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ALS H336

Prince of Wales
 Harrogate
 July 10 1886

My dear Foster

I have suggested an alteration in one paragraph of your draft – I have no doubt as to the value of the scientific results of the borings if they are carried to the bottom – but it is quite another question whether the R.S. would be justified in warranting the expenditure incurred. I should like to see the Zagazig boring carried to the bottom or at any rate until Miocene fossils are brought up by the borer – the results of this boring should then be carefully discussed and the ways & means of getting another made elsewhere considered – If we leave off before we touch Miocene bottom at Zagazig we shall have spent a good deal of money without getting any definite result. However it is something to know that there is no bottom at 66 feet.¹ I expect that fellow Figari Bey² drew a good deal on his imagination.

I return all the papers herewith. The smashing of the G. O. M. appears to be pretty complete³ – though he has unfortunately enough left to give him the means of playing an ugly game of obstruction in the next Parliament.

You have rather taken the shine out of my exultation at Lubbock's majority⁴ – though I confess I was disheartened to see so many educated men going in for the disruption policy. If it were not for Randolph I should turn Tory – but that fellow will someday oust Salisbury as Dizzy ousted old Derby – and sell his party to Parnell or anybody else who makes a good bid.

We are flourishing on the whole. Sulphide of wife joins with me in love
 Ever yours
 T. H. H.

¹ Stokes reports in his presidential address to the Royal Society in November 1886 that the committee had decided to extend the initial boring at Zagazig in the Nile delta and that money had been given from the Government Grant to supplement the funds from the Royal Society; see previous letter. 'Anniversary meeting', *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London*, 1886, **41**: 378.

² Figari Bey, an Italian geologist in the service of the Egyptian Government, had published the results of a series of borings in different parts of the Nile delta.

³ Gladstone lost the general election of July 1886.

⁴ John Lubbock was the liberal unionist parliamentary candidate for the University of London.

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ALS H335

Prince of Wales Hotel
Harrogate
July 21 1886

My dear Foster

The formation of Huxley Sulphide will be brought to a sudden termination tomorrow when we return to London. The process has certainly done my wife a great deal of good and I wish it could have gone on a week or two longer but our old arrangements are upset & we must start with the chicks for Switzerland on the 27th that is next Tuesday.

Any time on Friday or Saturday morning before 12 (I have an engagement at 1 at the Board of Trade – so if you are for Saturday morning or afternoon perhaps Athenaeum would suit you best) or on Monday I could meet you – either at Athenaeum or S.K. – or will you come to my house & feed any time?

But let me have a letter to fix time & place when I reach home – as I have a variety of things to see to.

I hope the above interpolation is intelligible.

Ever yours

T. H. Huxley

The question of the hour

Is Dilke or Rix the bigger liar

(after J. Evans)

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ALS H337

Hotel du Mont Collon
Arolla
Suisse
Augt. 3rd 1886

My dear Foster

Your post card has followed me here from Evolena. Would you mind acknowledging the safe receipt of the crayfish & tell the sender that I will look to it as soon as I return? If it is really a crayfish it will be a great find.

We reached Evolena on Thursday last, instead of Friday, as I found the wife & Nettie not so tired as I imagined they would be when we reached Lausanne. Arriving a day

before that I had fixed, we had a near shave of getting no rooms as the hotel was full of people – We had glorious weather Thursday & Friday, and the latter day (having both been told carefully to avoid over exertion) the wife & I strolled, quite unintentionally, as far as the Glacier de Ferpècle and back again. Luckily the wife is none the worse and indeed, I think I was the more tired of the two. But we saw at once that Evolena was a mistake for our purpose and were confirmed in that opinion by a deluge of rain on Saturday – the hotel is down in a hole at the tail of a dirty Swiss village & only redeemed by very good cooking. So Sunday being fine, I, Ethel & Harry, started up here to prospect 18 miles up & down & 2000 feet to climb – & did it beautifully – It is just the place for us, at the tail of a glacier in the midst of a splendid amphitheatre of 11-12000 feet snow heights – and yet not bare and waste, any quantity of stone pines growing about.

Nettie (who was looking very ill when we started) is picking up already – I rather long for the flesh-pots of Evolena – cooking here being decidedly rudimentary – otherwise we are very well off. Some very nice people, named Courtenay, turned up at Evolena & have come on here – the son turns out to have been your demonstrator at Cambridge – the mother is a wonderfully cheery, intelligent old lady and we sit together to our comfort & satisfaction.

We are between six & seven thousand feet up & the air is wonderfully good – I absurdly slipped on the floor of the stone passage this morning & gave my great toe an ugly wrench which will probably keep me quiet a day or two – otherwise all well.

Ever yours
T. H. H.

