

10 June 1935

Dear Fryor,

I have now heard from Sir Charles Howard, and find that I have succeeded in interesting him in the proposals I wanted to make. His position is that, on retirement from his work as Director-General of Observatories in India, he feels himself fit to undertake scientific work in this country and would be glad to earn a small addition to the pension that he has now earned. I think, in fact, that he would be glad, if asked to undertake the organisation of the Statistical Institute, to accept such a salary as you would give to an Assistant Director, say £600 a year, and I am sure his appointment would be a most valuable step towards nursing the Institute into existence. He has, of course, a great deal of experience of directing the work of statisticians in respect of Indian climatology, where his methods used and proposed for forecasting the monsoon have for some time been of great economic importance.

I should be glad, therefore, to get your reaction as

to what you think of this, for my own position is that, though I shall be very glad to give such guidance as I can as to the qualification of statistical candidates and the kinds of work which they should be asked to undertake immediately and in future programs, I do not feel that I have the time to give all the initiative which the building up of the Institute will require.

On the side which concerns animal and plant improvement, I was glad to find that you felt the intensive study of quantitative inheritance on the basis of work already done on performance tests, and the particular study of such tests from the point of view of their precision, ought to play an essential part in guiding future practical work. What my proposal amounts to is that, although professional geneticists such as can be found may with great advantage be associated with this side of the work, the bulk of it must be technically statistical and should be carried out by or within a primarily statistical department, charged with this task. It is a subject full of real difficulties which have not to be mastered,

and I do not suppose. Waddington or anyone else could make a good job of it regarded as a side-branch of their main work. The whole subject of animal improvement is a good deal encumbered at the moment by enthusiasm for such changes as artificial insemination, which is after all only a method of dissemination of select germ-laden, and makes no direct contribution towards bringing good stock into existence. I do think we shall have to manage somehow to get the latter problem squarely faced.

Yours sincerely,