

Aug 12. . 29

CRIPPS'S CORNER,

FOREST ROW,

SUSSEX.

My dear Fiske.

I sometimes blow off steam to you about things that puzzle or interest me, but do not answer under the spirit most you.

On p-234 of this week Nature, Watson says that if individuals differing from the norm are isolated they will tend to vary more from the original mode, quoting Pearson in support. I thought the opposite, i.e. a reversion to the mean for one generation only. I wonder if I miss the point. On p. 233 he speaks of the lack of evidence to show

that death is controlled by
small differences. I should have
thought that nature is making
millions of supermanimals every year
to prove that differing species
with only survival in differing
habitats. The differences which make
for survival must be small or
invisible. My father used to point
to bits of ground where one plant
would grow and another would
not; for this kind of argument
irritated him peculiarly.

MacBride has a typical letter
in the same vein. He quotes

Morgan as saying that there is no other source for deviations but environment; wherein I think M. is wrong. The collision of two gametes, so to speak, might produce quite incalculable results, which could hardly be called the effect of environment.

I remember agreeing with something you say ^{to the effect} that my father did not; I could not have seen how mutations were stored up and accumulate in domestic breeds. Looking over Domestication the other day did, however, ^{it} seem to me to show that it is probable that domestication increases the rapidity and size of mutations. I see nothing improbable in this, now we know how black varieties

are made, and the effects
of X rays. I wonder if you
agree.

and I wonder how your
book goes on.

Yours sincerely,

Samuel Dawson