



Coll. Exm.

March 5. 82.

Dear Howard

I hope so early
an answer to your epistle of
this morning won't quite disconcert

you.

You will be glad to hear that
Mackenzie got in with ease: I
had a severe crum to have the
pleasure of letting him know
just for as soon as we have
done the counting it is "good
form" for the representatives to go

with the President into the Raye
debating Hall whilst he declares
the result. However I won a
good "sprint" race down the Corn +
St "Oles" to the House & soon to
yards: moreover as it was about
10 p.m. the gates were closed so I
had the privilege of getting them
opened whilst my opponents made
up last ground.

With regard to "design" I
am sorry to have mistaken you
but the word "design" to an evolutionist
is somewhat like a red-ray to a bull.

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I dare not follow you as far
as your single "atom" technically
speaking of course an "atom" could
not of been that not 1 wk. all things
have been evolved on the fundamental
idea of an atom ^{so} that it cannot be
and division must take place if the increase
divided up ~~in~~ besides. ^{think we}
cannot postulate as much material
substance as now exists as we
cannot imagine matter arising or being
evolved out of nothing: what evolutionists
deal with is the various combinations
of matter one of the combinations
(an extreme evolutionist would say) has
at some remote period produced what
we call life or has produced a "material"
-single protoplasm - endowed with life:

Of course Thompson says that protoplasm
just came from some star in some
mysterious way landed upon our earth:
Huxley used to assure me of his firm
belief that life just originated in what
he termed "a lucky thunderstorm"; this is
not really so outlandish on the supposition
that to endue matter with "life" (that is
the power of assimilation, reproduction etc) it
is necessary to have a combination in a
certain definite proportion of certain elements
which combination has not yet been discovered.
However this is a fruitless discussion & I'll
stop.

I don't quite see how your argument
concerning the existence of a god proves
this at all.

You said that the mind could
not conceive anything without there



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existing a correspondent external +
 secondly that a supreme power
 was in our minds an essential
 or something to this effect + that
 ∴ a ^{supreme power} ~~force~~ did exist.

I don't see the argument in the
 least. We cannot conceive in
 our minds of anything existing
 without there being a correspondent
 external existence: we cannot certainly
 conceive of in our minds a supreme
 power that is "the infinite" + from
 these two premisses though we cannot
 say indeed that there is no such thing
 as a Supreme power yet I don't quite

see how we can say that one
does exist: it seems to me that
we are simply landed in the
agnostic position & I suppose that
in our quieter moments we must
find that we are more or
less agnostics. I don't think
our religious belief will stand
very much analysis.

You will probably feel inclined
to fear this up at all events
I'll stop.

Your Friend

W.H.S.