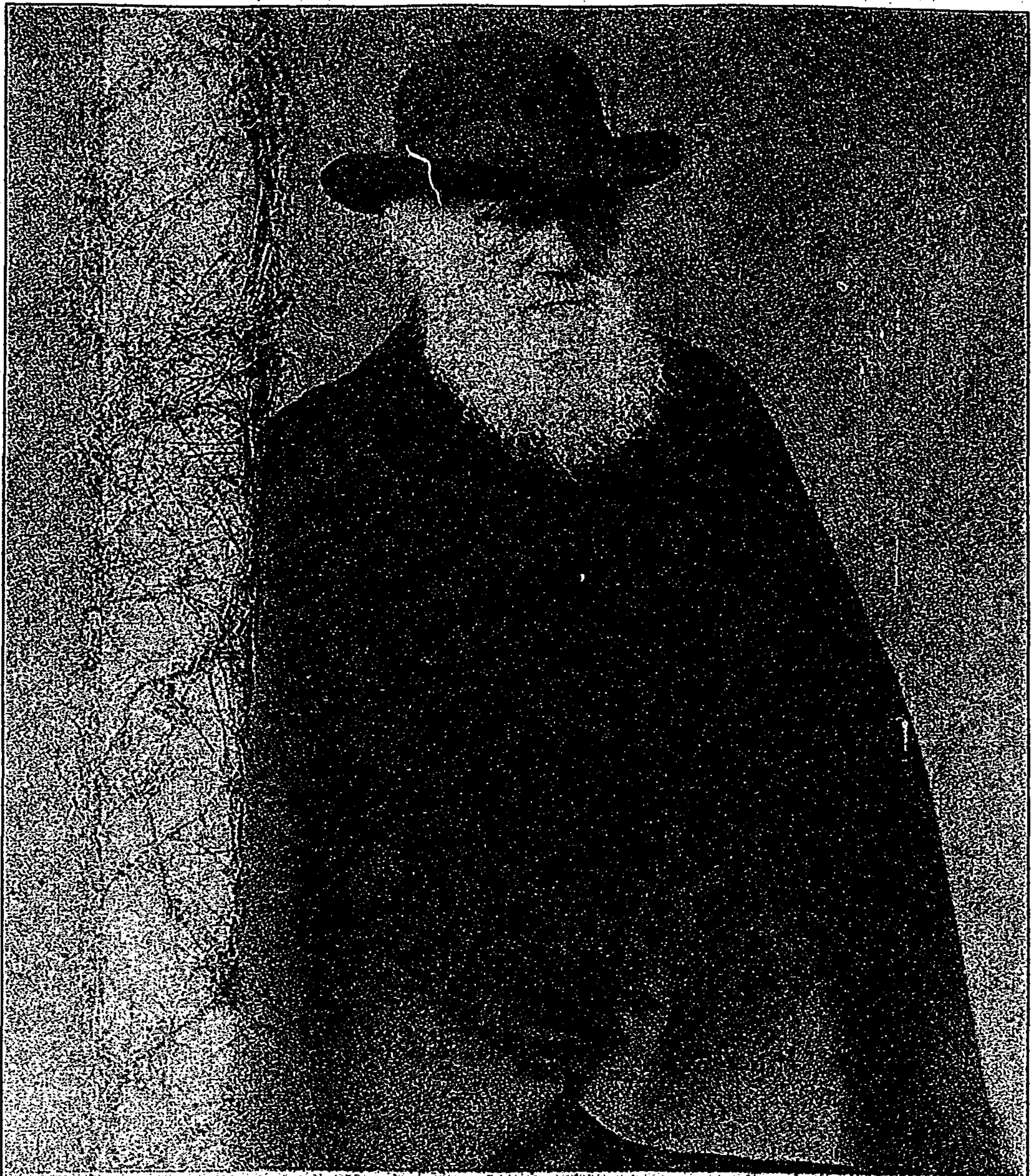




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The signed photograph of Darwin, in hat and cloak, taken a year before his death

Rare Darwin photograph on sale

A RARE signed photograph of Charles Darwin has surfaced at auction, together with an original sketch and a collection of letters by the great naturalist. The photograph shows an aged, white-bearded Darwin, wearing a hat and cloak, posing on the veranda of his home at Down House in Kent.

Bearing the signature C. Darwin, it was taken by the photographers Elliott and Fry, of Baker Street, London, in 1881, a year before his death aged 73. The albumen print of the man whose 1859 publication *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* was a landmark in the history of science, is expected to fetch up to £3,500 at a Christie's natural history sale in London on November 11.

The sketch, in pencil and brown ink, of the different parts of a primrose, was done by

Darwin in about 1861, apparently as a guide for an illustration in his paper on *The Two Forms, or Dimorphic Condition, in the Species of Primula, and on their remarkable Sexual Relations*. It is estimated to fetch between £2,000 and £4,000.

Also for sale, from another private source, is a collection of 18 letters from Darwin and other 19th-century scientists to Sir William Henry Flower, later director of the Natural History Museum. The letters, mainly about the identification and classification of species, are set to realise up to £8,000. In one, dated 1877, Darwin invites Flower to stay at Down and writes, in typical fashion, of the long ill-health that dogged him all his working life: "I find it impossible to talk long with anyone, and then I have often to go and sit quietly."