

27th. October 1943.

Dear Wishart,

Thank you for your letter and invitation to sit on the committee, which I am willing to do, though so far as I can understand the issues to be discussed I doubt if they ~~it~~ should have any high priority.

Is the question merely this? Whether difficulties should be put in the way of a student, whether on a Ministry of Agriculture scholarship or not, who aspires to the statistical training given in the Diploma, ~~course~~ and whose advisors in the University think that he will not do much good in a single year. My answer, of course, to such a question is a peremptory, No. This is supposed to be a centre of education and not merely a place where proficiency may be confirmed.

Of course, it had always seemed to me that the attempt by means of a single diploma, organised by the Faculty of Mathematics, would necessarily fail to supply the wider and more urgent demand for statistical training. I mean that there is no wide or urgent demand for people who will refine methods of proof in set theory, in the name of improving mathematical statistics. There is a widespread and urgent demand for competent mathematicians who understand that branch of mathematics known as theoretical

statistics, but who are capable also of recognising situations in the real world to which such mathematics are applicable.

I believe for this reason that the present regulations will only work well for those who have already taken mathematical statistics to Part III standard, and who give their year of work for the Diploma principally to understanding an applied field, with, of course, a quickening and intensification of interest in such pure topics as are found to be applicable in that field.

Equally, though the demand does not at present exist, the present diploma course in mathematical statistics would be valuable to students who have already taken a diploma in applied statistics, working in the departments of their own fields of study.

Yours sincerely,