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To M^r Robert Blair

Sir

London July 14th 1743.

On the Receipt of your last Favour I went immediately to M^r Cuff, & gave him your Letter, & bespoke your Microscope; which I hope will arrive safe by Ship mention'd in M^r Cuff's Letter. He brought it to me as soon as finish'd, and I strictly examin'd every Glass, & can assure you they are all very good, & shew the Object clear and distinct. Perhaps you'll wonder at not finding the Contrivance mention'd in my Book for putting Sliders thro'; but 'tis now disus'd, as unnecessary, since the Sliders may be laid on the Brass Stage, & mov'd under y^e Eye more readily without it: & it only serves to make the Instrument dearer. The circular Brass with round Holes for Objects is all that belongs to this Microscope; but I have made M^r Cuff put you in three Sliders, a Glass to hold in the Hand, and some Glass Slips: all which you'll find very useful; and I doubt not but that by the little Assistance my Book may give, you'll be able to manage it very well. I shall want much to hear your first Reflections on Nature's Miniature Pieces, which seem to excell in Workmanship in proportion as they diminish in Bulk. I have sent you ten Polypes in a Phial: you'll think it strange to find it corked, & seal'd, but in that Manner they came from Holland, and if the Passage is not over long I'm in hopes they'll get alive to you; which if they do, you may soon stock all Scotland with them. I fed them here at London with very small Worms found in great Plenty in the Mud of the River Thames; & I suppose in that of other Rivers, & perhaps of Ponds & Ditches: These Worms are so numerous, that in a Bason full of Mud I am sure of finding Thousands, which I get out by washing away the Mud, and put in clean Water before I give them to the Polypes. As soon as you receive them, please to put them in fresh Water; It must not be from a Spring or Well, but out of some Pond, Ditch, or Ri

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ever where the Water is soft. Their Water must be shifted every 2 or 3 Days if you perceive it foul; 'tis best to keep them in a Glass Vessel, like a Water Glass, with a wide Mouth, that you may take them out easily, When you shift the Water loosen their Tails from where they stick, & pour them out with the Water into a Cup or Bason, then rub their Glass Vessel very clean, fill it with clean Water, & with a Quill cut Scoop Fashion take them out of the Cup or Bason & put them into You'll find them extremely ravenous, catching the Worm with their Arms as soon as it touches any one of them: but if you think a whole Worm bigger than the Pot can swallow, give him a piece only. They are also very fond of the Pulices Aquae & I believe will eat any other small Water Insects.

Since my last, I have read your Poem on the Grave more than once over, & been with the many masterly Paintings you have drawn, & the noble, judicious, & pathetic Reflections abounding every where. Such a Performance must render any one (that with much greater Merit than 'tis my good Fortune to have) proud of a Correspondence with its Author; and You do me Honour in pleasing to accept of mine, which I shall endeavour to render ^{as tolerable} as I can when I know what Subjects will prove agreeable to you.

The Post will not permit me to tire you longer, and therefore assuring you that without Ceremony you may command any Services in my Power to do for you at London, I am,

Good Sir

Your affectionate & most obed^t Servant