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ALS H338

4 Marlborough Place
Abbey Road, N.W.
Sep. 10 1886

My dear Foster

We got back last evening after a very successful trip. Arolla suited us all to a T, and we are all in great force. As for me, from the day I got there I have not known of the existence of my liver – and except for the fact that I found fifteen or sixteen miles with a couple of thousand feet up & down quite enough, I could have deluded myself into the fond imagination that I was twenty years younger.

By way of amusement I bought a Swiss flora in Lausanne & took to botanising – and my devotion to the gentians led the Bishop of Chichester¹ – a dear old man – who paid us (that is the hotel) a visit to declare that I sought the “Ur-gentian” as a kind of Holy Grail. The only interruption to our felicity was the death of a poor fellow who was brought down on a guide’s back – from an expedition he ought not to have undertaken & whom I did my

1886

best to keep alive one night. But rapid pleuritic effusion finished him the next morning – in spite of (I hope not in consequence of) such medical treatment as I could give him.

I see you had a great meeting at Birmingham² – but I know not details. The delegation to Sydney is not a bad idea³ – but why on earth have they arranged that it shall arrive in the middle of the hot weather? Speechifying with the thermometer at 90° in the shade will try the nerves of the delegates – I can tell them.

I shall remain quietly here and see whether I can stand London. I hope I may, for the oestrus of work is upon me – for the first time this couple of years.

Let me have some news of you. With our love to your wife & you

Ever yours

T. H. Huxley

¹ Richard Durnford (1802–1895), Bishop of Chichester, had a keen interest in botany and horticulture.

² Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. See following letter.

³ To celebrate the centenary of the Colonies of Australia in 1888, it was proposed that a special meeting of the British Association, attended by representative members of the Association, be held in Sydney in the January of that year.

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Huxley Papers 4:275

Shelford

Saturday [12 Sept. 1886]

Reverend Sir

Hurrah for Arolla! It is very delightful to hear you talk (write) in such a satisfactory way.

I have had a very quiet time – of sheer laziness mingled with that ultimate infirmity of noble minds, gardening – (the penultimate infirmity is worrying about local Floras – we shall catch you with the spade before long – *Laus Deo* –) & feel so content that I don't want the term to begin – or the scientific season to start – but I suppose it will.

Don't choke your appetite for work by trying to satisfy it too amply to start with – but as little tit bits you may

1. pull this report to pieces – Master D. has struck out the whole of my suggestion about teaching the teachers.
2. think over the publication Ctee and the Colonial Ctee – we shall have to be meeting soon.

Yes the B. Ass was successful – there is a d—d lot of vitality in that business yet – *sedebit in eternum* – unless the Australian visit clears off the cream by baking them to death – but then I suppose a new cream will rise.

I don't want to come to London yet – at least I did not – but now you are back I dare say I shall find some “call” to town before the Alpine browning has passed away.

Missus joins in

Ever thine

M. Foster

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ALS H339

4 Marlborough Place, N.W.

Sep. 16 1886

My dear Foster

I enclose the Report & have nothing to suggest except a quibble at p. 4. – If you take a stick in your hand you may feel lots of things – determine their form etc. with the other end of it, but surely the stick is properly said to be insensible – D°. with the teeth – I feel very well with mine (which are paid for) but they are surely not sensible? Old Tomes¹ once published the opinion that the contents of the dentine tubules were sensory nerves – on the ground of one feeling so distinctly through the teeth – He forgot the blind man's stick. Indeed the reference of sensation to the end of a stick is one of the most interesting of psychological facts.

It is extraordinary how those dogs of examinees return to their vomit – Almost all the obstinate fictions you mention are of a quarter of century date. Only then they were dominant & epidemic – now they are sporadic.

I wish Pasteur or somebody would find some microbe with which the rising generation could be protected against them.

We shall have to re-arrange the Examination business – this partner having made his fortune & retiring from firm. Think over what is to be done.

Ever yours

T. H. H.

You don't happen to grow gentians in your Alpine region, do you?

¹ Sir John Tomes (1815–1895), dental surgeon.

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Huxley Papers 4:277

Shelford
Friday
[Sept. 1886]

My dear Huxley

I had hoped to have got up to you yesterday or this morning but fate wouldn't let me. Delighted to hear you are back.

Did you get my letter at Nuremberg – in it I pressed you not to attempt to stay in London – but as soon as possible to move off to the Surrey Hill or elsewhere.

Why not try Hazelmere or Hind Head – you will have bright sharp air & plenty of walks – & one will have more chance of seeing you than if you are at Bournemouth.

Do think seriously of it before the wet comes – The exams are all in train – Don't bother about them or any of our scientific & academic squabbles.

Ever thine
M. Foster

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ALS H340

Godalming
Sep. 25 1886

My dear Foster

We are here till tomorrow on a visit to Leonard – seeing how the young folks keep house.

