

Smithalls

106 Dock Street (Dorchester)

Newport, Mon.

4 mo 22 1889

I wonder
I have sincerely
I thank you
Respected friend

I have been read
with considerable interest nearly
the whole of the work "The Chain of
life in Geological time"
= What induced me principally to turn
my attention to the subject at ^{lastly} ~~this time~~
was a remark made in our last
Yearly meeting (of the Society of Friends,
large body) by a young man an M.A. of
London an old school-fellow.

He said this reference to a proposed
Declaration of Faith the adoption of which
he was opposing that those who
had studied the subject know that
Evolution would take its place

side by side with Gravitation
* That must come a a shock
on the minds of those who had
been brought up to think differently but
he believed they would be able to in time
to offer for acceptance a creed or doctrine
which ~~appeared~~ would not involve
intellectual inconsistency [or something similar]

" Now since that time my mind has dwelt
very much on the subject because it appears
to me to involve such great issue as
quite to nullify Christianity if the terms
used in speaking of evolution are such as
~~some~~ understood in a sense which mean
that man can evolve goodness out of
himself

" Turning to the book I found that the evidence
of Palaeontology was not such a would
have justified anyone in 1849 in saying
that those who had studied the subject

know &c. Turning again to some
publications of Dr Lionel Beale, about
1875 & 1876, the evidence in his
particular line of research appears
equally inconclusive.

May I ask thee then, ^{as one} who knows that
whatever else is uncertain that Christianity
is no cunningly devised fable whether
in the last 10 years anything has
transpired which justified that use of
the word know with regard to evolution
, thou wilt ~~be~~ hope pardon my
liberty in thee addressing thee

"Presumably it appears to me that there
is evidence both from the language
of Gen & from the discoveries of prehistoric
remains that there were men living on
the earth before Adam, but that is far

from saying that he was descended
from a monkey or animalcule.

If all created ~~for~~ beings are descended
from outward forms similar to their
present embryos, which I take to be
the teaching of modern science so
called, we either have a definite
distinct division of all existing species
from the first dawnings of life or else
we have animalcules now living
which might in a possible combination
of circumstances become as in a few
million years the ancestors of men.
Then again if we accept the middle course
say that all existing forms sprung from
a few ~~original~~ ~~for~~ elementary forms which
could not possibly lapse one into the other
if we admit the creation of elementary
forms why not admit the creation of
Complex ones. Perhaps thou would kindly
favour me with a summary of thy present views