

Euler to Wettstein  
Berlin, 6 July 1754  
Letter 284 (2785)

[...] I have received your very kind letter of 10 May and soon thereafter 12 pounds of tobacco with the seeds from Mr. Collinson and the 29 unsold genealogical almanacs. I am extremely grateful for their return. I have the honor to tell you that once our distinguished President returns from Potsdam, I hope that Mr. Collinson will be received into our Academy. In that which concerns the unsold almanacs, the Academy will be satisfied with the payment for those which were actually sold. We are not surprised by the poor sales due to the egregious mistakes which slipped into the genealogy, however I have taken steps to ensure that such things never happen again and the smaller etchings will be much more interesting next year. This is why I encourage you to continue to sell our almanacs.

I understand that it is either the city of Paris and perhaps as well the city of Basel which will have the honor of having you this summer, Sir, with your dear wife, for which we are jealous, and I kindly assure you that if we could expect a visit from you our joy would be inexpressible, and we would do everything to make your stay in Berlin as pleasant as one in Paris or Basel. The number of Basellers increases on a daily basis. Mr. Schaul of Leipzig has just settled down with his daughter to manage Mr. Gotskowski's factories. When I told them that I would be writing to you within the next few days, they insisted that I present their best regards as well as to your wife, the same undertaking is always given to me by our venerable Baron de Gorgier, who never misses an opportunity to toast your health as well as to all our compatriots.

It must be that Mr. Clairaut is enjoying his stay much more in London than in Paris, since he is spending such a long time there, without even thinking of returning. As much as I am able to know him through his letters, he must be a very principled man, and very different from the petty annoyances that the academicians in Paris employ to mutually debase each other. It is undoubtedly the reason why he is staying for such a long time in Paris. You have had the kindness, Sir, to tell me that you will see Mr. Delisle in Paris to

whom I have been prohibited to correspond, however, I request that you tell him on my behalf of all my feelings of esteem and friendship and that I very much regret being unable to communicate from time to time with him.

Mr. Mayer of Gottingen has assuredly accomplished in lunar theory everything that has been said about him, having taken the tables to such a point of precision that the calculations do not exceed more than a half minute from the truth., But to succeed to the Longitude prize, it would be necessary for him to discover a method to conduct the lunar observations at sea with the same exactness or at least where the error would not exceed one minute, it so happens that it is what he is working on right now.

If you have the goodness, Sir to send us the 11 volumes of the Transactions, I request that you add the numbers 495, 496, 497; because 494 were the last number that we received.

I am received some information on M. Megard on which he speaks a great deal concerning mechanics, but in Geneva no one seems to know anything about these so-called discoveries. I do not believe that it is impossible to construct a telescope of two inches in size which will locate Jupiter's satellites, and since the author speaks of the thickness I am assuming that he has built it with a number of reflectors in order to obtain such smallness. If this is the case he would have gained nothing, because at sea it will be as difficult to use this one as an ordinary one. The field of vision being this small and once having lost sight of Jupiter, which could happen at any moment, one would not be able to relocate it without a great deal of effort. The telescope referred to would be a discovery worthy of a reward, however I doubt whether the author has manufactured these two instruments. The news should already have some reaction in Geneva, but if they only exist as ideas, the discovery would not be worth a single cent.

I have sent Mr. Short's letter that you had the goodness to send me to our Academy and afterwards sent it also to Saint Petersburg where they will not hesitate to obtain some of these excellent micrometers, as for ours I will speak firstly to Mr. de Maupertuis as soon as he returns.

Mr. Bruckner's machine does not deserve any attention, because he neither understood the question nor the difficulties to which it was subject, it has a number of defects and if it did what it was supposed to (because it would need a great deal to do this) it would be as I said that it would only show the curved path of the rise and fall of the ships. I believe that I raised all the issues, without which he was unable to respond.

I have noted that M. d'Haucarville who has played a nasty trick by revealing his name as the Count d'Elincourt having incurred some debts and was incarcerated for a long time in prison having done these things. Finally Prince Louis of Wurtemberg delivered him from prison and has taken him under his protection, he seems to have accomplished something in mathematics and appears to have a talent for it; however I have yet to see his book.

With all of our most affectionate respects of my entire family and all our compatriots, I have the honor of being with the most perfect regards [...]

1<sup>st</sup> Edit 12/2/03