

Letter from Newton to John Collins, dated 25 May 1672

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Cambridg. May 25^t. 1672.

Sir

This day fortnight I received your letter accompanied with part of the remaines of M^r Horrox, two Tracts of Honorato Fabri, & 4 or 5 Coppies of a Synopsis of M^r Kersies Algebra. For these & D^r Wallis his Mechanicks together with many other civilities I must acknowld your Obligingnesse & affection to me, & shall be ever ready to testify as much. Nor is your Mathematicall Intelligence lesse gratefull; for I am very glad that D^r Barrow's Book is abroad & that the world will enjoy the writings of the excellent Astronomers M^r Horrox & Hevelius & those complete Mathematicians Monsieur Huygens & Slusius.

Your Kindnesse to me also in profering to promote the edition of my Lectures which D^r Barrow told you of, I recon amongst the greatest, considering the multitude of buisnesse in which you are involved. But I have now determined otherwise of them; finding already by that little use I have made of the Presse, that I shall not enjoy my former serene liberty till I have done with it; which I hope will be so soon as I have made good what is already extant on my account. Yet I may possibly complete the discourse of resolving Problemes by infinite series of which I wrote the better half the last christmas with intension that it should accompany my Lectures, but it proves larger then I expected & is not yet finished.

The Book here in Presse is Varenius his Geography, for which I have described Schemes; & I suppose it will be finished about six weeks hence. The additions to Kinkhuysens Algebra I have long since augmented with what I intended, & particularly with a discourse concerning invention or the way of bringing Problems to an Æquation. And those are at your command. If you have not determined any thing about them I may possibly hereafter review them & print them with the discourse concerning Infinite Series.

I take much satisfaction in being a Member of that honourable body the Royal Society; & could be glad of doing any thing which might deserve it: Which makes me a little troubled to find my selfe cut short of that fredome of communication <18v> which I hoped to enjoy, but cannot any longer without giving offence to some persons whome I have ever respected. But tis no matter, since it was not for my own sake or advantage that I should have used that fredome.

The Coppies of the Synopsis of M^r Kersies Algebra I have communicated to our Mathematicians, but meet not with any subscriptions. However to encourage the undertaking I shall subscribe for one, & hope ere long to send you another or two.

For my tardinesse in returning you this Answer I have no excuse but that I stayed 4 or 5 days in hopes to send you some of those subscriptions, & being intent upon the duty of this Terme, the time slipt on faster then I was aware of.

But I promis my selfe by your so much testified friendship that you will pardon it, & beleive that I think my selfe really

Your most obliged

Debtor

I. Newton.
