

July 5, 1938

Dear Mather,

I have just been reminded that I have failed to answer the question you asked in the second paragraph of your letter of March 23rd, a letter which I much enjoyed reading.

I have often found myself in the same position as you, after doing a fairly heavy job, of not knowing whether it is worth going on with. Sometimes I have eased my mind by completing it, and perhaps publishing later. Sometimes, I am afraid, I have let it go. More than anything else, I think, it comes to how you find it most convenient to regulate your own activities. I find it no bad thing to have usually a heavyish job on hand, working at it from time to time as time and inclination permit, but this may well not suit everybody. I cannot see anyone using the method described except under your direct supervision, unless it were Fairfield Smith, or someone equally good having had contact with you. Still, it would make a nice paper, which I should be glad to publish in the Annals, so long as I am responsible for that journal.

It has been suggested to me that I ought to apply, on Punnett's retirement, for the Chair of Genetics at Cambridge. The great drawback is that Punnett has let his Department down to nothing, and it would mean beginning again, as at the Galton Laboratory. I think I should only take it on condition that the Serological Department moved with me, and that provision were made for scientific and other assistants. Of course, if they were ready to appoint Ford I should prefer not to compete. If I took it, I should want to make you an offer, probably after one year at Merton, so I should be glad to know what sort of offer in Cambridge would attract you as senior genetical assistant in a department there, and whether you would prefer to be specifically associated with animal or plant genetics, or perhaps with cytology.

In case I have not said so before, I think your book is a little gem. It will not be appreciated at once by the body of geneticists; but it is, I think, really worthy of the reputation you are making.

Yours sincerely,