

Devonport N

Oct. 23. 1897

My Dear Mr. Clark.

Your 22^d has just reached me. I hasten to reply by return mail, as my answer does not require much Consideration.

You would see from my note, written back at Parattah, that I had Considered the possibility of your forming a ministry, and leading which you should do. My only fear was, that with the mal-Content & the opposition you would not be in a sufficiently strong position to secure the good Government and good legislation, that we ought to have.

I fear that our Conversation on Thursday night last, when I put Lewis' plan, & my own before you, at Lewis' suggestion, has left an impression on your mind that I personally desired a position in the new Combination, my letter from Parattah would correct that and shew you, that so far from desiring personally either now or at some future date to take

Bradder's place, I earnestly desire to avoid it, and it was only in outlining Lewis' plan that I named myself. our common object was to secure a good strong government and draw together all the best elements in the House & thus effectually checkmate the malcontents, mostly office seekers. My plan as you know was. You-
 - self as Premier, Lewis attorney General, Fyfe (at the meantime Treasurer. Hartnell Low and Piesse Ch. Secy. Hartnell afterwards suggesting Geo Collins as a Cabinet Minister without port-
 - folio. If Fyfe went England as Agent General, as he might say well do, then Bird to get the Treasury. I wish you to understand very clearly, that I cannot at this moment in-
 - -agine any circumstances, short of a great pressing necessity, that would induce me to take any part in a ministry.

as to giving you support if Bradder is out of the team, I can only say, that I must be loyal to my friend Lewis. You will know however, from my views on the present position of parties, in the House, and my feelings towards

You personally, that I would not condescend with
 the malcontents to turn you ^{out} and find myself
 amongst them, and supporting a ministry, that
 held its right to live on the favour of that
 Crowd. If you can induce Braddock to
 withdraw, you should have a chance of
 working on. I am going late to try and
 secure Murray's support to amendment

Time up. mail closing

Yrs faithfully

John Henry

no time to read what I have
 written