

THE DARWIN CELEBRATION AT CAMBRIDGE

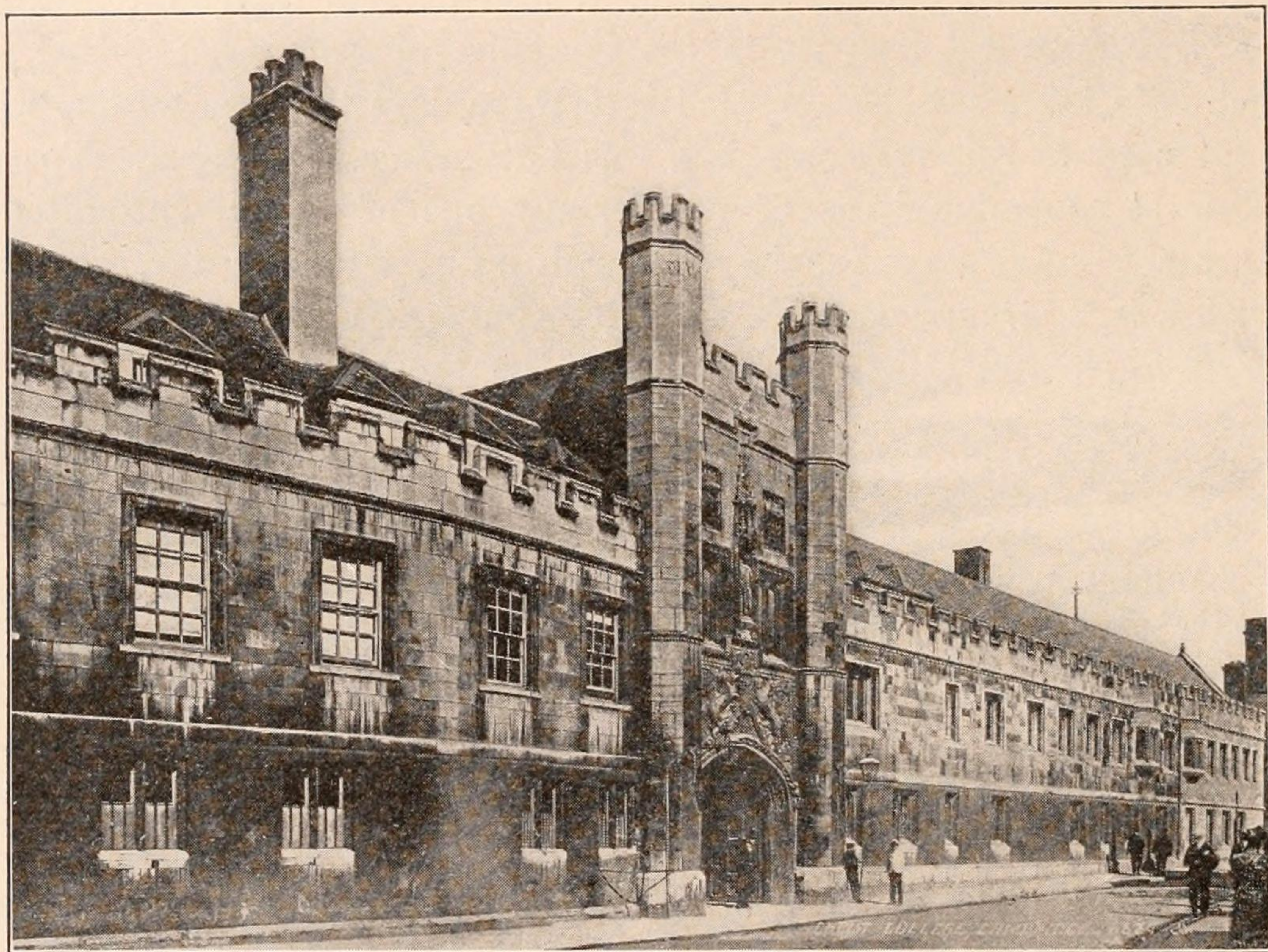
BY PROFESSOR T. D. A. COCKERELL
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

THE Darwin Celebration, held by the University of Cambridge in June, was in every way a great success. So much has been printed concerning it that it hardly seems necessary in this place to go into many details; yet a brief account may be sufficiently interesting. The university did its part in the most magnificent way; indeed, so much entertainment was crowded into three days that the writer, who is not used to this sort of thing, was left rather bewildered. To see and meet some hundreds of people, any one of whom, encountered separately, would have furnished enough interest for the day, was like arriving in a strange country, where the fauna is all new and the pursuit of each rare object is interrupted by the sight of two or three others. This, however, was inevitable, and in spite of the complexity of the whole affair, there was apparently no serious hitch anywhere.

