

29 October 1932.

Major L. Darwin, Sc.D.,  
Cripps's Corner,  
Forest Row,  
Sussex.

Dear Major Darwin:

I am sorry you have bothered to read again that long screed of Hogben's as in my opinion it wanders constantly from the point nor is it in any sense a good criticism of Haldane's book, even when it happens to be talking about it. The lectures which Haldane gave to the Welsh agricultural students must have been good and stimulating lectures, though, even in lectures, fewer personal opinions, or more reasons for them might have been worth while. But the book they make is structureless and loosely written so that almost every statement made in one place may be found contradicted in another, or is so ill defined that one scarcely knows what there is to contradict. Altogether it was an utter disappointment to me and I understand also to a number of geneticists both in this country and America.

I didn't know Hogben had yet written a book on Natural

Selection, but I suppose he inevitably will, and then Haldane, if the spirit of gratitude is in him, had better do his best to puff it.

As regards the word "particulate" I took Galton's term, in the sense in which he used it, to contrast hereditary carriers which maintain their identity, whatever company they keep, with the other sort of hypothetical carrier which fuses with others to form a new sort of carrier. I had noticed the term "unequal blending" and suppose it to mean that a greater mass of Type A blends with a lesser mass of Type B, but I never could see that there was a clear conception behind it, else, if there were such an idea capable of resolving the contradictions to which the blending theory seems to lead it ought to have been developed very fully and explicitly.

Hogben borrows the word particulate, evidently from my book and not direct from Galton, but makes no use of it, I mean it plays no part in any argument of his, except the generally suffusive one that Hogben is a very clever fellow, and knows how to use all the latest words.

Haldane, I think at the end of his preface, but I have not the book before me implies that he agrees with my argument as to the difference between particulate and blending inheritance, excluding Lamarckism; or rather he implies that

this will be proved later in his book, which it is not, I forget if he uses the term particulate.

For my part I should not have chosen to use the term, which I wanted solely for the purpose of developing the argument on mutation rates, if I had thought that in Galton's mind it connoted something like pan-genesis, in which, if I understand it rightly, the gemmules have no continued identity beyond a single generation.

So you see I see very little point in your sending your letter to "Nature", but this may be partly because I am writing after a bad night, with a heavy cold in my head, and should not be very easily pleased with anything.

Yours sincerely,