I brought the Egyptian report down with me – It is very important, and in itself justifies the expenditure. Any day next (that is to say this) week that you like I can see Col. Turner¹ – If you and Evans can arrange a day I don't think we need mind the rest of the Committee. We must get at least two other borings ten or fifteen miles off if possible on the same parallel, by hook or by crook. It will tell us more about the Nile valley than has ever been known – That Italian fellow who published sections must have lied considerably.

Touching gentians, I have not examined your specimen yet but it certainly did not look like Andrewsii. You talk of having acaulis in your garden. That is one of the species I worked out most carefully at Arolla but its flowering time was almost over & I only got two full-blown specimens to work at – If you have any in flower & don't mind sacrificing one with a bit of the rhizoma – & could put it in spirit for me, I could settle one or

two points still wanting – Whisky will do, & you will be all the better for not drinking the whisky!

The distributional facts when you work them in connection with morphology, are lovely.

We put up with Donnelly on our way here – has taken a cottage at Felday eleven miles from hence, in lovely country – on lease – I shall have to set up a country residence some day – but as all my friends declare their own locality best, I find a decision hard – And it is a bore to be tied to one place.

Ever yours

T. H. Huxley

¹ Colonel Turner of the Royal Engineers, attached to the army of occupation in Egypt.

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Huxley Papers 4:279

Shelford

Nov. 7. 86.

Reverend Sir

I rather doubt if we are on the right track about the Colonies etc.

I quite sympathize with your ideas as to English speaking – but Evans' scheme does not seem to me suited to that – we want something different – & before any thing is done the Americans themselves should be thoroughly consulted. It will probably be long before anything adequate in that direction will be done.

Meanwhile it will be preparing the way if we work in India & the colonies into some scheme – but it should, I think, be distinctly a colonial or imperial scheme – tying in some way science in the Colonies etc to R.S. We ought therefore not to mix up Colonies as “Corresponding Members” with Germans & Frenchmen etc – Please think over this before we meet.¹

What do you say to the R.S. throwing up its cap at H.I.M.'s Jubilee by publishing as *libre de luxe*, an account of the progress of science and its influence on the welfare of mankind during the 50 years of her reign, written by all the talents – & possibly illustrated by facsimilies of this & that, portraits etc etc – Please think over this too. I have mentioned it to mumbo jumbo – but that is not much use – It would be a replica of part of your presidential address writ large by several hands.²

I have no doubt Mumbo Jumbo has written to the Pres. R.S. E – but of course he has not shown me what he has written – & of course I shall not ask him – Alas for the days that are past!!

1886

My letter is of course between yourselves [*sic*]– & don't go wasting your time by answering it.

Ever thine

M. F.

¹ The Royal Society of Victoria (Australia) having written to the Royal Society, the latter set up a committee to consider the possibility of establishing a formal network among scientific societies in the “Colonies and Dependencies of Great Britain”. Although the committee reported in November 1886 (Huxley Papers 4: 281), there is no evidence that the proposal was taken further.

² Queen Victoria's golden jubilee in 1887. Huxley contributed an article on ‘Science’ in Thomas Humphry Ward's *The reign of Queen Victoria: a survey of fifty years of progress*, London, Smith, Elder, 1887, vol. 2, pp. 322–38, reprinted in *Collected essays*, vol. 1, pp. 42–129.

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Huxley Papers 4:262

The Royal Society
Burlington House, London, W.
[Dec 1886]¹

Dear Huxley

I am most anxious to have a Challenger Ctee on Thurs next 16th at 12 Noon. You must if possible be present, will write later to explain.

Yours ever M. Foster

¹ This letter is catalogued in Dawson as September 1885.

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Huxley Papers 4:282

Shelford
Dec 10 [1886]

My dear Huxley

I hope the air of the hills has set you quite up again – I write a hurried note to Ikley on this wise – When last spring we sent in our annual report of Challenger with the estimates

we found that Murray had sent in estimates already viz in the previous December & that the estimates so sent in had been accepted. Hence our sending in estimates was a mere farce. You will remember my speaking to you and Murray about it just before Gov. Grant Meeting.

I hear from Murray that the Treasury have again asked him for estimates – & he has sent me his estimates. Since the Treasury (in the name of Jackson¹) has asked Murray for the estimates – though the Treasury (in the name of Welby²) had in answer to my letter of remonstrance last summer asked us to send in estimates by January, I thought it best to send on to Treasury Murray's estimates, which he, Murray, had sent to me in an envelope already directed to the Treasury.

But Evans argued with me that we ought to have a Challenger Ctee at once in order that in accordance with the instructions in Welby's letter, we may send in our report with our copies of estimates. So we have fixed it for Thursday next 16th at noon – I hope you won't mind its being so early & that you will be able to come. It seems to me important that without interfering with Murray we should show the Treasury that we are aware of our responsibility in this matter.

We fixed it at 12 because we have meeting of Council in the afternoon.

Ever thine
M. Foster

¹ Probably William Lawies Jackson (1840–1917), financial secretary to the Treasury 1885–1886.

