

27 July 1933.

Major L. Darwin, Sc.D.,
Cripps's Corner,
Forest Row,
Sussex.

Dear Major Darwin:

Many thanks for sending me Eugenical News, and particularly for mentioning on what page there was something which concerned me, for I have already thrown away two copies of the same number, sent to me without this explanation, without discovering Popenoe's article.

What I should like best, and what I am quite sure would do most good, would be for you to write your letter practically as it stands, that is, all but the first line and a half and the last paragraph, for publication in Eugenical News. The correspondence could then naturally be commented on and summarised in the following Eugenics Review.

There is one point, however, which I think it would be important to add, probably at the end of your letter. From first to last Popenoe has spoken of the theory as an attempt to explain the decline in the birth-rate.

Clearly he is confusing this with the differential birth-rate. But the confusion appears clearly in his first sentence and in his last. Unfortunately Wagner-Manslau, whose figures in the Eugenics Review showed that the penetration of bourgeois blood into the German nobility had contributed to its falling fertility, did speak as though some similar process could explain the birth-rate falling for the whole German people. By associating my name with Wagner-Manslau's, therefore, Popenoe has gained this much excuse. None the less, the misapprehension is a dangerous and damaging one.

Now will you send off your letter, which I am returning, to Davenport for publication? Would your hesitancy be at all relieved by getting the concurrence of any of the geneticists on our Society—Julian Huxley, Gates, Ford or Fraser-Roberts, any of whom would, I imagine, gladly join with you in signing the note; for I think they all follow my argument. However, I know the note would be most useful if you sent it in over your own name.

Perhaps I may quote from p. 231 of my Genetical Theory (a comment on M. de Candolle):

"Nor is it quite clear that he grasped the point of Galton's argument, which is not so much that heiresses can marry more easily than other girls, as that they may more reasonably aim at a marriage which is socially advantageous, and so are liable to mingle their tendencies to sterility with the natural abilities of exceptionally able men".

I believe with your support, I remember trying years ago, when the Society was spending ^{some} money on a collection of fishermen's pedigrees from Polperro, to get the lady at work on them to record total children and grandchildren for all marriages for which the latter might be taken as complete. I remember supplying her with cards for the purpose, but I never heard that any such work was ever done. At present I think it would be more useful to trace the effect of the family from which a person comes separately on the marriage rate, according to age, and on the birth-rate for given age of the married. Much data which threw no light on the second question would do so on the first. But it is the first question that we are most in doubt about. For, in spite of Mr. Huestis, of whom I had not before heard, inheritance in size of family is so strong as to be rather readily demonstrable, if you have any particular enthusiast in view, who would care to work on the subject, remember that I can offer adequate publication of complete data in the Annals of Eugenics.

Yours sincerely,