

community. Clearly Collinson was sceptical. By his own account, it was he who took Governor Grey out to visit the hermit of Tawa Flat: in elderly reminiscence, he makes the most of the occasion:

The visit of the Governor was like that of the Roman Senate to Cincinnatus, to ask him to give up his agricultural efforts, and come and help to save the state, by accepting the office of Private Secretary to himself. This was an offer that any young man might have been proud of, and which anyone in the Colony would have jumped at. But Arnold had been trained in a higher school; he did not like colonial politics, and he did not much admire what he had heard of Sir G. Grey's policy [:] he declined it, to Sir George's surprise, and to mine also: though Domett said indignantly, 'of course he did'.

The last full year both Arnold and Collinson spent in New Zealand was 1849: Tom Arnold was by then teaching in his little school at Nelson, but there were further contacts both in Wellington and at the Wairau. At the end of the year Arnold left for Van Diemen's Land to take up a position as Inspector of Schools; within three months Collinson also was in Tasmania, where he spent a month on the first stage of his return journey to England, and became acquainted with the Sorell sisters (Tom Arnold was by this time engaged to Julia Sorell, whom he married in June 1850). The letter which follows is Arnold's first direct communication with his friend since their parting in Hobart in April 1850.

THOMAS ARNOLD TO CAPTAIN COLLINSON

Hobart Town Sept. 5th 1851

'Tena-koe, Karehana'

My dear Collinson

At a party at Mrs Postmaster Smith's the day before yesterday, Clarke told me that Sir William had heard from you and that in the letter you 'blew up' him and me for not having written. I confess my transgressions in this respect, and throw myself on your favourable consideration. But really I expected to have heard from you on your way home; instead of which you wrote to no one but Clarke. However I suppose you thought you would wait to hear how things fared with me. They fare, my dear friend, as well as a man's heart could wish or expect here below. I have not come to a compromise with my creditors, and am not likely to do so; although certainly, from having furnished a house on credit, I have a good many debts; but they are diminishing, not increasing; and that is the main point. Perhaps I should have done well to have taken your advice and waited a month or two so as to have saved up a little money to start upon; and yet – much might be said on the other side. But the sum of all is that I am very happy, and that Julia and I understand each other perfectly, and that we have a