

Paratah

Oct 22. 1897

My Dear Mr. Clarke.

I am dropping you this hasty note, to say that I had a long chat with my friend Lewis & Hartnoll last night on the subject you and I discussed.

Hartnoll with his usual shrewdness suggests that it would not suit Geo Collins to take Ch Sec as the duties would interfere too much with his important business but, with Pease as Ch Sec, Collins might take a seat without parting.

It has occurred to me since as to whether you could not form an administration out of your own majority, independent of opposition.

with Fitz. You are the man who  
should lead, at this juncture, only  
the question is, could you with the  
opposition against you, and the  
strong body of malcontents, hope  
to secure a sufficient following  
what I should like to see is you  
Premier without portfolio and  
Lewis 'Attorney General,' I hope  
that cursed difference abt. St  
W's can be got over, and you  
and he join forces & secure a  
strong Gov. If you cannot do  
much the worse. I wish you  
to understand clearly that I  
am earnestly desirous of being  
left out of any possible Corn-  
-binthine, & trust that you can  
pick up a strong Gov. without me.  
as I am sure you can, if that  
St. W's trouble can be arranged  
Burke staunch as a rock. I will  
yours. Yrs faithfully John Murray