

Glasgow
480 Argyle St.
Sept. 6/88

Sir:

I feel honored by your reply
to my letter which I did not
expect, and I again venture to
address you with the timidity
and respect which I feel is due
to your learning and years.

Realizing the beliefs which you
do, the inquiry which I addressed
you may have appeared flippant
if not profane; for this I am
sorry because I believe the religious
feelings of our fellow men are
always to be respected, so long

as they do not tend to interfere
with the liberty of others whose
opinions concerning Theology may
be different. I find no fault
with your telling me that it is
good to have a knowledge of
God, because I think this is a
matter of experience. You have
experienced much good and comfort
from your belief in God; but of
course you will admit that
such a belief is not necessary, say
to my happiness and comfort - that
it is quite understandable how
I could be good without any
such belief. I also willingly
grant that a scientific man

can quite well reconcile his
knowledge of nature with a
belief in some great first cause,
— call it God if you like — but
you have made it quite clear that
you believe in the God of the
Bible and his revelation. This
is where I stumble. I cannot under-
stand how a man so well
learned in science as you are
can reconcile science with the
Bible. In your address you fol-
lowed out some of the great
workings of nature, talked of them
as such; and yet according to
your theology, they are the acts

of a God. And you say the
more we know of God and his
revelation, the better will we be
able to penetrate the mysteries of
his works. This I would suppose
means that the bible contains the
beginning and the end of all know-
ledge. Surely you as a geologist
do not mean to say that Genesis
tells the same story of the
history of the earth as you teach,
or that you are acquainted with
any astronomer who believes the
astronomical absurdities related in
various portions of scripture? How
can a knowledge of revelation

assist in the penetration of the
mysteries of nature when every
mystery that is revealed is found
to be out of harmony with that
revelation? These things trouble
me. My scepticism is no mere
matter of flippant boasts, but rep-
resents the form my mind has
been moulded into by even a
superficial study of science and
her revelation of the origin of the
universe and of life.

To you this revelation of God
is a matter of more certainty, than
what you know of the workings
of nature, but any strength which

This opinion of yours would give
to me is immediately overpowered
when I find that Darwin, Spencer,
Haeckel, Huxley and Tyndall, with
the same facts come to an entirely
different conclusion. Thus I
think that scientific men when
talking on purely scientific subjects
ought to use only scientific terms.
Although you believe that it was
God who set the bounds of the
Atlantic, a great many geologists
do not believe so, and therefore I
am inclined to think it is better
not to introduce such debatable
matters which might be very hard

to prove. Scientific investigation
in all its branches in my humble
opinion ought to be worked out
independently of Theology. Let the
scientist work out his problems
free of the restrictions which
Theology must necessarily place
on him. If his conclusions come
in conflict with it, Theology has
got to yield, at least it has
done so in the past and apparently
will continue so to do. But
however fierce this intellectual war
may become in the future, I hope
that it will never be sought
by aggressive science to deprive men

Fraser
of the consolations of Religion
as long as they find the craving
for them. All that Science claims
from her, is that key which she
has so long held to the domain
of unfettered scientific inquiry.

Excuse my freedom, and pardon
the length to which this epistle
has gone.

Yours Respectfully

James Fraser Junior

Sir William Dawson