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Huxley Papers 4:343

Shelford

Dec. 17 [1888]

My dear Huxley

All right – my little share in the business is finished.

But I want you to consider another matter, the examinership at S.K. I am quite willing to go on with the physiology for the present – but I am not competent to take the Comp. Anat. As long as you could take your share in the advanced etc. I did not mind doing the elem. work – but I think now that the matter ought to be put on a proper footing.

Only who the Dickens is to take your place? Howes is not strong enough at least I think so – but where else are we to go. Please think over this – there is no hurry – but when you are up for Xmas we might talk it over. I am pretty well again – & the boy is so far flourishing. He sails per SS [Onlal], S.S. Austral on Jan 4. Mrs Huxley said she would give him some letters to Melbourne or elsewhere. We shall be very pleased to have them before he starts.

Glad to hear you can give such a good account of both of you – continue in your good works.

Ever thine

M. Foster

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*Life and Letters*, vol. 2, p. 214<sup>1</sup>

December 27 1888

... I have been thinking over the Examinership business without coming to any very satisfactory result. The present state of things is not satisfactory so far as I am concerned. I do not like to appear to be doing what I am not doing.

— would of course be the successor indicated, if he had not so carefully cut his own throat as an Examiner... He would be bringing an action against the Lord President before he had been three years in office! ... As I told Forster, when he was Vice-President, the whole value of the Exr. System depends on the way the examiners do their work. I have the gravest doubt about — steadily plodding through the disgusting weariness of it as you and I have done, or observing any regulation that did not suit his fancy...

<sup>1</sup> This extract of a letter is likely to be to Foster though it is not explicit in *Life and letters*.

Huxley Papers 4:345

Shelford

Jan 27 [1889]

My dear Huxley

Well! You are a going it – But I am very glad indeed to hear the news for though it cuts you adrift from the old house it “fixes things up” – and that is one of the satisfactions of life.

Please give my warm congratulations to the two happy couples. If old Stokey were worth his salt he would at once use his great Ecclesiastical influence to get that stupid Leistical business put on one side before March – and then the journey abroad might be saved & your friends might be present at the wedding<sup>1</sup> – but I fear he won't stir in time enough. There is a distinguished cricketer named Roller, is this the man who has “bowled over” Miss Netty?<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps you are right in pitching your tent at Eastbourne – but wish it were not so far off – & I still have an attachment to my notion the Surrey or Kent Hills nearer London will do for you.

I have no doubt the air will soon dehospitalise Hal<sup>3</sup> – don't let him however go back too soon – I had a letter this morning from Port Said. The boy is in capital spirits – & I am inclined to think that the sea is his vocation.

Give me warning when you next come up. I want to talk to you about President R.S. – it weighs on my mind much what is the best to do.

With best love from all of us.

Ever thine

M. Foster

<sup>1</sup> Huxley's youngest daughter Ethel was to marry John Collier, widower of her sister Marian. They were married in Norway as the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill was once again rejected.

<sup>2</sup> Huxley's daughter Nettie had become engaged to a mining engineer, Harold Roller.

<sup>3</sup> Probably Huxley's son Henry.

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ALS H373

3 Jevington Gardens  
Eastbourne  
May 20, 1889

My dear Foster

The inclosed letter from Donnelly reached me a day or two ago and he must have had my answer this morning as he telegraphed to ask me to send the letter on to you.

I told him for one thing that our present arrangements must be altered – I cannot have the Vice President holding me responsible for what I really know nothing about. I further told D. that I thought the report was in all probability justified of the facts – as it is just the kind of thing we used to have to say year after year.

However, you must deal with it.

Collier has been bothered with a suppurating tonsil & is not able to leave Venice yet – nice way of spending a honeymoon!

We shall leave about 8<sup>th</sup> June – & be in town that week. Hope I shall have a chance of seeing you.

Ever yours

T. H. Huxley

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ALS H374

3 Jevington Gardens  
Eastbourne  
May 29, 1889

My dear Foster

I am glad & sorry to see your name on the Vaccination Commission.<sup>1</sup> Glad because you will be of great service & sorry because I know too well that abominable waste of time temper & trouble which these Commissions involve.

We hear that Collier has at last attained the beef steak stage of convalescence; & they hope to set out for Monte Generoso this week. He has been bothered by a suppurating tonsil.

We shall set out for Monte Generoso early next week, probably Tuesday or Wednesday so as to have some little time with them before they return to England. As the summer advances, we shall go on to Maloja.