² Reginald Earle Welby (1832–1915), permanent secretary to the Treasury.

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ALS H341

4 Marlborough Place
Abbey Road, N.W.
Dec. 16 1886

My dear Foster

On thinking over this morning's Committee work – it strikes my conscience that being neither President nor Chairman nor officer I took command of the boat in a way that was hardly justifiable.

But it seemed to me that our sagacious Treasurer for once was going astray & playing into Murray's hands, without clearly seeing what he was doing, and I bethought me of "salus Societatis suprema lex" & made up my mind to stop the muddle we were getting into at all costs. I hope he was not disgusted nor you either. Hooker ought to have cut in, but he did not seem inclined to do so.

I am clearly convinced it was the right thing to do – anyhow; and we shall not only have the reward of virtue but the pleasure of putting those blundering Treasury officials whose right hand does not know what their left hand is doing – into a hole.

Ever yours
T. H. H.

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Huxley Papers 121/58¹

I hope you are really better – I really had no time to look at you or to really see how you were. I have told Rix to forward me at once any letter about Challenger which comes – & will see you about it directly. So please let me know your moves, if you are going to make any this Xmas.

G. F. Wilson² (who is an F.R.S.) at Weybridge has admirable ground for growing most gentians & would I know be delighted to help you.

Believe me
Ever thine
M. Foster

PS. I am quite sure Evans did not feel himself put aside at the Ctee – & as I said I absolutely agreed with you.

¹ This letter is incomplete and undated and catalogued out of the main sequence of correspondence. It is likely to have been written in December 1886.

² George Fergusson Wilson (1822–1902), industrial chemist, was in retirement a keen gardener and fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society, to which he donated his land at Weybridge.

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Huxley Papers 4: 284

The Royal Society,
Burlington House, London, W.
Dec. 28 86

Dear Huxley

Here's a letter from Treasury. The first question is shall we bring it before Council or play it off our own bat. To save time I have not waited to shew the letter to Stokes though it is addressed to him, but send it straight to you.

Of course if President wishes it, it must go before Council but if we agree not to take it before Council, we can, I think persuade him to the same view. My own view is that we should deal with it ourselves.

The next question is shall we call a meeting of Ctee or can a letter of which I enclose a draft be licked into shape by correspondence between us.

If we have a Ctee, it might be on Jan. 6 say at 3pm, the coast is clear that afternoon before the meeting of the Society. Evans is away or is going away, off to Rome I believe – but I have written to ask him his whereabouts & how he can be got at. Perhaps you will drop me a line to say what you think had best be done.

I have just polished off my teacher's papers – sent in marks, report & all. On the whole I think we have after all had some effect on these poor creatures. I hope this beastly cold shifting weather is making you fancy you are still at Ilkley and doing you good. It ought at all events to do somebody good.

Best seasonable wishes to you all

Ever thine

M. Foster

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ALS H342

4 Marlborough Place

Abbey Road, N.W.

Dec. 29th 1886

My dear Foster

In my judgement the Council has nothing to do with any business of the Committee (which is executive) unless the Council chooses to appeal to it – All our dealings as a Council¹ have been direct with the Treasury and not through the Council.

Stokes is not a member of the Committee & really has nothing to do with the affair. The Treasury has made a blunder (as usual) in addressing the letter to him.

I do not think the letter of which I very much approve altogether, can be sent without authority of the Committee. I will attend in Jan^y if you call a meeting.

I should think Gog & Magog must be nearly as good as Arolla just now – snow here beastly.

1887

Rachel got rid of her one the other day before yesterday with great success – a big bouncing boy again.²

With best wishes to all

Ever yours

T. H. Huxley

¹ Huxley probably means Committee here.

² This was Thomas Lydwell Eckersley (d. 1959), theoretical physicist and engineer. He was elected to the Royal Society in 1938.

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Huxley Papers 4:286

Shelford, Cambs

Feb. 19. 87

Reverend Sir

Here are questions in Animal Physiology. Element

_____ Adv

_____ Honours

General Biology.

I began to do some questions in Animal Morphology – but I feel more & more unsettled for this – & have given it up. Perhaps you will kindly do this and the Morphology Honours.

I enclose my collection of old questions in morphology etc – & the syllabus. Please let me have the questions back together with the collection of old questions, with your own questions & any changes in mine you may desire to make – I have the printed headings, a stamped envelope etc all ready for transmitting them to S.K. They have to be in by 28th Feb.

Abel¹ has sent a Jubilee letter to R.S. – we have appointed a Ctee, officers, T.H.H., Lockyer & Dyer to consider & draw up a draft reply with a view of the R.S. following up your letter – you shall have a copy of Abel's letter directly. Meanwhile think over it & tell me what you think we can profitably do, & tell me when we meet.

Ever thine

M. Foster

P.S. I send old questions & syllabus etc by book post.

