March 8, 1939

Dear Yates,

I am returning Bartlett's letter. I had already heard that he was returning to the charge with a view to confuting Miss Starkey.

On the third page, where he says, "To summarize the above argument", his short paragraph amounts to saying that he does not want to use fiducial probability, although it seems he still wants to use the phrase is some sense of his own, at present, I believe, undefined. The following paragraph is rather astonishing, for he says, "This standpoint enabled me to give." a formula under which samples of two supply no information, which is so manifestly absurd that one would have thought he must hesitate to adduce it in support of his standpoint. The defense that samples with one degree of freedom are so unstable that they are best left out altogether is, of course, beside the point for what purports to be an exact treatment of finite samples. Manifestly a large aggregate of samples of two will give a result with precision known after the event, and increasing without limit in accuracy for further accretions of new material of the same kind. Of course, such material could

could be used to discuss the actual distribution of σ in the source of supply, and this is the type of information completely absent if we are discussing the information supplied by a single sample; but from either point of view a formula which ascribes zero information to samples of two, or even of one, is manifest nonsense.

Yours sincerely,

Bartlett's letter returned.