

Cripps's Corner

June 20  
[1933?]  
JHB.

Dear Fisher, I have been thinking over an interesting talk about family allowances & I have come to the conclusion that I had better write nothing about this subject, except perhaps a few casual remarks in your own eating only. I saw Blackie's draft and perceived nothing wrong in it. But being now rather slow at the uptake, I may well have overlooked something, & this has strengthened my feeling that I had better keep in the back ground.

I think I agree with you altogether on this subject; except possibly on two points. I hold that family allowances would in all cases increase fertility, & from this conclusion it follows that in half the population they would be eugenic & in half dysgenic. Eugenics Societies should therefore mainly concern itself with procuring for the introduction of this system amongst all sections of the community.

Which one of value of the nation as a whole  
 My second point is that I am  
 not averse to taxing the rich to some  
 extent in order to aid the poor; but I find  
 it very hard to decide where to draw  
 the line. It seems to me that income tax  
 allowances for children may be said to  
 have such an effect; and if they were not  
 given no grading? The income tax  
 might be made less steep.

I have progressively become  
 more & more convinced of two things,  
 (1) That the differential birth rate is now  
 the greatest danger to our civilization,  
 (2) That Social amputation is the main  
 underlying cause of the differential  
 birth rate. Birth control is an agency  
 rather than a cause. I agree with you therefore  
 that our object with regard to the fit should  
 be to make them feel that a large  
 family would not be a hindrance to  
 them if they rise in the social scale  
 & therefore that they should be able to work  
 toward to getting after such a rise the  
 same family allowances as their new  
 associates would be getting.

as to those who fail in life or die early, nature's simple and highly eugenic plan is to let all their offspring die by starvation, that is rather "too rich for us". A man's duty certainly borrows to the ~~sub~~ regarding to some extent of the interests of his children under all conditions.

You advise I think that this point should be separately considered, but I feel sure that most people will be inclined to consider all their payments for insurance in regard to their children at the same time. Some compromise between these different calls on a man's purse ought to be thought out in advance, tho' I confess I see no logical grounds on which to settle the relative amounts which should be set aside for such purposes.

When I have talked of a flat rate system of family allowances, I have always meant a flat rate for the whole community. A flat rate for each class is another matter. Such a flat rate should be approached as far as maybe; but accumulated <sup>in</sup> ~~in~~ <sup>of</sup> wealth will always make complete equality impossible. Those members

of a class who have enjoyed good incomes  
 in a long period must contribute some-  
 = what towards the family allowances of the  
 members of the same class who have risen  
 from a lower paid grade. This is the least  
 objectionable method.

I am delighted to hear that you  
 think of attacking the census question with  
 someone inside the office to help you. There  
 is a most important field for good work.

I have enquired about the

Surveyor Institute friend - about your cottage,  
 but have had no reply yet.

Yours sincerely

Herbert Darwin.

No answer to date