The delegates were both numerous and distinguished. According to the final list, which is understood to include only those actually present, there were twenty-five from the United States, not counting a couple of guests. Some of these were not biologists, but the list included many prominent workers, such as J. Mark Baldwin, J. Loeb, C. B. Davenport, E. L. Mark, E. B. Wilson, H. F. Osborn, W. B. Scott, C. D. Walcott, L. O. Howard, etc. Philadelphia did not send a single delegate of its own, though Professor Osborn, of New York, represented the American Philosophical Society. Harvard University and the Boston Society of Natural History had only one delegate between them. In general, however, the response from this country was highly creditable, considering the difficulty and expense involved, and the later, though in a certain sense rival, meeting at Winnipeg. Practically every country which makes any pretense to do biological work was represented, but some much better than others. Sweden sent eight delegates, including Nathorst and Arrhenius; Switzerland five, Holland six; but Norway only one, while Spain and Greece were represented solely by Englishmen. Germany, France and Austria had of course numerous and distinguished representatives. At the great reception by the chancellor of the university in the Fitzwilliam Museum, and again at the presentation of addresses, we marveled to see the splendor of the various academic gowns and hats, the men on these occasions really outshining the other sex in the conspicuousness,

if not the beauty, of their attire. Two nations only, the Swiss and the Japanese, wore plain black clothes. Chancellors of English universities are usually noblemen of no particular distinction intellectually; but most fortunately and appropriately, the present official head of the University of Cambridge is Lord Rayleigh, himself a scientific worker of the highest rank. In this, and also in the person of Professor A. C. Seward, who was the official more immediately in contact with the delegates, Cambridge was happy in being represented by scientific eminence no less than academic distinction.

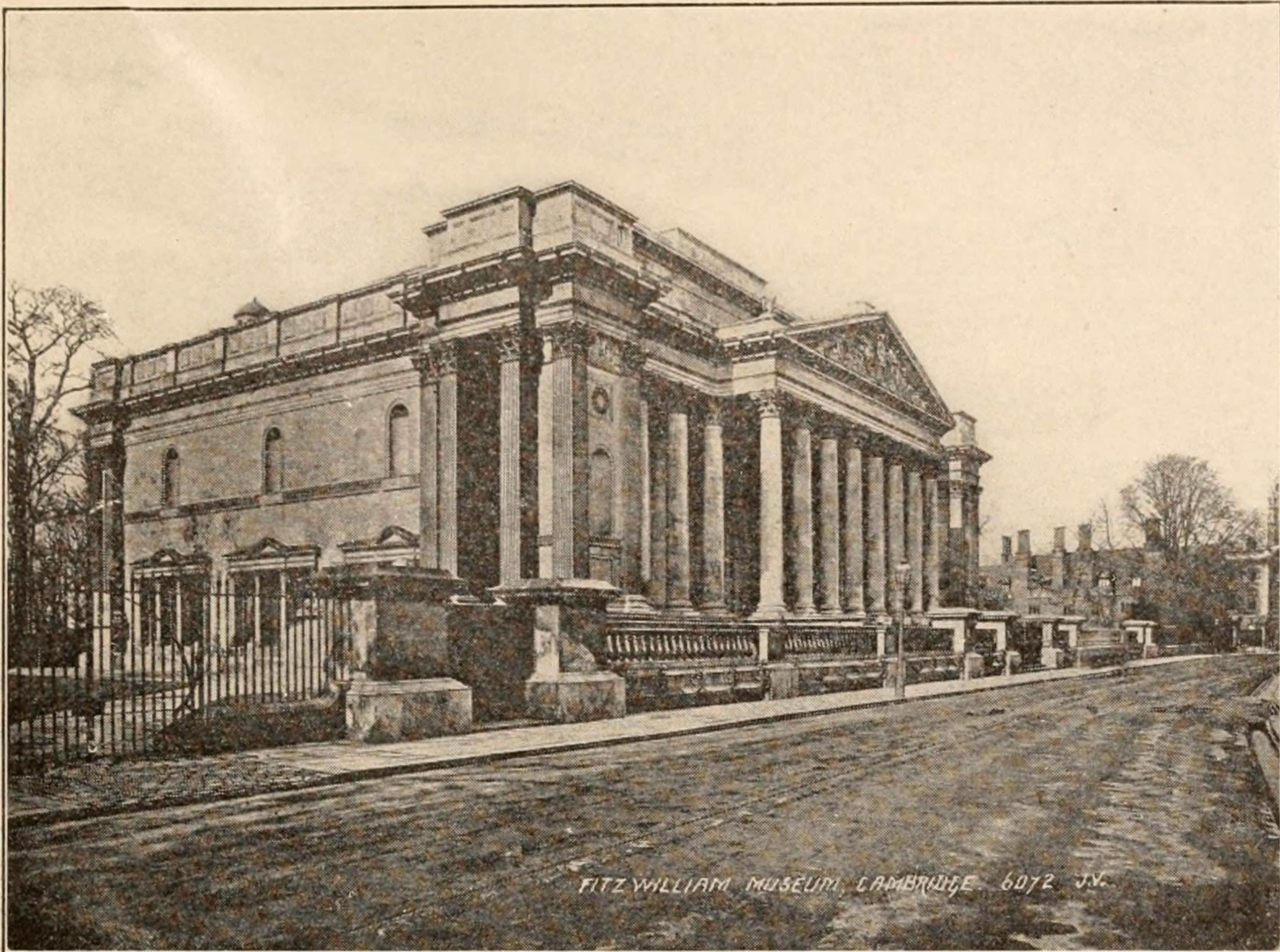
At Christ's College, where Darwin was in residence some eighty years ago, there was an exhibition of objects connected with his life.



