear in the spring.

(With envelope addressed as follows :

The Rev I Brodie Innes  
Milton Brodie  
Forres  
N.B.

Then comes more about natural history and a long discussion about education in Scotland. Darwin's youngest son Frank was an excellent musician. Leonard participated in an astronomical expedition to Australia to witness the transit of Venus.

ULC (49) Milton Brodie, Forres, 7 May 1875

Dear Darwin

In March 1874 my keeper turned about six very small rabbits about the size of rats, with a ferret from a hole near this house. Four the usual brown and two quite white. I desired the white ones should not be killed. One of them came down in its infancy and established itself on the Lawns, where my wife noticed it and as she seldom gets beyond the windows it became known as her white rabbit. It seems to bear a charmed life, of course it is not shot, but the terriers chase it and ferrets in holes are risky. There it is yet and much tamer than its brown relations. But it is no longer white. For the last two or three weeks patches of fawn colour have begun near the tail and have crept over most of the snowy coat. It seems to be developing into a hare.

Unfortunately, I never saw more of the blackbird which used to fly at the head of everyone who went near her nest some years ago. I took care that the young ones should not be disturbed in hope the peculiarity would be inherited but I have never had an attack since. I hope Mrs. Darwin's Border *Colombine* have proved a success. Mine are now in full bloom, and I have a pan full of young ones from the same seed I sent her.

I saw in the Bromley Record that Dr. Darwin (I suppose Frank)



had contributed to the pleasure of a concert at the school. We generally conclude here that the school act will treble the cost, and on the whole rather diminish the efficacy of the school. Under the old system (and in that respect no alterations will be made) Scotch Parish Schools gave a good education to the middle classes, sons of Ministers, farmers and the like, and those of the peasantry who were clever enough and could stay long enough to learn higher branches. A small cottar on my land who was employed a good deal as a labourer here has two sons, of whom one has got into a lawyer's office as a Clerk and the other is a pupil teacher. In the same school (though not always with as good results) the Ministers' sons are prepared for the University of Aberdeen and those of farmers paying £300 or more of rent are taught. But 80 per cent of the children go to work or service, and must be neglected. Their education is infinitely less than we gave the children in our School at Downe. I hope there may be better examinations than was the custom when it was left to ministers who had been schoolmasters themselves, and were satisfied with having questions asked by the master and answered, without question to whether anything was really understood. I doubt if the compulsory system will work well. There are always some depraved families where the children are brought up to steal, swear and other bad things. To their misfortune they were never sent to school. Now they are caught and driven in, but I believe the infection they bring with them is tenfold greater than any good they can be expected to carry off.

I have been betrayed with a sort of essay which I fear will bore you if you read it. I was sorry to see that your son's station on the Transit expedition met with such unfavourable weather. It must have been a great disappointment to him. I had intended to have been in England about this time but my wife's niece who had been here for the winter was called away by a marriage which is an irresistible call to women, and I could not leave the wife alone.

With our best regards to Mrs. Darwin and your children, Believe me,  
Faithfully Yours,

J. Brodie Innes

RMS (50) On cross breeding of rabbits, schools, etc. The envelope is addressed as follows and postmarked Beckenham and Hayes, May 10, 1875.

The Rev

Dr. Brodie Innes

Milton Brodie

Forres

Scotland

May 10th [1875]

DOWN  
BECKENHAM, KENT

RAILWAY STATION  
ORPINGTON, S.E.R.

Dear Innes

Your case of the rabbit is a curious one ; but there is something very odd about the colours of young rabbits. There are breeds, which are

invariably white when young & then become almost black ; & other breeds which are at first black & then become almost white.—Most of them were aboriginally crossed breeds, & I should suspect that the parents of Mrs. Innes-Brodies rabbit were of impure origin.—

Your account of your schools has interested me much, & all the more as on Saturday Ld Young, who as Ld Advocate introduced your school-boards, was lunching here, & was talking about the Scotch schools.—He was remarking how odd it was that the voters who taxed themselves now spent very much more in their schools than was formerly done.—He did not know anything about the relative advantages of Scotch & English primary schools.—I have no news, whatever to tell you about the neighbourhood, as I see, if that be possible, even fewer people than formerly.—Mr. Duck, you will have heard, is dead, & we have had to appoint a new Trustee to the Friendly Club in his place, & the Committee elected Mr. Pearson.—By the way there is a wonderful piece of news, Mr. Ffinden has forgiven Mr. Pearson, & they are reconciled.—I have not been very well of late & have been working too hard in correcting the proof of another of my evolution books viz on Insectivorous Plants—which contains hardly anything about evolution.—

We never cease to wish you had not left us.