So I leave this on Friday & join the wife in London to pack up.

1889

I am afraid there is no chance of seeing you in consequence of the firm belief of the R. S. in the Ascention.

How in the world does Stokes continue to afford a Baronetcy? I thought that if a man had heirs male they never would grant one unless he had £70,000 – & the patent costs £500.

G. G. will now have beaten Newton by  $Bt - Kt = x$  unless Sir Isaac's essay on the Apocalypse is of greater value than  $x$ .

But G. G. may yet beat the Apocalypse commentary – by a mathematical demonstration of the probability of pig-bedevilment – there is a peerage possible for him yet!

Ever yours

T. H. H.

<sup>1</sup>Foster served on the Royal Commission on Vaccination which was set up in 1889 and published its final report in 1896.

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ALS H375

Hotel Kurstaal  
Maloja  
Haute Engadine  
Aug 16 1889

My dear Foster

I wonder how you are prospering – whether you have vaccination & anti-vaccination on the brain; or whether the gods have prospered you so far as to send you on a holiday. We have been here since the beginning of July. Monte Generoso proved lovely – but electrical – we had on the average three thunderstorms every two days – Bellagio was as hot as the tropics & we stayed only a day & came on here – where whatever else may happen – it is never too hot – the weather has been good & I have profited immensely, and at present, I do not know whether I have a heart or not. But I have to look very sharp after my liver. H. Thompson,<sup>1</sup> who has been here with his son Herbert (clever fellow, by the way), treats the notion that I ever had a dilated heart with scorn! Oh these doctors! they are worse than theologians.

Do you know anything about Lankester? The last I heard from him he was very ill in Paris. When he abstains from his war dances for a decent interval, my interest in him always revives. It will be a great pity if he is not appointed to Oxford.

My wife has been walking about in most youthful fashion – up to a fortnight ago – when I am afraid she did too much for one of her knees – which has given her much trouble – she is somewhat consoled by the presence of Ethel & her husband & Joyce.<sup>2</sup>

We shall be back somewhere in the beginning of September & then go to Eastbourne.

Our love

Ever yours

T. H. H.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Henry Thompson (1820–1904), surgeon. His son Herbert (1859–1944) was an Egyptologist and succeeded to his father's baronetcy. See *Oxford DNB*, vol. 54, pp. 440–442, 443–445.

<sup>2</sup> Huxley's granddaughter, Joyce Collier.

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ALS H376

Hotel Kurstaal

Maloja, Engadine

Aug. 31, 1889

My dear Foster

We start for home on Monday next, over the Albula. Last week we were deep in snow & pinched with cold when we shewed our noses out of doors. All this week has been fine & for the last three days the loveliest summer – the best weather we have had, in fact. My wife hurt one of her knees with too much walking three weeks ago. It has stopped her exercise & so she has been ailing & neuralgic – and as I do not want her to be exposed to any more cold we shall leave before another dose sets in – I suppose we shall be at M.P. about the latter end of next week – & stay ten days or a fortnight before going to Eastbourne.

I walked eighteen miles, three or four days ago – & I think nothing of one or two thousand feet up! I hope this state of things will last at the sea-level.

I am always glad to hear of & from you, but I have not been idle long enough to forget what being busy means – so don't let your conscience worry you about answering my letters.

I am very sorry to hear that Lankester has not got right yet. Oxford ought to let bygones be bygones and take him – If you see your way to putting the screw on – you may give my opinion on the subject as strongly as you like.<sup>1</sup>

Picton<sup>2</sup> is, I am afraid, more or less of an ass. The opposition he & his friends have been making to the Technical Bill<sup>3</sup> is quite unintelligible to me – Bradlaugh may be, & I rather think is, a knave but he is no fool;<sup>4</sup> and if I mistake not he is minded to kick the ultra-radical stool down now he has mounted by it. Make friends of that Mammon of unrighteousness & swamp the sentimentalists.

1889

My wife joins with me in love to Mrs Foster & yourself.  
Ever yours very faithfully  
T. H. Huxley

I despise your insinuations – All my friends here have been theological – Bishop, Chief Rabbi, and Catholic Professor – none of your Maybrick discussors.

<sup>1</sup> Lankester was appointed Deputy Linacre Professor of Comparative Anatomy at Oxford in 1890 and on the death of Moseley in November 1891 became full Linacre Professor.

<sup>2</sup> Probably James Allanson Picton (1832–1910), who was in parliament until 1894. See *Oxford DNB*, vol. 44, pp. 237–238.

