

30th August 1963

Greetings Jennie:

Thank you for your note of the 15th. The 3-VT5 tubes arrived on the 7th. This turned out to be the army number for identical tubes OG1332 of Navy and WE215A of manufacturer. Now I have the same thing under all three numbers.

That memo from Harris merely means the old pass book is full or they have a new clerk. Just ignore it. They will get organized.

Apparently all of Uncle Sam's children are now to have numbers instead of names. I say Q32FB7S, can you pronounce your new number without stuttering? Please find the slip with the threat. Write on it "Who gets the five dollars?", sign my name and return it to them. Recently, I learned from Srinivasa Ramanujan, 1729 is a very nice number. This is the smallest number which is the sum of two cubes in two different ways.

$9^3 + 10^3 = 12^3 + 1^3 = 1729$. I choose the number 19-13-1729. You can send it to anyone who wants a number.

Recently I've analysed all the beans of last years crop. Now it is certain that twining the vines backward changes the color of the seed. I suspect there is more to this than meets the eye. Recently, I talked to a visiting biochemist from England. He is looking for plants to grow for cortisone. There are many varieties of Dioscorea. Cortisone is present only in the ones turning left. No known reason; purely observations. Davis had demonstrated that left hand coco palms produce 22 percent more nuts. My left hand beans produce thinner shucks and more black seed.

Two years ago one plant produced a few pods of jet black seed. These I planted last year. This seed reproduces itself. Now I have a pint of jet black seed. Also it breaks down into dwarf examples of the original Hawaiian of three generations ago (purple flowers and purple striped pods), plus white seed (white flowers and pure green pods), plus brown seed (yellow flowers and pink pods), plus pink mottled seed (yellow flowers and crimson streaked pods). Samples of all these will be grown this year. Burpee sent a free sample of bean seed which has been intercepted by the custom officials. They say it has bean virus. I say it doesn't. The only way to test is to grow the plants in quarantine. This year the Customs Department will have a nice crop of Kentucky Wonder pole beans!

Two short notes of mine have appeared in Science. These are:

"Messier 1", 15th February 1963, p 677, vol 139.

"Terrestrial Magnetosphere", 28th June 1963, p 1362, vol 140.

There are no reprints.

A portable electroplating device is available on the American market which would be useful here. A felt or cloth pad is filled with moist chemical in one electrode. The other electrode is the work. Dry cells or storage battery is source of power. The moist pad is rubbed over work and a fine coating of metal is deposited. I would like to chrome, tin or silver plate short sections of some of my copper wires where connections are frequently changed. The plating should stay bright when outdoors. Presently the wires have to be cleaned with fine emery paper. Please have someone investigate this matter and send to me literature giving details, performance and prices.

Things are going well here with much good data being secured at Bothwell. That operation is now mostly in the hands of my capable man Veio Fletcher. By spring, enough data should be available to make a trip to Canberra and Sydney worthwhile.

Best regards,

Grote Reber
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