Yours very sincerely  
Ch. Darwin

My wife desired me to say that the plants of your *Aquilegia* are doing well, but not nearly so forward as yours,

Darwin testified before the Royal Commission on vivisection in 1875. He was always violent in his opposition to cruelty to animals although recognizing the importance to physiology of studies on living organisms. The year is a sheer guess.

RMS (51) No date Feb. 25 to Innes in Francis Darwin's handwriting.

Feb. 25 [1877]

DOWN  
BECKENHAM, KENT

Dear Innes

I have received the book. Many thanks for you & your son for the extracts from the Act ; but I procured a copy from London. Last night I gave the club a long harangue, which I think produced some effect ; at least it acted like a bomb-shell for all the members seem to have quarrelled for the next two hours. I do not think there is the least chance of the dissolution of the Club. I had much satisfaction in reading aloud the penal clause.

Yours very sincerely  
Ch. Darwin

In a secretary's handwriting, probably that of Frank.

RMS (52) Oct 5, 1877

DOWN  
BECKENHAM, KENT

RAILWAY STATION  
ORPINGTON, S.E.R.

Dear Innes,

It is a curious story about the tree. I am sorry that I am not a botanist ; but I think the bush is the wild or single Guelder-rose, which is said to be very rare in Scotland. Next summer you could know whether it is the guelder-rose as the exterior flowers on the corymb or head have considerably larger petals than the interior flowers.

I wish indeed you back here, but I know is an idle dream. Our present man has been at peace with all mankind, wonderful to say, for several months. We are glad to hear that Mr. Hoole will soon be here : someone, but I cannot remember who, was speaking to us in the highest terms about him. I cannot think of any local news to tell you. I am going on just as usual & working very hard with Frank, at plants—

Believe me  
dear Innes,  
Yours very sincerely  
Charles Darwin

The following printed passage is pasted beneath his signature.

A ROSS-SHIRE TRADITION

A TRADITION prevails in Ross-shire that it was foretold by the last preacher in a kirk at Loch Carron, now ruined, that after his death an unknown tree should spring up where his pulpit was, and that when it reached above the wall there should be a European war. A tree of which the like is not known in the neighbourhood has grown on the spot. This year for the first time the top is above the wall. I send you a sprig and berries. Can you tell me what tree it is ?—J. Brodie Innes

[The tree is *Sambucus racemosa*, Red-Berried Elder, introduced by Gerarde in the year 1596. No genus has more superstitions connected with it than has the *Sambucus*.]

ULC (53) Milton Brodie, Forres 20 October 1877

Dear Darwin

Thanks for your note about the Loch Carron tree. I sent a portion of it to the Journal of Horticulture and the editor replies, "The tree is the *Sambucus Racemosa* Red berried Elder, introduced by Gerarde in the year 1596. No genus has more superstition connected with it than has the *Sambucus*." If Stuart is still at Courthall next summer I shall examine the flowers. Could the wily old minister have got some seeds and stuck them in where he foretold (if he did) that the tree should grow. I am glad to see your Coal and Clothing Club is doing well. Ffinden sent in a report of it.

And I am glad to hear that Ffinden has an interval of pacific tempers,

some at least of Hoole's family are, I hear at Downe already. I think you will like them the children are the dearest little bodies I know and the parents very genial and pleasant.

With our kindest regards, Faithfully yours,

J. Brodie Innes

RMS (54) On Pusey's sermon against evolution. See letter in *Life*, III, 325.

Nov. 27th [1878]

DOWN  
BECKENHAM, KENT

RAILWAY STATION  
ORPINGTON, S.E.R.

My dear Innes

Many thanks for your most kind letter & for sending me Dr. Pusey's sermon, which I have been glad to see, but I am a little disappointed in it, as I expected more vigour & less verbiage.—I hardly see how religion & science can be kept as distant as his reviews, as geology has to tell of the history of the Earth & Biology that of Man.—But I most wholly agree with you that this is no reason why the disciples of either school should attack each other with bitterness, though each upholding strongly their beliefs. You, I am sure, have always practically acted in this manner in your conduct toward me & I do not doubt to all others. Nor can I remember that I have ever published a word directly against religion or the clergy. But if you were to read a little pamphlet which I traced a couple of days ago by a clergyman, you would laugh & admit that I had some excuse for bitterness; after abusing me for 2 or 3 pages in language sufficiently plain and emphatic to have satisfied any reasonable man, he sums up by saying that he has vainly searched the English language to find terms to express his contempt of me & all Darwinians. We have just returned from a week in London, where we went as I wanted rest, but I am now tired, so will write no more.

I suppose that the misery from the wicked Glasgow bank is something inconceivably great in Scotland.