CHRIST'S COLLEGE, where Darwin attended from 1828 to 1831.

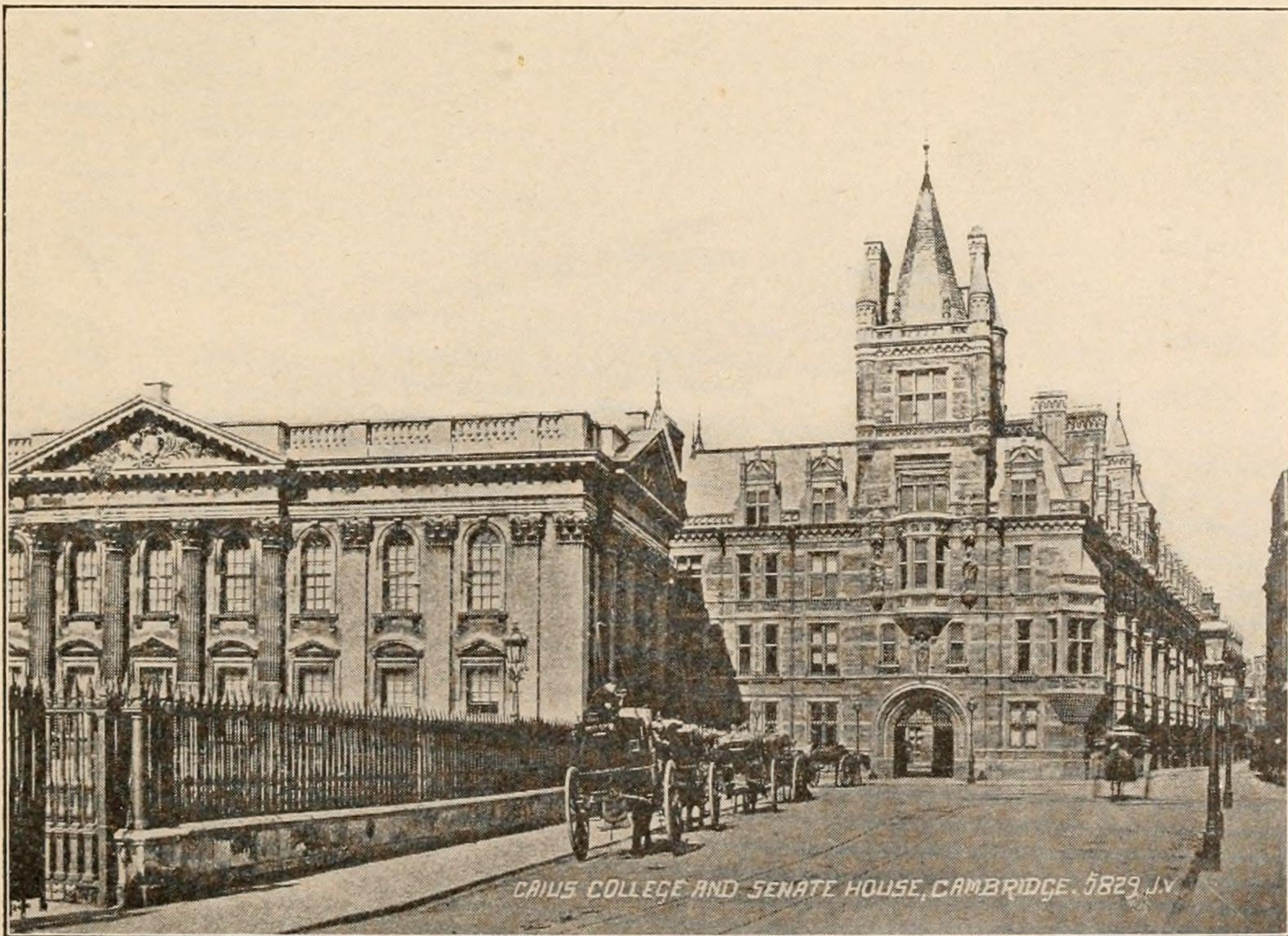
This included many manuscripts, the apparatus he used upon the voyage of the "Beagle," specimens he collected, numerous portraits, etc. There was even a series of contemporary caricatures, some good-natured, some otherwise. One represented a monkey with a face more or less like that of Darwin, sitting in a tree, reading the "Origin of Species." "Here," ran the legend, "but for natural selection and the survival of the fittest, sits Charles Darwin."