¹ The chemist, Frederick Augustus Abel (1827–1902), was appointed the organising secretary of the proposed new Imperial Institute. See following letter.

1887

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ALS H343

4 Marlborough Place
Abbey Road, N.W.
Feb 22. 1887

My dear Foster

I leave the Exⁿ papers for you at R.S. – where perhaps I may look in tomorrow on the chance of seeing you – you will find a note on one or two of your questions.

As to the Committee on that old Institute business I meant to be out of town for a few days on Friday – to freshen up my liver – & perhaps your Com^c may meet in the interval.

But my opinion is that the R.S. has no right to spend its money or pledge its credit for any but scientific objects and that we have nothing to do with sending round the hat for other purposes.

The project of the Institute Committee as it stands connected with the South Kensington site – is condemned by all the city people & will receive none but the most grudging support from them. They are going to set up what will be practically an Institute of their own in the city.¹

The thing is already a failure – I daresay it will go on & be varnished into a simulacrum of success – to become eventually a ghost like the Albert Hall or revive as a tea garden.

Ever Yours

T. H. Huxley

¹The establishment of an Imperial Institute to combine science and industry was proposed to commemorate Victoria's golden jubilee. Huxley supported the proposal but opposed the choice of a South Kensington site arguing it was too distant from the businesses and organisations in the City. See *Nature*, 1887, **35**: 265–266, and *Life and letters*, vol. 2, pp. 150–155.

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ALS H344

4 M.P. N.W.
March 6 1887

My dear Foster

Fogbound till yesterday morning – & did not get here till afternoon.

I have written Abel's letter – (or have I forgotten it?) anyhow we must be very careful not to give advice in a form that could involve us in trouble.

Therefore though I should uncommonly like to administer the dose contained in your draft – I don't think I will do – still less Dyer's.

I have written a very rough sketch of three paragraphs containing all that I think need be said.

You see the first does not tell them they are fools but assures that they are going to be wise which (in this case) comes to the same thing.

I should be ready to attend a meeting on Thursday.

I had summer in I of Wight up to Wednesday – then two days beastly fog – & now I have a really fluid cold. But it is not going to come to much I hope – I am well as soon as I get out of this beastly London.

“Beastly” seems in my head.

Ever Yours
T. H. Huxley

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ALS H345

4 M.P.
March 14 1887

My dear Foster

I have looked at the inclosed draft carefully & have made two suggestions. They may be carried out better but it is important I think to note 1) that this is not merely a case of feeling – but that we really have no authority to worry the Fellows about matters which are no business of the R.S. and 2) that we certainly cannot do what they say could “identify” us with their rotten scheme.

Ever yours
T. H. Huxley

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ALS H346

4 M.P.

March 22 87

My dear Foster

I left at the Royal Society this afternoon a short paper (not more than 3 or 4 pages of Proceedings) about the Snapping turtle whose head & tail Owen has stuck onto a lizard body. I have kept free from controversy in tone & substance – only alluding to Owen's paper so far as necessary.¹

If you can let me have a folding plate to figure the skull & a caudal vertebra of the fossil & the recent form side by side – I could set them going at once & soon have them ready.

Can the paper be read on the 31st. I am going away on the 1st with the wife to the I. of Wight and though I shall be up on the 7th my Gentians come off at the Linnaean on that day² so I don't want two papers on my hands.

I have been exceedingly lively for the last week or two and begin to think there is something left in me still.

Ever yours

T. H. Huxley

¹ T. H. Huxley, 'Preliminary note on the fossil remains of a chelonian reptile, *ceratochelys sthenurus*, from Lord Howe's Island, Australia', *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London*, 1887, **42**: 232–238.

² 'The gentians: notes and queries', *Journal of the Linnean Society, Botany*, 1888, **24**: 101–124, reprinted in *Scientific memoirs*, vol. 4, pp. 612–635.

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Huxley Papers 4:288

Shelford

April 22 87

Reverend Sir

I sent you off a hurried note from R.S. yesterday. We want a Croonian Lecture & H. Seeley sent in a paper which I thought might do – I shall be very grateful if you could look at it and say whether you think it will do – & if you could give me your opinion before next Thursday, – & that if favourable we could fix the matter at Council on that

day. Whether the lecture should appear in the Proceedings or Trans can be determined later – though if you can form an opinion, while looking at it, on this point so much the better. I hope it won't be bothering you too much.¹

I have a letter from S.K. saying that a document about payment of Assist. Exam. has been sent to you – & I am to consult you on the matter – what the d—I is it all about?

