

12 ESBERTON PLACE

S. 113.

30th June, 1921.

My dear Fisher,

Thanks for your letter of the 29th. I am sending on the latter to Sir Arthur Schuster and hope it will be useful.

I am quite free on Monday and should be very glad to come down to Rothamsted if that seems the best plan. Kindly write by return of post so that I shall get it on Saturday.

I am inclined to add something like the enclosed, marked 'K' on page 20. You can let me know what you think of it when we meet.

Yours sincerely,

L. DARWIN.

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P.S. Kindly let me know what time my train starts as it is difficult to find out what trains are running.

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Since writing the above, Mr. R.A. Fisher has suggested another factor tending to produce certain forms of infertility between varieties closely resembling each other, which is more immediate in its effects. In the case of two varieties, each adapted to its own special surroundings, between which interbreeding takes place, the hybrids thus produced will as a rule be inferior to both the parent types, and will therefore be reduced in number or exterminated by natural selection. It follows that those individuals which have the least tendency to be fertilized by or to pair with individuals outside the ranks of their own variety will have most descendants; and natural selection will thus tend to foster any natural tendency either to refuse to mate with alien types or for certain forms of infertility to arise between slightly differing organisms. Infertility thus produced would directly facilitate the bifurcation of species, and would also thus promote the survival of certain types of organisms when in competition with other types which interbreed more freely in the manner above suggested. We cannot, however, thus account either for such infertility as results from the process of fertilization being ineffective or for the sterility of hybrids.