

## CORRESPONDENCE WITH CHARLES DARWIN

excepting one of separation of countries, on which perhaps we differ a little. I admit that if we really now know the beginning of life on this planet, it is absolutely fatal to my views. I admit the same if the geological record is not excessively imperfect; and I further admit that the *à priori* probability is that no being lived below our Cambrian era.

“ Nevertheless I grow yearly more convinced of the general (with much incidental error) truth of my views. I believe in this from finding that my views embrace so many phenomena and explain them to a large extent. I am continually pleased by hearing of naturalists (within the last month I have heard of four) who have come round to a large extent to the belief of the modification of species. As my book has been lately somewhat attended to, perhaps it would have been better if, when you condemned all such views, you had stated that you had not been able yet to read it. But pray do not suppose that I think for one instant that, with your strong and slowly acquired convictions and immense knowledge, you could have been converted. The utmost that I could have hoped would have been that you might possibly have been here or there staggered. Indeed, I should not much value any sudden conversion, for I remember well how many years I fought against my present belief. . . . ”

### DANA TO DARWIN .

“ NEW HAVEN, May 23, 1872.

“ I have addressed to you a copy of my book on *Corals and Coral Islands*, and have commissioned my son, Edward S. Dana, to present himself along with it, and also to assure you of my unfailing esteem, and my admiration for your labors in behalf of Science. My son, having graduated at our University, goes to Europe to continue his studies in Science next autumn in Germany. In the meantime he looks forward to excursions during the summer in the Alps, as one means of benefiting his health, now somewhat impaired.

“ I was sorry that your sons did not visit New Haven when on this continent, and give me a chance to show my appreciation of their father.”