

CAMPER

1773 CAMPER

To Dr. W. Hunter. London.

Dr. Sir!

The letter you sent me about the sale of Dr. Smellie's apparatus was received by me, but too late to give any commission: as I had made myself a phantome (?) I thought I could be without that of others; the more as I considered how those should be sold at high prices.

I'm extremely curious to see your plates upon the impregnated uterus, I'm satisfied with your excuses; it was a favour I asked and not a desire to have them against your will.

I'm employed about a great many things, my third volume about the anat: of the brain could not be finished because my engraver did think good not to continue for some time but the principall part is finished.

I have made some discoveries about the air entering into the hollow bones of birds, especially of the eagle, the ousel (?), the stork, and most of the others. I have given an essay upon this to the Society of Rotterdam. I have found out the true difference of the various outlines of nations (?) se: which is under the press at present.

But at the same time I have dissected the Orangoutang, the head of the rhincceros, and a Rendier, or Farandus, of which I intend to publish a fasciculus, with plates. I have the honour to offer you the plates. † The first has a scale of Rhyland measure. They are all drawn by myself. Tho' they observe that this animal has two teeth, I can observe none but grinders, for I have observed that all quadrupeds have their teeth or dentes incisores in a peculiar bone, which we may call the anterior maxillary bone; now in this as you may see in the outline of the head, A, is very small and has no teeth and the rest has two or more roots, consequently they bear the character of grinders.

This head was sent to me from the cape of Good Hope, where they all have two horns, but I know some with a double horn are sent from Asia; by which means the Romans could easily get them either from Africa or Asia. I have given as you may see on the second plate both the medals you was so kind as to communicate with me, pray return my thanks to Mr. Duac and accept mine. I fancy Martialis is now very well explained.

As I intended to make a collection of monsters either to explain what nature could do in time of labour or to give certain proofs of the nutrition (?) of the fetus in the womb I got these here added engraved. Tab 1 and 2 are the exact half of the life. That of Tab 2 is in my collection likewise fig 1 + 2 of Tab III. I hope you will be pleased with them as they are drawn by your constant friend and admirer. †

I publish actually my dissertation upon the inoculation (?) of the small pox which was crowned at Toulouse of which as it is in latin I'll send you a cotype.\*

I'm in a constant hurry by business. I have made a pretty collection of anatomical preparates and of skeletons, heads of all beasts almost. In short my collection is very agreeable to me, tho' not to be compared to that I hear you have made since my late visit 1752. I hope I'll once see you again, my three sons begin to grow up very successfully, besides the Greek, and Latin, they speak the French perfectly well, read and speak High German, and begin to speak English. They draw very well for their age. But non of 'm has as yet any turn for medicine.

† In Hunterian Library.

\* This is not in the Hunterian Library - Glasgow University.

I intend to go for some few days to the Hague. I'll write to you as soon as I return, and I'm with the greatest esteem and faithfulness.

Your most ob. and Humble Servant

Petrus Camper

Groningen the 24th of March

1773.