23 September 1932.

Dr. A.C. Aitken,
  2 Sycamore Terrace,
    Corstorphine,
      EDINBURGH.

Dear Dr. Aitken:

Your letter, which I have not digested in detail, is of great interest to me.   As you will be well aware, I have only by gradual stages, from a first publication in 1919, brought the analysis of simple series, from its chaotic condition in the heads of the biometricians, into a condition in which it is arithmetically simple, and logically intelligible.   For heavy data I have frequently used the process of broken summation, and the two chief points which I believe might be useful improvements are this and the slight gain due to cutailing the summation in Jordan's manner. I have often looked forward to an opportunity of perfecting the existing process in these two respects, for future editions of my book.

This, I gather, is what you have now done, and I very heartily congratulate you.   It may be some time before I am able to go into your process in detail, but if it is as good as I anticipate, I may be able to adopt your new forms in future editions.

One thing, which I think you will not mind my saying, has impressed me increasingly as I have got to know more of what has been done elsewhere, and that is that really valuable advances in statistical technique have been buried and effectively lost, through the author not taking the trouble to make his process known to those who will profit by it. This involves (i) the adoption of a notation as far as is possible (i.e. consistent with logical presentation) familiar already, (ii) the publication of practical examples, not in mathematical journals, but in the journals of the applied subjects, and (iii) a very clear and intelligible explanation of the logical bearing of the analysis in the subject to which it is applied. This is a long and difficult programme.

All our mathematical departments, Foreign perhaps as much as British, suffer greatly from lack of intellectual contact with scientific work — but this opens out a more difficult programme still!

Yours sincerely,