

Letter from Erasmus Darwin to Matthew Boulton, 1789/10/22

Darwin writes to Boulton for information about steam engines and coining for Darwin's latest poem, *The Loves of Plants*.

Derby Oct. 22-89

Dear Boulton

I write this to introduce to your acquaintance my friend Mr Archdale, a gentleman [of] classical abilities, and will therefore not steal any of your inventions, and who is going to make speeches in the Irish parliament – and wishes to see all things visible on earth.

I had design'd to have written to you on another subject, if this opportunity had not offer'd it; and that is, that as an idle book of mine, call'd the Loves of Plants sells so well, as to pay me; I think of publishing another part of the same work in the spring, and shall have occasion to speak of fire-engines. Now what I wish is that you would tell me as much about the superiority of your fire-engines, as may fill half a page or more by way of note.

Likewise I want much to know, if you have the Coinage, and something about you coining fire-engines for a note also. Viz, a short account of what number of halfpence He makes in a minute, and at how many operations, etc. The Lord be with you, adieu, I hope your Son and Daughter are well

Your affect. friend,

E Darwin