

you give me free rein just where I wanted it. That is, you consent that I should devote myself wholly to the natural sciences should this career offer me, as I hope it may, a more favorable prospect. It requires, for instance, but two or three years to go around the world at government expense. I will levy contributions on all my senses that not a single chance may escape me for making interesting observations and fine collections, so that I also may be ranked among those who have enlarged the boundaries of science. With that my future is secured, and I shall return content and disposed to do all that you wish. Even then, if medicine had gained greater attraction for me, there would still be time to begin the practice of it. It seems to me there is nothing impracticable in this plan. I beg you to think of it, and to talk it over with papa and with my uncle at Lausanne. . . . I am perfectly well and as happy as possible, for I feed in clover here on my favorite studies, with every facility at my command. If you thought my New Year's letter depressed, it was only a momentary gloom due to the memories awakened by the day. . . .