

George Hotel

St. Kilda  
22 Dec

1879

My dear Andrew,

I write you a few lines hoping they will reach you before Christmas & that I may not be too ~~late~~ in wishing you a merry Christmas to you & Mrs Clark & the Witta Jey & the other members of the happy circle from which I am exiled. You will ask why I have not written before but my answer is ~~a~~ convincing, - at least to me - I have been too ill -

Early in October last I contracted  
a cold but paid no attention  
to it & after about a fortnight  
it increased to a troublesome  
degree & then became seriously  
inconvenient & finally resulted  
in a sharp attack of influenza  
which laid me up for about  
a fortnight during the greater  
part of which I was away  
from the office - I recovered  
very, - fast, it has turned out  
not too, rapidly - My work  
had of course fallen into arrears  
& this added to the fact of  
some heavy extra business coming  
in to my staff of assistants

Fring reduced ~~had~~ caused me  
to double my labors, with  
the result which might have  
been Anticipated, - I have again  
fallen ill & am likely to be  
a long time in recovering - I seem  
to be suffering from a Complication  
of <sup>Complaints</sup> ~~Complaints~~, - my sight is ~~impaired~~  
impaired, & my sense of hearing has  
~~been~~ <sup>so</sup> entirely left me that a week  
ago I had to place myself  
under the care of Dr. Gray, an  
Eminent Auroist of this City -  
He states that the symptoms are  
not venereal & result from over  
exertion & previous want of care  
but that, in addition, the bronchial  
tubes of the throat are seriously

Affected & that I am also  
suffering from a bilious attack - Well,  
this was a pretty Bill of fare to  
present to "an affected one" at  
this festive season but his words  
were soon verified for I have been  
laid by the heels for 6 days & <sup>today</sup> made  
my first appearance down stairs  
& since visiting the medico, &  
a pretty sight I present, with  
yellow face, bloodshot eyes,  
a ragged beard & trembling limbs.  
The worst features are the infer-  
the deafness, & almost incessant vertigo.  
Today however I managed to get  
into the sunshine & supported by  
the arm of a kind friend, to  
take out. To night I feel well  
Enough to scrawl a few lines

George Hotel

A. Kilda

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with the intention that I  
have already mentioned.

I dare say you will gather  
from the foregoing what I  
have felt growing on me from  
the beginning of this year viz  
That the duties of the  
situation I hold are too  
arduous & are not worth the  
time I devote to them &  
to the consequent sacrifice  
of all my leisure time.

I have not either  
time or strength to put  
now up any plans but  
will revolve them during  
my Convalescence, which  
will unfortunately consume  
all my holidays & would have  
prevented my visiting Tasmania  
this year had not a long  
series of reverses & losses  
already - put that out of  
the question - (to Nettie & Joy.

I hope you will understand  
the unfortunate position in

Which I am pleased that  
it may work a partial  
excuse for my backslidings  
As a Correspondent, I had  
intended to have also written  
a long letter to you on various  
topics, & especially with regard  
to the draft Bill you sent  
me for which I take  
considerable interest, but I  
must hold this over for the  
present & throw myself, as  
I have often done before,  
upon your paternal forgiveness.

In Conclusion I repeat that  
my heart is full as I wish  
if my illness had given me  
leisure to reflect how widely  
different ~~are~~ my life might  
have been had I been wise in  
season - But this is not a  
time for regrets -

I wish you again & again  
all those happy compliments which  
it is now the custom to pay &  
trusting that your future may be  
bright, happy & prosperous,  
Believe me, Ever to be

Your affectionate friend  
A. J. Clark Esq. -

P.S. I write in great haste as my  
medico is waiting