Believe me  
My dear Innes  
Yours very sincerely  
Ch. Darwin

ULC (55) Milton Brodie Innes, 1 December 1878

Dear Darwin

I want to thank you for your most kind letter, not to inflict on you the smallest call to reply to what I say, but only to express my own idea on the subject Pusey has spoken of.

Lately I was at our Church Congress at Dundee, where a Bishop

and some Parsons were assembled as guests in a hospitable house, and one evening when the subject was introduced, I said, "I have the pleasure of the intimate friendship of one of the very first naturalists in Europe. He is a most accurate observer and never states anything as a fact which he has not most thoroughly investigated. He is a man of the most perfect moral character and his scrupulous regard for the strictest truth is above that of almost all men I know. I am quite persuaded that on any morning if he met with a fact which would clearly contradict one of his cherished theories, he would not let the sun set before he made it known. I never saw a word of his writings which was an attack on Religion. He followed his own course as a naturalist and leaves Moses to take care of himself."

This in substance is what I said then and on other occasions and I believe it is both true and the proper way in which scientific studies should be pursued. I have always (and I must say that I am indebted to you for much confirmation of the view) held, as Pusey says now, that Science and Religion should go on separately, and no contest in any way. Those who believe firmly and unhesitatingly, as I hope I do myself, that the teaching of the Church, of which her Book, the Bible, is only a chief part, is infallibly true, need not disturb themselves about any effect which real discoveries in Science may have on Catholic Truth. I hold that a Theologian reads the Book of Revelation Forward from our Saviour to this time, and as Naturalists the Book of Nature backward from one discovery to another, as would be the case with the same book in Hebrew and in Greek. That, whatever may appear at the time, the lines, coming from the same source, can never cross and will in the end be seen to have been parallel. In something of this way, (though I very feebly express it), it seems to me that all might go on harmoniously and to the benefit of all. I have certainly seen some very nasty and needless utterances from naturalists in England, and much more in Germany; but I must confess with sorrow that most of the unwise and violent attacks have come from the theological side, to the great injury of the cause they were designed to promote.

I did not mean to write so much when I began. My design was to tell you how I thought the two things could be profitably kept from jostling. It looks as if the abstract of the discourse might be "How nicely things would go on if other folk were like Darwin and Brodie Innes." Very soothing reflection. However it has done me no harm to write and I hope will do you none.

With kindest regards and we wish you all a happy Christmas, Believe me, Dear Darwin, Faithfully yours,

J. Brodie Innes

ULC (56) Milton Brodie, 14 July 1879

Dear Darwin

I told you some years ago that I had found a wood pigeon nest on the ground, the first I had ever seen in such a situation. This morning my game keeper and I found one on the ground in the middle of a whin

bush on the links. We both saw the bird fly up and found the two eggs laid in a shallow hole scratched in the ground. There are woods within a half a mile on each side. My old game keeper said he had never seen one in such a place before. Kindest regards, Faithfully yours,  
J. Brodie Innes

ULC (57) LOHCARRON ROSS-SHIRE, N.B. 19 August '80

Dear Darwin

When ignorant folks fancy they have observed something, most likely it's a mare's nest.

Today shooting on the forest here and being more than half way up the hill of Ben [ . . ? . . ], I found some barnacles on a rock. *1st*, it struck me as curious that barnacles should be so high up. *2nd*, that as they were easily separated from the rock with a penknife, that they had not long since been separated by the weather. The piece of rock they were on must have weighed from  $\frac{1}{2}$  a ton to a ton or more. I looked at a good many places about without finding any more. I send you the specimens.

I hope you are all well. The reports of Mrs. Hoole I lament to say seem very unfavourable. She appears to be even worse than she was when we were at Downe.

My little home party would join me in kind regards to you all but I have forsaken them for a run on grouse muir and forest. I am however off home again tomorrow.

Believe me, Faithfully yours,

J. Brodie Innes

RMS (58) On Lichens found on Scottish mountains.

August 23 1880

DOWN,  
BECKENHAM, KENT

RAILWAY STATION  
ORPINGTON, S.E.R.

