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

Oct 2d 1879

My dear Prof Semper,

I thank you for your extremely kind letter of the 19th, & for the proof sheets. I believe that I understand all, excepting one or two sentences where my imper=fect knowledge of German has interfered. This is my sole & poor excuse for the mistake which I made in the second

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edit of my Coral book. Your account of the Pellew Islands is a fine addition to our knowledge on Coral reefs. I have very little to say on the subject: even if I had formerly read your account & seen your maps, but had known nothing of the proofs of recent elevation & of your belief that the Islands have not since subsided, I have no doubt that I should

have considered them as formed during subsidence. But I should have been much troubled in my mind by the sea not being so deep as it usually is round atolls, and by the reef on one side sloping so gradually beneath the sea; for this latter fact, as far as my memory serves me, is a very unusual & almost unparalleled case. I always foresaw that a bank at the

proper depth beneath the surface would give rise to a reef which could not be distinguished from an atoll formed during subsidence. I must still adhere to my opinion that the atolls & barrier-reefs in the middle of the Pacific & Indian oceans indicates subsidence; but I fully agree with you that such cases as that of the Pellew Islands if of at all frequent occurrence, would make my general conclusions of very little value. Future observers

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must decide between us. It will be a strange fact if there has not been subsidence of the beds, of the great oceans and if this has not affected the forms of the coral reefs.

In the 3 last pages of the last sheet sent, I am extremely glad to see the you are going to treat of the dispersion of animals. Your preliminary remarks seem to me quite excellent. There is nothing about Mr. Wagner and I expected to find. I

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GRESHAM S.E.R.

I suppose that you have seen
Moseley's last book,
which contains some good
observations on the species.

I am glad that you
'Bishop' will appear in
English, for then I can
read it with ease.

My believe me
yours very truly
Charles Darwin