

Broughton to Coleridge, 26/7/1836

My dear Sir: In testimony of my having neither undervalued nor forgotten the truly Christian interest which at the time of our separation you expressed in the welfare of our religious establishments in this country, I avail myself of the earliest opportunity to commence a correspondence with you upon the subject. You will, I am certain, readily understand that nothing could have prevailed on me to resume my station here but the conviction of there being a great duty imposed upon me to discharge, from which I could not shrink without proving myself treacherous and unworthy. It is even so, that I find all my anticipations of the extent of the dangers which I should have to encounter here more than realized; while I am at the same time confirmed in the soundness of the view which I took as to the duty of undertaking this office, by the unanimity of the reception which has attended me from all Protestants, and their general persuasion that a stranger to the Colony arriving in the same capacity with myself, must have been incapable of acting so early and so effectively as to meet the present emergency. I mean because a stranger could not have known the people; and the people could not at once have put confidence in a stranger. Here therefore I am; set in the front of the battle against the force of the Roman Catholics; and having, almost singly, to sustain against them the cause of the Church of England. The Protestantism of the place is deeply tinged with sectarianism or indifference; and by far too many of those professedly within our own pale are deplorably ignorant of the grounds upon which their Church is founded. I do therefore consider that in looking for support in this severe difficulty to my far distant brethren at home I am not asking for what is unreasonable in itself; or likely to prove, if granted, unserviceable to that cause which they must wish to see flourish all over the world: and I consider the anxiety which you expressed upon the subject, not only as a

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gratifying proof of your confidence in myself, but as affording even a providential opening for our obtaining much assistance which at this crisis would be all important. My anxious desire then, a desire which I assure you occupies my days and nights in thinking how it may best be accomplished, is to obtain assistance in prosecuting three specific purposes: I may say four, as that relating to Schools may be dividing into two. The first of these is the erection of two additional Churches in the town of Sydney, for the parishes of St Andrew and St Laurence; which though containing about 7000 Protestants have no place of worship whatever connected with our Church. We shall be able among ourselves to raise an important sum; but not sufficient to do all that is desirable; since these Churches ought to have some degree of architectural pretension as may make them capable in some sort of bearing a comparison with the Structure which the Roman Cqths are now completing. They ought also to be large for a better reason than this: in order that we may be able to offer the greater number of free sittings.

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Secondly I am desirous of obtaining from the Home Government, an order to secure me in possession of the King's School at Parramatta, was built under an order from Earl Ripon (then Visct Goderich) expressly as an adjunct of the Church of England; but which our present Governor is anxiously bent upon detaching, and handing over to I cannot tell whom. My wish therefore would be to have such an effort made on the part of any persons of influence who may wish us well, as may obtain the positive settlement of the land and buildings upon perpetual Trustees for the purposes of its original appropriation. The Government will give no further positive aid towards the establishment. Well: I say, be it so: but do not let them withdraw what they have given. Only let us be permitted henceforth to take upon ourselves the burden of maintaining or increasing it. The School now contains above 100 boys, of the best families in the country,

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and you will therefore at once perceive what a serious blow it must give to the principles of the Church of England that they should be withdrawn from her training. To afford them due accommodation the buildings require enlarging and improving, at an expense of from £800 to £1000; and in order to impress upon the entire establishment a religious character, and to attach it more closely to the Church, I should be very desirous, if I had the funds, of annexing to it a small Chapel which would cost some hundreds of pounds more.

In the third place, I am under the necessity of straining every nerve for the maintenance of our parochial Schools upon the English National System. They have existed under the superintendance of the clergy from the very foundation of the Colony; but more extensively since 1824; and under the pressure of every kind of difficulty in obtaining and keeping effective masters and mistresses have been the instrument of effecting very extensive good. As an example I will mention that from one master I have a list of the names of 120 of his scholars, who are now settled in respectable stations in life, and have most of them families growing up in habits of peity and good order: and so proportionably in many other instances. You may judge of what importance these things are in a country like this. Nevertheless our Governor, under sanction from home, is now preparing to subvert the whole in order to gratify the Roman Catholics; and to introduce what is called the Irish System. The principle of this system is universally and without exception, I may say, disliked among Protestants here; nor is there even the same pretence for introducing it as in Ireland where the proportion of Roman Catholics so far exceeds that of other communions. But here they amount not to more than 1/5 of the whole population; and if we count free persons only, probably not to more than 1/7 or 1/8. I see however that the measure is decided on; and therefore we are making what efforts we can to take our schools upon our own hands: and towards doing this also, any

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aid could be afforded would be most important.

