12th December 1934

Dear Professor Van Uven,

I am much interested to hear of your forthcoming book on the Mathematical Treatment of Observations. There could be no copyright restrictions, even if we should wish it, which is not the case, on your quoting figures from the published report and stating where they have come from. If, however, in the example you are chosing Justesen uses in addition other data which were never published, it would perhaps be formally correct to obtain Sir John Russell's sanction for their publication.

I am very glad to hear that Irwin's paper was useful, as opinions differ a good deal about it. Actually it was written to meet certain particular, not very difficult, algebraic questions which had arisen in discussion between the author and others, such as J. Wishart. The proofs he gives are, as he himself explains, incomplete, through not dealing with the important question of independence. He does, however, refer the reader for the complete proof to a method developed in a paper of mine published in Metron Vol.V. part 3. pp. 90-104 entitled "Applications of Students' Distribution'.

I there give a simple algebraic equivalent to the geometric mode of reasoning by which most of my solutions of problems of distribution had been actually obtained. Perhaps by reason of the title of the paper, or because the case I treated was a quite general one of regression on an independent variate capable of taking any number of values, rather than the specially restricted formulae used in well designed experiments, it has taken quite a long while for writers on probability to realise that the method given in Metron covers all cases.

            Yours sincerely,

Dr M.J.Van Uven,
Wageningen,
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