February 15, 1937

Dear Maclean,

Thanks for your letter and news of Koshal — from whom I had not heard. Probably he has delayed answering until he can finish the work he is on. I do hope he makes a good job of it. I am much struck by the variety of your interests. The index of nutrition seems just the kind of problem where the best linear function is needed, but where is the objective criterion of mal-nutrition with which to compare the measurements? I find it most difficult to think of anything adequate. Perhaps experimentally one could measure response to additional dietary factors, as in assessing vitamin content of different materials by feeding rats, and using the change in growth rate on putting the child for a month on an experimental full diet as an index of the insufficiency of his previous nourishment. The set of previous measurements which best predicts such a change in growth rate would then be an objective measurement of mal-nutrition — but it is the kind of scheme which needs a philanthropist.

Yours sincerely,