

2 EVERYON PLACE

S.W.3.

29th April, 1920.

My dear Fisher,

I think you have probably kept that copy of Stevenson's paper which I sent you. If so I should be much obliged if you would look at the figures and tell me if I am being stupid over one thing. It seems to me that they indicate that birth limitation was first introduced into the richer classes and then spread downwards amongst the poor to a certain extent. Now it seems to me that if a campaign against these practices were to reverse the course of history the result would, therefore, inevitably be dysgenic, assuming that there is a correlation between innate worth and the classification adopted by Stevenson. In a letter to him I suggested that this is the case, and he said he could express no opinion on the point. This makes me wonder whether I have been muddleheaded on the subject.

at first)

Another point came up in the discussion which interested me. A Dr. Brownlee (?) said that he had been breeding guineapigs and that the Inspector of Vivisection Practices had told him that his guineapigs were too crowded and under insanitary conditions. He put the conditions right and immediately the guineapigs left off breeding and he had in future to buy them. When he said this I thought 'well, this is rubbish,' but he added that at the Zoological Gardens they had had exactly the same experience with other animals. I told this story to MacBride, and he said: 'how strange, because that has been exactly my experience with mice'. Now this cannot be anything to do with temperament or inherited qualities for the result was immediate. Can you explain it? If there is anything in it it ought to be considered.

Yours sincerely,

L. Dawkins

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