

41

Manurta

23rd Nov 1900

My dear Professor.

I have yours of 11th Sep & 21st October to reply to; when last mail left I was down the road over Elections as I surmised I would be. I spent the best part of two days at C.W. & had a good time, John & William Bailes were there bound for Adelaide and old Jilly was in from the Dove. The Bailes did very well out of this last contract & John has not altered much since you saw him; while at C.W. I posted you some seeds of everlasting & some of that other

Rush that I am anxious to get the name of a kind it would look well cultivated. Who are Knight Bros of Bendigo? They have been writing to the Mission for Palm seeds.

Old Sime came out of his shell over the funds for your expedition. I was very glad to hear but still I think the scientists who were so anxious for the work to be done, ought to have contributed some of the Cash. (I noted the objection that results would have had to go to them though) I suppose Jellen sent you a letter I saw, signed, "Cropless Farmer", which I expect riled him a bit, especially being called a "Postmaster of a small town at a big salary". whoever it was that penned this, must have some knowledge of the Pontiff for he appears certain that he won't be out of Pocket over it & I agree

With him in that respect, it is a pity you could not get old George Habbitt but old Chance is about as handy a man as you could have dropped across and a good cook. What's more, he will not worry you too much before sunrise which will suit F. J. G. I never knew whether you really objected to my earliness or not, for you always seemed to get up so readily & cheerfully. About spirits - you ought to have accepted the claret for your friends sake. There are plenty of that medicinal brandy instead of that limited supply, but keep it entirely under your own immediate control. (not meant for F.). I am speaking seriously now & travelling day after day, if hot or cold, one or two nips of good liquor has a wonderfully

beneficial & tonic effect. I know you consider the daylight "nip" most reprehensible but it is the one of the day to restore & enliven the nerves dulled with slumber & shall be a generous one. I can picture your saying "fancy Coule holding serenade on a subject like this but honestly, except when in Company or playing the fool, I hardly ever talk more than three waltzers in the day. No matter what Kitchener or anyone else says about men being better without it, there are times when it is invaluable as proved in Hospital & if you have not got it, God help you if you supply its place with what you will obtain in most places both in its stead. His man Bro. got Tempe Downs & Coulehard has the Country

he has sold the Mt Burrell place to old Hayes. Martin will probably go down soon & take a trip home, he says he will come back & try & get a little place lower down country. (am afraid he will fritter away his capital if he does though) I hoped Kidman might not close at the end of his option & that some Bloomfield & I might have got the place for in that case I could have still remained here but the Kidmans knew too well what a good thing it was.

Martin offered me Lempe, with all rations, plant & about 400 horses of one sort & another a few months back, for a little over £800. At this time though, I was thinking seriously of going down country & trying to settle & reward the misplaced affection of some damsel, so declined

Shares were at a good figure & the money would have been no trouble at all. Subsequent events (affections transferred elsewhere) robbed me of my only reason for desiring to leave Bush & then Cash was not so plentiful but still tried to get place but and found it under offer to Kidman. Have been kidding myself ever since. Suppose Kidman will remove stock now that there has been rain down at C.W. & should get over £1000 for the first 100 head. Tempe has been sacrificed through the regular arrival of budgets of English Magazines & papers & the policy of always "going to do" instead of "Doing".

Do you understand what I mean?

Had a most awful storm here on the 3rd, it only lasted about a quarter of an hour but unroofed the hut, ruined the garden, smashed

nearly all the big trees & left the place looking as if a bush fire had passed over it, killed 10 kids, skinned others & drowned or killed 20 chickens & 4 hens the hail was the biggest I have ever seen & bruised the bark of trees as if shot from a gun.

My companion is not coming back & has resigned, he got down below & tried all sorts of ways to get out of going back to the Bush & at last reckoned he could not live with me - (I would not have let him in any case) have not seen the correspondence but suppose I'll get it next mail. what annoys me though is that new people coming up this way, are not informed what sort of a place it is & come from Town believing Illamurta is a village. when they arrive

they want to leave at once & this last article, I think, used to do him out - most to get me to report him as that he might get near a Pub again. I would not do that for his father's sake but told him he could alter or cook for himself - this he had done chiefly by me & at my expense & did not cost H. M. G. one penny. I am entitled to the occupation of it.

Re poor old Todd, the loyalty you speak of amongst his officers is very pretty & touching but that is exactly the base of our Civil Service all over the Colonies. Retirement should be compulsory at a certain age if not earlier & no loophole whatever, such as 'Unless considered beneficial to State to be

9.

allowed to remain longer" this simply means if popular & influential in most cases & the States go on paying high salaries to useless figureheads who ought to have saved enough to have comfort to the end of their days, instead of this they are let hang on to their places as long as they can be wheeled to them & their compensation goes on mounting up & up while some poor subordinate is doing all the work at a pittance & the Public if they inquired would be told "Oh, the head of the Dept. is simply indispensable & we have no one we could promote to his position & so on.

Churina Am trying to get a 2nd box filled - have about 50 of one sort & another in addition to the list I sent you of the closed case

Expect camels about middle of the month but they are damned independent & won't trouble to take a case or two often, because they say one or two camels loaded delay them as much as if all were & there's something in it. Several of the Stone Churina I got last month are good & also big - "Uturringhita" grub - "Uncharlita" grub - "Possum" Euro & Kangaroo, very old in most cases but can't get much information except that they've all day sit down at such & such a place & by & by'ven go long a ground there. One wants to see a big Waterhole or cave or some other feature or to have, just at that moment, the nigger associated with that spot and ask how that tree or rock or so forth got there & then you would get the tradition - you know how

little the others know of the traditions of groups not intermixed with them or closely associated. Four old Pigo came from Owen Sp. with a dozen sticks last night (of course mail time & cost me four hours this morning for no result except one snag)

One Churina represents a boy, one of a lot of boys of the Alcheheringa line with no totem. Just a Boy aolende Remus would say. The other boys ramble round away to Glen but this one went into the grounds near Mt Giles - from where they started, his name was "Kooditcha" now re-incarnated as a bilbra, "Yabbay" her totem I think is Bari which the boys at this spot played with & threw at one another. Her mother conceived her at this place & the child was a female, what interests me is that the only Alcheheringa that went into the grounds here was a male

& I did not know the sex, could be transferred in this manner. I fancy the old people would have got out of the fix in some other way.

Let me know what you think of this & if you have come across similar cases. My best intermediary is away but there is no doubt about the jumping - when my boy returns from his spell I will try & get this old fellow, the Churina & him together & see if I can get anything more but the getting the 3 together will be difficult

Much stuck up - I hope to see you on the road somewhere & discuss matters

Please wish Mr Spencer & the little ones all good luck & their hearts desire & may they have a Royal time in the New Year in France & yourself the same amongst the poor Blacks

Yours sincerely

C.E.