

March 1, 1939

My dear Gini,

I have just had the pleasure of adding my name in support of your candidature as an Honorary Member of the International Statistical Institute. This reminds me of two things of which I have wanted to speak to you. The first is that this year I have proposed F.Yates as ordinary member of the Institute. Yates has recently won the Sc.D. of the University of Cambridge, which, as you know, is by a long way the most advanced doctorate of science given in this country. He is one of the most brilliant and enterprising of the younger English statisticians, and has contributed very notably to the applications of statistics in scientific experimentation. I think his is a name you might be glad to support.

My other question related to a paper published in the current number of Metron by a certain G.A.Baker, giving as if it were new the solution of the problem of the sampling distribution of the ratio between the variances estimated from two different samples of the same population. You will, I think, remember our meeting at the International Mathematical Congress at Toronto, in 1924, when I gave this

same solution and a brief summary of the many statistical problems which could be solved by its means. During the last 15 years it has become widely known, and certainly several hundred papers could be cited in which it has been used as the statistical test of significance in connection with the analysis of variance. The numerical tables for the 5% point appeared in the first edition (1925) of my book on Statistical Methods.

It often happens that a mathematician interests himself in some problem, without knowing that it has been already extensively discussed or fully solved. The fact that Mr Baker knew nothing of what I have said is, therefore, not altogether surprising, but I should have hoped that your secretary, or whoever passed the material through for publication, would have drawn Mr Baker's attention to the fact that there was nothing novel in the results he obtained. I suppose, as sometimes happens in these cases that, being in a foreign language, his contribution was passed for publication without being examined very carefully. You will, no doubt, be glad to have your attention drawn to this circumstance.

Yours sincerely,