

5 Camot Terrace, Grey St., E. Melbourne
16 January 1881

Dear Andrew,

You have now been absent from me for some 6 weeks & I have not yet heard of or from you. Whenever a long interval like this occurs I begin to experience a kind of indefinable feeling of uneasiness, a vague dread of losing my hold upon your regard & a fear that you are slipping away from "my beloved soul." Perhaps the thought of my own unworthiness makes me the more anxious, or a suspicion that your keen gaze has detected some flaw in my moral nature unknown to myself causes these ~~same~~ thoughts to arise, but, whatever the cause, I cannot soothe these apprehensions & seek at once either to know the worst or to be reassured. Of course, I know that your holiday, busy as it was, must have disarranged your affairs, caused a variety of business to accumulate, & necessitated many calls upon your time & leisure which calls are perhaps even now only partially satisfied. Perhaps I am jealous, or

be anxious, care worn or lonely; but do please
set my fears at rest & let me have a loving
letter.

I have much to say in this letter which will
I hope both interest & please you, so I must
economize time & space. In the first place, let me
hope that you are in the enjoyment of your wonted
health & spirits, & that you are returning to business
like one refreshed by slumber, only to meet with
that reward which your talents & courage deserve.
Please remember me affectionately to Mrs Clark who
is I trust in the enjoyment of perfect health
& happiness. I sincerely hope that your little ones are
well & that the new year opens brightly
for all of your family.

I have received a kind letter from Burn enclosing
me a volume of Keats which I have eagerly
re-perused. Tell him I thank him most heartily
& am only delaying to answer it because I wish
to send him (and you & Milton, of course) a copy of
my photograph, which I intend shortly to have
taken. Other reasons explaining my not having sooner
written to you & to him will appear from the
circumstances I am about to relate.

After your ~~own~~ departure nothing & up to
the end of the ~~year~~ old year nothing eventful
occurred. I speak persistently to work &
continued to live the life of peaceful industry
I have cultivated for the last 12 months.

Edwards, too, kept in the old groove. (I see but little of him now as he ~~was~~ is often absent on his short-hand pursuits). At the commencement of the new year McKenzie (who is much disappointed at not having seen you) sent for me & informed me he was about to be married to a lady of fortune & asked me to prepare his marriage settlement. (The bride brought him a fortune of some £5000 in hard cash) - I did so & attended the marriage, which was rather a grand affair. Miss Douglas, now Mrs Mac, is a big, plain, quiet girl, much resembling Mac in appearance & disposition - The match was entirely one of affection & I have every reason to suppose they will be very happy - Shortly after this I was seized with a violent attack of diarrhoea which confined me to the house for about a fortnight. I also suffered great pain from the hem. Thus, for the 2nd time, my Christmas holidays have been spent on a sick bed - However, thanks to the ministrations of your friend Street, I am returning to business tomorrow quite restored to health - I may have a few days leave, but practically my holidays are over. Fortune was very hard on me at this time & played me many shabby tricks. To add to my discomfort, the weather for the last 3 weeks has been intensely hot & I have suffered

great discomfort in ⁽⁴⁾ emergency. However the
fickle goddess has deigned to smile on me
once more & it is with reference thereto that
I wish your sympathy & advice.

You remember the Entanglements which have
for some time past ~~been~~ distracted my affections,
& which I, in a somewhat nonchalant way, disposed
of when you referred to the subject? Well, I
think they are cleared up & that Hope once
more smiles a me - To explain, - a few days after
you left, Miss Parson came up from Geelong & in
the course of an interview we had, informed me
she had finally determined to cross his connection with
me & was about to be engaged to some one else -
I, inwardly rejoicing, congratulated her & after some
"framing" the subject dropped - After her departure
from Melbourne, I called on my friends at
Albert Park, hoping to see Miss Burke there,
but, to my great disappointment, found she was
in the country. I was very much depressed for
some days, but by making diligent search &
after the exercise of much ingenuity & patience
discovered ^{the address of} a lady (a former landlady) who could
give me a clue to the true state of affairs -
After calling half a dozen times I, last Evening,
at length managed to see her. Almost the
first words she addressed to me were "Well,
you have heard about your friend Miss Burke,
"I suppose?" I was so much agitated that I did
not answer - "Oh this made a great match, &