Here is a serious matter. The Parkerian crisis has come on rather suddenly. As you know there is a good deal of doubt among the younger brethren as to the old gentleman's present work, and at last Council opportunity was taken of the very general terms in which your report and that of the other referee (Flower), (this is of course private) were given, to suggest that a further report by one of the younger brethren should be taken. I did not oppose this, because I have long been aware of the state of feeling amongst our young friends about Parker's long papers² – & knowing that the nettle must be grasped sooner or later, thought it better grasped at once. I have not seen the text of this later report – but I know that in substance it recommends considerable curtailment and indeed omissions. The report is of course by Lankester. Now don't you think it will be best to take the whole matter up, and try to find some final settlement? We might do this by referring the matter to a Committee say yourself & Flower to represent seniors – Moseley & Lankester to represent juniors & Evans & myself to represent the Society in general. I can't help thinking that if we were to talk the matter quietly "over a round table" we might decide on some plan of action, by which we might secure all the remainder of work that is to be got out of Parker, without anyone being able to say that he is a "burden".

I do hope that some such course as this will commend itself to you, & that you will be writing to take your part in bringing it about. As I just said the thing must be laid hold of sooner or later – & to my mind the sooner the better.

I hope you are flourishing & eke the Missus. I have been away for two or three weeks in north Italy – a very pleasant holiday – have left my Missus behind with Miss Mercy in Paris but I expect them home tonight.

By the bye – when I reached home on Wednes. I found another paper by Sir Richard, on *Meiolania* down for yesterday!! The abstract read won't do much harm – but the publication of the paper offers another nettle.³

Ever thine

M. Foster

¹ Harry Govier Seeley (1839–1909), palaeontologist and geologist, gave the 1887 Croonian Lecture: 'Researches on the structure, organization, and classification of the fossil reptilia. II. On *Pareiasaurus bombidens* (Owen), and the significance of its affinities to amphibians, reptiles, and mammals', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, B, 1888, **179**: 59–109.

² William Kitchen Parker (1823–1890), comparative anatomist and zoologist, was known for his long, detailed and sometimes rather obscure writings. His paper 'On the structure and development of the wing in the common fowl' was read in January 1887. It was revised and published in *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, B, 1888, **179**: 385–398. See also letter 235, note 1.

³ Richard Owen, 'On parts of the skeleton of *Meiolania platyceps* (Ow.)', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*, B, 1888, **179**: 181–191, read 21 April 1887.

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ALS H347

Cleveland, Shanklin
I of Wight
April 28 1887

My dear Foster

I have had a letter from Lendenfeld¹ in which he says that Lankester induced him to leave Australia by offering him the post of his First Assistant and that when he arrived he found the post filled up, that his “legal claims” obliged Lankester to giving him some employment – but that his engagement terminates this autumn – finally he asks me to help him to something or other.

He refers me to Cayley for confirmation of his statement – I wish if you have an opportunity you would ask Cayley about it. Lankester is “capable de tout” but this is altogether too bad.

In the meanwhile it occurs to me that we might be able to give Lendenfeld a “personal grant”. He is an able man & would do credit to help. Moreover if his story is true he has been swindled & we ought to do something for the credit of Englishman’s honour.

We go back tomorrow all the better.

Ever yours
T. H. Huxley

¹Robert von Lendenfeld (1858–1913), Austrian spongiologist, cnidariologist and glaciologist, who had worked in Australia.

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ALS H348

4 Marlborough Place
Abbey Road N.W.
May 12 1887

My dear Foster

Very sorry not to keep tryst today – but yesterdays debauchery knocked me up & I have been very seedy all day & trying hard to have a sore throat.

I trust you have won the smoke battle.

Ever yours
T. H. Huxley

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ALS H349

Savernake Forest Hotel
Nr Marlborough
June 5 1887

My dear Foster

I shall be at disposal on Thursday. I will read the Honours paper (which has come down here) but as to the Advanced – I would much rather not. Can't somebody be got to do it? The Department ought to pay as they save my honorarium – I told Horace that I thought he ought not to take any more Asst Examiners work after his promotion. But there could be no great harm in his doing this much.

I am very glad to hear that Hooker is all right for Copley, I had rather set my heart on his getting it.¹

The wife has been down here with me for a few days & left much better. I got seedier & seedier after returning from Cambridge (I enjoyed my visit very much) and there was nothing for it but to run away, which I did yesterday week. The weather has been detestable – & I got no good, till yesterday which was happily fine. Ditto today, so I am picking up & shall return tomorrow – as like an idiot as I am, I promised to take the chair at a further meeting about a Free Library for Marylebone on Tuesday evening.

I wonder if you know this county. I find it charming.

Ever Yours

T. H. Huxley

Could I have four more tickets for Soirée – Harry & Ethel & the Eckersleys would like to go.

¹ Hooker won the Copley Medal in 1887 “For his services to botanical science as an investigator, author, and traveller”.

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Huxley Papers 4:202

Great Shelford

Camb

June 20 [1887]¹

Reverend Sir

I send you herewith a draft report & so much of the appendix as I have done. If you think well of it I will finish the rest of the questions in the same style – & send it to you, say on Monday or Tuesday. Meanwhile I must leave aside tomorrow to overlook the Elementary Biology which I have just received from Parker.