My dear Innes

The discovery of Barnacles on the rocks on the mountains of Scotland would have been an extraordinary & very interesting one, but I am sorry to say that the objects sent are not barnacles but very hard Lichens, I do not remember having seen any of the same kind, but I have never studied lichens, & they are very perplexing bodies.—We returned on Saturday from Cambridge where we staid a week with Horace & his charming little wife ; & we enjoyed ourselves much, admiring the grandeur of Kings Coll. Chapel & the other old scenes of my early life.—My wife has not seen poor Mrs. Hoole since her return ; but I daresay you have had late news of her, as Mr. Hoole was telling us what a comfort to him your letters were, & that he often wrote to you.—

We have just had a curious scene on our lawn, viz 67 half-reformed criminals & vagabond boys who have come down here for a holiday, & to each of whom I gave six pence. Some of them had very good faces & some as atrociously bad faces. Did you see in papers an account of a burglary at High-Elms ; it was a bad one, as the burglars tried to force their way into the Butler's pantry ; he being within with no arms.—I wish I had got your rockets for this house—Ever yours very truly

Ch. Darwin

ULC (59) Milton Brodie, 24th August 1880

Dear Darwin

You would have seen that I was not unprepared for the upset of my idea that there were barnacles on a rock high on a Scottish hill. The articles look to me so much like barnacles that I was deceived. I could not guess how they could have got up there.

I had not heard of the burglary at High Elms. It is a pity that the butler had not means of winging (or rather legging) one or two of the birds. In case any of your 67 visitors should have born away an outline of your house and the readiest means of nocturnal access, I should think the alarms I had, and still use on occasions would be serviceable. They can be got, either with cases of fireworks or with maroons, from Wilkinson, Gunmaker, Pall Mall. You must have much enjoyed your visit to Cambridge, and your son. I am glad to hear his marriage has been so happy.

I have not had any late accounts of poor Alice. I fear there is no improvement to report, or it would have come. I know she used to be much cheered and comforted by Mrs. Darwin's frequent visits to her.

With all our kindest regards, Believe me, Faithfully yours,

J. Brodie Innes

ULC (60) Milton Brodie, Forres, 29 November, 1880

Dear Mr. Darwin

I heard from Hoole on Saturday, and as Downe gossip he says he understands Fromer Lodge is to be sold. If this is true, and if the land on the West side of the road is to be sold apart from the house, I should be glad to have the offer of it, as at some future time it may be an advantage to the Parsonage. Probably neither of these ifs may prove realities. You will be glad to hear that Mrs. Hoole continues to improve. She gets out a good deal every day in spite of cold weather, takes, for her, quite long walks, and seems to be making a new start.

In our, unusually mild, country we have had an unusually early frost. I got my ice house filled on the 23rd. The earliest date in any former year was the 6th of December. Since the 23rd there has been no frost,

a furious gale of wind on Friday. With my wife's kindest regards and love to Mrs. Darwin, Believe me, Faithfully,

J. Brodie Innes

RMS (60A) No year Dec. 24 to Innes from Emma Darwin on black-bordered paper. Experiment could be Movement of Plants which appeared in 1880.

Down Beckenham  
Dec 24 [1880]

Dear Mr. Innes

I have undertaken to answer your kind letter & to give you all the news I can. My husband is much pleased that you were interested in his book. The experiments are so minutely described that he thinks some skipping is very necessary for most of his books. The Teesdales have been settled for 2 or 3 months & have furnished Down Hall most comfortably & sumptuously. They seem to be very agreeable people with pretty cultivated daughters. (In order to show how severe our weather has been I may mention that Mr Teesdale went to Orpington for 10 days on a sledge.)

The great event last week was the opening of a reading room, when Mr. Nash gave a good supper to whoever chose to come & I was not surprised to hear that he had 90 guests. They have hired George Woods's old house for the purpose & begin the world with 45 members. Of course they will not nearly pay their way ; which one would have preferred. We have also a Band of Hope under Mrs. Nash's superintendence which is of course prosperous at present, while the children are young & have no temptation ; but I have some hopes that the effect may remain with some, especially of the girls, after they are grown up. Both these undertakings are thorns in Mr. Ffinden's side & he has not been content with holding aloof from them ; but has used all his influence to prevent their succeeding. Mr. Darwin is pretty well & hard at work with his secretary (Frank). Leonard is stationed at Malta with the engineers, & George who has been an invalid for some years is going to join him there in a week's time. Will you give my kind love to Mrs. Innes & tell her I hope we shall see you & her when you come south as I am glad to hear you are intending, & with my kind remembrances to your son & with every good wish to your trio.

Very truly yours,  
Emma Darwin

P.S. As a proof that nobody need despair I will tell you that Mr. Horsman has a curacy in Kent, & is rash enough to talk of his "friends the Lubbocks".

I have omitted poor Mr. Thompson, whose fate is very melancholy. He is said to be slowly affected by the creeping palsy, which is quite a hopeless malady.

