

6 Clauricarde Gardens  
London W.

9 September 1901

My dear Spencer,

It was a great pleasure to receive last week your letter of 18<sup>th</sup> June written from Barrow Creek. It was posted at Alice Springs 23<sup>rd</sup> July and Donadetta 25<sup>th</sup>. So you must be some way up. I dare say I can find out where by referring to the Horn Exped<sup>n</sup> Map.

We have been away for nearly two months first in Devonshire and later in Edinburgh & round South of Scotland and are now glad to get back again to the comfort of our own home -

In spite of the monstony of the Country you speak of I would like greatly to be with you. There can hardly be any doubt that the

Work you are doing will be the most valuable read ever made of a race just on the point of disappearing. Callus' American Indians will be the only one to compare with it and your photos and photograms will beat his illustrations and records hollow.

By late accounts there have been fairly abundant rains both in S. Australia and Queensland but whether they will have reached you in the mid Australian desert I am doubtful. It is interesting to note that not only sheep & cattle but all native creatures disappear in these long droughts. I remember how you found before April & even fish appear in previously dry pools after heavy rain. So hope some good things may turn up before you have done. You say you will not be back

til February so there ought to be plenty of time to catch you at Port Darwin.

By far the most interesting things you will bring will probably be the ground sloth - our old friend *Haplogus* (formerly *Phricton*) is now if you please *Selenocorys* a new type of *S. javanensis* from Java and after seeing a male (from Crown Point station S.A.) I have come to the conclusion that it is not *S. Kochi*. P. Crampin & I have remained in S. Stirling. Stirling by the way was here when I left home and I must I think still be here, though I have not yet had time to see, he is buying books with a part or gift for the S.A. Museum -

I am glad you have another smaller one that you think you had not in the Horn Expedition - you had two smaller ones <sup>from both, certainly new</sup> - you say doubtless well known - much more probably never seen before - you say very rightly that *S. Stirlingi* (Promis) is very nicely spread

24.

N. Guinea (See Rainier) Queensland, Central Australia  
S. to Crown Point & Coolgardie. but it is about the  
only one that is so and most of the others  
are seemingly comparatively local. d'Albertis  
brought several from Cape York, all new -  
and from where you are now to Port  
Macarthur and Port Darwin is all  
unknown, except from <sup>what</sup> the Horn Expedition  
may have had which did not reach so far north, so most  
likely all you get will be new - They  
make their holes and seem not to  
move far from the place of their birth  
in spite of their powerful legs.

I think it likely that if they wander  
far from their original community  
the males have some difficulty in  
finding the females. They live  
in the ground and none of them can  
see very far. The Selenocosmia with  
stimulating organs can find one another  
and we find them spread for long  
distances - <sup>Porock of course does not believe they can</sup>  
<sup>hear one another's stimulations but I feel sure they</sup>  
<sup>must come how. Have you ever heard them by the way?</sup>  
Curiously enough the earliest specimens  
<sup>of spiders</sup> described from Sydney & Melbourne in

5. N.B.S. Darwin 9 Sept '01.

32

In the cases *Eriodon* <sup>Latreille</sup> of different species and from solitary specimens are not known for certain since they can hardly have totally disappeared and probably, are only rather difficult to find. In the so whatever you find now are sure to be valuable and probably unique. In the Horn Expedition you had two bottles full from Palau Creek of a spider I put down as *Idiocris helva* L. Koch (from Fiji) - I have now called it *I. palmarum*. I would like to get another look at it and hope you may have got some more. You had a head & <sup>3 pairs</sup> legs only of another I thought to be *Hugos paradoxus* (from N.Z.) but it is new to me here also.

I will post you to Port Darwin as soon as I get copies next month. of my paper from <sup>Proc. Zool Soc.</sup> London (it was too late for R.S. Vic last half year <sup>Vol. 20</sup> so I read it here instead of sending out) and you will see from what meagre material the larger number of our *Territelariae* are

known or rather have been described; for  
the larger numbers of the type specimens  
are either lost or in someone's possession  
whom they are unknown.

The zoological situation of the year you  
may not have heard of in your remoteness -  
a new animal as big as a horse from  
the upper Congo forests - It is really  
a most wretched unhorned giraffe.

With legs striped like a zebra and brown  
body - the natives call it Okapi & kill  
it for eating so it will probably be soon  
quite extinct now they have guns. At  
first the name the description it was thought  
to be a zebra & was called Equus Johnstoni  
after Sir Harry Johnston who sent it. Then  
it was called Giraffa Johnstoni. When  
it was found to have double hoofs - now  
it is to different & is called Okapia a  
new genus. It will be described with a  
very fine plate in the October part of  
the Proc. Zool. Soc.

Pocock hopes you will send him  
some scorpions - He has just printed  
the Centipedes you sent him before

and they will be published directly.

I just started today on the Australian  
Laterniprakes (the Coryphenora, Philodromidae -)  
but I am afraid there will not be so  
much new since Woods time as in  
the Semitelesae -

You never had those Victorian Clabs &  
throwing sticks at my topings before I  
left. The last lady Miss Charteris &

Caroline St. James. Was quite willing  
to exchange them with you when I told  
her you wanted them for the public museum  
You will have to go & see her when you  
get back or send someone before -

We are all well I am thankful to  
say though Linby has to go to the South  
Pines and in school because of her throat  
and making you well back in Victoria and  
later here at one of which ends I hope  
to see you before there will be for me  
I am always yours very sincerely  
J. R. S. 1899 -

Prof. W. Baldwin Spencer  
Port Darwin -