Ever thine

M. Foster

¹This letter is catalogued as 20 May 1887 in Dawson.

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Huxley Papers 4:203

[June 1887]¹

Reverend Sir

Enclosed is the rest – if they are published we ought to go carefully over them in proof.

Ever thine

M. F.

¹This letter is catalogued as 21 May 1887 in Dawson.

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ALS H350

4 Marlborough Place
Abbey Road, N.W.
June 27 1887

My dear Foster

I see I have a meeting of the “Parker Comi^t” [Committee] down for next Wednesday – I am very sorry that it will be impossible for me to attend it – If I am well enough to leave the house I must go into the country that day to attend the funeral of my wife’s brother-in-law and my very old friend Fanning¹ – of whom I may have spoken to you. He has been slowly sinking for some time & this morning we had news of his death.

Things have been very crooked for me lately – I had a conglomerate of engagements of various degrees of importance in the latter half of last week & had to forgo them all, by reason of a devil in the shape of muscular rheumatism of one side which entered me last Wednesday & refuses to be wholly exorcised – (I believe it is my Jubilee Honour). Along with it – & I suppose the cause of it, a regular liver upset – I am very seedy yet & even if Fanning’s death had not occurred I doubt if I should have been ready to face the Tyndall dinner.²

I am glad to see that you are coming on to the Marine Biological Council – though doing so will probably not contribute to your peace of mind – I find a secretary, who when a paragraph is expunged from his proposed Report by the Council – immediately sends the importance of it in a letter to the “Times” – trying – and I do not propose to waste time & temper over keeping him in order. I am sick of the whole thing.

Ever yours very faithfully,

T. H. Huxley

¹ William Fanning (1816–1887), a businessman, was married to Henrietta Huxley’s half-sister Oriana. Huxley had met Fanning in Sydney in 1847 and through him met Henrietta. See Desmond, *Huxley*, p. 70.

² John Tyndall had resigned as superintendent of the Royal Institution in March 1887; he refused any memorial but a dinner was arranged in recognition of his life-long work. See Eve and Creasey, *Life and work of John Tyndall*, pp. 249–253.

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ALS H351

4 Marlborough Place
Abbey Road, N.W.
July 9 1887

Sir¹

I should be happy to serve on the proposed Committee to consider the project of an Imperial Geological Union if there were any chance of my being able to attend its deliberation – But I hope to be well enough to leave town on Monday next and it is extremely unlikely that I shall be back before the end of September if then.

The copy of Sir W. Dawson's² letter to which you refer was not inclosed

I am Yours very faithfully,

T. H. Huxley

The Secretary of the Royal Society

¹ To the biological secretary of the Royal Society.

² Sir William Dawson (1820–1899), geologist. For Dawson on the idea of an Imperial Geological Union, see his article in *Nature*, 1887, **36**: 146–147.

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ALS H352

Wells House
Ilkley
Yorkshire
July 15 1887

My dear Foster

I was very much fatigued by the journey here, but the move was good, and I am certainly mending, though not so fast as I could wish. I expect some adhesions are interfering with my bellows – As soon as I am fit to travel I am thinking of going to Lugano & thence to Monte Generoso – The travelling is easy to Lugano & I know the latter place.

My notion is I had better for the present avoid the chances of a wet cold week in the high places.

1887

M.B.A

I have a notion Beard¹ is a good man – but I do not know him personally. As to the employment of the Grant, I think it ought to be on something definite & limited. The Pilchard question would be an excellent one to take up.

Lankester seems to have a notion of employing it on some geological survey of Plymouth Sound – work that would take years & years to do properly & nothing in the way of clear result to shew.

I hope to be in London on my way abroad in less than ten days time & will let you know.

Ever yours very faithfully

T. H. Huxley

¹ Probably the Scottish embryologist John Beard, who in 1889 worked for the Scottish Fishery Board and the Marine Station in Dunbar.

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ALS H353

4 Marlborough Place
Abbey Road, N.W.
[July?] 24 1887

My dear Foster

I have already got down 2.30 & 3 p.m. on 27th for Lendenfeld & Challenger. How did I come by that fixture if I did not arrange it with you?

I thought the S.K. report was finished & gave it to Abney two or three days ago. You had better write & reclaim it at once if you have not done with it.

I will look at the draft letter carefully & send it on if needful, to Hooker.

I am thinking of collecting my letters to the journals as models for a new “Polite Letter Writer”. The last will be headed “To ingratiate yourself with great folks who are playing the fool”.

Donnelly tells me I shall never be knighted now – Ohoo! Ohoo!

