

MOORE COLLEGE: BROUGHTON LETTERS

Broughton to Coleridge, 20|9|1843 (On board the "Rajah" at Sea; off the Eastn entrance of Bass's Strait)

My dear Coleridge: Though more or less at sea during each of the last fifteen years I am still so bad a sailor as not to have much ability to write on board ship during the first month after embarkation: and having left Sydney only five days ago my present qualifications as a correspondent are likely to prove not very brilliant. Having however brought your Letters with me intending to write, and hoping to find more time for the purpose than falls generally to my lot on shore, I will not yield the point without an effort. Should I prove to be particularly dull, you must conclude not as the Spectator desired that I have a design in it, but that I am seasick and cannot help it. First however you ought to know why I am here and whither bound.

My destination is Port Phillip; and my engagement to visit that District: not the Churches, for alas! it contains but one and that unfinished: and no more than two clergymen. Having none disengaged who cld accompany me I go quite alone and unattended; but nevertheless hoping that my personal service may contribute to some good purposes; and serve to appease some disagreements; and to establish in attachment to the Church some who are now wavering; as was indeed to be expected where the Church finds herself placed in such a state of insufficiency and destitution. I am in a good quiet comfortable ship; waited upon by Arnold, the Bishop of New Zealand's quondam attendant, who has been staying at my house during the three months last past, waiting for some such opportunity of returning to Windsor: where if he arrive in safety you will have an opportunity of examining him and cross-examining him to your heart's content as to things places and persons in this quarter of the globe. Perhaps, as he is observant and intelligent, you may pick up more information, and obtain a better general idea of our condition than you might

MOORE COLLEGE: BROUGHTON LETTERS

Broughton to Coleridge, 20|9|1843(cont 2)

very readily derive from more formal communications. He does not appear to have liked New Zealand; so that you will receive what he says about it cum grano. My practise is to turn a deaf ear altogether to the theme.

We left Sydney Heads last Friday about 9 a.m. and have had our vicissitudes of wind and weather since: but upon the whole have not had reason to complain. At present it blows hardish from the West (right in our teeth to use the elegant nautical form of speech) and affords us little hope of passing Kent's Group and getting into the Strait. I have only one fellow-passenger: a poor young man who has been advised to take a voyage in search of health; but from his ghastly visage and other symptoms I cannot but fear that he has some malady which may fatally arrest his progress. Our Captain is a capital good Scotchman, and has his wife aboard: which affords at least one glimpse of refinement, and a sensation of relief, such as it is vain to expect where there are only great he creatures cooped up together. The only fault I have to find with the lady (who really is very conversible) is that she has turned Presbyterian out of compliment to her husband. She was of our Church: but, as you will suppose from her ready conversion, a good deal under the influence of sectarian prepossessions, and with a most intense dread of Pusevism.

← POSEYISM ??

Your Oxford friends may hear with surprise, perhaps amusement, that even at the antipodes, upon the bosom of the great Pacific, no less than amidst the forests of Australia, wherever I go navibus atque quadrigis, it is just the same. One is never exempt from the necessity of discussing the grounds of approval or disapproval to which they are entitled. I really cannot but see that in this universal application of all minds, with intense anxiety, to such a question there is something in progress which not only the individuals themselves never counted upon, but which surpasses the limits of merely natural consequence. There is so much good to be done, I find, by

Broughton to Coleridge, 20|9|1843(cont3)

calmly removing the groundless dread which has been taken up by persons who have the best intentions in the world, and where they are at all teachable in spirit there are such favorable opportunities afforded of impressing them with right views, that I cannot help regarding this now universal tendency to discuss such questions as one main resource which Providence affords is to strengthen the Church of England, and to prepare it more fully for the coming trial in which its services will be wanted and its resolution will be put to the proof.