My fourth and last object is to obtain the services of more clergymen. The urgency of this measure will appear to you when I state that in this town of Sydney with at least 14000 Protestants, I have but one clergyman on our own establishment, with the assistance, pro tempore, of one of the missionaries from New Zealand. Against such a pressure of duty, it is impossible for us, few and feeble as we are, to contend with effect, and our cause must accordingly decline if not perish unless we can be reinforced. Do you know, or can you find, any men of good education, good sense and orthodox sentiments with zeal of mind and strength of body, to go through a good deal of duty, who would come out to us? To two such who might be willing to devote themselves to the duties of this town I could engage I think to obtain from the Government and other sources here Stipends of £200 p.a. each; which so long as the Societies at home continue to place any funds at my disposal, I would increase to £250 p.a. and they would have a house free of all expense. This is the lowest estimate: and I am of opinion, but cannot say with certainty, that when our Churches are built, there might be means from the pew-rents or from offerings of the people to increase these incomes. Still you will perceive the quantum of maintenance proposed is painfully small; and therefore if any addition to it could be derived from collections made in England the donors might enjoy the satisfaction of thinking that they were doing God service. I will tell you the grounds upon which I think there rests some degree of duty upon our fellow countrymen to do this for us.

The great majority of those for whose eternal benefit we hope these clergymen are to be employed, consist of persons who are or have been in a state of bondage, or the descendants of such. Now I must ask, as a very serious

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question, whether the people of England can be justified before God for banishing these persons from their native country, where they might, if they would, have enjoyed the benefit of religious worship and instruction, and dooming them and their descendants for ever to a condition of hopeless unacquaintance with every thing which as immortal beings it most concerns them to know. For the security of life and property in England, we are in fact, by our system of transportation unaccompanied by any provision for religious establishments, we are I say actually founding empires of infidelity; nor can I forbear thinking as I have said over and over again, that every man in England whose safety is guarded by the transportation of so many offenders ought directly or indirectly to contribute, in proportion to the security afforded, or in proportion to the value of his property, towards making provision for their religious welfare in the land of their exile. Independently of this the Roman Catholics with the ready means always at their command, are making their advances slowly but surely where we are not on the alert; not through want of disposition God is our judge; but from sheer inability from want of suitable men for the employment, and means to support them. I am convinced that so far as you can have leisure to attend to such matters in the midst of your more immediate and urgent duties; you would apply all your energies to effect the removal or abatement of these very serious evils.

If you should be passing a short time in London would it be asking too much to request you to attempt to excite some sympathy for our situation among the many persons of influence whom you must have means of addressing. Among others who are I think ready to unite with you in making some such effort a little general, I may mention the Bishops of London & Winchester, Sir Robt Inglis, Hugh Rose & Lonsdale, Mr Hoare the Banker, who would recollect meeting me last year at Canterbury; also in the last named place Drs Spry & Russell and Molesworth; and

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THROUGH the Revd Sandys Lumsdaine of Hardres, near Canterbury, many persons of influence among what is termed the Evangelical party might be approached. My old friend Henry Blunt, late of Chelsea, but now, if alive, Rector of Streatham, would also I am sure exert his influence which is considerable. Mr Benson the Master of the Temple would also assist I think in raising some general feeling towards the cause.

