

October 26, 1939

Dear Ruggles Gates,

I was a little embarrassed by the letter which the Provost thought fit to write to the Times, as, so far as it refers to me, it was definitely misleading, also by the fact that, on its appearance, he immediately wired and wrote to me, explaining that he had written it nearly a week before. As I am a little unwilling to join in ~~public~~ recriminations with the Head of my College in the public press, I wrote him a letter, calling his attention to the discrepancies between what he said and what he had previously written to me. I am enclosing a copy of the letter I wrote to him at the time, since it was expressly for the purpose of demonstrating, not only to the Provost but to all others who have a right to be interested, that his statement of the case was, in fact, unjustified.

On the general question of research assistants in the University, you may be glad to know that I had the opportunity of putting to Lord Sankey, who, as a law lord, should be a good judge, the position which seems to have been wholly overlooked, that, by the terms of his appointment, it is stipulated not only that a research assistant

shall receive a certain salary, but that he shall carry out researches under a named chief in his chosen subject; that this privilege is an integral part of the inducement for which he accepts the post, since that is his only means of gaining experience, adding to scientific knowledge and establishing a scientific reputation, and these are the admitted qualifications for all more important appointments. Consequently, I claim, and I think this has a wide application, that, unless the College can plead necessity, as in the case of my assistants it certainly could not, deprivation of the right to continue their researches would be as definite a breach of contract as deprivation of their salary would be.

Of course I could not get any formal judgment from Sankey, but I feel sure that he felt the claim was unanswerable.

Yours sincerely,