

Broughton to Coleridge, 8/9/1837

My dear Sir: By the "City of Edinburgh" which arrived here on the 31st August I received the "Standard" Newspaper of 15th May, containing a statement of the noble subscription which had been commenced in England for the support of the Church of Australia. In the list of Subscribers I not only recognize your name accompanied by those of many dear and generous friends, but I cannot from certain appearances but attribute the rise of the proceeding to your active interference, and trace the whole up to your anxiety for the religious interests of this destitute community. Your own conscience and reflections I am sure will repay you for this exertion far beyond any recompense of mere thanks which it is in my power to offer; and I earnestly hope that you may at no distant period be still more amply remunerated by hearing of the permanent good affected among us by the produce of your good will for our cause. On behalf of my Diocese, I do very sincerely and with all my heart thank you; and trust that the blessing of God may accompany you and all who have united to make this provision for his house and service. Personally, and not excluding Mrs Broughton and my children, who are of sufficient age to enter into the same feelings, I can assure you we have experienced no satisfaction more profound in this place of exile than that of dwelling upon the manner of our friends in the list of contributors as so many proofs that we still continue in their remembrance and regard; and this I hope you will not omit to communicate to such among them as may be within reach of such a message.

My purpose however in writing now, next to making these acknowledgments, is to acquaint you with the views which, upon consideration of the state of the Church and its prospects, I have adopted as to the advantageous disposal of the funds which will be raised. The account which has reached me carries the amount subscribed to about £2500: and as I perceive that it has been raised within a

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comparatively limited circle, I trust I do not allow my sanguine hopes to outrun a cautious judgment by anticipating that the sum may finally not fall short of £3000. There can be no question that this sum, and even ten times as much, might be immediately laid out without fully effecting what is required to be done towards providing the means of religious worship throughout this extensive region. But considering how precarious as well as limited is the provision made for the permanent maintenance of a religious establishment, I am sensible that the wisest policy will be not to spend the principal; but to husband it as a permanent resource, and to serve as the foundation of a secure and independent provision for the clergy for ever. Limited as, upon such a plan, the returns must be during a number of years, I am of opinion that to charge any fund we can thus hope to create with the cost of building Churches, as well as of maintaining the clergy, would cripple both these purposes to such a degree as virtually to occasion the failure of both. The charge of providing their own Churches (that is the material fabrics) must be left to the inhabitants themselves, who will gradually become more and more equal to the undertaking; and will not I am persuaded be deficient in inclination, especially when encouraged by the residence among them of a sufficient number of well educated and zealous clergymen. Even should they be compelled for a season to discharge their duties in edifices somewhat deficient in accommodation and in dignity of appearance, still as the great point of making the people hear the preaching of the Gospel will be accomplished, all other defects may be submitted to with greater patience; and in process of time under the care of Providence may be removed. But to spend your money in building churches, and then to have no means left for maintaining the clergy who should officiate in them, will certainly be beginning at the wrong end; and will leave the people exposed to the danger of being led away by the Roman Catholics or schismatics, or of falling into a



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total forgetfulness and disregard of religion. For these reasons I trust the subscribers will be satisfied that no other appropriation of the funds can be so permanently serviceable as that of devoting them to the maintenance of the Bishop and clergy of the Colony.

To enforce this still further I will briefly state to you the circumstances in which they are respectively placed. The present Bishop has an income of £2000 p.a. but subject to many reductions below its nominal amount: e.g. he has no house allowed, but is compelled to rent at an expense of £300 p.a.; he is subject to a very burdensome charge for Life assurances, in consequence of the risks of sea voyages which he must undertake in discharge of his duties; and the entire expenses of travelling are borne by him. In consequence, the Bishop even with the observance of the strictest economy very unsuitable to his station, will not at the expiration of seven years have retrieved the expenses attendant on assuming the office. Sir Richard Bourke very unkindly, and under a total unacquaintance with these circumstances, has represented that the income is too large, and Lord Glenelg adopting this view engages that on any future appointment it shall be reduced. Such being the case I apprehend no further observation can be required to show that the next possessor of the See of Australia should participate in any profits which can be derived from the investment of the amount of Subscriptions.

The Clergy, according to a recent Act of Council, are provided by Government with Stipends of £200, £150 and £100 p.a. according to circumstances. These incomes however are altogether contingent on an annexed vote of the Legislative Council; and the clergy must be thereby placed in circumstances of insufficient maintenance, and reduced to a state of dependence. There is no source of

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certain income beyond the above except what may in some cases be derived from certain glebe lands which under the former system were annexed to the Churches; but which practice has now been discontinued. Excepting in populous places where they may be let on beneficial leases, the value of these lands is not worth considering; but in the town of Sydney, we hope ultimately to derive from them certain incomes of £100 or £150 to be held by the clergy in addition to the Government Stipend above mentioned. Including their fees, which in this town are not inconsiderable, the incomes of the clergy will vary from £140 to £150; exclusive of a house which will in all cases be provided. The expenses of living in this Colony being fairly calculated, it is clear that these incomes will not maintain the clergy in due respectability, enabling them also to provide for their families; besides which they are placed in a state of undue dependence upon government and upon the liberality which may or may not exist among their congregations. It is therefore most desirable to obtain some fixed income in which they may have jointly and severally a vested interest. Moreover the right of presentation to such advantage should be vested in the Bishop, who has now no exercise of patronage whatever, nor means of encouraging or rewarding the most laborious and useful services of the clergy. My proposal therefore is as follows:

1. That the assumed amount of the Subscriptions, £3000, shall be laid out in the purchase of landed property, and in stocking the same with Sheep and Cattle; from whose gradual increase means may be derived of augmenting the incomes of the clergy, and at the same time of reserving a growing surplus to be continually applied to the purchase of other estates to be similarly occupied.
2. That the fee simple of all such property be vested in the Bishop and his successors in their corporate capacity to be held in trust for the purposes intended; and that a scheme of management be drawn up and agreed upon for

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ensuring the greatest productiveness.