C. Desires me to say that both your facts are quite new to him & surprise him very much.



ULC (61) Milton Brodie, Forres, 14 September 1881

Dear Darwin

The cultivation of bees continues among my amusements. Wasps are their enemies and therefore are waged war against. This year I caught quite an unusual number of queens. It is a curious fact that they will readily go into bottles of syrup placed among the beehives, which the bees, though the contents are the same that they are fed on, very rarely enter. I don't know how they acquired this wisdom, as this was the first year I followed the plan so the information could hardly have been traditionally conveyed. Some of the queen wasps, which are the only ones who survived the winter, commenced to make nests in empty beehives, and I observed that the several cells which constitute their foundation were, so far as I could see, perfect hexagons and as well arranged as those of a commenced comb in hive. This sent me to "The Origin of species" and it seems to me that this regularity of construction cannot be accounted for in the same way as the work of the bee, as it is the labour of a solitary insect, which does all the early work alone.

What a sad harvest it has been in the South! I never heard of a year when the weather was so persistently different in England and Scotland. We had unusually cold weather all the time the wave of heat passed over you. In consequence, our crops now being cut, are very late and the appearance of the skies is not encouraging, but we should not be ill off if it came fine and warm now. I hope you enjoyed and benefited by your sojourn at the lakes.

With all our very kindest regards to you and yours, your Party,  
Believe me, Faithfully yours,

J. Brodie Innes

RMS (62) On the habits of bees, wasps, etc.

Sept. 15, 1881

DOWN  
BECKENHAM, KENT  
RAILWAY STATION  
ORPINGTON, S.E.R.

My dear Innes

The case of the bees not entering the bottles seems very curious, & I will mention it to Lubbock, who is by far the best judge & observer of the minds of insects now living in the world. Wasps have been extraordinarily rare here, as they appear to have been common with you.—The criticism about the hexagons made by queen wasps is a very good one: I well remember thinking over this case, & how I wriggled out of its difficulty, I cannot remember, I do not believe that I was so dishonest as not to notice it: at least if I did do so, it was momentary forgetfulness, as I collected wasps & hornets' nests & studied the different kinds of nests in the B. Museum & knew well that the Queen commenced her comb all by herself.—

There is really not a scrap of news to tell you. Poor Mrs. Parslow is

dead & she is a great loss to the village, as she was wonderfully kind to any sick & poor person.—I go on working in my usual manner & do what I can. I have occasionally attended for many years to the habits of worms, & next month a little book on them by me will be published, & as some parts may properly interest you (for you ought to have been a regular naturalist) I will send you a copy as soon as it is published.—

My brother, Erasmus, whom you may in old times have seen here, has lately died ; & I am glad to say that his last illness was very short & without any severe suffering. Farewell my dear Innes.

Yours very sincerely  
Ch. Darwin

I see that I have forgotten to take black-edged paper.

ULC (63) Milton Brodie, 20 September 1881

My dear Darwin

It was awfully kind of you to write me such a nice long letter. In Re wasps, I assure you that I did not intend a savage criticism, but to tell a small fact which I thought might possibly be new to you. If you had observed it, I am sure you would walk straight and not “ wriggle out of it ”. I told some folks at our Bishops lately I was quite positive that, if you met with, and had verified, any facts, which upset the Darwinian theory you would not rest until you published them. All the same I have full faith in the facts as observed by you, but do not yet accept the inferences. Returning to wasps, I do not think you have a commenced nest, before an egg is hatched, and I have packed one up, and am going to take it to the post office today or tomorrow, as a safer conveyance than the bag of the post runner. I am doubtful if it will reach you anymore than pulvis exigua but I have done my best in this way. The nest is glued on a card and put into a cap box. The card is fastened with thread to the bottom of the box and cotton wool put about it ; the top of the nest is nearly level with the top of the box and the commenced cells in the bottom. So when you take off the lid and gently lift the cotton in little bits, you will see what you will see ; and if indeed it is preserved, you can take it out of the box by cutting the strings at the bottom. Wasps are most clever architects but by no means substantial builders.

It is odd that since the queen season, about June, there has been hardly any wasps here. At that time, round my beehives, I caught about a hundred queens, but lately have seen none attacking the ripe fruit, either under glass or on the walls. The only persecution of them was about the hives, and as they stand in one corner of a walled garden of two acres, it seems unlikely that nearly all in the garden, much more in the neighbourhood, should have fallen victims. I rather think something in the season has prevented their usual breeding. Curious that this should be the case with you who have been over hot and with us, who have been unusually cold.

I shall be much interested in the Earthworms and especially as

you will send me a copy which I shall prize. Dr. Gordon, a naturalist neighbour, told me the other day that you had found they had much more sense, brains than they had credit for. I wish I knew a little of natural history. A lady friend sometimes stealthily used them for a bait, in defiance of all sporting rules, when salmon refused to rise to her fly ; and having been caught flagrante delicto, is now met with a question when she sends home a 20 pound one " did you use the Queen of Sheba ? " by which name her ignoble lure has become to be designated, as on the occasion of the first conviction she suggested that as the fortunate fly.

