



Letter from Svante Arrhenius to Georg Bredig, April 1914

Arrhenius, Svante. "Letter from Svante Arrhenius to Georg Bredig, April 1914," April 12, 1914. Papers of Georg and Max Bredig, Box 1, Folder 4. Science History Institute. Philadelphia. <https://digital.sciencehistory.org/works/2tk2aah>.

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Translated by Jocelyn R. McDaniel

English Translation

Image 1

The Fields for Experiments at the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry, 12 April 1914

Dear old friend,

Thank you for your kind letter from March 26th. On this day, I returned from a three-week trip in Norway, where I lectured on Cosmogony in Trondheim and Bergen. The reception committees were very welcoming, and the audiences were extremely interested. For example, in Trondheim, which has 50,000 residents, I had 1,300 guests. There wasn't a very large auditorium in Bergen, otherwise I would have had just as many guests there. It is very encouraging to witness the keen interest of the audience. Moreover, this trip allowed me to escape the flagrancy of local politics.

Image 2

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At the moment, the liberal leaders are being slandered. Despite these statements by the conservatives, with Seider involving some professors and the King's right-leaning partisanship, the left will prevail. Many seats will shift from the liberals to the socialists. The conservatives already realize that they will be defeated and are gradually starting to blame the poor King. It is most likely the conservatives' last political fight in our country. The election results will be known next Wednesday. In the autumn, we will once again experience similar electioneering.

I am now preparing for the lectures in London, where I plan to give three Tyndale Lectures on May 14th, 21st and 28th. I will give the Faraday Lecture on May 25th.

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Afterwards, I'll go to Copenhagen for a month to work in Madsen's institute. I will soon have to write a new edition of "Immunochemistry". Beforehand, I want to clarify a few questions so that everything is coherent (i.e., this is my hope). I disagree with the colloid chemists because they spin everything into a spider's web. They have limited knowledge of the exact sciences.

With regards to Snethlage, Taylor has dealt with a similar topic and has most likely achieved as much as possible in this area. I am sending you a sample of his work. Snethlage's treatise did not impress me as much as I expected. However, he is right, and you can tell him that. I don't think it's too much to ask that I should write to him directly.

Image 3

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He has not written to me on this matter.

I would like to congratulate you on the Solvay Prize that you most certainly deserve for your excellent research on catalysis. I'm also delighted that you enjoy your work and have many interesting topics in mind. It makes sense that you are working on the most important catalytic process: plant assimilation. To understand physiological chemistry, the physical component is necessary and therein lies its greatest significance.

I am also glad that you and your loved ones are doing well at the moment. As usual, I, my wife, and children are in good spirits. My oldest son will graduate in May and enter the military. My 4 ½ year old son, Sven, and my 10-month-old daughter, Esther, are in good health. Best regards from our home to yours.

Yours truly,

Svante Arrhenius