<sup>3</sup> The Technical Instruction Bill was passed to establish a new set of rate-aided schools, with local authorities controlled by the Science and Art Department at South Kensington, not the Education Office at Whitehall.

<sup>4</sup> Charles Bradlaugh was in parliament at this time. See letter 112, note 2.

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ALS H377

4 Marlborough Place  
N.W.  
Sep. 24, 1889

My dear Foster

Best thanks for the second part of your Physiology which has just turned up – How you are growing! 846 pages & only end of part II.<sup>1</sup> I know the difficulty from the author's point of view – But think of the students'.

You must be well satisfied with the success of the book – it seems to have cut out everything else.

We were so very sorry to miss you at Basel – but the wagon-lits were taken. Wonder if you are back yet!

We are off to Eastbourne tomorrow – old address 3 Jevington Gardens.

I have had as much London as I can stand & begun to discover I have a heart again – a circumstance of which I had no reminder at the Maloja.

Ever yours  
T. H. Huxley

<sup>1</sup> The second part of Foster's *Text book of physiology*, fifth edition, largely revised, London, Macmillan, 1888–91.

Huxley Papers 4:347

Shelford

Oct 14. [1889]

Reverend Sir

I got your little scrap at Basel – & your letter the other day – very sorry to have missed you at Basel – very glad to hear that you are out of London & back at Eastbourne which is obviously the best place for you.

The Congress at Basel<sup>1</sup> was a decided success – no gallery to play to – no nonsense, good hard work – & lots of informal talk. After that we had a splendid holiday – with delicious weather – three or four days at Bel Alp – Tyndall, who seems in great “form” as the boys say, taking us for a ramble on the glacier – over the Simplon to Maggiore & on to Venice & a few days at Stresa on our way back.

While I was at Basel Margaret & Sissy stayed at Lucerne & saw the Colliers there.

We have on Thursday week to settle about a new for. Sec. R.S. since Alexander W. W. has resigned.<sup>2</sup> Have you any views?

I saw Ray the other day – he looked fat and says he has recovered pretty well from his Paris malady. To what extent are you prepared to help him in re. Oxford, about which he will apparently meet with much opposition. Would you be prepared to sign in common with many of us a statement to the effect that from his reputation etc – (to save time I enclose a rough sketch –) we are of opinion that he ought to be elected – or hope that he will be. If you feel able to do this, your signature would be followed by such a series that Acland<sup>3</sup> would stand no chance & the Vice Chancellor would have to climb down. Tell me what you think.

How you & the Misses are. I am delighted to think that you may be able to get up to the G. H. Lewes meeting.<sup>4</sup>

Wife joins in best wishes

Ever thine

M. Foster

Barring Histology, the new edition contains less stuff than the old! – it is writ larger & drives home more.

<sup>1</sup> The International Physiological Congress took place in Basel from 10–12 September 1889.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander William Williamson resigned as foreign secretary and was replaced by the geologist (Sir) Archibald Geikie (1835–1924).

<sup>3</sup> Sir Henry Wentworth Acland (1815–1900), physician and Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford.

<sup>4</sup> The George Henry Lewes Trust was established in 1879 to fund a studentship for the support of physiology. Huxley was one of the original trustees and remained so until his death. Michael Foster was the director of the Trust from 1879 until 1901. See E. M. Tansey, ‘George Eliot’s support for physiology: The George Henry Lewes Trust 1879–1939’, *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, 1990, **44**: 221–240.

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ALS H378

3 Jevington Gardens  
Eastbourne  
Oct. 16, 1889

My dear Foster

I wish the British Assoc<sup>n</sup> could be recast on the model of your Basel conference – it seems to get duller & stupider – less worth the bother – every year.

I did not know that Williamson had resigned For. Sec., Hooker will be happy. By the way Hooker used to be very strong about making the appointment temporary – say for five years. It is worth thinking about unless you can get a real good man – then the point is to keep him.

Get a comparatively young man – with some stuff in him. I suspect you ought to have a chemist. What about Thorpe?<sup>1</sup> From what I have seen of him I am inclined to think very well of him. I am glad to hear that Ray is all right again. I am prepared to help him for Oxford to any extent. He would not do in official harness even now – but what skittishness is left in him will not hurt in Oxford – quite the contrary.

I spoke very strongly about it to an Oxford man whom I met at Maloja – in the hope that what I said would get round.

It is intolerable that that egotistical old bubbly-jock, Acland should have his finger in pies of this sort and I should rejoice to see him get a lesson.