During the course of my present expedition I hope to have an opportunity of forming a personal acquaintance with our newly arrived brother of Tasmania: and so to ripen into confidence that regard which by means of Letters we have already enjoyed mutual opportunities of expressing. Sir John and Lady Franklin have taken their passage to England by this Ship (the 'Rajah') and when they come across from Launceston to join her at Geelong in Port Phillip (where she is to take in her lading) the Bishop promises to accompany them. It is my most earnest desire that the times may be so accommodated as to admit of his arriving before I quit that place; or at any rate before I leave Melbourne which is my destination after completing what is wanting at Geelong. Such a meeting will prove a source of comfort and support to each of us: (at least if I may make my own feelings the test) and to render our satisfaction perfect, we shall need nothing but the presence of our truly dear but far distant brother G.A.N.Z. The bond of episcopal association, under such circumstances, as we are now placed, draws us, as you will readily comprehend, very closely together. In fact I do not believe there is any position in which men can be drawn towards each other by such high and constraining motives, or from which the very possibility of mutual jealousy or misunderstanding is so effectually shut out. To me it is I assure you, a source of satisfaction quite inexpressible to have attained associates not only in my labours, but



Broughton to Coleridge, 20|9|1843(cont4)

in my feelings: and still more in being so associated with two men the most worthy I believe that the Church cld furnish of that unreserved confidence with which I accustom myself to communicate with them on all things relating to our common charge.

In my latest, or one of my latest, Letters to you I omitted (to my own vexation on discovering it afterwards) to allude to your suggestion that you might be advantageously armed with a sort of joint diploma from the three antipodean bishops; regularly constituting you their Commissary (I suppose it may properly be called) for all affairs in England connected with the welfare of their several Dioceses. The omission with which I reproach myself, is that of not having even referred to the subject for the purpose of explaining why it was not in my power to go fully into it at that time. But I may now very naturally do so, because the real reasons was that I thought it wld be better to confer with the Bishop of Tasmania as to the most suitable mode of carrying the suggestion into effect, before I myself took any active part. Now hoping to see him I may also look forward to the probability of realizing your proposal more to your satisfaction, upon the principle that two heads are better than one. No possible objection suggests itself to me: and shld there be a concurrence on the part of F.R.T. I think we may be quite sure of N.Z. For myself, my dear Coleridge, I hope you are convinced that if I might in this or in any other way express even the feeblest sense of the obligation I am under to you for the many acts of substantial kindness which this Diocese has experienced through your exertions, it wld be one of the most gratifying acknowledgements which I have ever been called upon, or have ever had ability, to make.

23rd September: I purposed this day to have proceeded with writing: but since by a shift of wind we got into the Strait the day before yesterday we have had

MOORE COLLEGE: BROUGHTON LETTERS

Broughton to Coleridge, 20|9|1843(cont5)

a furious gale (equinoctial I suppose) which has discomposed my senses and put all my little ability to flight. We lay too (sic) for 24 hours and upwards: and if the gale had lasted double that length of time might have been in rather a poor plight, drifting about among rocks and islands, and with land on every side. But by God's mercy the wind has very much subsided: though the weather still looks wild and stormy; and to complete the misery I am very sick!!

24th September: We have been a little better off since yesterday: today I was enabled to preach twice. The wind is still strong, and not favourable. Yet we are making way, and see the coast to the N.W., so that if nothing adverse happens we may be in Port Phillip tomorrow.

25th September: We entered the Port this morning about half past seven and have the pilot on board. The wind still strong against us so that we must work up to our anchorage which is nearly 40 miles distant; and if we reach it today it will be as much as we can hope for. However we are in comparative quiet and security after so much tossing about: for which God's name be praised. Before closing my Letter let me apprise you, with many thanks for the same, of the arrival of the books advised in Darling's Letter to me. They shall be incorporated, or rather are already so, with our Theological Library. I cannot say how much vexed I am at the continued non-arrival, and it may now be said the final loss of the Catalogues: 80 in number; for it can scarcely be expected they will ever reach you. It is most unaccountable as they were regularly entered in the Manifests of two ships in succession, and I paid the freight both times. Our benefactors, I fear, will think us an ungrateful progeny: and this imputation, though unmerited in reality, is still sufficiently painful to us.

