

6th. September 1950.

Dear Anecombe,

Thanks for your review of the book of Scottish intelligence.

I think perhaps you have inadvertently taken a parti pris on a rather central point on which, in fact, opposite opinions are held, i.e. when you say "it appears therefore that, whatever the reason may be, no fall in intelligence has occurred".

I do not know whether this view is expressed in the report, but even if so I doubt if it is Godfrey Thomson's opinion. He, at least, seems to have been sufficiently aware that no direct comparison has been made by tests carried out with an interval of fifteen years on a school population in which methods of instruction, interests and particularly the interest of teachers in intelligence tests have certainly not been stationary.

Fraser Roberts at Bath found that by testing the same children at something more than a year's interval their apparent intelligence, as judged from the group test, had been materially increased merely by exposure to the test in the previous year.

I mention this because I was rather dismayed at seeing exactly the same assumption taken for granted in a review in the Annals of Eugenics, and it would be tragic if a comparison which,

I believe, was not originally intended to be critical as between epochs should be interpreted as though it were decisive on a very debatable and important question.

Perhaps you would like to look at the original and at your review again with this point in view.

Yours sincerely,