I return the two drafts you send me, with a sketch of my own, which may or may not be an improvement – I rather think we ought to keep to public reasons & leave out about friend and colleague. However I shall be ready to sign what you agree to.

Our love to you and Mrs Foster – you do not say a word about Michael Junior – so I take no news for good.

Ever yours  
T. H. H.

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Edward Thorpe (1845–1925), professor of chemistry at the Normal School of Science, South Kensington.



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ALS H379

3 Jevington Gardens  
Eastbourne  
Jan 6, 1890

My dear Foster

That capital photograph reached me just as we were going up to Town (invited for our holidays by our parents) & I put it in my bag to remind me to write to you. Need I say that I brought it back again without having had the grace to send a line of thanks? By way of making my peace I have told the Fine Art Society to send you a copy of the engraving of my sweet self – I have not had it framed; firstly, because it is a hideous nuisance to be obliged to hang a frame one may not like – and secondly, because by possibility you might like some other portrait better – in which case if you will tell me – I will send that other – I should like you to have something by way of reminder of T. H. H.

When Harry<sup>1</sup> has done his work at Bart's at the end of March – I am going to give him a run before he settles down to practice. Probably we shall go to the Canaries – I hear that the man who knows most about them is Dr. Guillemard, a Cambridge man. "Kennst du ihn wohl?" Perhaps he might give me a wrinkle.<sup>2</sup>

With our united best wishes to you all  
Ever yours very faithfully  
T. H. Huxley

I was told very definitely the other day – that Acland is not vehemently opposed to Lankester, nor working against him.

<sup>1</sup> Huxley's younger son, Henry.

<sup>2</sup> Francis Henry Hill Guillemard (1852–1933), naturalist, traveller and lecturer in geography at Cambridge.

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ALS H380

3 Jevington Gardens  
Eastbourne  
Jan 13, 1890

My dear Foster

Just found the inclosed among a heap of letters I am trying to clear off – Is Judd doing anything?

Harry has had a sharp dose of influenza at Bart's & is "recuperating" here. Hope you are keeping clear of it at Cambridge.

Ever yours very faithfully

T. H. Huxley

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Huxley Papers 4:351

Shelford  
Jan 18 '90

My dear Huxley

All good wishes for the new year – & may your new roof never leak.

I know Guillemard very well – & I fancy the best thing for me to do is simply to introduce you & then you can ask him any questions you like – hence the enclosed letter. He was going away from Cambridge – but I am not sure whether he has started – He went a long trip a few years ago to the Phillipine [*sic*] Isles & "Voyage of the Marchesa"<sup>1</sup> I think was the book he wrote – he is a [naturalist] dilettante of the first water – but a very decent fellow.

Sorry Harry got the influenza – but I hope the wonderful air of Eastbourne will soon get him up.

Best thanks for the picture which I shall prize very much – glad you like my phiz it shows me in all my native ugliness.

Lady Stokes is going on well. Old Stokey has made up his mind to resign Pres R.S. next Nov. – so we have got the horrible task of choosing a new one – it is not easy.

1890

I can't get Judd or any of the geologists to go on with the Nile business. I can't drive it myself – and it does not seem as if any one were willing to take it up. I will tell Judd about the well [drawing] – but I don't expect any thing to come of it. Between ourselves Judd has rather disappointed me – he has not “go” or “stuff” in him sufficient to make his caution valuable.

Wife joins in best wishes

Ever thine

M. Foster

<sup>1</sup> F. H. H. Guillemard, *The cruise of the Marchesa to Kamschatka & New Guinea*, London, John Murray, 1886, 2nd edition, 1889.

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ALS H381

3 Jevington Gardens

Eastbourne

Jan 27, 1890

My dear Foster

People have been at me to publish my notice of Darwin in P.R.S. in a separate form –

If you see no objection will you apply to the Council for me for the requisite permission? But if you do see any objection – I would rather not make the request.

I think, if I republish it I will add the Times article of 1859<sup>1</sup> to it. Omega and Alpha!

Hope you are flourishing. We shall be up for a few days next week.

Ever yours very faithfully

T. H. Huxley

<sup>1</sup> Huxley's anonymous review, 'Darwin on the origin of species', *The Times*, Monday, Dec. 26, 1859, p. 8, issue 23499, col. D; the *Times* article and the obituary were published in *Collected essays*, vol. 2 (1893), pp. 1–21; 253–302.

