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Government House, Capetown, 15 June 1861

My dear Miss Lloyd,

The arrival of the English Mail a few days ago has brought me good news from home, but only by the next mail I can expect to hear from you, if you have not forgotten to write to me. You will be interested to hear that your friend Kennedy's intended arrived by the last Mail. They were to be married yesterday morning and Capt. Lowther drove out to figure as bestman. But in the meantime Miss Greenham had altered her mind, and would not be married. In vain were the persuasions of the would-be Adonis; in vain waited the Dean in the Church. She declared that her affections were differently engaged. As I hear on board ship she has fallen in love with the second officer. However, although she declared that she could not give him her heart, Kennedy has not yet given her up, and hopes still to persuade her to relent. I hear, there is not the least chance of the second officer marrying her; but she has been heard on board ship to say that she could not respect her future husband, and it seemed evident that if she had the least chance, she would rather take any bridegroom in preference to this, although I cannot do it a great blow to Kennedy I cannot at all say that I pity him in the least. He has all the time that he was here been carrying a most reckless life, and deserves fully to be jilted. She is on the contrary, described as a high-spirited, very amiable, lively and well behaved lady, whose only fault was that she fell in love with this officer, who is said to be a very gentlemanly person. Why she came out, is not very clear, except that she had engaged herself, and that she wanted to fulfil her engagement. She has until now been staying at Lady Hodges, but is going to live at Mrs. de Villiers till the Norman sails (21st inst.), in which she is to return (except Kennedy can prevail upon her to change her mind). Excuse me writing you all this scandal; but I thought you would enjoy a little the fun of seeing this Irishman's arrogance and impudence so very properly punished. — In the Norman also Capt. and Mrs. Hillcoat take at last their departure. I am afraid it is almost too late for poor Mrs. H. — With the exception of Capt. Lowther (who is said to have been refused by Miss Taylor and is now paying his addresses to the Missen Painters, an Eastern Province M.P.'s daughters, with whose family he is now staying at Mr. Brown's), we have now still the same persons, whom I mentioned in my

4 There is e.g. no reason, why in the meetings of a religious union, there should not be a sermon to direct people's mind, and awaken them to higher thoughts of life; though of course such a sermon need not necessarily be based on a passage from some canonized book. Singing and music is also not to be despised in its influence upon the human mind. But the songs ought to be carefully selected, so as to contain elevating and comforting ideas, and as to be free from idolatry. Further prayer, in the form of an address to a certain fancied idea of the deity leads too easily to idolatrous worship to be practicable in public, but what there is truly strengthening and comforting in prayer, the concentration of the mind upon one point, and the throwing off from oneself of all minor objects in the devotion to one noble purpose, — this can as well be given by a general contemplation, in which particular circumstances as at the moment existing, are referred to higher ideas and aims. This can, (in public meetings) either be connected with the sermon or form a separate part, but it ought never to take a very prominent part in a public meeting as it is else too easily liable to perversion from its purpose. It will, however, be long before the old forms of prayers loose their magic power as spells over the mind of most individuals, though these may have learnt to regard them as mere idolatrous formulas, and in private devotion, not much harm can result therefrom, if otherwise the mind has emancipated itself from idolatrous notions, and old remembrances keep it wedded to the usages of its childhood. A thoroughly harmonious mind will however get even over such old attachments. — A Union based on humanistic principles cannot be satisfied with religious meetings as substitutes for the Christian religious services, but also in conformance with the religious teaching, it will be desirable to have lectures delivered for the instruction of the people and for their intellectual elevation, which is also an aid the cultivation of their minds. Besides these the Union has to keep in view as one of their main objects the erection and maintenance of good schools, elementary and others, in which at once the young are trained in humanistic ideas, in the true spirit of tolerance, and are shown the idolatrous nature of the so-called assertions of the so-called positive religions. With this has been achieved, it is impossible for the Union to gain any considerable strength and influence. — As I said before, the organisation of such a Union will anywhere be a matter of great difficulty, though it is merely necessary that some one should come boldly forward, and begin the work. He is sure to find soon plenty of sympathizers. — Besides, the

