

Essexdon

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Wed. Even^g

My dear Spencer,

I am returning thanks
in quite a number of languages,
though I never had any very grave
doubts as to Macmillan's taking
the book after we heard that
Fraser had gone in enthusiastically
for it. I shall be delighted to
meet you & Howitt. But as to
the term "~~class~~", we used it only
for want of a better, because
Phratra suggests paternal
descent. But the suggestion is only
in the connection of the word, not
in the word itself, & there is no
philological reason why it should
not be applied to a tribal section
with descent through females.

Personally, I always preferred

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phratria, or rather its Anglicised
form phratry, & sub-phratry. If
this is all, there is no difficulty, for
I am sure Hewitt will agree.

The question is an important
one, & now is the time to
settle it. In all probability the
term will be accepted by the
anthropologists in general if you adopt
it.

If there is any other point,
"when found, make a note of", &
we can turn it over in our minds.
There is no need for any delay on
your part. Use the term & we
will follow. But what will
you do with the totemic subdivisions
of the subphratris? They are the
difficulty. Virtually they are
very, but the anthropologists howled
at me for calling them such. The
Roman "gens", wh. is more convenient
than γενος, was not an exact
equivalent to it - it had developed

more, & there is a hitch as to using it. But phratry is beyond question.

I suggested once to Tylor that we should use "totemy", & he approved.

Phratries, sub-phratries, & totemies would be clear enough. But perhaps joint tobacco, combined with a modest quencher, might lead us in the way of wisdom.

I grieved to hear the other day of the death of one of the persons which your little daughter showed me. Please convey to her my beautiful sympathies.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Lawrence Fison.

Excuse these smears. Something went wrong with the wick of my lamp, I knocked off the burnt portion, & beheld a lot of little blacks descended on this paper. My youngest - & most ineffectual daughter, who was with me, commanded me to write the letter over again; but I rebelled, & didn't, & won't.