

MOORE COLLEGE: BROUGHTON PAPERS

Broughton to Coleridge, 22/11/1852 (Southampton)

Yours of 19/11 reached me same day on board the La Plata: and afforded me, I think I may truly say, as sweet consolation as I ever in my life experienced: and at a moment surely when I stood more in need of it than on almost any other occasion. The same evening I landed, after having gone out to sea again to inter the bodies of two poor fellows who died: one on Friday night; the other on Saturday morning. This terminated my duties; and I then proceeded to the Dolphin Hotel where I am comfortably lodged, and in good health (blessed be God) though still rather enfeebled. On 19th I wrote to you and that letter must have crossed yours on the road. Most deeply do I feel the force of the expressions you refer to in the 91st Psalm. But of all portions of that most sweet and animating Book, the 71st Psalm (on the 14th morning) is that which comes nearest and most forcibly home to me. It formed part of the service on the 14th February 1836 (the day of my consecration) and by a gratifying coincidence it was repeated on 14 August this year: the day on which I last communicated with my faithful clergy and people before my embarkation.

I am thankful you know Mrs Allan: and you may communicate to her from me how universally her husband was respected and esteemed; how faithfully he did his duty to the last, and that he died, I have reason to hope, in the belief and expectation of better things, not seen as yet. He was mentioned to me by my very old friend John Gregory, who went out by the vessel to his government at Bahama (sic) and fully justified all that was said of him. At St Thomas's he exposed himself a good deal during a most tremendous broiling day in making the final arrangements. As I sat in the Saloon I saw and heard him about the ship giving his orders calmly distinctly and mildly and himself seeing to their execution. The anchor began to feel the capstan. At last it gives (sic) way. The ship is at liberty; the mighty agent which is to impel her bursts forth with a roar that sounds truly awful, to fill the cavities of that

Broughton to Coleridge, 22/11/1852 (cont 2)

wonderful engine; and she is urged on her wintery way by the power of 1000 horses. At the same instant the band mingles with ruder sounds the notes of "Home sweet home". I can assure you I felt it as a moment of intenser emotion almost beyond the power of human feelings to endure. Solitary as I then was, I thought to myself where is that home of mine, from which death and absence have removed those who once rendered it so truly sweet? little imagining how few days were to pass before the fell destroyer was to invade the home of one who was then before my eyes the life and soul of the whole enterprise upon which we were entering. I wished to have seen him before his death; but he sent me word he was too weak. I wrote him a Letter, enclosing a copy of a prayer, which it gave me pleasure to hear he was gratified with and used. I hope they (sic) will be sent to his widow; that she may know he was forgotten <sup>^</sup> ← Not ?? or forsaken. The last duty I fulfilled was in the interment of the two poor fellows I have spoken of, at the close of which I took my leave of the survivors in a short Address, suggested by the late events: and was thankful to observe it was attended to with earnest attention by all, both officers and men; some of whom afterwards spoke to me in terms which evidently shewed that a right impression had been made upon their minds. God grant it may be a lasting one.

I almost forgot what I said in my former letter; but believe I stated my first occupation would be to pay my duty to my venerable mother and to seek her blessing. Whether to go by London, or through Reading to Birmingham I can hardly determine, but (I) think I shall take the former course by the train tomorrow. My stay in town will be so short that I cannot find a moment even to run down to see you, much as I long for it. But till this sacred claim, or as Pope pathetically expresses it "the tender office" has been fulfilled I feel hardly at liberty to think of any other.

Broughton to Coleridge, 22/11/1852 (cont 3)

The best address will be 79 Pall Mall: where on my return to London I should find all communications and Letters. I received yours announcing the death of my most valued and respected friend Dr Keate: and wrote to you in reply in terms which I hope expressed duly, as they did sincerely, the feelings which I myself and those connected with me have ever entertained towards one who independently of his distinguished acquirements, was a man of as much true probity as through life it has ever been my lot to be associated with. My dear wife loved him and Mrs Keate too from the first moment of seeing them. She has said to me a hundred times, "there is no affectation or insincerity in them. I know that they mean what they say." This was the congenial spirit of her own mind and I think they knew her value. I hope some day to go to Hartley: but at this moment I am not equal to undertaking it. Many thanks for the Guardian; which contains food for reflexion which even many years could hardly exhaust. It seems to me I have arrived at a moment when even my feeble interposition may not be without a beneficial effect: but I shall neither act nor speak without full consultation with those whose principles and experience qualify them to put me into the right way. With love to Mrs Coleridge and all at Hartley...

P.S. Mr and Mrs Walsh had arrived safely at Sydney before I came away. Allwood is to be in England within a few months.