

Euler to Wettstein  
Berlin, 1 March 1755  
Letter 286 (2787)

[...] I was placed at ease when I learned with your letter of 27 December that you wished to honor me that our almanacs arrived in time and that they are to your publics' taste; at least they should be commended due to the correction of a vast array of mistakes which filled last years' genealogy.

All of us here are thrilled with your decision to come to Berlin and we hope very much hope that all of the plans happen soon some that you may execute this plan as soon as possible. We were just speaking of this yesterday at Margrave Heinrich's table; where Baron de Gorgier praised you and had me with my glass in hand toast you with our warmest regards.

It has just been brought to my attention with a great deal of importance that there is a Mr. Dietrich of Basel who has been in London since he left as tutor to Mr. Bischoff's sons. I have no doubt that he should place himself under your care in the way that you have always given to all of compatriots. As what I have been told is that he is in need of a position and that he has not yet found one, and in case that he is still unemployed, I ask you to tell him that I shall do everything possible to find one, and tell him that I have no doubt that I will be successful in view of the great knowledge and good qualities that I have heard praised of him. If he is hard-pressed, he could come to me to tutor my children since the tutor that I had will enter a new employment that I found for him. I will provide him with 60 ecus a year including full benefits and if Mr. Dietrich wishes this employment then he should be prepared to live in the country at my mother's home in Charlottenburg. I think that he will find this to his liking and if he wants he should come as soon as possible.

There should also be in London one Mr. Huber of Basel and we are very proud of his progress in mathematics and astronomy. Our most worthy President is determined to hire him at our Academy.

It was Mr. Kies who made you a Chevalier last year in our astronomy almanac, since Mr., Formey provided him with your title as an abbreviation. However you are Chaplain in this year's and you will find your baptismal name in next year's. It just so happens that this is the way we find things to perfect and is better than finding everything to correct all at once.

I will be very grateful, Sir, if you would not mind speaking to Messrs Bradley and Short, if the occasion should present itself, I would appreciate your telling these gentlemen that I have just discovered, by the immortal Newton's theory, the changes to which the obliquity of the ecliptic is subject besides those that arise from the nutation of the earth's axis. I have found that the average obliquity diminishes by 48 "every century, which appeared to be in accordance it all time observations. However, one must not think that this diminishment will last forever, it is now at its greatest and after a few centuries its will get so small so to vanish and again after some time the obliquity and the ecliptic will once again begin to get larger. Finally, with the same theory I have the changes that must occur at the fixed star latitudes. I have found that that the latitude of those for which the longitude is Capricorn or Ram should alter by 48" per century, these approaching the northern pole of the ecliptic and those approaching the southern pole. After having compiled the fixed star catalogue of Ptolemy, Tycho and Flamsteed, I have effectively found in general that the stars whose longitude is Gemini or Capricorn were at other times further from the ecliptic pole than today and which is opposite for those for which the longitude is the Archer or Ram. I would be curious to know if others haven't noticed what appears to be something that would jump off the page to someone who compares these catalogues. In what regards this law that follows these changes are so fundamental to the theory, I am quite sure that no one has found it yet. Such a precaution is not superfluous, since it is very

likely that Mr. d'Alembert will publish the results of the same discovery.

I hope that at this time you have sent the numbers of the Transactions with Mr. Collinson's Mays Praecox, in the case that the seeds have not yet arrived, I'll rest easy and take the liberty to ask for 12 pounds of Virginian tobacco that I forgot or better yet I was not told that my stock was finished, but please forgive me.

My entire family presents their very humble regards as well as to your wife, and our entire compatriots do the same here and our President is very touched by the memory with which you honor him. Mr. Formey is the same. God be praised that we are all well despite the very hard winter that we have just been through.

I have the honor of being attached by which nothing may separate us [...]

1<sup>st</sup> Edit 12/3/03