

15 November 1932.

Professor E.B. Poulton, F.R.S.,
Wykeham House,
OXFORD.

Dear Professor Poulton:

I was much tempted to join in the correspondence in "Nature", if only to show Uvaroff that statistical methods of McAtie's kind would find little support among professional statisticians; but my own copy of the celebrated 80,000 stomachs I had lost or thrown away.

If you can, without inconveniencing anybody, send me a spare copy, I should be very glad indeed of the opportunity to speak upon it at the Entomological Society meeting, as, apart even from mimicry, the more widely it is understood what statistical methods can and cannot do as an auxiliary to biological studies, the fewer disappointments there will be.

I recently found that the encyclopaedic German work on methods of biological research (Abderhalden) has a good sized section of statistical methods. On looking it up I found it written apparently by a Berlin actuary,

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and consisting of an elementary introduction to the official vital statistics of Prussia and the Reichs. The writer and, by inference, the editor of the series, was apparently not aware of any statistical work bearing either on biological theories or on the practical interpretation and design of methods of experimentation.

I heard last Saturday, when I was up at Cambridge, of your intention to relinquish the Hope Professorship. I suppose no one could have more fully earned the right to lay down duties, though we shall all regret it, except in so far as you may feel freer to meet the other scientific calls on your time. This year is something of a crisis in my own life as I understand that Professor Pearson is retiring from the Galton Laboratory, and this is the only academic post in the country for which I feel I have qualified myself, and which I would like to take up. However, it is probable that Pearson's son will be regarded as a strong candidate as he has worked under his father there now for several years and it may be that the appointment of Haldane as Professor of Mathematical Biology at the same college will be felt to obviate the need for introducing any biological interest into the work of the Galton Laboratory. If, however, mathematical statistics

alone are considered I believe I have done enough to put in a claim, though, if appointed I should regard it as the main work of the Laboratory to put biometrical methods at the service of genuinely biological problems.

But I have no business to bother you about all this.

Yours sincerely,