

3 October 1930.

Major L. Darwin, Sc.D.,
Cripps's Corner,
FOREST ROW,
Sussex.

Dear Major Darwin,

I supposed MacDougall must be about 60 if he were retiring, and I quite agree that we should have to see him and consider his own views before fixing up our arrangements in detail. I am concerned though that we should not by hastily appointing someone else, put it out of our power to seize the chance of securing his interest.

He has published Lamarckian experiments but, though he probably thinks they are all right, he does not strike me as prejudiced.

Believe me, I was not relying greatly upon Goddard's figures, and the value 17 per cent. has nothing to do with them, but is a consequence of Punnett's assumption of a single Mendelian recessive equally diffused through the population. The medical profession which has been quoting Punnett with satisfaction for years, is extremely annoyed at seeing the opposite view stated, and Blacker seems quite incapable of holding his ground against criticism.

I do not fully accept your test of the effect of sterilisation,

though it is much better than Tredgold's. It does not take account of possible differences in marriage rate as between sterilised and unsterilised, which affects the reproduction of types of people who would marry then on these two conditions. This, however, is a complicated issue and I do not see which way it would affect the result of your method. I should like to be sure too that your method would always be correct in the 1st. generation, for I feel that an important part of the advantage of sterilisation is the reduction of the frequency of normal carriers. If they really were normal we should get no credit for this in your sample.

My own inference is that we have no data to improve upon or to criticise the estimates I made at your suggestion several years ago; what seems more important is that Blacker seems temperamentally unfitted as a propagandist, for this kind of timid vacillation on a point on which our opponents have no good ^{grounds} reasons, seems the worst way imaginable to lose public support for a strong case.

Yours sincerely,