"at least her people have for her." "For heaven's
"safe" said I, "don't say she is married."
"No, you foolish boy, she not married yet
"but I believe she is engaged, or about to be.
"Ah! what a prize you have missed. How
"could you be so indifferent?" & so on. By
the time the good lady had ratted on
until she had lost her breath, I recovered
myself & asked for an explanation. To put
the matter shortly, I may say that my passion,
which has never waned but has steadily grown
for 5 years, 5 long years, has been fully returned.
This of course was a great surprise for me, for
although I hoped that this was the case I
had nothing tangible to guide me in the opinion, -
in fact rather the opposite. All this time, by
a singular run of bad luck, I have only seen her
4 or 5 times. Whenever, at other times, she
has been in town I have been away in
Tasmania or elsewhere, or ~~she~~ ill, & although
I have haunted the house in which her parents
live I have never seen her, & even when I did see her
it has always been in the presence of strangers
& our interviews have always been short & formal.
I will not dwell upon the miserable hours
I have passed in all this weary time, but you
may judge of the true state of affairs when I say
that seldom has an hour passed when she has

not been in my ^{waking} sleeping ~~thought~~ thoughts. Despair has
 often seized me & at times I have even endeavored
 to banish from my memory - haunted mind the
 sound of her voice & the beauty of her face - I
 will not Chapoosidise farther but merely say
 that she is my ideal ^{of a} woman - my other soul -
 It seems that Miss Burke has to make long
 absences in the country attending to the household
 duties of her brother, a Church of England Clergyman,
 to whom she is much attached. A Mr. Lamont, a
 State School teacher at Dingleford, a man of 38 ^{of}
 years of age & (as I hear) very wealthy is paying
 her great attention & although once refused,
 gives her no peace. Her parents are determined
 that she shall marry him & have threatened all
 sorts of things if she does not. Miss Burke is
 timid, shy, retiring & conscientious & has promised
 to yield, but, as my friend tells me, she
 is in great distress over the matter as she cares
 nothing for her suitors & has, ever since our
 first meeting (April 1876) fixed her affections on me.
 You see its the old, old story: - the
 rich suitors & the irascible parents; the distressed
 daughters & the poor but ~~loved~~ favoured lover.
 My resolve was taken immediately. I
 informed Mrs. Pearl of my views & she agreed &
 has promised to help me. On Wednesday next
 (19th inst) I go, uninvited & unsuspected, to Mr.

U.S. There is a market for...
recovery - still has...
from all my...
Mrs Whiting has been dangerously ill but
she & my are much together & have told
me to "wade down in" & be "d. d. to Em."

Burke's house on a business pretext & there I
shall see Miss Bunte, who is now in town, & leave
leave the rest to chance. If I fail in securing
an interview I am to see her at Mrs Park's
& then the rest is easy, i.e. supposing she has
not already pledged her word to Lamont, in which
case I see great difficulty in the way. If she has
not done this, we can conclude a secret engagement
or, if necessary, I am prepared to marry her right off.
If the affair is discovered, there must be a great trial
in store for her, as her parents are determined on the
match & will leave no stone unturned to secure their ends.
If I am half afraid that Lamont had got some hold over
her father & has the latter partly in his power.

The points I want your frank candid advice upon
are these. (1) What opinion do you form of the match & my
intended course (2ndly) Whether you think I ought to
boldly marry the lady or conclude a secret engagement,
especially having regard to the fact that I am slightly
embarrassed (3) How would such an event operate
upon the practice of my profession elsewhere - or, rather,
whether I ought to go on as I am or take her
to Tasmania or some other colony? (4) How am I
to act on a proposal, - with which, ^{I made} out of pure despair
& which has been accepted - to my mother for a wholesale
emigration of all our family to Melbourne where I was
to support them, conjointly with my brother (This last
is the most knotty point, although my mother's letter only
came to hand yesterday). "And finally" to five me

The benefit of your opinion on any other thoughts points that may strike you in connection with the above. I should like you to take Wotton into consultation.

I do not, dear Andrea, apologise for the length of this letter or for the trouble I am giving you because I do not think you will let them influence you. I cannot now write on any other topics as I am much excited & absolutely deprived of apprehension, or elated with hopes. I may add that Mr. Burke is a small freeholder residing at Albert Park & although a very well informed & estimable person is intensely ambitious & a man of violent prejudices. (I would have, as I learn on good authority, no chance as an ever-awakened suitor). Mr. Burke is like his husband only "more so." The family consists of the Rev. R. G. Burke, two younger sons in Bank, a married daughter & 2 unmarried daughters. The family are all very handsome & the other Miss Burke is one of the most beautiful & fascinating girls in Melbourne; but she does not fascinate me as she, although only 19, is a pronounced coquette & a great sister favorite in society. My choice has fallen on the Elder daughter who is the antithesis of her sister & not so well, although she was considered so when I first met her. She is now 22. (I am 31). The family are strict Protestants & rather strict in their religious notions.

Please give my kindest regards to Wotton. I wrote to a married note to him a few days ago. Perhaps he will consider this letter as written to him & to you jointly. I shall be on thorns till I hear from you so write a few lines as soon as possible. Ever yours affectionately
P.S. Kind regards to Geo Edwards. W. Mill