

4 November 1943

My dear Panse,

I have just received your letter of October 19th, which is really remarkably quick. With what you say I find myself in wholehearted agreement. In saying this I am taking it for granted that it shall be officially recognised from the start that, whatever technical procedure is adopted, it and the statistical data derived from its use shall be under continuous review by a competent statistician charged with this work and not called in only from time to time as a consultant when difficulties appear to be arising. I believe any good statistician with this responsibility would certainly find himself able to make modifications from year to year, sometimes to great advantage, in increasing the amount of information obtained at a given cost, or, per contra, reducing the cost of obtaining a given precision. It seems to me most important that there should be an officer responsible and having powers to make variations in procedure,

both for the sake of adding to his own information and equally because he has indications that a variation in procedure would be advantageous. The danger to be avoided, and perhaps I may hope this is not a danger in India, is that the routine adopted, perhaps over wide areas for a period of years, should continue in use for its own purpose without performing the subsidiary but very important purpose of throwing light on how the work could be done better.

You may have heard that this year I have left the Galton Laboratory to take over the Department of Genetics at Cambridge, where H.C. Punnett was formerly Professor. It will be a long and fairly heavy task to rebuild this Department so as to fulfil at least in the post-war period the aims with which it was originally established about thirty-five years ago. I am glad to feel that I have your cordial good wishes in this new enterprise.

Yours sincerely,