Cripps's Corner

June 20
[1932?]

Dear Fisher,

I have been thinking over our interesting talk about family allowances. I have come to the conclusion that I had better write nothing about this subject, except perhaps a few casual remarks in your own writing only. I read Black's article and perceived nothing wrong in it. But being now rather slow at the uptake, I may well have misconstrued something. I think it has strengthened my feeling that I had better keep in the background.

I think I agree with you about getting on this subject; except possibly on two points. I hold that family allowances would in all cases increase fertility, and from this conclusion it follows that in half the population, they would remain in half the economy. Bryce's solution should therefore mainly concern itself with increasing the introduction of the system among all sections of the community.
which are of value to the nation as a whole. The second (and I think the third) is that indirect income tax allowances for children may be said to have such an effect; i.e.,,
as to those who fail in life or die early, nature's simple and mighty eugenic plan is to get all their offspring killed. A man's duty certainly belongs to the preserving to some extent of the minds of his children under all conditions. You advise I think that this point should be separately considered, but I feel sure that most people will be inclined to consider all their payments for insurance in regard to their children at the same time. Some compensation between these different calls on a man's purse ought to be thought out in advance, though I confess I see no logical reasons in which to settle the relative amounts which should be set aside for such purposes.

When I have talked of a flat rate system of family allowances, I have always meant a flat rate for the whole community. A flat rate for each class is another matter. Such a flat rate should be approached as far as maybe, but accumulated wealth will always make complete equality impossible. Then number
of a class who have enjoyed good incomes for a long period must contribute more towards the family allowances of the members of the same class who have risen from a lower paid grade. This is the least objectionable method.

I am delighted to hear that you think of attacking the serious question with someone inside the office to help you. Here is a most important field for good work.

I have inquired about the Surveyor but it is not decided your colleague, but have had no reply yet.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Darwin.

No answer so far yet.