

On the move. June. 9. 1930

My dear Fisher.

I have been rather busy of late for me, with the Twitchein bequest, & other minor worries. I have not had time or brains, therefore, to tackle your book in earnest. I have read the first chapter, & turned over some of the papers, with the result that my impression is confirmed that it will be slowly recognized as a very important contribution to the subject. But I am afraid it will be slow, because so few will really grasp all that it means. You must not, therefore, be disappointed at the reception which it receives, but trust to ultimate results. I remember that I criticized

to some extent - what you said
about my father's views, and I think
you did make some changes. It rather
depends on what is meant by the
word 'theory'. I can imagine my
father saying, if reading your first
sentence about what he accepted, "but,
hang it all, I have not got a theory or
inheritance. I work to goodness I had.
Cases like the Neulatto show that blending
does take place, and other cases show
that individual characters are inherited.
How & why this is, I do not know.
But I have come to see that in 1842
I stressed blending too much." But
this is a minor point, as I say
depending largely on one word. I have
noted two letters, which I enclose as
reminders, showing how fogged people are
about Evolution, and how a thorough
knowledge of the particulate theory would
help them. Selibury's letter is interesting &

stimulating. I suppose selection is always
making for uniformity (by extinction) and
diversity (by selection of mutations), and
that sometimes one prevails and sometimes
the other. Is not the death rate at different
periods of growths an entirely erroneous
basis for comparison? The biological value
(? right expression) at each period must
be held in view. If young plants are
more similar than old ones, I guess it is
because conditions are more similar, the
light being always amongst a large number
of the same kind. Similarity means ancient
evolution, but I am not sure how it tells.

Cunningham is too weak for words.
He cannot have even thought it out
carefully. He seems to assume that a
mutation cannot take place in the
green which only shows it self in the
obscure. Reciprocal characters ought to have
made him see that this was possible.
He ought to work out in detail the
evolution of anti, with two kinds of
workers, on the Lamarckian hypothesis.
I have rather an idle day, and that is

why I love you. The whole theory of
growth depends, I believe, on genes
acting differently in different circum-
stances. All this can go into the
waste paper basket & needs no
answer. I wonder what you are
talking.

Yours sincerely,

Leonard Darwin