

Dear George

Thene Terrace Aberdeen
{ 24th January 1832 -

I wrote you from Moscow on the 22^d July 1828 & directed the letter agreeably to your desire to the care of Mr Cotton in London - Since that time I have never received a scrape of a pen from you, but hear that you are doing well in Hobart Town & exporting a great deal of mimosa bark or some such indigenous production of Van Diemen's Land.

As for myself, I was obliged to return home to Scotland in the autumn of 1829 in consequence of the precarious state of my father's health; I remained almost idle these two years; my father died in March last year of a bowel complaint under which he had suffered since the autumn of 1827; the arrangement of his affairs has detained me at home till the present moment; but as soon as the shipping season for Russia commences, I intend to return thither & resume my old plans.

Whether they may eventually succeed or not, I cannot foresee, but I am not nearly so sanguine regarding them as I was when we met last in London; & indeed if it were not on account of my grandfather ^{on} ~~not~~ whose death my presence will be required at home, I would be more than half inclined to seek my fortune or my livelihood in your quarter of the globe. You would probably hear that your old class fellow Ferris went to Swan River with a young lady whom he had married, but

died of a fever or galloping consumption in consequence of
having caught cold, a few months after his arrival.

I understand you correspond with Mason - I have not
seen ^{him} for this year or upwards, but suppose he sticks
close to his kirk. What a lucky fellow he was in
stepping into such a snug living, with nothing to care
for on this side the grave, while fellows like you &
me must wander God knows whither in quest of a
livelihood! William Leith also has been very lucky.
Old Bryce died two or three months since, so that William
will have the entire charge & stipend of the South Church,
& very elegant gothic structure which has started up
since you left this country. Johnny Law is at Edinburgh
studying medicine under a Dr Law there. You would
hear of your aunt Mrs Stewart's death, also of the
death of Anne Gray's husband Mr Gordon.

Edinburgh 1st May 1832

Dear George I had written thus far in the month of January.
I resume my pen now on my way to Russia, & beg you will
write me something about the country in which you are settled, as I
am under considerable misgivings concerning my eventual success in Russia.
What sort of a soil? What sort of a climate? What chance
has a person with a very small capital, of gaining a comfortable
livelihood in Van Diemen's Land? I suppose there is no
direct trade between the Baltic & your part of the world.
With what places is the trade of your place principally carried
on? and what are the chief articles of import & export?
Are there openings at present in any particular branch of
trade & manufacture? Is there a plentiful & cheap supply
of fuel? How have the coal ^{& iron} mines, said to exist there
turned out? Is there a great deficiency of labourers & mechanics?
Are the convicts employed as servants a great nuisance?
What are the principal inconveniences under which you suffer?
What sort of weather prevails?

What returns (how many fold) do the principal sorts of grain
yield with you? But I am annoying you with the number
of my questions. In fine is it a comfortable & agreeable & healthy
country to live in, & is a subsistence easily procured by a person
with but little capital who is unacquainted with any learned
or mechanical profession?

Since I began this letter, ^{William Leith of a consumption} poor ^{deed} just the day before
I left Aberdeen. [This is written in a very indistinct & confused
manner; but considering the noise & disturbance which takes
place in the cabin of a Baltic schooner in which I am now
sitting, it is not so much to be wondered.]

The cholera you would hear has been making sad ravages
in the north of England & south of Scotland, & latterly in
London & Paris. Luckily Aberdeen had escaped at the time
when I left it, though it had made its appearance at
Perth (only 80 ^{off} ~~off~~) → The Reform Bill is another
subject which ~~has~~ created a great stir throughout
the country. Sandy Bannerman is likely to be elected
for Aberdeen once it is passed. By the bye there is
a lad now settled at Sidney I think who was in the same
class or next class to you at the Grammar School.

Shene Craig is his name: But I believe little intercourse
subsists between the two settlements & the voyage is long.
I should like much to have a cruise among the various
islands of the South seas & visit Otaheite, New Zealand
the Sandwich Islands &c. There is no good to be done
at home that is certain. Every year some of the people
who used to be thought among the richest among us is
becoming bankrupt & some of them in not a very reputable
way - witness Morrison of Auchintoul, Maberly, Baillie Duthie,
Sheriff Downie &c. &c. all within the last six months.

Now, do for goodness' sake write me soon with a great deal of
information to the care of my mother in Shene Terrace, Aberdeen.
For my part I shall always be glad to do you any service in my
power. I am Dear George &c. &c. &c. George Hop

George
Robert Spurr
Van Dieman's Land
via London

PROCESSED
1832

RECEIVED
1832

FRIDAY
8 MAY
1832

on
has