

D. Wries Amsterdam 10 Sept 1879

My Dear Sir!

I thank you very much for your kind letter, and for the seed of *Lychnis fithagi*, which I propose myself to sow next spring. I have finished my experiments on tendrils for this year, and hope to continue them next summer. In the course of this winter I hope to be able to send you a copy of my paper on tendrils.

In respect to the movements of *Oscillaria*, I am very sorry to say that I never studied them so exactly as to have an opinion on their mechanism, which seems to be very difficult to recognise.

You ask me whether I feel sure that cell walls have not a power of contraction. I am quite sure that they often have this



especially interested by your experiments  
on the movements and the curious sensitiveness  
of the roots and plumules of young seedling-  
plants, which I hope to repeat as soon as I  
shall have an occasion, for I desire very  
much to observe myself these interesting and  
unexpected phenomena. I always remember  
the great pleasure, I had in repeating the  
experiments, described in your work on Insecti-  
vorous plants, with all those species, which I  
could procure either in botanical gardens or on  
excursions. By so doing I not only obtained  
a better knowledge of the subject, but often had  
the opportunity of showing these phenomena to others.  
And now I always cultivate some *Utricularia*,  
*Drosera* and *Singuicula*, so as to be able to  
show their insectivorous habits to my students  
every year.

Your considerations on the embryology of leaves remembered me the curious case afforded by the young plants of *Sium latifolium*, which have their leaves divided in a much higher degree than the pinnated leaves of the older plants, and so show their descent from an Umbelliferous type with highly divided leaves. So your experiments and remarks on the danger, occasioned by the radiation during cold nights, suggested to me, that perhaps the hairs of plants might in many cases have been acquired for the same purpose as the sleeping movements, and that this supposition would account for the curious instance that so many leaves are covered with hairs when young, and lose them when growing older.

In your work you often speak of my papers on the same subject, and I am much indebted to you for your very kind judgment on them, which will be a stimulus to me in

endeavouring to contribute my part to the  
advancement of science.

With many thanks

Yours sincerely,

Henry de Vries.