

LVIII. *An Extract of a Letter of Monsieur De la Lande, of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, to Dr. Bevis, dated there March 26, 1762. Translated from the French.*

Read May 13, 1762. I Have received, with a great deal of gratitude, *The Seaman's Practice*, which you were so good as to send to me. I return you my most humble thanks for it. I had never heard, that Norwood's measure had been printed so early as the year 1636; and I did not think, that before Newton, that is, before 1666, it was at all known. I assure you, that I will publish in our *Memoires* an extract of this book, in order to do homage to the labours of that celebrated Englishman, who had preceded us with relation to the figure of the earth. I am sorry, that I have seemed to have been in doubt when I spoke of it, and that my book is already dispersed: but I shall find an opportunity to repair this another time. In the mean time, do me the justice to observe, that I did not say, that Norwood's measure did not exist; but only, that Newton had no knowledge of it, as seems to result from the testimony of Dr. Pemberton, who relates, that Newton having had the notion of the attraction of earth upon the moon, was diverted from pursuing it, by observing, that the earth was too large not to produce a greater attraction. If any member of your illustrious Royal Society is offended with my reflections, I desire you to

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make my excuses to him, and to assure the Royal Society of my most humble respects.

“ J’ai recû avec beaucoup de reconnoissance le livre
 “ de *Seaman’s Practice*, que vous avés eu la bonté de
 “ m’envoyer : je vous en fais mes très humbles remer-
 “ cîmens : je n’avois jamais oüï dire que la mesure de
 “ Norwood eut été imprimée des 1636, et je ne croiois
 “ pas qu’avant Newton, c’est a dire avant 1666, on
 “ en eut en connoissance. Je vous assure que je ferai im-
 “ primer dans nos Memoires un extract de ce livre
 “ pour rendre hommage aux travaux du celebre An-
 “ glois, qui nous avoit précédé sur la figure de la terre.
 “ Je suis fâché d’avoir paru en doute lorsque j’en ai
 “ parlé, et que mon livre soit déjà distribué par tout ;
 “ mais je trouverai bien l’occasion de réparer cela une
 “ autre fois. Cependant, faites moi la justice d’ob-
 “ server, que je n’ai pas dit que la mesure de Norwood
 “ ne fut pas existente, mais seulement que Newton
 “ n’en avoit pas connoissance, comme il semble resulter
 “ du temoignage de Pemberton, qui raconte, que
 “ Newton ayant eu l’idée de l’attraction de la terre
 “ sur la lune, en fut détourné sur ce que il vit, que la
 “ terre etoit trop grande pour ne produire pas une
 “ plus grande attraction. Si quelqu’un dans votre
 “ illustre Societé Royale est blessée de mes reflexions,
 “ je vous prie de lui en faire mes excuses, et d’as-
 “ surer la Societé Royale de mes tres humbles re-
 “ spects.”