I saw a notice of your Brother's death, and regretted it for your sake. I am glad to hear he was spared severe suffering. I well remember seeing him at your house, long long ago on a cold day, and think it was he who said that if he had to live in Downe, he should sit in room with a German stove, wear a fur cloak and never go out.

It is well for Parslow that before he lost his good wife his son should have married comfortably. Will you remember me to him, and assure him of our sympathy in his loss. The wife and Jack unite with me in kindest regards, Believe me, My dear Darwin, Faithfully yours,

J. Brodie Innes

Acknowledging wasp nests which Innes mailed 20 September. This letter written seven months before Darwin's death is the last one recovered of the Darwin-Innes series. It is on paper with a black border, but not otherwise marked stationery, written from ' Down '. Watermark shows a crown and S M L in Gothic letters.

RMS (64) Sept. 22 [1881]

Down

My dear Innes

The wasp's nest has arrived safe, except part of the outer walls, & was *wonderfully* well packed. The cells are not half such disagreeable objects, as I expected to see them ; as the outer walls, when not in contact with any other cells are distinctly rounded or curved ; & the extreme bases or bottoms of the cells are also rounded. If a queen wasp were to make a *single* cell in the shape of a hexagon, the fact would have been an obvious one in my eyes. I believe that she builds up several cells at the same time & makes straight walls between the adjoining cells ; & these intersecting plates between 6 cylinders produce the hexagon.— But the subject has gone out of my head, & I cannot spare time to force it into my old worn-out brains. Very many thanks for your most kind letter

Ever yours sincerely

Ch. Darwin

The following letters of Emma Darwin, Francis Darwin and Innes, written shortly after Darwin's death are included because of their interesting comments. There is also added the statement which Francis requested from Innes.

RMS (1) To Innes from Francis Darwin. Darwin died April 19th. This letter is not dated but the envelope bears the postmark April 24, 1882. It is addressed :

The Rev. J. Brodie-Innes  
2 Addison Grove  
Bedford Park  
W.

DOWN  
BECKENHAM, KENT  
———  
RAILWAY STATION  
ORPINGTON, S.E.R.  
[April 24, 1882]

Dear Mr. Innes

You will have heard before this of my dear father's death. We all know the strong and affectionate regard you had for him & we feel that you should be written to among the first of those beyond our relatives.

We have been uneasy about his heart for some time past but we did not think there was immediate danger. On Tuesday night at 12 o'clock he was attacked with pain in the chest and fainted away. He soon recovered from this faint & the pain left him after some time but he remained terribly weak & faint and suffered from terribly distressing nausea, & occasional exhausting retching. He became gradually very cold & pulseless, but remained conscious up to within a quarter of an hour of his death which took place at 4 in the afternoon of 19th. He seemed to know he was dying from the first and was not afraid to die, & indeed in his suffering he wished to die. My mother bears it bravely & is very calm, I think the feeling he does not survive her is a comfort, for she feels that he could not have born the loss as she can.

I think he will be buried here, probably on Tuesday. I know it is not for me to speak of the friendship that existed so long between my father & you, but I may at least say how often I have heard him speak of you in warm hearted & kindly words

Yours dear Mr. Innes  
Sincerely  
Francis Darwin

I have only just seen your kind letter to my mother.  
[Funeral card of Darwin to Westminster Abbey bordered in black with wax seal.]

FUNERAL OF MR. DARWIN

Westminster Abbey,  
Wednesday April 26, 1882  
at 12 o'clock precisely  
Admit the bearer at Eleven o'clock precisely  
CHOIR (Entrance by West Cloister Door, Dean's  
Yard)  
G. G. Bradley, D.D.  
Dean

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N.B.—No Person will be admitted except in mourning.

RMS (2) To Innes from E. Darwin on black-bordered paper with envelope as follows :

The rev. I. Brodie Innes  
2 Addison Grove  
Bedford Park  
London

Ap 27 1882

My dear Mr. Innes

Your heartfelt words were a comfort & pleasure to me. I hope you made one of the many loving hearts around his grave yesterday. I am afraid it would have been too trying for my dear Mrs. Innes. I am not surprised that you who knew him so well saw the beauty of his character, so simple & open ; but it is a constant happiness to me to see the effect of it on those who hardly knew him personally. You know how fond he was of you. He often spoke with pleasure of your last two visits especially the one in which Mrs Innes was able to come with you. Pray give her my affectionate love. I was not unprepared, as some months ago I felt our secure happiness (& what happiness it was I only now seem thoroughly to realize) was utterly shaken.

