

Cripps's Corner - Forest Row, Sussex. Apr. 20 - 31.

My dear Fisher

I have read the enclosed, and like it very much. It seems to me most valuable at the present time. I wonder where it will appear.

I have made a few pencil remarks in the margin. Hardly any, if any of them are coherent to your line of argument. They represent my reaction at the moment. All I will say in their favour is that they are easily rubbed out.

I wish Smelt's could have read it and your book before the autumn. He made the Berg criticism in a very crude form.

I like what you say here better in some ways than as put in pages 1 & 2 of your book. You here divide it into periods. The reader of your book might be led to think that my father held firmly all your (a) to (f) points simultaneously, which I doubt. If he were asked in 1881 or so if he believed in the blending theory of inheritance, I imagine he would have replied as follows: - "I really do not know exactly what you mean by your question. In 42, when considering the indisputable fact that there is normally a good deal of blending when crossing takes place, I was much puzzled because of the apparently obvious tendency thus to wipe out the effects of selection. Now

I have to content myself with the fact that great changes obviously can be produced by selection, as is proved by domestication. I have no theory to account for blending, ^{not} operating as would seem probable. I wish to goodness I had". If you were asked to state what exactly was my father's blending theory, which must have fitted in with the reappearance of ancestral qualities and the differences between sibs, would you not find it hard to reply?

I have sometimes felt that one of the difficulties unconsciously felt by critics is due to the half formed belief that the 'lower' animals have given rise to the 'higher' in ~~the~~ ^{an} evolutionary process of 'improvement'. All organisms have probably been ~~subject~~ ^{subject} to an equally long period of selective action, and no surprise should be felt at any perfection of adaptation amongst the 'lower' animals & plants.

But all I really want to say is that I hope this note will be published somewhere.

Yours sincerely,

Herbert Darwin

P.S.

CRIPPS'S CORNER,
FOREST ROW,
SUSSEX.

Let me know sometime
when you expect to go to the
U.S.

I am sorry there is a row
about Dachtel's article. I read
it rather coolly, & saw no reason
why it should not have been
published; for I like to see all
views stated. But I hold that
it is not the right time of
advance, for reasons given on
pages 153 & 154 of my book. But
I want to keep clear of the
mêlée!

L. D.