

1540/7/23

23, RYDER STREET,
ST. JAMES'S STREET,
LONDON, S.W.

NATIONAL REVIEW.

~~57, BEDFORD STREET,~~
~~W.C.~~

September 29th, 1904.

Dear Mr. Deakin,

I cannot say how grateful I am to you for your offer to remove from the "National Review" the just reproach of ignorance as regards Australian affairs by becoming its Australian correspondent. I consider it a very great compliment and distinction that you should have made this offer to me, and I cabled on getting your letter suggesting that the contributions should be Quarterly, and proposing an honorarium of £20 for each. My idea, as at present advised, though subject to future modification, would be that each of your articles, while keeping the reader posted in the current events, should in the first place deal with some special topic, and should perhaps take their title from that topic, as for instance one quarter "Australia and Imperial Preference", giving a review of the position of the Preferential Question in the Commonwealth, and the attitude of the different States and Statesmen towards it. Then

another discussing "The Population question in Australia", or ~~upon~~ "Borrowing", or "Australia and the Far East", or "Australia and Defence", which latter questions are, I venture to say, infinitely more important to ^{Australian} ~~them~~ than they seem to realise, and are closely connected with one another. The question of Defence is even more cavalierly treated by many of our Colonial politicians than it is by our home politicians, which is to say a great deal. The keen ones among us are engaged in perpetual warfare with our Parliamentary statesmen owing to the impossibility of getting them to realise the gravity of such problems. They do not affect Divisions and they do not affect By-Elections, and therefore they are deemed unworthy of attention, and yet those who will stop to think must come to the conclusion that the whole future of this Empire will become imperilled unless we can get our leading men everywhere to change their somewhat frivolous attitude upon these questions, as also upon ^{all} matters of external policy. However, I know you feel as I do about these questions, and it would not be my place to preach a sermon on the subject, but I do think it would be

exceedingly interesting if on each occasion that you write you would deal at large with one or other of the greater problems that interest or ought to interest Australians.

Please forgive typewriting, which is due to my having Writer's Cramp, which prevents my using a pen.

I have received your cable containing the words "Letter posted", which I hope means that you have despatched your first article.

With very many thanks,

I am,

Yours sincerely,

I. J. Maxie

P.S. I fear that the dreadful blunder as regards your original letter was due to a revolution in the life of the "National Review", viz. its transference from the Publishers to its own premises. In the confusion of the new office your letter, which was marked "Urgent", and put on one side for immediate reply, seems to have got mislaid under a heap of unimportant correspondence, and to my horror I found, many weeks after its arrival,

that it had not been replied to. I was about to cable to you when I got your second letter. I trust you will forgive this quite unpardonable violation of the amenities, which will certainly never happen again.

*accepted
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1540/7/26

23, RYDER STREET,
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LONDON, S.W.

NATIONAL REVIEW,
~~37, BEDFORD STREET,~~
~~W.C.~~

November 3rd, 1904.

Dear Mr. Deakin,

There was really only one reply possible to your letter of September 21st, and I accordingly cabled the word "Monthly". I cannot say how delighted I am to enrol you as a regular contributor. As you know there is nothing serious appearing anywhere now on Australian affairs, and it is the duty of the "National Review" to fill the void, so let us make a

preliminary arrangement for monthly letters for a year on the terms you suggest, viz. £20 a month. I will take all practical steps here to make this new departure known, and hope that Agents-General and others interested in the Colonies may be induced to co-operate. I am glad to know that I may expect your first manuscript in time for the December number. Please forgive this hasty attempt to catch the mail. Happily I wrote so fully before that I do not think it necessary for me to add very much.

With kind regards,

I am,

Yours very truly,

L. J. Mearns

P.S. It is of course understood that you remain anonymous.