

Carpenter

June 13/82

Dear Mr. Francis Darwin

The only letters of importance that I have preserved, are those which relate to <sup>the paper</sup> ~~which~~ it was my privilege to be able to give your Father, in procuring a favourable <sup>consideration</sup> ~~reception~~ for his immortal work. These, I am sure, will be of interest to you, - particularly as showing his own modest appreciation of it. It now seems almost ridiculous that he should have expressed himself in the terms he did, as regards my general acceptance of his views.

I may mention, in explanation of them, that when he was good enough to send me his 'Principles of Species', I wrote to <sup>thank him for it</sup> ~~him~~ as soon as I had acquainted myself with

the general drift of his argument,  
and <sup>had</sup> read the last chapter.

He is quite correct in saying  
that I must have <sup>previously</sup> thought  
out the subject in some degree;  
the fact being that I had been early  
put on the track of the 'variability  
of species' by Dr. Prichard, had given  
much attention to the <sup>question</sup> ~~subject~~ as  
occasion for getting adding to my  
stock of information upon it  
offered, had ~~to~~ made it the sub-  
ject of a lecture at the meeting of  
the British Assoc<sup>n</sup> in Glasgow  
in 1855; and had enlarged upon  
it in my Memoir on Pebble-stones  
in the Phil. Trans. in 1855; - my Fo-  
raminiferal studies having led  
me to extend my conception of  
the range of variation in that  
group, beyond anything previously  
suspected. Moreover, in a Review  
of the 'Vetties', I had expressed

my readiness to entertain any hypothesis of evolution that could hold water scientifically. And I had been strongly impressed by Baden Powell's admirable essay, in favour of Geological Contingency (I had, indeed, paid a good deal more attention to that part of the subject than your Father was aware of, - as he afterwards came to recognize) and was quite prepared to accept to the full his argument on the "Imperfection of the Geological Record". Consequently, when I saw that your Father had got hold of a definite scientific doctrine, I was fully prepared to give it the favourable consideration which his own previous admirable work entitled it to claim from every scientific man.

But I have no doubt that after carefully studying the book (I used to read a chapter every morning after breakfast) I wrote to <sup>convey</sup> ~~expressed~~ to him my full general acceptance of his

views; probably expressing the he-  
sitation I remember to have felt  
about the common origin of two  
lyses which I had been accustomed  
to consider as so physiologically  
opposed as Birds & Reptiles, — a  
point about which I now feel no  
difficulty. And your Father's third  
letter refers to this.

His 4<sup>th</sup> letter shows his kind  
appreciation of the Review I wrote  
in the "National" — then edited  
by Hutton & Bagehot. And his 5<sup>th</sup>  
expresses his gratification at  
a Review I subsequently wrote  
in the "British & Foreign Medical-  
Chirurgical Review", which took  
up several points not noticed  
in the preceding. I heard through  
some friend, that he had expressed  
considerable surprise at my pro-  
tecting <sup>there</sup> showing the possession of  
a much larger amount of Geo-  
logical knowledge, than he had  
previously credited me with.

My earliest communications with him must have been in the earlier days when he was Sec<sup>y</sup> of the Geol. Soc<sup>y</sup>, and was working up his South American Geology. I examined at his request the microscopical character of some of his specimens of the Permian deposit; and you will find my observations results in pp. 77 & 99 of his book. He then began to work at the microscope himself; and I have a letter relating to something to which I was helping, being <sup>inserted</sup> in Mr C's Autograph book. I will have it copied if you wish; but I scarcely think you would care for it. I remember his paying me a visit at Stoke Newington (where I first settled when I came up to Town), to learn some particulars of Microscopical manipulation. This

must have been about 1846, when  
he was beginning to work at the  
Carripts.

I am about to publish in the  
"Modern Review"; an Address which  
I gave recently at Leon College  
on the general subject of the  
relation of <sup>the doctrine of</sup> evolution to Darwin,  
with a notice of your Father's  
earlier life. This Address had been  
arranged <sup>for</sup> some months before  
his death; and I gave it very  
much as it had been previously  
planned. The whole, I fear, can  
not appear in the next No; but  
the Editor is desirous of giving  
the first place to what relates  
to him personally.

I need not say that I shall  
be very glad to have these letters  
back as soon as you have  
had them copied; as they are very  
precious to my family, as well  
as to myself. Believe me  
Yours faithfully  
Wm B Carpenter