

5 Museum Terrace, (71)

Oxford
Oct 18. 85

Dear Howard

I fear it is somewhat
of a lengthy period since you
heard from me. You are
now getting more settled
at Bowdoin & I trust your
mother has got no harm
from the change & will get
great good though you can
scarcely expect very much result
from the change during the winter
months.

Probably you may tumble
up against Fairbairn who lives
at Holmlea. Barnington Rd.
Atricham.

From what he tells me I fancy
that ~~he~~ he overstates a more
to Leipzig before very long for
purposes of study: he was in
for a while but has not for some
season got one - why I can't
think as he got a 1st class here &
is a really good man at philosophy.

It is just possible that Wilkins
who is strongly Cambridge has
opposed him for I don't fancy that

when at Owens Wilkins much
cared for him. Of course I know
nothing & this is conjecture but Owen
I think is strongly Cambridge &
this would go against an Oxford
man - especially a philosophy
candidate. However don't mention
the affair to him unless he broaches
the subject which is very possible.

You will I imagine be better satisfied
but J. Macleods than at A.S. What
think the President of the North of
the "Wave of Infidelity" which is sweeping
over the land. The whole Public
could scarcely have put his foot into it

to better effect than when analyzing
this statement in ~~isolation~~^{read} with the context
the remark can only be taken in part, at
least, as referring to dissent.

I think also that Chamberlain's very strong
assertion as to the impossibility of the
question being settled by this parliament
is striking: I for me, earnestly trust
that it won't be brought forward just
at present thinking it would do more
harm than good & that other things want
settling first: it must of course come
in the course of 10 years or so but we
don't want it just at present.

As to your remarks some week or two
ago on Evolution. If you admit
that such has taken place I see no

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The reason why you are not to believe that it has held good altogether.

We have not the slightest evidence (i.e. several) in favour of the theory that certain forms were created & from these others have been evolved.

It is not as though certain classes were marked off sharply from one another & could be imagined to be a special creation (or descended from specially created ancestors) apart from all other classes.

Throughout the whole of nature there is simply a great line of animal forms consisting of separate creatures

such that when two at long intervals are compared & striking differences are seen between them but when, say half a dozen contiguous ones are examined, they are seen to be connected in the closest manner with each other & in such a way that we can only account for their appearance in the supposition that the higher & more specialized has been evolved from the lower & more generalized one.

Ordinary flukes only see those which are widely separated from each other & it is really impossible to realize the vastness of the cumulative

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evidence in favour of evolution (in animals) unless you are more or less intimately acquainted with the details of their structure.

However for all practical purposes the evolution theory is now accepted as fact the differences lie in the question as to how evolution has been thought about. This of course is more correctly called Darwinism - the explanation of the causes - the theory itself had been proposed by several before his time though it was his collection of facts which placed it on a firm basis.

No one as yet is one whit nearer to the solution of what after

all is the main question - How
came life on to the earth at all?

~~that~~ When once life ~~was~~ or rather
living organisms were present, it is impossible
to deny that evolution took place + for
all practical purposes it is as hard to
explain the origin of one as of several
living organisms though we have not the
slightest evidence in favour of the creation of
types while all the evidence at command
is strongly against his theory.

I cannot see how anyone can get beyond
the idea that at some time + somehow
"creation" of something took place + of course
"creation" presupposes a "creator."

For myself I am quite inclined to
admit that "living" must have arisen
from "non-living" material: we find
no element in "living" matter which

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is not also present in "non-living"
material - the difference lies
in the manner + solely in the
manner in which the elements
are combined together.

This may sound rather cold-blooded
+ is certainly a theory which would
not meet with universal support
but yet to me it seems to be a
grand one.

External conditions are never the
same for two however short periods
of time + it may have been that
(under certain conditions which may
never recur again) ~~that~~ certain

elements came together + combined
to form, at first an extremely formless
substance, + endowed with a property
which we term "life".

It may even be that there is some
thinner set of internal conditions
under which such a combination might
take place. Though it is difficult to
imagine this but at all events the
material thus produced must have
been of the simplest kind + not
possessed of any definite organization -
it must in fact have been of a
nature similar to that of the lowest
living forms known to us.

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However with such a theory do this I
scarcely think you will be willing to
agree.

One thing, in closing,
often strikes me + that is the
possible identity of what you
call - "the will of God" - with -

"the Laws of Nature":

Excuse the fragmentary nature of
the letter - I have been writing
ahead + there is not much
sequence. V W.S.