March 15, 1937

Dear Mr Sheppard,

I am anxious, in a forthcoming number of the Annals of Eugenics, the journal published by my Department, to publish an obituary of your father. But I feel rather strongly that an inadequate account would be worse than none.

I am, myself, familiar with a great deal of your father's mathematical and statistical work, but I know scarcely anything of his personal history, the early signs of his high ability, or of the manner in which his interests developed. I should much like to see an obituary account in which justice was done to him in these respects, as well as in regard to the still living influence of his work, which, during his lifetime, was too often overshadowed by pretentious researches which have not stood the test of time. I am thinking, in particular, of the fact, which seems to me more extraordinary the more I consider the circumstances, of his never having been elected to the Royal Society. For I am sure he would have been had his name been put forward.

Now would you undertake to write such a notice on the understanding that I should put myself entirely at your disposal, if you are in doubt as to how to rate the consequence of different lines of your father's output? You probably have a suitable photograph, which I should like to reproduce as frontispiece
to the next volume. A more troublesome business will be the compilation of a comprehensive bibliography, and a classification of his researches with their proper connections. I would not think 30 pages or so too much if you have, or can compile, material of this amount.

Perhaps, at any rate, you will think it over and let me know if the project affects you.

Yours sincerely,