As we were looking at these things, Dr. Francis Darwin came in, leading an old man. My heart stood still for a moment to realize that this was Sir Joseph Hooker, the great botanist who was Darwin's friend and adviser more than fifty years ago. I had never expected to look upon his face, but there he was, ninety-two years old, yet quite able to enjoy the proceedings and converse with those who were presented to



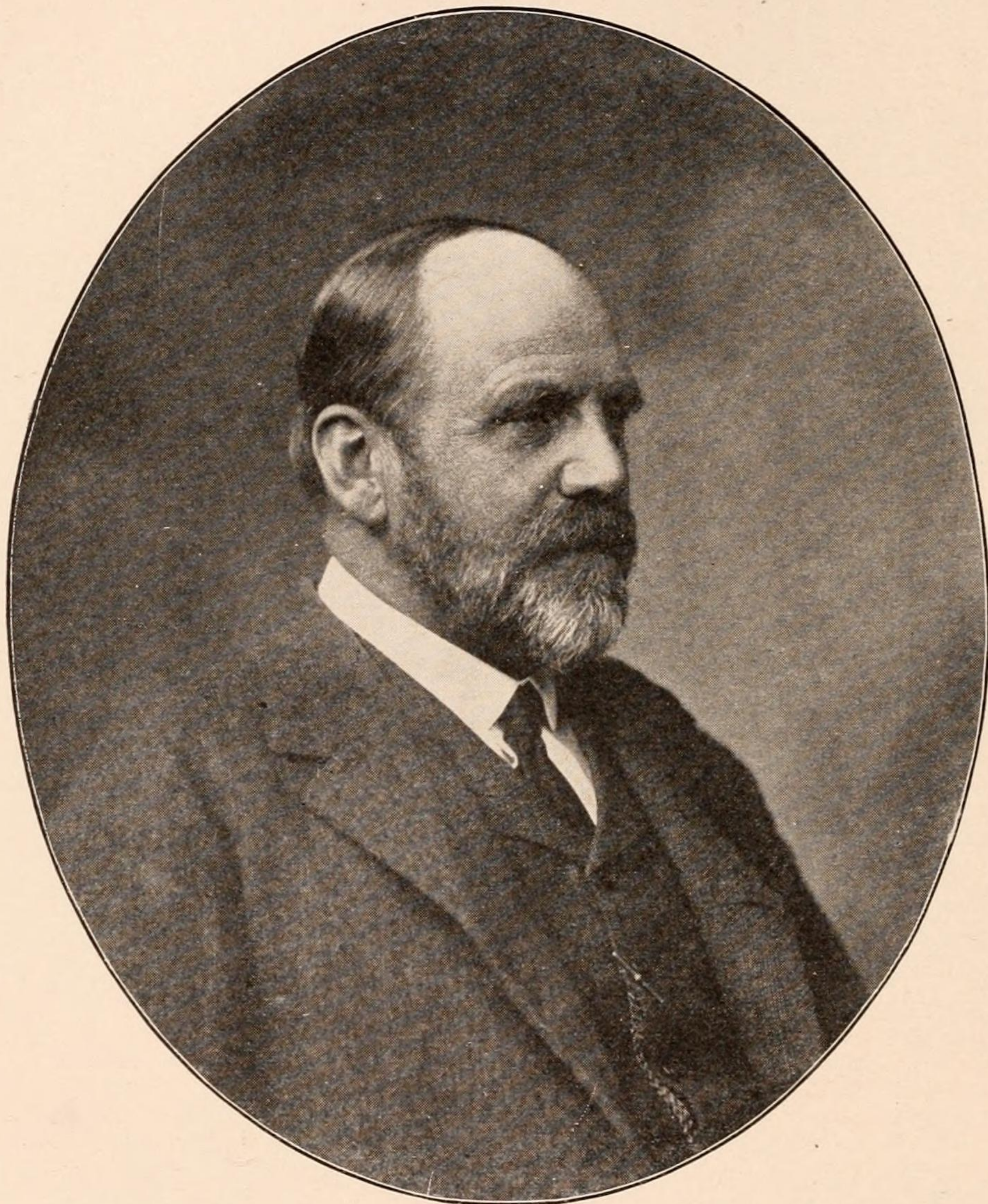
FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM, where the Chancellor's reception was held.

