

THE PICKERING MASTERS

Edited by Neil Chambers

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Letters 1790–1799

1

4 The increas'd Size I apprehend is owing to the Streng[t]h necessary to be given to Glass which must be Stronger than metal & Consequently larger: I apprehend however that if the Liquor taken from the Trader for the purpose of Trial is return'd to him again as it */always/* ought to be no Complaint will be made if Even a Quart instead of half a pint was necessary

I by all means advise that your Queries may be forwarded to M^r Gilpin for his answers which he who has applied his Mind to the mechanical Part of the Construction of the instrument will be far better Able to furnish than Me I should hope also that M^r Ramsden will offer the fruits of his labors to the board in due time & I see no reason why M^r Quin or any other person capable of Comprehending the Tables may not */advocate/ /accommodate/* the Common hydrometer according to the */specific/ /gravities/* noted in them */instead of the Erroneous ones on the Principles by which they have been hitherto Constructed/*

From John Ferril

[1138]

39 Great Tower Hill, London
15 September 1792

Sir

Tho' I have not the honor of being known to you, yet from the encouragement which you are ever ready to give, to any undertaking that may tend to improvement or Public utility, I therefore hope you will excuse the liberty I have taken on this occasion. – I have for some time been led away with an idea, that I have discovered a new mode of raising Water, in large quantities with small labour. – A Machine is just comp[leted] agreeable to my plan, at a considerable expence, but unfortunately I find, that I am prevented from bringing Speculative ideas to actual experiment, on account of the Wood being too porous to resist the pressure of the Air. – My intention is still to persevere by erecting one of metal, but I must confess, that I am alarmed at the expence, least my idea be chimerical and prove unsuccessfull. – I would wish to apply to some person for Scientific information, but I must say, that I have none to whom I should choose to disclose: thus situated, I have come to the resolution of repairing to the fountain head, in hopes you will not be offended at the liberty I have taken. – Will you do me the honor to inform me on receipt of this, whether or not you will take the trouble to look into it and give me your opinion upon my Principle. – If I shall be so fortunate as to have your acquiescence in this, I will immediately enclose a draught of the Machine, with the principle upon which I build, and in

this case, I will be directed in my future operations entirely by the opinion you may give, and either be encouraged thereby to go on, or desist

Sir

I am with the greatest respect

Your most obedient Servant

John Ferril –

[Banks Endorsement.]

M^r Ferrill

Sept. 20 – 92

[September] 24 – [1792]

[Addressed: Revesby Abbey.]

To John Ferril

[1139]

[Revesby Abbey]

[17 September 1792]

Sir

as I have never made the Science of hydraulics a principal object of Investigation I do not Consider the Small Knowledge of that Subject I am possessed of is sufficient to Enable me to become a Judge for other people whose property */might/ /may/* suffer materialy in case I Should misjudge their invention by */being deceivd/ /an Error/* in opinion I have also an insuperable Objection to becoming the depository of other mens secrets lest I Should bear the blame of disclosing what other persons have */been/* not been able to Keep private

From Jonas Dryander

[1140]

London

30 September 1792

Dear Sir,

Since I had sent off the letters on Thursday last, John Roberts told me that among them was a note relating to Spanish Sheep on board a vessel, which had been brought by a man from the ship, who told that they must be landed next day, as they were in bad condition. As I did not know any thing about the operations to be performed relating to these sheep I sent John to M^r Robinson at Kensington Palace, to ask him if he knew what was to be done, of which I found him as ignorant as myself. On Friday I sent John to M^r Maclane, to enquire if he

had been concerned before about these operations, and to ask him, in that case, what was to be done. He said that it was too late then to get the business done that day, and yesterday was holyday, so that nothing could be done till tomorrow. John went on board the ship to see the sheep, and found them very well.

With a note inclosed came some berries in a paper.

With the letter from M^r Bell the Surgeon, came a description of the Rhinoceros of Sumatra with a drawing of it, and 3 drawings of the cranium.¹ As I could not conceive how an African animal came to Sumatra, I was very anxious to examine this account, and compare it with the information we have relating to the two species of Rhinoceros hitherto known; the result of my enquiries is that the Sumatra beast is a new species, intermediate between the Asiatic one-horned and African two-horned. The African has no dentes primores, but the molares come very near to the front of the jaw; the asiatic has dentes primores, then a long vacant distance in the jaw; and no molares towards the farthest ends of the jaw; and the Sumatra one has the same, but it has really two horns, and not the great folds of the one-horned, tho' not entirely with folds as the African is described by Sparrman. M^r Home, to whom these papers were sent from Bell, wishes that M^r Hunter should not know that they came thro' his hands, but directly from Bell to you.

