

The fact that the quote was not found in Darwin's writing or letters has been known for some time – Darwin historian John van Wyhe pointed it out [here](#) and [here](#), for instance. Evidently he gets emails every month by people trying to figure out where Darwin said this, where Darwin never said any such thing. But the actual source (or at least, something very close to the source) was mysterious...until I stumbled on it in July. Here is what I found:

Yes, change is the basic law of nature. But the changes wrought by the passage of time affects [sic] individuals and institutions in different ways. According to Darwin's *Origin of Species*, it is not the most intellectual of the species that survives; it is not the strongest that survives; but the species that survives is the one that is able best to adapt and adjust to the changing environment in which it finds itself. Applying this theoretical concept to us as individuals, we can state that the civilization that is able to survive is the one that is able to adapt to the changing physical, social, political, moral, and spiritual environment in which it finds itself.

(p. 4 of: Megginson, L. C. (1963). "Lessons from Europe for American Business." *Southwestern Social Science Quarterly*, 44(1): 3-13.)