

MOORE COLLEGE: BROUGHTON PAPERS

Broughton to Coleridge, 25/1/1853 (Chester Street)

I have one peculiarity of disliking so much to write upon subjects concerning which I feel deeply, as really to shrink from it: and upon this ground only have I postponed a Letter to you since last Friday when the result of the election first became known to me. I called upon your brother in Park Crescent, hoping to have an opportunity of talking the matter over with him; but he unfortunately was not at home; indeed, I afterwards heard he was in Court, engaged on Newman's case. It is impossible to conceal that the decision of the Provost and Fellows has mortified and vexed me more than any occurrence for many years, or perhaps any in the whole course of my life. Not indeed that any mere loss of money would have had that effect upon me. I have no great concern about it for myself; and therefore judging you by the same rule my persuasion is that neither would you have felt much if that had been all. But I cannot endure that they should have shewn themselves insensible to your claim, and should have passed over one who had personally done so much to reflect honor upon Eton, and had so successfully trained many others who in the highest stations and most important offices, are giving proof every day of the great advantages they derived from your teaching. From what was stated in my hearing in the early part of last week in a place which I must not name, there seems no possibility of doubting that very high influence was opposed to your pretensions. If the election were determined, or was much influenced, by this it does no credit to the electors; whom I cannot acquit from blame unless they were bound by precedents of long standing to form such a determination as they did. Be that however as it may, I am deplorably vexed. Regret however is so far useless that it cannot alter the event. You, I hope and firmly believe, will have strength of mind and self-respect sufficient to enable you to pass with equanimity through what it must be allowed is a very trying crisis. The great consolation is that no occurrence of this kind can take you down from the eminence which you hold in the eyes of the world, and still less can it abate or shake the good

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opinion of your many friends, or the affection and esteem with which you are regarded by them. On the contrary I think it will but add force to their former feeling of esteem; and I trust they will not be backward in shewing by some public testimonial that their sentiments towards you are entirely unchanged. I have a letter from Anna Keate today, from the tone of which I infer that the feelings of Hartley are somewhat discomposed. It is impossible to wonder at it: but still I shall advise her that it is wiser and better not to let the world at large be aware of the existence of such feelings. It affords only an opportunity of triumph to the envious and malignant. Those whom I most feel for are your wife and daughter. But give my love to them and say I trust they will shew themselves equal to the trial: for such I am sure it must be to them.

Tomorrow I am to dine at Baron Alderson's and cannot help hoping that your brother may be one of the party; for I most sincerely wish to have a long talk with him. Many other matters I have to write to you about: but must take another opportunity of doing so: for indeed it is not in my power to tie down my thoughts at the present moment to more than this one subject. When you write I believe 79 Pall Mall will be the best direction. God bless you my dear Coleridge, and make all things work together to you for good. Such chastenings are indeed grievous to be borne, but may be medicinal in effect; and that this may be so to you is the prayer of your sincere and affectnts friend, W.G.S.