

[*From The Times, February 1, 1892*]

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—I appeal to your courtesy to allow me to meet Mr. Huxley's challenge. His criticisms, moreover, suggest that in my desire for brevity I failed in my former letter to make my meaning clear. May I then restate the point at issue?

In "The Dawn of Creation and Worship" Mr. Gladstone maintained that natural science confirms the truth of the Mosaic cosmogony. Mr. Huxley's reply to this I give in his own words:—

"It is agreed on all hands" (he wrote) "that terrestrial lizards and other reptiles allied to lizards occur in the Permian strata. It is further agreed that the Triassic strata were deposited after these. Moreover, it is well known that, even if certain foot-prints are to be taken as unquestionable evidence of the existence of birds, they are not known to occur in rocks earlier than the Trias, while indubitable remains of birds are to be met with only much later. Hence it follows that natural science does not 'affirm' the statement that birds were made on the fifth day, and 'everything that creepeth on the ground' on the sixth, on which Mr. Gladstone rests his order; for, as is shown by Leviticus, the 'Mosaic writer' includes lizards among his 'creeping things'."

The passage Mr. Huxley quoted was Leviticus xi. 29-31, and his comment on it was that "the merest Sunday-school exegesis, therefore, suffices to prove that when the Mosaic writer in Genesis i., 24, speaks of creeping things he means to include lizards among them."

This same argument is summarized in still terser and more unequivocal language in his letter of January 24.

My rejoinder to all this is that the entire argument rests on no better foundation than the chance use of the expression "creeping things" in our English Bible, whereas, in fact, that term represents two wholly distinct words in the original Hebrew. One of these words (*reh'-mes*) is never used in the Bible