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ALS H382

3 Jevington Gardens  
Eastbourne  
Jan 31, 1890

My dear Foster

Mind you let me know what points you think want expanding in the Darwin obituary when we meet.

We go to town for a few days on Tuesday and I will meet you anywhere or anywhen you like – Could you come & dine with us at 4 M.P. on Thursday? If so please let me know at once, that Ethel may kill the fatted calf.

Harry has been and gone and done it – we heard he had gone to Yorkshire & were anxious, thinking that at the very least, a relapse after his influenza (which he had sharply) had occurred.

But the complaint was one with more serious sequelae still – Don't know the young lady<sup>1</sup> – but the youth has a wise head on his shoulders – and though that did not prevent Solomon from overdoing the business – I have every faith in his choice.

Dr Guillemard has kindly sent me a lot of valuable information – but as I suggested to my boy yesterday – he may find Yorkshire air more wholesome than that of the Canaries, and it is ten to one we don't go after all.<sup>2</sup>

Ever yours

T. H. H.

<sup>1</sup> Henry Huxley married Sophy Stobart in 1890.

<sup>2</sup> Huxley travelled to the Canaries with his son in April 1890, returning via Madeira in May.

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Huxley Papers 4:354

Shelford  
March 1 '90

My dear Huxley

Just a line to say I could not possibly get to Mar. B.A. but Evans was there & did as well or better. As far as I can understand many thought like myself that you knew about

1890

the letter & I do not think that there was any intention any where to keep the matter from you – but undoubtedly care should have been taken & was not taken that you should have been well acquainted.

Ever yours  
M. Foster

Delighted to hear the new member pleases.

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ALS H383

4 Marlborough Place  
Abbey Road, N.W.  
July 5, 1890

My dear Foster

I shall be very glad to see you on Friday – If I did not consider it a deadly offence to be asked out to breakfast I would offer chips & coffee but I believe your feelings are the same as mine on the unwholesomeness of that vile practice.

Mind I talk to you about the application the Marine Biologies seem to have been making – unbeknownst to me – Can't understand it.

Ever yours  
T. H. Huxley

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ALS H384

3 Jevington Gardens  
Eastbourne  
July 24, 1890

My dear Foster

I wrote an official letter to Lankester today to be laid before the Council of the M.B.A. requesting I be relieved of my Presidential functions. It is the only way left to me to mark my disapproval of the action of the Council last August<sup>1</sup> – and to put myself straight with the Board of Trade & the Treasury, who doubtless believe that I have suddenly turned my back on my former opinions.

1890

If you are at the meeting of Council please let it be understood that my decision is final – I cannot be bothered with this sort of thing any more.

Ever yours faithfully

T. H. Huxley

The fiancée has turned out to be charming.

<sup>1</sup> Huxley resigned his presidency of the M.B.A in 1890 following an application to the Treasury for funding without his knowledge; see Joseph Lester, *E. Ray Lankester and the making of modern British biology*, ed. Peter J. Bowler, Faringdon, Oxon., British Society for the History of Science, 1995, p. 112.

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ALS H385

Grand Hotel,  
Eastbourne  
Oct. 15, 1890

My dear Foster

Best thanks for the third part of the ‘Physiology’ which I found when I ran up to town for a day or two last week. What a grind that book must be!<sup>1</sup>

How’s a’ wi’ you? Let me have a line.

We ought to have been in our house a month ago<sup>2</sup> – but fitters, paperers & polishers are like bugs or cockroaches – you may easily get ’em in, but getting ’em out is the deuce. However I hope to clear them out before the end of this week & get in by the end of next week.

One is obliged to have names for houses here – mine will be ‘Hodeslea’ which is as near as I can go to “Hodesleia” the poetical original shape of my very ugly name.

There was a noble scion of the house of Huxley who having burgled & done other wrong things (temp. Henry III) – asked for benefit of clergy. I expect they gave it him, not in the way he wanted – but in the way they would like to “benefit” a later member of the family. Between this gentleman & my grandfather there is unfortunately a complete blank – but I have none the less faith in him as my ancestor.



1890

My wife I am sorry to say is in town – superintending packing up – no stopping her – I have been very uneasy about her at times & shall be glad when we are quietly settled down.

With kindest regards to Mrs. Foster.

Ever yours

T. H. Huxley.

<sup>1</sup> The third part of Foster's *Text book of physiology*, fifth edition, largely revised, London, Macmillan, 1888–91.

<sup>2</sup> Huxley had bought a plot of land near Eastbourne and had a house built from plans drawn up by his son-in-law Fred Waller. He and Nettie left London and Marlborough Place and moved into Hodeslea in December 1890.

