

September 22, 1939

My dear Ford,

I meant to tell you before how the test on the Chimpanzees went at the Edinburgh Zoo. Your suggestion was really a brilliant one. By the prompt help of Dr Riddell from Glasgow we were able to make up solutions in sufficient quantity, using 2% sugar in all, and either none, 6 1/4, 50 or 400 parts per million P.T.C. The astonishing thing is this, that six out of 8 chimps tested were obvious tasters, while the other two returned again and again to drink the strongest P.T.C. solution. As the other six clearly disliked the bitter flavour, it seems extremely probable that these two are non-tasters. The only orang available also behaved as a non-taster; but of course it is possible that this species relishes the flavour.

I am just making a start with the material at Regent's Park, and hope to arrange a test at Whipnade later. It seems to me immensely exciting that there should be polymorphism with a gene ratio apparently stable for millions of years in a quality which we had certainly thought of as quite without selective effects. I am sure you will be as pleased as I am that the tests have turned out so remarkably interesting.

If Julian and I write a note to Nature about it, will you join us, as the suggestion originated with you?

Yours sincerely,