him. In the few words I had with him, he recalled with pleasure his botanical trip to Colorado with Asa Gray. Old as he is, he has by no means given up botanical work; a paper describing new Asiatic species of *Impatiens* appeared only the other day.



SENATE HOUSE (to the left of picture), where the addresses were presented and the honorary degrees conferred.

On the morning of June 23, in the Senate House, was the ceremony of presenting addresses. These were of course not read, but were handed to the chancellor as the names of the delegates were announced. Some, perhaps expecting to make a short speech, had no document to offer, but others had quite large books, elaborately bound and ornamented. The Japanese offerings looked particularly bulky and interesting; one could not help feeling curious as to their contents.



DR. FRANCIS DARWIN.

Although it was impossible to read the addresses, short speeches were made by representatives of Germany, France, the United States and Great Britain, these being Professor Oscar Hertwig, Professor Metchnikoff, Professor Osborn and Sir E. Ray Lankester respectively. The last speaker took somewhat controversial ground, maintaining the validity of the theory of the natural selection of minute and ubiquitous variations, and stating that certain views advanced by modern naturalists had been duly considered by Darwin, and for sufficient reasons set on one side. It could not be doubted, he said, that Darwin would have

been deeply interested in Mendel's results, but these, although throwing light on the mechanisms concerned in hereditary transmission, were not in any way opposed to Darwin's great theoretical structure.

In the evening of the same day there was a great banquet in the new examination hall, 538 men sitting down. A few wives and daughters, as the custom is, were permitted to observe the feast from a gallery. We were furnished with printed lists, showing where everybody sat; so it was equally easy to find one's own place, and to learn the names of all one's neighbors. The menu was printed in a little booklet, on the outside of which were portraits of Darwin at the ages of seven and fifty-nine. There were blank pages, and so the books circulated round the tables, and came back full of pencilled signatures. The tables were