my last letter. Since the English steamer came in, there is in the house
a Mr. & Mrs. Shepperson with two children, a former M.P. from
Grahamstown son-in-law of Godlonton. On the 12th there has
been a grand ball for H.M. birthday, put off on account of the
mourning for the Duchess of Kent. I was not there. — On the 13th
departed Col. & Mrs. Grey for Simonsbay, to embark there on board
H.M. St. Gorgon for Natal. Mrs. Grey is much better, but still quite
out of her mind. Poor woman! She looked bodily much stronger
than two years ago. The following day Sir Baldwin & Lady Walker
and daughters left Government House, where they had been staying
since the 10th. — Now ~~only~~ Sir Walter & Lady Currie are the only
guests; except Mr & Mrs Layard, the present Private Secretary.
The great stir of the moment is the Separation question,
which came on in the House of Assembly last week, and
in which the Separationists were defeated. In the Legislative
Council they have, however, this week carried a motion
for a Committee to consider the matter. In our house, Darnell
and Shepperson are furious Separationists. — Sunday 16th
June, A very dreary, stormy, rainy day. I was packing. — I hear
that Miss Greenham continues indecided assurances that she
cannot marry Kennedy. It is supposed that she has heard
something of the way in which he has been going on during
his stay at Capetown. What I cannot however understand is
that one sees her still continually together with Kennedy,
who himself seems wonderfully tenacious in his suit. I met
her yesterday with him. She is small of figure, with long
ringlets and piercing eyes. She was the pet of the regiment,
always living with officers' ladies. — I have had some curious
conversations with my chief. He is in some regards a most extra-
ordinary person. I never saw any one who, if ever anything is to be done,
tries to do it in the least straight and most indirect manner. You remem-
ber, when I applied for my leave of absence, that I told you, I would not get it;
and I have not got it. Happily my health has been as yet able to
stand the Cape winter. I know he has certain intentions regarding me,
or rather, regarding what I shall do for him. Now he has given me as much
as to understand (~~that~~ that he has told me directly, but made me
guess) that in a few days a man of war steamer is expected to
carry him and me to Sydney as he says, from whence he intends to
cruise in a yacht of his own through the Pacific and South America.
Now notwithstanding this his intimation and notwithstanding
that I think it very possible that the English Government
may have commissioned him to New Zealand, to pacify again that
Island — it is just as possible that this intimation contains merely
a hint that he intends to be off to England by the Mail Steamer and
wishes me to be ready to accompany him and to do certain things for him
in England. In a few days I must of course know this. You will ask, why I give
me whether
in to such summary treatment. Well, I say, in case he wishes me to go