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This is what we chiefly want: and though I have named the above as persons to whom I am known, and who would exert themselves probably on that account, yet I should rely most of all upon the more general acquaintance which you have among persons of influence and proper feelings and principles: combined with your ability to address them with effect and your sincere anxiety to promote the cause of religion and virtue. Perhaps with a view to the more effectual service of that cause you will allow me to put you in fuller possession of the present circumstances of the country by giving a Letter of Introduction to Mr James Macarthur who is now taking his departure for England. His name, in connection with this Colony may not be altogether unknown to you; he being the son of the great leader who by the introduction here of the improved breed of sheep, first developed the natural resources of this country. Mr Macarthur, the joint inheritor of his father's great landed property is going to England in charge of a Petition to the two Houses of Parliament, praying that due measures may be taken for our future good govt. As he is thus accredited by the greater portion of the wealth and respectability of the country, we attach some importance to his proceeding; & I am most anxious if possible that he should have while in England an opportunity of conversing with persons whose views are correct and likely to give a right turn to his. Among other objects he has in view, one is to endeavour to engage some of the industrious labouring people of England to emigrate to this country for the purpose of being

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established on his estate as farm servants or small tenants. I have therefore furnished him with a Letter to good Dr Keate; thinking it possible that some of my former honest neighbours in and around Hartley may think it worthwhile to try to improve their circs by following me to this distant shore. Another purpose which he contemplates is to engage the services of a clergyman for a Church and School which he and his family are about establishing on their estate; and in making his choice I have assured him of your assistance. The atmosphere of Eton, I fear, can never have given breath to a man of sufficiently humble views and expectations to be induced to bury himself in the obscurity of New South Wales; and therefore I do not mention the case with any view to obtaining such assistance. But possibly you may know or have means of knowing some good scholar from the provincial schools, who may be at the same time an able divine and a gentleman, to whom the proposal might be sufficiently attractive to induce him to come. 'I should be anxious if you could suggest any one to Mr M., that we may escape the risk of his bringing out a radical or liberal of the Arnold-Hampden(?) School; which, from some acquaintance which he has at ← (?) Cambridge, might otherwise not be impossible'.

This I believe includes all that I have to say upon the subject of public affairs; excepting that Mr Macarthur is brother to Major Macarthur, who holds the appointment of Secretary to Marquis Cholmondely as Lord High Chamberlain, and may always be heard of at the Office in the House of Lords if you should wish to find him. He also takes to England a List of the contributions we have raised in this Colony towards accomplishing the purposes referred to in the former part of this Letter. In case you should conceive it practicable to do any thing on our behalf perhaps it will be well for you to see that List; as it will prove to our brother churchmen that so far as their means extend the people of this country are disposed to do what they can on their own behalf. But they who have this disposition are really unable to do all that is required, and the

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great bulk of the people require to have the feelings of grace and godliness excited in them, by having the ordinances of religion in the first instance presented to them and pressed upon their acceptance.

Of ourselves I have not much to say except that we are all well; but very uncomfortable living at a miserable hotel from dire necessity; not being able any where or any how to meet with a house of any size or description. We had a very rapid and reasonably pleasant voyage. Some of our companions, not having the fear of the fate of the Auntient Mariner before their eyes did ← ANCIENT certainly not shoot the Albatross; but they caught him with a fish-hook and killed him with prussic acid; which I think was much more atrocious. But we escaped the penalty, and had no more than the usual proportion of storms & calms. I shall be very much delighted to hear of you, or from you; and a full account of all that concerns the interests or pursuits of yourself & family; for be assured there is nothing which concerns our so far distant friends which can ever prove uninteresting to any one of us. Having mentioned I believe in my letter to Dr Keate all his family excepting Mrs Coleridge, I will not desire through you our united best regards and kindest remembrances to her. If we are ever permitted to behold our dear native country again, there are few, very few, friends indeed to whom we shall have more satisfaction in finding ourselves united. But I dare not speak or even think of such things. I am not but beginning a labour which must increase in extent and difficulty every day: and having put my hand to the plough I cannot look back. May God have you and yours in his most gracious keeping. This is the heartfelt prayer of, my dear Sir,  
Your very faithful friend and servant. Will. G. Australia.