Ever yours very faithfully

T. H. Huxley

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ALS H354

Hotel du Mont Collon
 Arolla
 Switzerland
 Aug. 28 1887

My dear Foster

I know you will be glad to hear that I consider myself completely set up again – We went to the Maderaner Thal & stayed a week there. But I got no good out of it. It is charmingly pretty, but damp & moreover the hotel was 50 per cent too full of people, mainly Deutschers and we had to turn out into the open air after dinner because the salon and fumoir were full of beds. So in spite of all prudential considerations, I made up my mind to come here. We travelled over the Furca & had a capital journey to Evolena. Thence I came on muleback (to my great disgust – but I could not walk a bit up hill) here. I began to get better at once and in spite of a heavy snowfall & arctic weather a week ago – I have done nothing but mend. We have glorious weather now & I can take almost as long walks as last year.

We have some Cambridge people here, Dr Peile of Christ's and his family. Also Nettleship of Oxford.¹ What is the myth about the Darwin tree in the Pall Mall? Dr Peile believes it to be all a flam.²

Forel³ has just been paying a visit to the Arolla glacier for the purpose of ascertaining the internal temperature. He told me he much desired to have a copy of the Report of the Krakatoa Committee. If it is published will you have a copy sent to him? He is Professor at Lausanne, & a very good man.

Our stay here will depend on the weather – At present it is perfect. I do not suppose we shall leave before 7th or 8th of September – and we shall get home by easy stages not much before the end of the month.

With all our love to Mrs Foster & yourself

Ever yours very faithfully

T. H. Huxley

Madder than ever on Gentians.

¹ John Peile (1838–1910), lecturer in philology at Christ's College, Cambridge; probably (Richard) Lewis Nettleship (1846–1892), philosopher and tutor at Balliol College, Oxford, who was a keen walker and mountaineer.

² It had been reported in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of Tuesday 23 August that a tree, which had been planted in Darwin's honour in Christ's College, Cambridge, had been "spirited" away overnight.

³ François-Alphonse Forel (1841–1912), Swiss physician and scientist, credited with being the founder of limnology, the study of lakes.

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ALS H355

Hotel Righi, Vaudois
 Glion
 Sep. 18 1887

My dear Foster

We descended from Arolla ten days ago and have been repairing our constitutions after the somewhat ascetic face of that place by the help of the flesh pots of these pleasant quarters.

I can recommend them if you can come this way. The air is excellent 1500 feet above the lake and if you want walking you can have 3 or 4000 feet more as stiff uphill as our elderly party can require.

My wife got a sort of bilious attack with distressing giddiness after we reached the Rhone valley and has only just returned to her normal state – otherwise we are flourishing especially myself – I have tried my wind pretty sharply of late & if there are any adhesions they certainly do not interfere with the play of my lungs.

We leave for Geneva next Friday & travel by way of Dijon & Paris taking it easy & reaching home on the 27th.

London seems to be in a beastly state of epidemic especially Marylebone Parish¹ – but we must return some time.

I trust you are flourishing & fit for the sessions work.

With our love to Mrs Foster and yourself

Ever yours
 T. H. Huxley

I have been doing some very good work on the Gentians in the interests of the business of being idle.

We are off for a “tour du lac” – Glorious weather.

¹Huxley is probably referring to the serious epidemic of influenza in London in 1887.

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ALS H356

4 Marlborough Place
Abbey Road, N.W.
Sep 30 1887

My dear Foster

I found Heape's¹ letter (among a heap of others – I wrote 17 answers the next morning and have not done yet) when we returned last Friday evening.

Ex parte, it looks a tolerably complete answer to Lankester's charges – I have expressed no opinion on that point in my reply to Heape, but assured him that it should be fully & fairly considered by the Council. What is at the bottom of it all?

Heape's appointment was warmly urged by Lankester & backed by all Cambridge representation who hitherto have veered & tacked pretty much as L. has bidden them.

You know that my faith in our Hon Secretary is a negative quantity – and I shrewdly suspect some dirt at the bottom of his present action.

If I can help it the Council shall not be made his catspaw for doing any injustice to poor Heape – On the other hand, unless Heape is a much stronger & better man than I take him to be – it would be the ruin of the Association to keep him on in Lankester's [tab].

L. is an executive officer and he could throw the whole blame of any complication that might arise on the Council if we kept on a subordinate against whom he had reported.

The position is abominably difficult and I hope you will think seriously over what is to be done on the 7th.

I see on the agenda a proposition to buy a steam trawler. It will require very strong reason to persuade me that we are justified in incurring such an expense as that before our building is finished & fitted up.

When are you coming up? Could we have a talk any time before the meeting?

Ever yours

T. H. Huxley

¹Walter Heape (1855–1929), physiologist, then superintendent of the Marine Biological Laboratory at Plymouth. A letter from Lankester to Huxley on 10 January [1888] (Huxley Papers 21:111) states "I step by step arrived at the definite and final conclusion that it would be an injury to the prospects of success of the Association and a fraud upon its supporters to keep him in the position of resident superintendent. I was obliged to take steps to throw him overboard". Heape resigned in October 1887, with his resignation taking effect in March 1888.