

## Letter from Erasmus Darwin to James Watt, 1800/01/21

On the evening of 29 December 1799, Darwin's son, Erasmus, who was in debt, committed suicide by throwing himself in the river Derwent.

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Derby Jan 21 -800

My dear friend,

I am indeed much obliged to you for your kind letter of condolence. there are evils in mortal life, which must be born, such is the condition of human nature! - & which nothing can eradicate but our own ceasing to exist; tho' Time alleviates all our evils in some degree, & the sympathy of our friends! - you know what it is to lament the loss of a beloved child! –

Mrs Darwin bears our calamity worse than I do, as other forced occupations steal me from myself at times; & the philosophy, which I have cultivated from my early years, occasionally still employs me.

Adieu, with Mrs Darwin's

[kind regards?] to you & yours from dear Watt,

[E Darwin?]

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