9 April 1945

Dear Williams,

I have looked at Yule's book, and probably made much the same test that you have, finding that his series are considerably more variable than the logarithmic. I was not myself inclined to do more anything about it, as the mere relative frequency of words, apart from what words are used, seems such a clumsy approach to literary style. Authors certainly have characteristic favourite words and also differ; I should guess, a good deal in things like the frequency with which a noun is qualified by an adjective or a verb by an adverb. I am sure such qualitative distinctions must be more characteristic of different authors than the word-frequency-distribution which, you would think, must depend a great deal on the subject of discourse.

I expect Nature is fairly full these days, but for aught I know they might like a letter on this subject.

Yours sincerely,