

April 22, 1940

Dear Phillipotts,

I felt some of the difficulties you mention in your letter, as, if one confined oneself to Europeans without a high proportion of B, I think the Scandinavian ratio is actually higher than any other I could find. I imagine the Lapps are a real source, but also that our material for reconstructing the programme of race mixture is bound to be inadequate, through our ignorance of the extent of racial movements in Eastern Europe during the last thousand years, e.g., Finland, the Baltic States and Poland all now show high percentages of B, of which higher percentages still are found on travelling Eastwards to a maximum in North Central India. I think, however, it would be rash to assume that these E.Baltic regions had received their B admixture 1,000 years ago. Indeed there seem to have been plenty of occasions on which the settlement of Easterners in these regions may have taken place. Consequently, there may well have been Baltic people capable by intermixture of producing the percentages now found in Scandinavian towns.

I stress the word towns, because, in fact, all the sufficiently

extensive series, or nearly all, come from central urban hospitals, and what I should like to try would be a travelling laboratory, deliberately setting out to get groupings by the thousand in regions like Skye and the Hebrides, the Orkneys, and the Norwegian dales. It would be bewildering, but it is still possible that such sparse and presumably primitive populations should not tally with the indication we have from Iceland.

The supposed purity and constancy of the Scandinavian population has been, of course, something of a pivot in European ethnology, and that is why I find the recent blood group data rather exciting. I presume the Irish percentage, when it is found, and the Welsh, will correspond with the Northern English or Scottish value, and I find that Haldane wants to make out that Iceland was really colonised from Ireland. However, I suppose the Norse settlement there is just about the best documented colonization in history.

Yours sincerely,