to N.Z. and agrees to certain conditions, I shall do so. — Otherwise, if it is
for England, these conditions must include a provision whereto spend the
winter as it cannot be thought off that I can stay it over in a northern
country. — Nobody has an idea that anything of the kind will happen,
as Sir W. is fond of appearing and disappearing like a deus ex machi-
na. Pray do not say anything about this, at least not before it is general
ly known what has happened. I dare not now write to my family
anything of it; and after all I feel not quite sure that he is not
humbugging me. — I have read two or three of the "Essays and Reviews"
The second (Rowl. Williams) and that on Mosaic Cosmogony. — Although
they are still too Christian for me, I must acknowledge a very great
progress of English theology in them, and am very glad of the
great emotion which the book has produced in England. —
I have made Mrs. Jamison read some portion of the book and she
has ordered a copy of it; but Mrs. Hill is afraid of it, because it
has been condemned by so many reverend people. I have even
told my chief that I was glad to see the book published, and he
threatened to send the Bishop to ~~back~~ to me. I am afraid the poor
man would sooner loose his temper than — Well! perhaps in a
dialectical fight I might succumb to the Dean's sophisms as I might
not have sufficient ready wit, or command of the language, to
combat with this Arch-Jesuit. But if he put this ~~down~~ down
in writing and let me consider them, I am conscious that I could
well answer all of them, and should not think to have done much.
In my last letter I have tried to explain the reasons, why true religion
cannot be based upon a certain idea of God. It is indeed not less
idolatry to worship an idea constructed by human thought than
an idol wrought of stone or wood. The former is merely a less coarse
form of idolatry than the latter; but essentially they are the same.
With the human like God falls at once the idea of religious worship
(for God is object); and our religious activity has, therefore, to
limit itself to its true sphere, i.e. to pervade as much as
possible our whole life and doing, to inspire us with generous
thoughts, to rouse us to noble actions, to comfort and elevate
in adversity, and solely to direct the instincts and energies
of our nature. — It is indeed true that, even in its alloyed
form, religion has been able partly to forward these its
main objects, but it is evident that it is not on account
but in spite of its illusory elements that almost every
form of religion fulfils to some extent the great aim
to which it aspires. It can scarcely fail that the
earnest endeavour of a mind religiously inbred should
not accomplish some of the main functions of true religion,
though the clearness of the religious perception may
be darkened by superstitious views, and though idolatrous
notions and practices may pervert partly its usefulness.
In discarding, however, the idea of religious worship, we must
take care not to throw over board, what are, in the present form
of religious worship, the truly salutary and humanizing elements.
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the tendency of such a Union cannot at all be exclusive; for, the members' persuasions are not measured by a certain ~~religious~~ standard Creed; but the very purpose of the Union admits to membership every one whatever his own fanciful ideas regarding things which are above our horizon, may be, provided he does not intrude them upon others, and does not think himself excluded by the evident objects of the Union. With respect to religious guides, scientific and literary lecturers, and teachers, paid or patronized by the Union greater care must be taken not to allow them to instill their individual fancies into the minds of those whom they are intended to guide. However, too anxious a supervision on this side will easily lead to narrowminded exclusiveness, and as leading to persecution, may become very obnoxious. After all, a few crochetty ideas can not do much harm, if the whole training is well adapted to invigorate the mind and strengthen the intellect and bring in full display all the noble qualities of man. — Wednesd. 17. June. News from Robben Island that there on the 16th inst (Sunday) a vessel was wrecked with loss of several lifes; among them two children of Mr. Pritchard, Secretary to the Admiralt. During the latter's stay at Capetown, Mr. Pritchard was one night Capt. Jamison's guest at dinner. Then he was very nervous about the vessel which had on board his wife and three children, being so long from England under way. — That night the Albatross came in, with the Mail from Natal. No letters for me. — Thursday morn —

morning (20th June) at last Mr. Kennedy was married to the refractory young lady, who to the last moment seemed not to know her own mind. She is said, only a few day before, to have allowed Mr. Richards, the second officer, with whom she was in love, to pay her passage back to England by the Norman. I have given to Mrs. Hill the address of Mrs. Fisher. If you should like to communicate with her, you will do best to send letters to the care of Messrs. Thomson & Co, St. Peter's Chambers, Cornhill, London. E.C. She does, however, not know that I am writing to you. — I am afraid you will not be able to read much of this scrawl. — I send you hereby also a copy of the "Argus", in which you will find a full account of the wreck. — I hear that the Himalaya is expected here, and I fancy that she is to take us either to New Zealand or to England. But that is mere supposition. As she was only to sail about the middle of this month, she cannot very soon be expected. — So I think there is quite as much chance of my remaining at the Cape after all as of the contrary. At all events, letters will always reach me by my old address. I am looking anxiously forward to the next mail, to hear, as I hope, of your safe arrival. — From St. Helena, no vessel has as yet arrived here, so that it is not probably that what letters you may have sent thence will reach Natal earlier than those announcing your arrival in England. They say "No man's land" is to be annexed to Natal. On account of repairs being necessary for the Waldensian, 28 passengers who are anxious to go to Natal, will proceed in a few days by a small coasting vessel. Take good care of yourself, and do not quite forget

yours sincerely attached friend
W. H. I. Bleek