MOORE COLLEGE: BROUGHTON LETTERS

Broughton to Coleridge, 20|9|1843 (cont 6)

Among the books last sent I must particularize for thanks, the Sermons, Charges etc. which you forwarded from the several Anthors. As the gifts of men so esteemed these are particularly valuable: and there wld be little probability of my obtaining a sight of them in any other way. Among these was Dr Pusey's Letter to the Abp which I had seen before; but have brought down with me, and have read again on the voyage with great attention. It pains me to detect in it (at least such is my impression) a far less buoyant and satisfactory tone than prevailed in his prior Letter to the B. of Ox. What you state as to them (i.e. the principal Tractarians) retiring, seems to bespeak some such feeling: I mean of wearisome dissatisfaction and almost of resentment gaining the upper hand. But as to retiring, why are they to retire? If their views are just, it seems to me they shld only the more strongly assert them as they are more strenuously opposed. I must say there appears to me every reason in the world why they should review and sift their opinions, so as finally to abide by such only as are solid and safe. The station of many of their opponents suggests this. Their own reputation as truth-seeking men enjoins it. But as to retiring and leaving all that they have written to take its chance of sink or swim amidst the wide waters upon which they have cast it (this you will recollect is written in ship-board). I can say only that Peace will gain nothing and Truth will lose much by such a course. Pelides certainly did withdraw when he met with opposition: but this must not be our model. Athanasius did not retire. Cranmer did not retire: or if he did it was only for a time to the shame of himself and of the Church. If I have any foresight, this scheme will lead to evil. If you have any influence, and it be not yet too late, try to keep them in their proper places: and above all things keep them if possible from cherishing in solitude a feeling of personal mortification and of growing resentment



Broughton to Coleridge, 20|9|1843(cont 7)

against the Church itself for the injustice of some of its members. If they give way to this feeling, it will lead them, as surely as they exist, to that very conclusion towards which their most bitter adversaries have ever charged them with tending; or it may at least terminate in a schism more terrible to the Church by far than that of Wesley. Surely the time is not yet gone by for the two sides to say 'come now and let us reason together'. It is not too late I hope for wise and moderate men to soften down that highly excited spirit which threatens every instant to produce such consequences as wld be forever felt, but cld never be sufficiently deplored. How different might have been the state of things if a tone of kind and earnest expostulation had been from the outset adopted by the adversaries of the Tracts, instead of that indiscrimination fierceness in condemning, under which the censured parties, some of them, seem almost literally brokenhearted, and can only, as I should suppose, be more confirmed in their errors, if errors they be. As for myself I have never been, as you are well aware, anything but a wary and cautious follower of them; but really I hope never to forget, or to remember without gratitude, or to suppress a thankful acknowledgement of, the great benefit which my own perceptions of many important truths and my general habits of thinking have derived from familiarity with these writings. But really while my heart and my understanding have been saying 'It is good for us to be here' my impulse has been to cry out at the same moment 'there is a lion in the way'. The Letter to the Archbp appears to reveal what it is that creates the danger. Surely it is that most evident and strange propensity to use always such an extenuating and strange apologetical tone in speaking of the Church of Rome. In this very 'Letter' are many passages which made me feel now ashamed and now indignant. Dr P. speaks of the need of sympathy. But how can we sympathize with him in this? Not to speak offensively it is treating that Church something in the same way as Rousseau and those of his

Broughton to Coleridge, 20|9|1843(cont 8)