3. It is proposed that whenever the original income derived from the land so provided shall be doubled, one fourth of the whole be appropriated, in such proportions as the Bishop shall appoint, for the benefit of any such of the clergy as he may think reasonable. It is designed to create so many benefices; the income of which, instead of being derived from the tithe of a certain number of Acres, shall arise from a certain fixed share of the clear profits of a particular estate, to be annually paid, whether more or less in value, to the incumbents of those benefices; to which also it is proposed to present and induct them so as to afford as secure and independent possession and tenure as of a living in England.
4. The remaining three fourths of the revenues to be continually laid out in the purchase of land and stock, or of real property of some description; and whenever the income arising from any such purchase shall have doubled, then to begin distributing one fourth as before, and continually to apply the remaining parts according to the same rule.

These are the main principles of the system which I contemplate to introduce. There will no doubt be many attendant difficulties in practise (sic) especially at first; but from my acquaintance with the facility of managing property of the proposed description here, I am confident that if due care and exertion be employed, such difficulties may be overcome. The remainder of my observations shall be directed to show how the project may be expected to work, and what provisions require to be made to establish it upon a lasting basis. We will suppose that the clear profit arising from the outlay is in the first instance £20% which is a fair calculation. The income will be £600 p.a. Looking at the extreme rapidity with which flocks and herds are multiplied here, and the instances of a rapid accumulation of property from them which are every day



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witnessed, I presume that in five years that income would be doubled; and we should begin with making a permanent endowment of £300 p.a., on the second doubling and consequent distribution we should have £450 p.a. to appropriate in endowments and a large sum to expend in further purchases of property and so on. The apparent insignificance of the effect to be produced at the outset, and the length of time which it may be supposed must elapse before any such result could arise as beneficially to affect the general condition of the clergy, may dispose you to regard this as not a very hopeful project. But we must not despise small beginnings. This, I am persuaded, is the only opening we shall ever find for working out independence for the clergy: and it requires nothing more in addition to the sum of money originally invested except steady perseverance, prudent management, and secure possession. It is upon this latter point that I am anxious to bespeak your attention and to solicit your assistance in procuring for me a portion of that eminent legal advice which may be within your reach; but from which I am in my own person altogether cut ← My off. It is proposed, you will remember, that the fee simple of all the property should be vested in the Bishop and his Successors, who by their Letters Patent are appointed to be a perpetual corporation with power to hold lands to any extent. Of course this could not enable us (at least I presume no) to ← not ? hold any such lands except in conformity with the law of the land; and if the Statutes of Mort main are in force here they must cut us off from any such ← MORTMAIN (one word) ? power. My opinion upon such a subject is worth little or nothing, but I have taken pains to examine the matter as well as I could, and see reasons for thinking that the Statute of Charitable Uses does not prevail here; and that if others do prevail yet that the operation may be got over. At least I hope so.

The Ship by which this Letter is to be sent sails for England tomorrow; and I have therefore no opportunity of forwarding any further particulars at this

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time. But by the next opportunity I will furnish you with a summary of the circumstances; and it would greatly add to the kindness you have already shown if you could submit them to such legal consideration as might enable me with certainty and security to make the incorporation of the Bishop and his successors available to the purposes of the proposed trust. What I am anxious for, if practicable is to obtain a permanent capacity of holding, upon similar conditions and for very nearly the same purposes, with the Corporation of Queen Ann's Bounty. If that cannot be, then we shall be reduced to devise such securities as the law may allow for holding and transmitting the property; though every other mode must be less convenient and more expensive than that which I am anxious to have allowed. I should add to what has been said, that my wish and intention are, so far as the funds will permit, to make provision for the parochial schoolmasters also: and for the maintenance of the widows and orphans of the clergy. To accomplish so many objects out of such limited resources must necessarily require time. Still I am persuaded if not obstacle should interfere with the working of the plan, that by means of it we may accomplish much that we wish, before the profits of invested property shall be reduced so low as to make the design impracticable.

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I have now entered so fully into what occupies my thoughts that it is unnecessary to trouble you further at present. The remainder of the page I will occupy with desiring my very kind remembrance and regards to Mrs Coleridge and to all our other dear friends at Hartley; or, perhaps when this reaches you, at Windsor. In all that I say upon this subject you will consider me only as the representative of those who belong to me. We all think and speak of you very often; including Mr & Mrs Chapman, and our friends in Albemarle Street whose liberal donations also we are gratified to see swelling the List. I wrote

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to Dr Keate in March last; and shall hope to do so again during the present month. Farewell my dear Sir. May you continue long in health prosperity and usefulness and see your family growing up in the same path. We hear much of sickness prevailing in England; but hope you have escaped. We all enjoy uninterrupted health. I am believe me, Your faithful and obliged friend, W.G. Australia.