

No. 738

Smithsonian Institution,

Washington, D. C., May 10 1862

My Dear Mr. March

I ought to be drawn and quar-
tered for not answering your letter
of Dec. 8th long ago. but after all I
have some excuse. Poor Mary has
had a hard time of it. This winter
in the middle of November she was
the beginning of March she was
in bed flat on her back with a
most painful and agonising gen-
eral neuralgia. I then took her
to Philadelphia for three weeks and soon
after her return Mrs. Churchill
was taken ill, and for a time
we despaired of her recovery. She
is now better but still very weak
and confined to her bed. I all
this I have most of the time been
principal nurse, and have been
unable to keep up with a list
of my ordinary avocations, as
Countdown, et. a dozen times
after writing twenty to forty letters,
I have come to you. As I tried
to go at it, especially as it did
not require some specific and