school have dealt with vice: drawing captivating pictures of it, and giving it all that mysterious kind of attractiveness which young and inexperienced minds find it so difficult to resist. It is of no use after this to say Vice is a horrid thing and you ought to be strictly virtuous: nor is it of much more avail to tell people that Rome is full of blemishes and defilements, and they ought to remain steadfast and satisfied in the Church of England. They have had their imaginations filled with a notion of some latent excellence in the Roman system as it is, which is wanting in ours as it is: and so our modern habit of being decided by what seems most immediately and practically good comes in support of a natural curiosity to find out what this supposed secret excellence can consist in: and being led to think that it exists nowhere but at Rome they go to Rome to find it. Upon my word, I do think that such statements do 'suggest temptations' though Dr P denies it: and such temptations that to young and susceptible minds they will never be counter-balanced by such motives as he adduces in page 12 for their continuance in the English Church. A similar complaint I cld not help making I recollect of his saying in his Letter to the B. or Ox. (when speaking of the real presence in the Sacrament) 'it is there independently of our faith'. It wld be injurious to say that this was meant to favour transubstantiation: and yet I must own it appears to me scarcely possible to support the correctness of the assertion without admitting it: and these things throw such difficulties in plain people's way that they are almost driven to Rome for a solution of them. So it comes to pass that they who will not go to Rome, rush back to Geneva: and we who will go to neither point are therefore left with a very ungratifying minority. We have great troubles and trials, you may believe me. I have had a difficulty, I will not say a dispute, with one of my own clergy about a stone altar, embellished with crosses, which he set up in his Church. Such doings seem to me not only contrary to the

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MOORE COLLEGE: BROUGHTON LETTERS

Broughton to Coleridge, 20/9/1843(cont 9)

Canon, but also most injurious in the train of thought which they lead to and encourage. And yet by declaring decidedly against them one is in danger of handing over the advantage to those of the contrary and scarcely less objectionably extreme. However I acted upon your maxim that a bishop should act decidedly in expressing his opinion and in enforcing compliance: **and** so I have insisted on the altar being taken away and it is taken away accordingly.

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Geelong. 29th September: We were unable to reach our destination on Monday night; but dropped anchor about sunset about five miles short of it. Tuesday morning early we came up to Point Henry where the Rajah is now lying. About 12 that day I came on shore: and had a rough difficult row of seven miles; the wind still blowing almost a gale and quite against us. I am now quietly settled on shore: and am much pleased with the place. It is a quiet green spot with a fine bay of the Sea on one side, and a river on the other. There has never been a clergyman here before: and yet they have a presbyterian minister, a wesleyan preacher, and a Romish priest: and yet more remarkable, the Church of England feeling still pervades the greater number, and the most intelligent: and already proofs have been afforded me of the genuine spirit of attachment to her ordinances which rules in the hearts of many, and how sincerely 'it pitieth them to see her in the dust'. What are we to do to supply such wants? Here have these poor people, for poor they really are, guided wholly by my advice at more than 800 miles distance and unknown to them by person until now, employed themselves in building an excellent schoolroom which will serve the purpose of a Church until that of which they are just going to lay the foundation, and have also erected a good parsonage house which wld be habitable within a fortnight. And yet I am compelled to say your good dispositions must be baffled: I have no clergyman to send to you.

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MOORE COLLEGE: BROUGHTON LETTERS

Broughton to Coleridge, 20|9|1843(cont 10)

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→ My intention is to remain here two Sundays: and I officiate twice every day: preaching only in the evening. During the day I am busily engaged in instructing those who will come next week to be confirmed: and in preparing all such as are willing, for the reception of the Holy Eucharist, which, it is unnecessary to say, has never been administered here according to our hallowed forms. I ought perhaps to put in a touch of shade by stating that I think may be discovered, that the parties who are urging the progress of the Church are some of them in some degree influenced by the consideration that they are owners of property may derive temporal benefit from the measure, as it may form an attraction to persons to settle here, and by creating a large town enhance the value of land. However, we should have had perhaps few Churches if it had been required that the motives of the founders shld be utterly free from imperfection.

There is no Vessel here immediately bound for London. My Letter therefore may be less early in reaching you. But I will forward it nevertheless as it may convey an impression of episcopal habits and employments somewhat different from that which you receive from the existing order of things before your eyes.

I left my wife and children in good health: but have been with them only a fortnight since the beginning of June. I have no further news from New Zealand but the disastrous blow struck there by the savages is a source of much discomfort to us all. I have begged the Bishop if any danger threaten, to send Mrs S and Willy over to us. God bless you and all connected with you  
→ my dear Col<sup>er</sup>idge. I am believe me your most faithful friend. W.G. Australia.