Entrance in Pembroke 57

Francis Darwin
 W.E. Darwin
 E. Darwin
 Howard Darwin

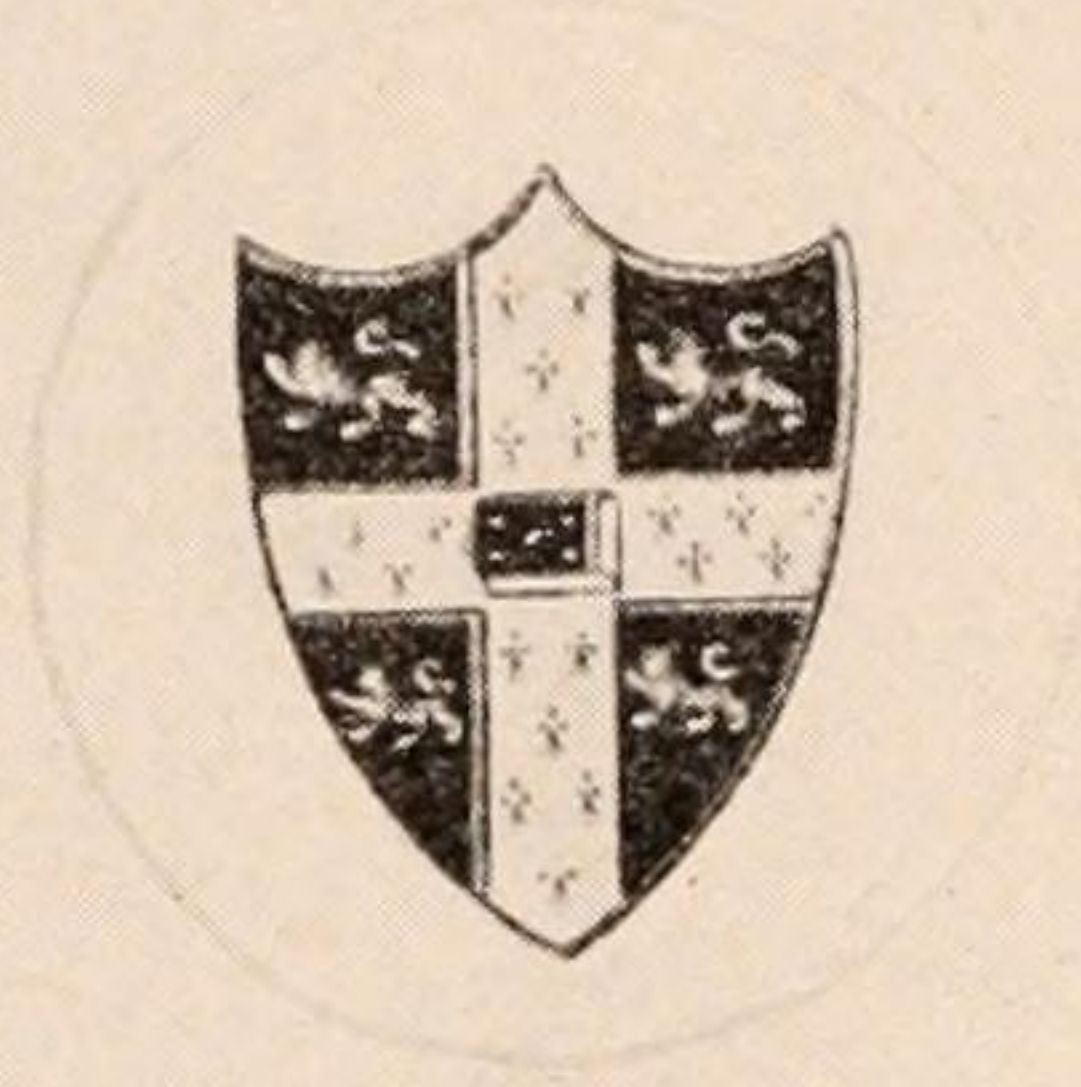
 R.F. Darwin
 Frances Darwin
 Nora Darwin
 Ewen Darwin
 Bernard Darwin
 Charles Darwin
 William Darwin
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Signatures of members of the Darwin family present at the garden party given by them to those in attendance at the meeting. The first four are sons of Charles Darwin. The others are grandchildren. (The other writing on the card is that of Francis Darwin.)

