My dear Fisher,

If you could answer the following question in a few words and not too mathematically, I should be grateful; but if it means a long reply, please don't think of giving it. If $A$ is positively correlated with $B$, and $B$ is positively correlated with $C$, what conditions if any have to be fulfilled to enable one to argue from these facts, that $A$ is correlated with $C$? I had better give the specific point in my mind. It will be generally admitted that $(1)$ wages are correlated with consumer
qualities, which I wish to lump together under the title of wage earning capacity. (2) Wage earning capacity must be correlated with certain innate qualities which I wish to call innate wage earning capacity. These being granted, can I straight away exclude that wages are correlated with innate wage earning capacity? As to (2) if wages are not perfectly correlated with environmental differences, they must be correlated with hereditary differences, and no non-hereditary hereditary differences
I have not yet begun to tackle empirical progress. But trusting our it rather vaguely to come to the conclusion that a good deal of weight must be attached to the general colour, so to speak, of the pedigree, whether it is much dotted with black or with white spots.

Yours sincerely,

D. Darwin