We have had very dirty weather, but I don't suppose we have had so great a quantity of Rain as you have had. The Raingage this morning was 2.19 since the 4th, and if I add 0.31 for the 3 first days, as I mentioned in my last letter, it makes exactly 2½ inch for this month, to which may still come little addition, as it appears likely enough to be more rain before tomorrow morning.

I have the honor to be with great respect

Dear Sir

Your most obliged and obedient

humble servant

J Dryander

1. See William Bell, 'Description of the double-horned rhinoceros of Sumatra', *PT*, 83 (1793). William Bell was a surgeon in the service of the East India Company at Bengkulu, Sumatra.

From Joseph Franz, Freiherr von Jacquin

[1141]

Vienna

6 October 1792

Sir

Before all, I must intreat you, to forgive my long silence after your gracious letter; it was partly owing to the hopes I entertained hitherto to get any notice of the

bohemian Dioscorides that M^r Born had received for you but which now, I gave entirely up. The library of M^r Born fell into the hands of his creditors and after having already suffered a sort of plundering by several persons who pretended to have lend him books, was partly sold by Auction and partly under hands. I could get no information whatever of your book amongst them and Baron de Vay is presently absent from Vienna. Notwithstanding that, I hope surely in a short time, to procure that book again, as I gave comission to several of my friends in Bohemia, wh[o] assured me, that it occurred very often at Auctions.

It was with the greatest pleasure we received the seeds from Botany Bay and I beg you to accept our best thanks for this present. We shall on every account, be very happy, to get into a exchanging commerce with the garden of Kew. The imperial Garden at Schönbrunn has encreased lately extraordinarily by several envoys from the Cape by M^r Schole. We worked all this Spring and Summer to make a Catalogue of the settled plants and to settle the unknown; yet there is near 300 unknown left, allmost all shrubbs from the East and West indians. Though we have a great list of desiderata from the Hortus Kewensis, yet we possess a great number which are not there, amongst those is the Epidendrum Vanilla whereof we have six good plants, the Artocarpus integrifolia, Cookia *Jussieui*, Carolinae princeps, Theobroma Cacao, Ruyschia, Vangheria *Jussieui*, several Brownea and Theophrastae &c I think, the best way of sending living plants to England and to get them from thence, will be by M^r Wätzel, who travels every year twice to England and back.

The present Emperor has, for his own amusement laid out a botanical Garden at the Belvedere, only for austrian plants, and sended D^r Host at his expences to the alps of Styria, Corinthia, Tyrol, to the Mons Bald[o] &c to get living plants for this garden. The transports are not yet arrived, without this I should have send you already a good parcel of the rare austrian plants alive; but I hope in the Spring at M^r Wätzel next journey, to amend this retardation. We should be very obliged to M^r Aiton if he would send us through the same way, some of the plants you was so kind to mention in your last letter, as also the Lemongrass, the Aitonia, the Aucuba, the Myrtus tomentosa and the Fuchsia coccinea which all died on the road, as I sended them to Vienna 3 years ago.

I am very glad, Miss Banks was pleased with the coins and medals, and D^r Sims who passed through Vienna some weeks ago, was so kind to take the gold medal, I mentioned in one of my letters to Bauer, with him to England. I wrote the value of those medals, which I bought myself some time ago to M^r Dryander and you may remit me, if you please the amount, as soon as the sum will be worth while of a lettre de charge. I had the pleasure to see M^{rs} Vere and Hill, some weeks ago here, /and/ and am very obliged to you for addressing them to me, though I was very sorry on the other /side/ that I could not shew them many civilities, as

Sept. 21 1792

My Dear Mr Joseph

I have particular pleasure in being able to acquaint you that I have received very flattering accounts of Bells success in Louisiana, both as point of character & eminent; he has sent a letter to you with a description & drawings of the scabber-headed Alouattas - I alas poor Drouil shall leave them in the square -

The reason of my troubling you with this letter is to acquaint you that I have been paying my addresses to Mrs Thompson, a niece of the Rev Mr Dodsworth, who is in town for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements respecting his niece as I am a perfect stranger to him, and wish that he should be perfectly satisfied respecting me. I have referred him to my friends of mine with whom he was acquainted. I think myself fortunate in his being acquainted with you, for whom he has the highest respect, and I have requested him to write to you, having no doubt, from the many marks of friendship and protection I have received from you, that you will upon this occasion, in which my happiness is particularly interested, speak of me as you know me. In this case, as well as in every

My dear your partiality leads me to believe
you will do me more than justice. —

I remain with much truth

Your much obliged

& sincere friend

Leicester Sq^e

Everard Home.

Sept 21st 1792

