

17th September, 1951.

My dear Henry,

Let me thank you first for your most interesting long letter on your travels and experiences. I am so glad you got some time with Hovanitz and everywhere.

About Julian's book, I should most certainly like to do something to express respect and appreciation for his general activity in regard to selection theory over a really very long period. I could wish there might be some opportunity other than one of these compound books which I have grown considerably to dislike, though I suppose they have their special role to fulfil in scientific discussion. It is, however, utterly different from a book from which you can gain a unified point of view due to a single individual and form one's own opinion as to what strands are going astray and what are worthy of further development. In fact such books do mess up scientific discussion a good deal and often through allusions at second hand, give a very wrong idea as to what each worker has in fact contributed.

I do hope you ^{will} consider when you can conveniently visit me again in Cambridge and make a date if one seems feasible. Also, please extend a similar invitation to Sheppard and Michie, whose work continues to interest me very much. Michie might like to see an odd left ear anomaly which Bennett here is trying to breed.

There is another thing that I ought to write to you about:

For some years there has been at the British Association a Genetics Co-ordinating Committee with myself as Chairman and a chap called Crosby whom perhaps you know, as Secretary. Incidentally, Crosby has recently become Junior Secretary to the Genetics Society. Last winter I understand a number of members of this committee urged Crosby strongly to explore whether a Genetics Section could not be formed and he called a meeting in Edinburgh for a preliminary discussion before approaching the officers of the Association. I wrote to him in advance that I did not think geneticists in this country were sufficiently numerous or sufficiently united to run such a section successfully, but that there were other groups of workers in the biological field such as the biometricians who were equally unprovided for so far as the British Association was concerned, and that I thought a section of "Biometry and Genetics" might be made a success. Not knowing how fast things might move in Edinburgh, I wrote at the same time to the members of the Biometrical Society Committee asking what they thought of such a proposal. Rather to my surprise the replies were mostly strongly in favour, with the reiterated suggestion that "Biometry" rather than "Biometry and Genetics" would be the better title.

Well, in Edinburgh very few people attended the meeting and Crosby had obviously received a very severe wiggling from the botanists of Section K, as indeed I had warned him would be the likely reaction of either K or D. I did have a word

with Brunt and told him that, so far as I was concerned, the matter would go before him and his colleagues only if the committees both of the Genetical and the Biometrical Societies were to join in proposing to the Association the formation of a new section. I think the title is a minor matter and that a section named "Biometry" could justify its existence, especially if it nominated a leading geneticist as its first President and took care that at least one of the sectional officers was always largely interested in Genetics.

As to people, I have no doubt at all that both in ability and character the biometric group would greatly strengthen such a section. I should be personally very anxious that the section should gain and retain a good proportion of the genetical papers and should deliberately try to supply what has been lacking in the opportunities given by the Association for genetic discussion. It would not necessarily be the end of the Co-ordinating Committee, but would, I think, greatly facilitate its work. I am not quite sure, but I believe I am again this year not on the Genetics Society Committee though someone said they thought I was. In any case, I suppose Crosby, with the utmost timidity, and at least Riddell, will raise the matter, ^{I should expect neither Darlington to be in favour} though it is fairly clear to me that the Genetical Committee will be a more difficult body than the Biometric Committee so far as agreement is concerned.

I should so very much like to know what you think about

all this. It comes quite a surprise to me in the summer though the difficulties that Crosby has encountered could be fairly easily foreseen. I had not previously thought about the matter and I hope you think I did right and have not needlessly stirred up a lot of stinging insects.

Yours sincerely,