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ALS H386

Grand Hotel

Eastbourne

Nov 16 1890

My dear Foster

I have just written to Rix to say I hope to be at the dinner on Dec<sup>r</sup> 1.

I am very much struck with Koch's account of his work published in the Times<sup>1</sup> – It is exactly the torpedo launched to hit marked product & nothing else whereof your H. S. prophesied at the Inter<sup>n</sup> Medical Congress.<sup>2</sup>

I am very glad to see you have put Thorpe & Austen Roberts [*sic*] on the Council – they are both very sure men.<sup>3</sup>

Really & truly we expect to be in to the house Monday or Tuesday week. Most of my time for the last fortnight has been spent in arranging books & tearing up papers till my back aches & my fingers are sore.

Ever yours very faithfully

T. H. Huxley

<sup>1</sup> 'Dr. Koch on tuberculosis', *The Times*, Saturday, Nov. 15, 1890, p. 15, issue 33170, col. F.

<sup>2</sup> T. H. Huxley, 'An address on the connection of the biological sciences with medicine', *Br. Med. J.*, 13 Aug. 1881, ii: 273–276, reprinted in *Collected essays*, vol. 3, pp. 347–373. In this paper given at the International Medical Congress in London, Huxley used the image of a torpedo for drugs in the future: "It will, in short, become possible to introduce into the economy a molecular mechanism which, like a very cunningly-contrived torpedo, shall find its way to some particular group of living elements, and cause an explosion among them, leaving the rest untouched", p. 372.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Edward Thorpe see letter 297, note 1; Sir William Chandler Roberts-Austen (1843–1902), professor of metallurgy at the Royal School of Mines.

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Huxley Papers 4:349

Shelford

Nov 17 [1890]

My dear Huxley

Hurrah! That is very nice – we shall have a small dinner – bad day, Monday for swells etc.

I take it unless you loose my hands I am to insist that you are not to be even asked to speechify –

Yes – Koch's work is very fine – & it is just like you to have prophesized it.<sup>1</sup>

I take it we shall in the next 10 years make a great start in medicine – this second step after Pasteur on somewhat different lines will just open up the whole thing.

It is a pity those d—d Berliners & newspaper folk have vulgarized it.

I am wondering what Stokey is going to say in his address – he has not said a word to me or shewn me a line!!!

Don't you think we ought to run Koch in as For. M.R.S. at once.<sup>2</sup>

Ever thine

M. Foster

P. S. Hope you will get in safely into the new abode – & have the name stamped on your letter paper so that I may learn how to spell it.

<sup>1</sup> Koch's discovery of the tubercle bacillus had created a stir; his announcement of tuberculin in 1890 was a public relations triumph even if the reality was less successful.

<sup>2</sup> Koch was in fact elected a foreign member of the Royal Society in 1897.

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ALS H387

Grand Hotel

Eastbourne

Nov 19 1890

My dear Foster

Thanks for your jolly letter. As to speaking you know & I know that I ought to have done with it. But this occurs to me – I have a very real respect not to say affection for



1890

old Stokes and from the time we received medals together near forty years ago till now we have been incessantly associated with him in the Royal Society.<sup>1</sup>

If you think under these circumstances that I might be the preferred person to propose his health I will gladly undertake the business & do it with a will – But keep the proposal to yourself, unless you think it will be acceptable all round.

I am in unusually good spirits having just dispatched the G.O.M. in a manner that will make you proud of the anatomical & surgical skill which still remains in your old friend.<sup>2</sup>

T. H. Huxley

<sup>1</sup> Huxley was awarded the Society's Royal Medal in 1852 "for his papers on the anatomy and the affinities of the family of the Medusae"; the same year, Stokes was awarded the Rumford Medal "for his discovery of the change in the refrangibility of light".

<sup>2</sup> Gladstone had attacked Huxley in his 'Impregnable rock of holy scripture', published in *Good words*. Huxley retaliated in the December issue of *The Nineteenth Century* with 'The keepers of the herd of swine' (1890), *Collected essays*, vol. 5, pp. 366–392.

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Huxley Papers 4:356

Shelford

Nov 21 [1890]

Dear Huxley

That is charming. If your wife does not inhibit before Thursday next I shall have you put down to give the toast of the Retiring President.

Ever thine

M. Foster

I suppose the G.O.M. is murdered in [fining] Knowles.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> James Thomas Knowles (1831–1908), editor of *The Nineteenth Century*.