

the old one. It will
 winter. Copies will
 be sent to
 you, Fison, and
 Howitt. Please
 give my kindest
 Remembrances to
 them and
 accept the
 same for
 yourself. My
 wife would
 join in them
 if she
 were
 beside
 me.

Yours very
 Sincerely
 G. Frazer

INCH-MARSH HOME
 CAMBRIDGE. PRAGER

32

4 June 1900

My dear Spencer, How am I to
 apologise to you for having left
 your letter so long unanswered?
 Forgive me if you can. I have no
 excuse to plead but more or less
 incessant work and an almost
 invincible repugnance to writing
 letters. However, believe me that I
 was very glad to get your letter
 expressing your approval of my
 statement of our joint theory of
 totemism (or rather of the
 totemism of the central Australian
 tribes) in the Fortnightly. Of course
 as we both, I believe, recognise,

edition of the
 G. B. Frazer,

the theory is merely an attempt to
formulate the conclusions to which
the
collected by you and Spilon, seems to
point. It may be confirmed or
upheld by labor investigations.

Some little time ago Fison sent
me a letter of yours in which you
expressed a wish that the Govern-
ment would order you to go &
work among the tribes who still
remain to be examined (whose
name, if not Legion, is something
like it, I fancy) and Fison
suggested that we at home should
get up a memorial praying the
Government to send you out
to do field work among the
niggers. The suggestion seemed to
me admirable, and I am
acting on it. I drafted memorials
(of which I enclose copies) to the

Governments of Victoria & South
Australia asking them to grant
you & Spilon leave of absence for
a year in order to investigate the
tribes of northern Australia. The
drafts were approved by Ridgeway
& and Jackson and we are
now having them signed by
people whose names are likely
to carry weight. At this stage
of the proceedings I am seized
by a ghastly fear: what if
you and Spilon don't want to
go after all? Perhaps it was
very rash and wrong of me to
rush into the matter without
consulting you both. If I have
done wrong, I can only ask
your forgiveness. But I hope
I have been right. Had I
written to you first, time
would have been lost, and when
your answers (if favourable) came

I might not have been able to move
in the matter, as we have let our
house and are going abroad for
the winter. So I trust all has
been for the best, but I would ask
you to relieve a certain anxiety
which I feel on this point as
soon as you conveniently can.
What will Mr. Spencer and Mrs
Spiller say to me? My rejoicing
is mixed with trembling when I
think of them. But it is a grand
piece of work we are asking you
and Spiller to do, probably the
finest piece of anthropological work
that could be done in the world
just now, and you and he are
the very men to do it. If I
should have been in any measure instru-
mental in getting it done by poking up
your governments in the matter, it
will be the best thing I ever did
in my life. As for Fison, I can
see him chortling in his joy. I do
hope it will come off.
I am hard at work at the new