

Woolwich
July 4th 1851

Dear Hutchinson,
Your letter found me here, having come up from Sheerness on my way with the 20th company of Sappers to Swan River, Western Australia. Matson offered the appointment to me and I took it forthwith, being too good an opening to refuse – so here we are, with Mr and Miss Drinkwater, who have come to the to see us off and furnish us with the needful supplies of tin etc – we saw your sister in law last week, and we thought her looking well. It was a painful meeting on both sides. She told us that you had been offered the company, which I have got, and that you expect to go on the Scott survey – I hope you may have the good fortune, and from what I have heard of your interest with Col. Hall, I should say you have a good chance, if the number of officers is increased.

The whole work at Sheerness consisted of repairs to barracks, and not a thing of any kind in the neighbourhood – the place at the end of a march and nobody being there but officials, so you may suppose I was glad to get out of it – I hope I have done with barrack duty, as this employment has put me in immediate communication with Lord Grey and Col. Jebb, and the nobs at Pall say it will lead to something else when I return (DV) [deo volente]

Stace [?] appeared amazingly happy, when I saw him. We went to the Crystal [Crystal Palace] as Miss Robe calls it together, and enjoyed it very much. He is a capital fellow certainly – Scott has got £700 a year with his wife She is in very bad health, being gouty and, I am afraid, scrofulous – don't think me cool [?], if I ask when you are going to join the ranks of the Casados – nothing like it, you may depend.

I think you mistake my letter, or that part of it touching religion – I don't disbelieve in Christ, for nobody with but a madman could do so, as the character of Christ could no more have been invented by the Jews, than we could imagine anything higher than his character at this time – I certainly should never in reading the Bible have arrived at the doctrine of

the Trinity in Unity had it not been put forth in the creed of the Church of England – the arguments being forward respecting the attributes of God, I have often heard and in former times made use of – but there are many counter arguments which are too long to state here and which I think have equal force. I must say that I don't think that Christianity is understood – we make it too much a matter of doctrine and not sufficiently practical – as to the simplicity of the doctrine of the church of England, so often boasted of, I contend that it is the most complicated of all doctrines – and that directly a man begins to think and find a reason for his belief, he is in a mirage of doubt and difficulty – with nothing to depend upon, but the assurance that he must deny his reason entirely and put faith (which he does not possess) in mysteries, which nothing but faith can make him believe – however I am perfectly open to conviction, and in the meantime I try to follow His Son, and have no doubt that if these things are intended to be believed, and if the conclusion arrived at by the Church of England is true, God will convince me in his own good time – at the same time, though no doubt a great discovery, I have no fear, that he would not pardon me, were I [to] die tomorrow –

We expect to sail in a month – I take 65 men 55 of whom are married and the remaining 30 follow in September with a subaltern who is to be junior to me – I am to retain the Company, Henderson having a general Superintendence – I shall have 500 convicts and 400 ticket of leave men, the latter to form a depot of labor for the colonists – Mrs Wray and the shavers are flourishing and in fact all the family - Carver is expected today from Gib. [Gibraltar] They all send kind regards to you – your sincere friend

Henry Wray

P.S. Roe is here, and Mrs Roe - the latter was not to blame, further than that she was obstinate in refusing to do as he wished – He looked very wretched at first, but is looking more in spirits - Whittingham is I am afraid a thorough blackguard. I saw Ducane [sic] in the Zoological Gardens a fortnight ago - He has got very bald, but as I see it is not much altered.