

December 23, 1941

Dear Dr O'Brien,

During our talk yesterday on the current work of the Galton Laboratory, and on the possibility of continuing Miss Simpson's work there, you asked me for a memorandum on the two lines of work for which most particularly I find her assistance necessary, namely, the editorship of the Annals of Eugenics, and the auxiliary work which the Department has been doing in the past three years in salvaging material of scientific value, obtained as a by-product from the activities of the various blood-grouping centres.

For your convenience I am sending this on a separate sheet.

Yours sincerely,

I am enclosing also the current issue of Annals of Eugenics.

P.S. There is a ^{well day} train from St. Pancras at 10.40, due to arrive in Harpenden at 11.50 a.m.

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The *Annals of Eugenics* is now in its 11th volume, and consists of four quarterly numbers, each of about 100 pages of large quarto size. It is printed by the Cambridge University Press, and, as the material contains a good many text figures, skiograms, numerical tables, and much mathematical typesetting, it is relatively expensive to produce. Parts are offered at 15/- a number, but the greater parts of the sales are the subscribers paying 50/- a volume of four numbers - off which a small discount is allowed for sales through agents.

In view of the recent increase of 20% in the charge for typesetting, the subscription price will probably have to be raised. It is an encouraging circumstance that, during the war period, in which our Continental sale has almost wholly disappeared, there has been a steady accretion of new subscribers from English speaking and Latin-American countries.

The primary subject matter of the Annals is the genetic study of human populations. Together with papers directly bearing on human genetics, there are published studies in the genetics of other organisms, especially those most likely to throw light on human genetics, and to which the methods developed in human genetics are most suitably applicable, i.e., the very important, difficult, and somewhat neglected, field of quantitative inheritance, and problems in which advanced statistical methods are required. Further, a proportion of the papers are primarily concerned with the developments of statistical methods themselves.

The current number is in these respects quite typical. The aim has been that regular readers of the Journal, like workers in the Galton Laboratory, whether primarily statisticians or geneticists, should have an adequate opportunity of familiarising themselves with fields of study in which both disciplines are essential.

The continuance of the Journal has always required a considerable amount of correspondence, respectively with contributors, with the publishers, and with subscribers. Without secretarial assistance I should have very seriously to consider whether the Journal itself should be abandoned, or, alternatively, a considerable part of the time now available for personal research.

The section of the Galton Laboratory for scientific workers (together with laboratory assistants) formerly devoted to serological methods in the study of human inheritance has been taken over for the duration of the war by the Medical Research Council, and is now working at Cambridge, principally on the supply of grouping serum to the many recently created blood transfusion centres. This has brought us into contact with centres where quite unprecedented numbers of the British population are being grouped for transfusion purposes. We have been at pains to maintain these contacts, with a view to securing data on the blood group frequencies from different cities and areas, and in particular the association of these with such characters as sex, age, and surname, which are usually recorded on the transfusion forms. Apart from the collection of data enumerated elsewhere, more than 100,000 forms have already been sorted and enumerated in the Laboratory. It is essential that this work should be carried

on without delay, since, failing this, the data frequently become vitiated in the course of sortings, misplacements, and the admixture of heterogeneous material at centres where purely medical aims are held in view, and the scientific value of a population survey is necessarily often disregarded.

It is obvious that the collection of this material involves considerable correspondence, to which may be added the methodical reception and despatch of parcels, and the avoidance of errors when material of this bulk passes through the Laboratory. Apart from this, Miss Simpson has been actively engaged in the enumeration of the forms in the laboratory. That what we have been able to do is valued by the Medical Research Council is indicated by a letter from Dr A. Lendborough Thomson, written last Summer when the dismissal of my secretary was first threatened. I am attaching a copy of this letter.