He became very feeble in body ; but exactly the same in mind, & if possible, more tenderly regardful of those around him.

The last hours were very suffering but not very long I am thankful to remember.

With affectionate regard to you both

Yours

E. Darwin

Pray remember me most kindly to your son.

RMS (3) Innes from Francis Darwin on black-bordered paper.

Down  
Beckenham  
May 25-'82

My dear Mr. Innes,

It has occurred to me that you might be able to give me some valuable recollections of my father as you knew him here, I need not say how

much we should value it if you would (at your leisure) do so. We should in the first instance place any sketch you might give us in the family "archives", and it is uncertain whether we should ever have to ask your leave to publish it. I hope therefore that you would not mind writing freely, and would not think anything too small to be told.

I take this opportunity of saying that I should think it a great privilege to be allowed to see any letters of my father you may have. I am collecting material for a *Life*, though it is not yet certain who will undertake the work of writing & editing. I should like to make copies of his letters to you; there would be no need to go into the question of what to publish just yet. I should like you to think of them as going with anything you may have about my father into the archives.

Yrs sincerely  
Francis Darwin

RMS (4) To Innes from Francis Darwin on black-bordered paper.

Down  
Beckenham  
May 29-'82

My dear Mr. Innes

Many thanks for your most kind note. I am rejoiced that you will put down a few recollections of my father. I go tomorrow to Cambridge for a day or so, but the following week it would be a real pleasure to see you.

I *believe*, (though it would be a painful meeting), that my mother would like to see you extremely. But I will write again about this.

Yours dear Mr Innes  
sincerely  
Francis Darwin

Please forgive me for always making a mistake about your name. I think I am insane on the subject.

RMS (5) Innes from Francis Darwin.

June 16/82  
131 Piccadilly  
W.

My dear Mr Innes

I am very worried that your visit to Down should have failed through my fault. You interpreted my note quite right and I am extremely worried that I forgot to write. I have been overwhelmed with letters which have given me a great deal of work; this is not excuse but it is the reason for my stupid piece of forgetfulness.

My mother has gone to the Wedgwoods at Leith Hill near Dorking for a few days, and I go on there tomorrow. I don't feel that I deserve to be forgiven, but I hope you will do so

Yours sincerely  
Francis Darwin

The following statement in Innes's handwriting without date is found in the private collection of letters. A copy which is quite similar was found among the Darwin papers at the Cambridge University Library. They have not been compared side by side but their substance is essentially the same.

RMS (6) My acquaintance with Mr. Darwin commenced when he took up his residence at Downe. I was then Curate of the adjoining parish of Farnborough. [In 1846 I became Vicar of Downe, and we became friends and so continued to his death. His kindness to me and my family was unvarying and we repaid it with warm affection. The charm of his manners, the heartiness of his friendship, the brilliance of his conversation were such that as a relation of mine who lived near him for a short time observed, no one who really knew him did not love him.

In all Parish matters he was a most valuable supporter. In Schools, and Charities his liberal subscriptions and help were always ready and in the disputed questions which arose in that, as in all Parishes, I was always sure of Mr. Darwin's support, as he held that where there was no real objection he ought to support the Clergyman as being most responsible.]

As I have always endeavoured to be first of all a Churchman, these relations could not have been maintained if Mr. Darwin had been the avowed Unbeliever and opponent of religion that was supposed by many who did not know him, did not study his works, and supposed to be his own the deductions which others drew from them, and the sentiments others supposed him to hold.

Before I knew Mr. Darwin I had adopted, and publicly expressed the opinion that Natural history, Geology and Science in general should be studied without reference to the Bible. That the Book of Nature and Religion proceeded from the same Source and that properly understood they proceeded on parallel lines and would never cross. Pusey's sermon—

Mr. Darwin from his own side held the same views. Of course any conversations we had on purely religious matters are as sacredly private now as in his life, but the quaint conclusion of one may be recorded. We had been speaking of the apparent diversity between some supposed discoveries and the Book of Genesis. He said "you are a Theologian, I am a Naturalist. I pursue my investigations without considering how they affect Scripture. I do not attack Moses and I think Moses can take care of himself. Later he wrote, I do not think I ever directly

attacked religion or the Clergy" and referred to an abusive pamphlet by a clergyman which I should laugh at, and which might have given him cause for bitterness. So we never attacked each other. He wrote that you are one of the rare mortals with whom one can differ and yet feel no shade of bitterness, and he would be proud if any one could say the same of him.