DARWIN COMMEMORATION

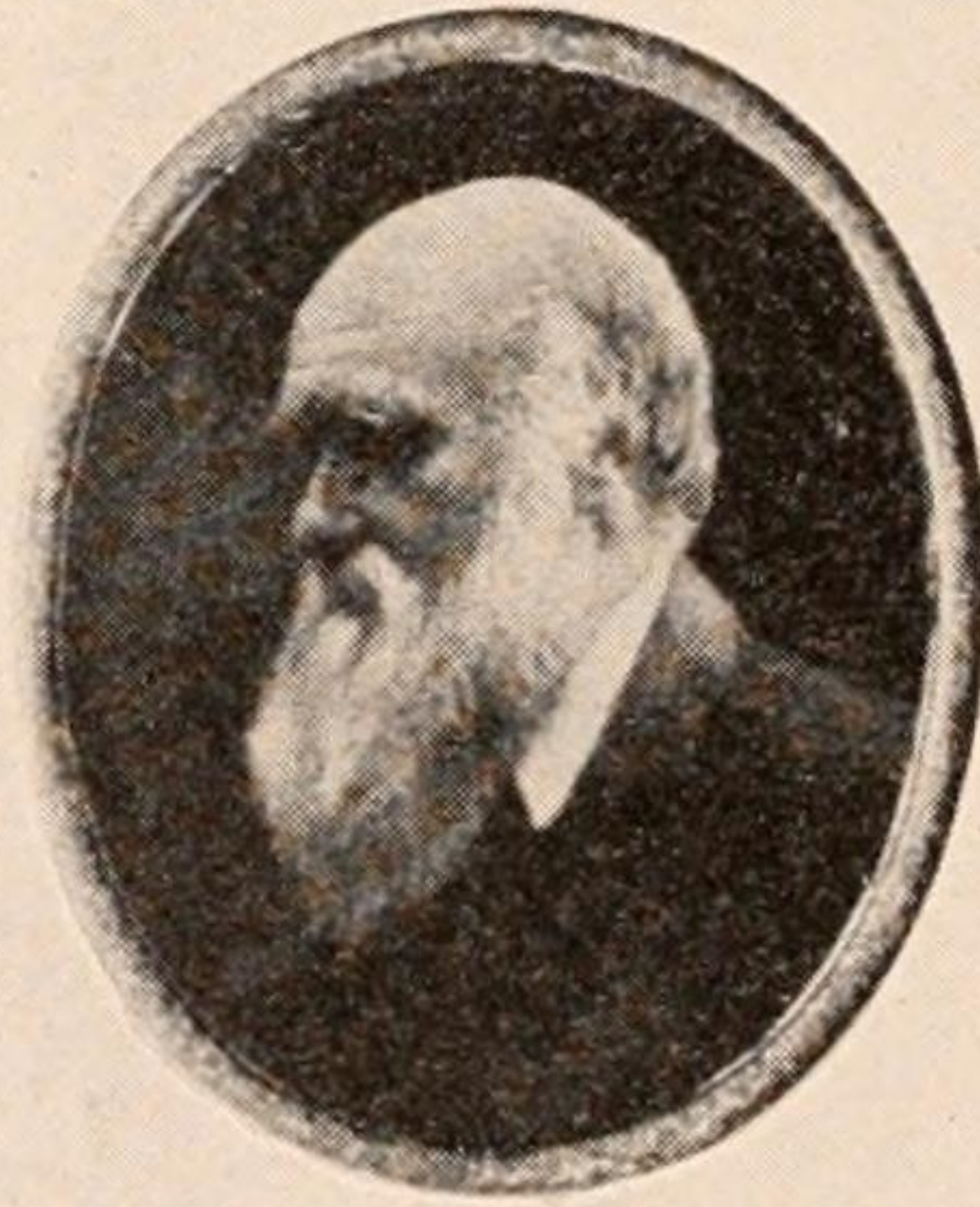
1809-1859-1909

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY



BANQUET

23 JUNE 1909



Charles Darwin

ÆT. 7

ÆT. 59

COVER OF MENU CARD AT THE BANQUET.

decorated with flowers, one of which, chosen I believe at Professor Bateson's suggestion, was the Myrtaceous *Darwinia hookeriana*. As we left the table several of us took specimens to preserve in remembrance of the occasion. The speeches at the banquet were made by the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, Mr. William Erasmus Darwin (Charles Darwin's oldest son), Dr. Arrhenius and Professor Poulton. The most interesting was naturally that of Mr. Darwin, who gave his recollections of his father. He said that in trying to think out his father's characteristics, the one which came most prominently before his mind was his abhorrence of anything approaching oppression or cruelty, and especially of slavery. Almost the only occasion when he had known him to be angry was when a subject of this sort was brought before him. He also spoke of the way in which Darwin treated his children, playing with them when they were young, and later treating them with entire trust and freedom. "It was rather touching to remember the tone of admiration and gratitude with which he acknowledged any help which they could give him." Mr. Darwin also referred to his father's modesty, and could imagine him saying, with a note of deprecation in his voice, that if there was to be a celebration, there could be no more fitting place for it than Cambridge.

At the close of the banquet the vice-chancellor got up, and spoke of the regret which all felt at the absence of Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace. It was proposed to send a telegram to him as follows: "The naturalists assembled at Cambridge for the Darwin celebration, can not forget your share in the great work which they are commemorating, and regret your inability to be present." This was endorsed by the most tremendous and unanimous applause; the vice-chancellor, speaking for himself, said he only regretted the word naturalists, as this might seem to exclude from participation such persons as himself, who, though engaged in other than biological work, were strongly in accord with the sentiment of the telegram.

