

MOORE COLLEGE: BROUGHTON LETTERS

Broughton to Coleridge, 13/7/1850 (Syd)

By the "Asia" I have written to you a long Letter principally upon the subject of my purposed surrender of income for the service of my Church; and have also communicated respecting the same matter with my brother in law Francis; begging him to ascertain whether the additional Life Insurance which for my children's sake I am anxious to make can be affected. If not, I am at a loss to determine how my purpose can be accomplished; and if it fail, then what is to become of the Church? My earnest hope is therefore that before the 22nd of next May (when I shall be deemed one year older and charged with (sic) a higher premium) my wish may have been happily fulfilled. The present Letter also goes to you by the "Asia": only not by the Mail, but by the hand of my dear and valued presbyter the Revd W.H. Walsh. Twelve years ago he was recommended to my good offices by that worthy and judicious man, the late Archdeacon Watson; and he has since been labouring earnestly and most successfully in a Church and parish which owe their existence, I may almost say, to him: for the former would never have been built, nor its large and attentive congregation assembled in it, but for his untiring exertions and his winning spirit and example. It pleased God, also, that he should be in attendance on my most dear and regretted wife in her dying hour. It was he who accompanied her departing spirit with prayers in which I was not permitted to join; and he too, with his excellent wife, supported my poor child under her sorrows which I could not be present to share. You may judge therefore what a sense of obligation to them is seated in my mind. I commend him to your notice and friendship of which you will speedily perceive he is not unworthy. At his urgent request I have supplied him with a Letter to the B. of Exeter, which you will oblige me much by reinforcing with a good word of your own, if, after communication with him you see not reason for withholding (sic) it. He goes to England in the hope of obtaining a cure for an affection in his throat, which besides presenting some rather alarming symptoms, has so impaired his powers of utterance that he is quite incapable of continuing the duties of his Church. He sails I believe, on

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the very day on this month on which a year ago poor Naylor departed from us, seeking relief from a nervous affection which the faculty here professed themselves unequal to cope with. He comes not back among us. He died at sea, and the remorseless deep closed o'er his head. May a merciful Providence avert the omen which, against one's better reason, will forever itself upon [^] ← ? one's thoughts. This is one among the many trials and sorrows which of late have multiplied themselves around me.

My position as to a supply of clergymen sufficient in number and ability to provide for the service of our Churches in Sydney alone (leaving other places out of consideration) is most perplexing and alarming. My Archdeacon, upright and good intentioned old man, is failing fast: his curate, the son of Captain Kind, whom I tried to introduce to you last year, is unequal to heavy duty: so is his name-sake at St Andrew's. Allwood has been quite laid up, and is still so unable to read or preach that if Mr Abraham had not been here to take his duty at St James! I know not how it could have been provided for. Mr Grylls is gone home in a most feeble state; his curate has been already compelled to ask medical advice and has received a very discouraging opinion as to his competency for hard work. Now Walsh is going; and the curate left in charge (Alfred Stephen whom you know) will I am nearly certain break down under a burden quite disproportionate to his bodily strength, however good and willing may be his spirit. Thus the five Churches within the city are so insecurely provided for that they might on any Sunday in the year be all closed, owing to some sudden failure of the physical powers of the clergy attached to them. What can I do? My best resource will probably be to divide my strength, trusting in Providence for its continuance for yet a little while: and, by taking upon myself three Sermons every Sunday, enable the rest to husband their bodily powers until better times return.

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Walsh will tell you, unquestionably, a good deal about our difficulties: but there are some rising up which he will not be here to witness; and there is one (likely to be formidable) in which he has not taken part with me. That you may see how we stand I will enclose herewith two Letters which I wrote to him upon the question of admitting to the Holy Communion a person who had married his wife's sister. My persuasion is that I was right, of course, or I should not have persisted: but my wish is, if you please, that you should not mention the matter to him; because although he in this instance which I had taken, he has been so earnest and good in every case, that nothing would grieve me more than to let him think I was in this case dissatisfied.

The next question is that of "General Education" which I have to right almost single-handed against a Government disposed to lavish its treasure upon the Irish-system Schools, while they condemn ours to comparative starvation; and against a Council ready to concur in every proposal, to that end, which the Government may introduce.

The last matter is the Gorham case, to which you allude in terms which make me tremble for the future. Mr Abraham has shewn me by desire of Mr Gladstone a Letter written by the latter to the Bishop of New Zealand, and upon a consideration of its contents I have made bold to write on my own behalf to Mr G. in terms which, I trust, may be of service to some who may be perplexed by recent events, and by the shadows of those which are coming. As I have every reason to suppose you have full and unreserved communication with Mr G. upon matters of that kind, I will not repeat to you the contents of my Letter to him; not questioning that he may impart them to you. The only real danger to my apprehension consists in this: that persons more or less dissatisfied with the state of things within the English Church, should be influenced thereby to rush madly into the Church of Rome; seeking a remedy which will in the end be found worse than the disease. I quite enter into your feeling in saying that

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se → you have no sympathy with such persons, but much compassion for them: my only reservation upon the latter point being that with my compassion is mixed a large portion of dissatisfaction with their judgment, and (in some instances, not in all) with the psirit of self-will by which they are influenced. From the conversations I have held upon the subject with your friend Mr and Mrs Abraham I have been led to entertain a dread, lest the feeling here spoken of should have been extended not only more widely than our previous acquaintance with the state of things within our Church had prepared us to expect; but had also penetrated into quarters which we should have hoped and expected would have repelled a suggestion founded, as we think, upon such a very mistaken view; such very inconsequential reasoning. However I can (say) no more.

Poor Walsh has just been with me with a heavy heart. They sail in the morning: - jamdudum mulio virga Adnesit. Abraham's skipper makes a corresponding signal.

K² → They too are to embart from us at 9 A.M. tomorrow: and then we are left alone once more. I feel the departure of the latter very much; for I have no such associates here. We have had constant discussion upon every subject that can interest right thinking minds, and have learned much from them. We have been together long enough to make parting painful; and I shall remember them both with very sincere esteem. I am believe me, my dear Coleridge, Your faithful and affectionate friend, W.G. Sydney.

P.S. I forget whether in my previous Letter I thanked you for the £15 contained in yours. Pray allow me to do so now: and return my best thanks to the generous donor. As you do not state specifically how the money is to be appointed, I have placed it in our General Church Fund, which is well nigh at its last gasp.