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Letter 3798 – Darwin, C. R. to *Gardeners' Chronicle*, [before 8 Nov 1862]

Summary

Asks whether T. A. Knight's tall blue and white marrow peas were raised by Knight himself.

Also asks whether anyone who has saved seed peas grown close to other kinds observed that the succeeding crop came up "untrue" or crossed? CD would expect that such crossing would occasionally happen.

Transcription

Will any one learned in Peas have the kindness to tell me whether Knight's Tall Blue and White Marrows were raised by Knight himself?^{f2} If so, I presume that they are the offspring of the crosses described by him in the Philosophical Transactions for 1799.^{f3} I find that the name `Knight' tacked to a Pea is not a guarantee that the sort was of his production. I will beg permission to ask one other question. Has any one who has saved seed Peas grown close to other kinds observed that the succeeding crop came up untrue or crossed?^{f4} This certainly occurs rarely if ever; yet from what I have observed on the manner of fructification of the Pea, I should have expected that such crossing would occasionally happen, as in the case of Dwarf Kidney Beans, of which fact I gave a striking example in your Paper of October 25, 1857.^{f5}

Charles Darwin, Down, Kent.

Footnotes

[f1](#)

The letter was published in the issue of 8 November 1862 (see also *Collected papers 2: 70*).

[f2](#)

CD was preparing a draft of the part of *Variation* dealing with `Facts of variation of Plants' (see `Journal' (*Correspondence* vol. 10, Appendix II)); he discussed Thomas Andrew Knight's pea varieties in *Variation 1: 326, 329--30*.

[f3](#)

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Knight 1799; CD discussed Knight's experiments in *Variation* 2: 129.

[f4](#)

See letter from Adam Fitch, 18 November 1862.

[f5](#)

CD was mistaken about the date; his letter was published in the *Gardeners' Chronicle and Agricultural Gazette* on 24 October 1857 (see *Correspondence* vol. 6, letter to *Gardeners' Chronicle*, 18 October [1857]).

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