Although Dr. Wallace could not prudently have endured the stress of the celebration, in which he would have been a central figure, I may be permitted to report that his health has much improved recently, and when I visited him in August he was as active minded and ready to discuss the celebration and other matters as one could have expected had he been thirty years younger. His garden is as beautiful and full of rare and interesting plants as ever, and he is collecting materials for a new book.

On the following day, June 24, the official proceedings closed with a session in the senate house, at which honorary degrees were conferred on a number of delegates, and the Rede Lecture, dealing with Darwin's contributions to geology, was delivered by Sir Archibald Geikie. On this occasion a venerable lady was observed occupying a chair, con-

Southern South America has probably a larger - percentage
 of Birds, specifically same, as intertropics S. of Equator, (compared)
 with Europe, hence it is closer allied by percentage system,
 but this can hardly be considered the case ???
 — (22) —
 If North America had no mammal identical with
 Europe, in same way as S. America has not,
 then the percentage system would not show that N. America
 is incomparably closer allied in its mammifers to
 Europe than S. America is. —
 —
 It comes to this ~~that the percentage system takes no account of~~
 that the percentage system takes no account of
 relationship of organisms, when all species different. —
 —
 For instance Galapagos land Birds all different from
 S. America yet certainly closest alliance. —

PAGE OF DARWIN'S WRITING, taken from one of his note books, believed to be prior to 1859. Given to Mr. Cockerell by Dr. Francis Darwin.

"Southern South America has probably a larger percentage of birds, specifically same, as intertropic S. of equator, compared with Europe; hence it is closer allied by percentage system, but this can hardly be considered the case ???"

"If North America had no mammal identical with Europe, same way as S. America has not, then the percentage system would not show that N. America was incomparably closer allied in its mammifers to Europe than S. America is."

"It comes to this, that the percentage system takes no account of relationship of organisms, when all species different."

"For instance Galapagos land birds all different from S. American. Yet certainly closest alliance."

[This is a very good example of his manner of criticizing his own methods, or methods presented to him, and considering the matters involved from every point of view.]

trary to all custom, on the floor of the senate house. It was Mrs. Huxley; to whom else could the unique distinction have been offered?

Degrees were conferred on twenty-one delegates, nearly all of them men whose names are familiar to every biologist.

Three Americans received degrees, Wilson, Loeb and Walcott. It is not customary for the university to confer degrees upon its own mem-

bers, but an appropriate exception was made in favor of Francis Darwin, who, when he came forward, was received with deafening applause. With this exception, we thought de Vries was the most heartily received. The public orator, Dr. Sandys, made an appropriate speech to each one in Latin; here and there the resources of that language were somewhat taxed to find the means of describing the recipient's attainments. Was it justifiable, for example, to tell de Vries that he had worked on the *Primula vespertina*? We waited with curiosity to hear the Latin for Dr. Walcott's middle name, but it was discreetly skipped. The Rede Lecture was so appropriate and correct as to be somewhat dull, and had the misfortune to come when every one was tired out.

In the afternoon there was a garden party at Trinity College, given by the members of the Darwin family. Here were four sons and two daughters of Charles Darwin, seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild. The last mentioned, Ursula Darwin, aged ten months, daughter of Bernard Darwin, seemed to realize the dignity of her position. The high ability shown by Darwin's children is at least in some degree possessed by the third generation, as Charles Darwin, son of Sir George Darwin, was this year fourth wrangler.

After the Cambridge celebration was over, a large part of the Darwin exhibit was moved to the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, and to this was added a large collection of specimens of all sorts illustrating Darwin's theories and observations.

Some important literature was published at Cambridge in connection with the celebration. The most interesting was a small book entitled "The Foundations of the Origin of Species," being Darwin's original outline written in 1842, showing that his theory was far developed even at this early date. This work, edited by Francis Darwin, was issued in a special edition, a copy of which was presented to each of the delegates and guests.

"Darwin and Modern Science," edited by Professor Seward, is a large volume containing twenty-nine essays by prominent evolutionists. This will be familiar to students in America, and so need not be described. *Christ's College Magazine* issued a very interesting centenary number; while the "Order of Proceedings," given to each delegate, contains a sketch of Darwin's life, with admirable portraits of Darwin, Mrs. Darwin, Henslow and Hooker. There are also catalogues of the exhibits, both at Cambridge and South Kensington, both containing a quantity of interesting information.