The quietness with which he received attacks is shown by his saying I should laugh at the abusive pamphlet, and another instance is that when the Bishop of Oxford's review of the Origin of Species appeared in the Quarterly he wrote a postscript in a letter to me "If you have not seen the Quarterly do get it, the B of Oxford has made such capital fun of me and my grandfather." I was at Englefield with the B when I got the letter, and I showed it to him, he said "I am glad he takes it in this way he is such a capital fellow."

Notice his most remarkable accuracy in all observations. The labour of years to ascertain the reversion of kinds of pigeons to the original type. Of bees which I assisted him to observe and in which, and other matters he always suggested doubt when I thought facts were proved and required further observation.

His remarkable truthfulness shown in all his conversation. On one occasion after a discussion of a Parish matter he came to me at night to say what he had said was really accurate but it had occurred to him that I might have drawn one erroneous inference and he would not sleep till he had explained it. I feel sure that if any day he had discovered some facts which would upset his theories he would have placed them on record for publication at once.

His bad health prevented his conversing for above half an hour at a time and he was obliged to break off and lie down because he felt sick—

His rules, to carry pebbles in hand and drop one at the end of each round of the plantation walk to be sure he had accomplished the distance set.

Snuff—6 months resolved to keep the box in the cellar and key in the garret.

Another 6 months, only to take a pinch when from home when he used to get one in my study.

On my last visit D said at dinner B.I & I have been fast friends for 30 years. We never thoroughly agreed on any subject but once and then we looked hard at each other and thought one of us must be very ill.

In substance sent to F Darwin 20 June 1882 with seven letters, some of which are referred to above.

RMS (7) To Innes from Francis Darwin.

West Hackhurst  
Dorking

June 23  
1882

Dear Mr. Innes

I am quite delighted with your recollections of my father, it is just what I wanted only even better than I hoped for. I have just taken



it to my mother who received it with much pleasure, and I am certain will like it as much as I do. I would not alter a word of the essential parts. Perhaps I might leave out what you say about sea sickness as I think my father did not agree with the usually received opinion as to this undermining his health. Also in the sentence which you quote my father speaking of you, might I alter it to "Innes" as it was thus I think my father always spoke of you? but it is really of no consequence.

My mother begs me to ask you to give her best love to Mrs. Brodie Innes: and to say with her kindest remembrances to you, that she hopes very much you will give her an opportunity of seeing you both when you next come south, as it would be a great pleasure to her.

With my best thanks

Yours sincerely

Francis Darwin

The letters shall be carefully returned.

RMS (8) To Innes from Francis Darwin on grey-green paper with matching blank envelope, undated.

WYCHFIELD,  
HUNTINGDON ROAD  
CAMBRIDGE.

Dear Mr. Innes

I herewith return some letters from my father to you, with many apologies for not having sent them to you long ago.

Yours very truly

Francis Darwin

Thus the Darwin-Innes letters are concluded. They have been presented in their entirety in so far as they have been discovered. Francis Darwin, Emma Darwin and Innes continued to write until 1882. This correspondence reveals a warm and abiding friendship between Darwin and Innes and their families from 1846 to 1882 and they record through the years the trials and the triumphs of both families. The famous illness of Darwin is documented almost continuously and he and his wife were frequently concerned about the health of their children, particularly Etty. There are many scientific discussions often prompted by observations of Innes, Darwin's amateur naturalist friend. There are comments on both sides about Darwin's publications. Most of them are commendatory but not without reservations.

The greatest significance of this correspondence is the evidence it presents of Darwin's interest in parish affairs, his willingness to contribute

and to serve as Treasurer of the Sunday School and the Coal Club, his concern about the character and the performance of the vicars and the impact they had on the community. This loyalty is particularly surprising in view of the confession suppressed for so many years from his autobiography of his complete lack of faith or even of concern for revealed religion. There is no better explanation than that it was actuated by respect for his wife's feelings, his friendship for Innes and his fear of disapproval from his contemporaries.

Darwin's character, personality and general attitude toward life's ordinary experiences and the loyalty to and from his friends as revealed in this correspondence are beautifully expressed in the statement Innes wrote for Francis after Charles Darwin's death.

The author wishes to express his thanks to Mr Robert Darwin, C.B.E., for permission to publish the Innes-Darwin letters in his possession and now deposited in the University Library, Cambridge ; to Dr T. C. S. Morrison-Scott, D.S.C., Director of the British Museum (Natural History), and to Mr A. C. Townsend, M.A., Librarian of the Museum, for their kindness in providing facilities for him to work on these documents ; and especially to Miss B. Maria Skramovsky for her advice and assistance in the checking of his transcripts against the original text. As is usual with such material, the transcription has in places not been easy, but it is hoped that there is a minimum of avoidable error.