

Letter to Parents and Sisters, 29 September 1841

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Kuruman 29th September 1841

My Dear Parents & Sisters

In case I have no other opportunity of writing you to setting off towards the north I now begin. I am sorry I not one ready yesterday when a Griqua passed this way sent several to friends & I hope this wont be long behind of which you may hear

I am busy learning the language which is not remarkably the only impediment is a want of proper aids such Dict^s Grammars &c I hope however soon to conquer & then preach Christ & him crucified to the [...] Bechuanas have a great deal of work in the way of helping the infirm & many of them seem attached to me on account of little shewn to themselves or children of whom they are fond. Mothers are mothers I see all over world if only a little if only a little of poor humanity remains uncorrupted the customs of sin. How is my mother I Hope comfortable God bless her and give her an inheritance with the in Heaven by sanctifying her to himself

I have got no letter as yet from you & have now you 5. It is no easy matter to have all the to oneself but I hope they are on their way Well what shall I tell you about, I suppose Janet & Agnes would like a lion story or something of that that I cant however give for I have not dared to one in the face. A terrible fellow was shot a short from this & the sight of his dead body so (shall I) frightened me I have no wish to have intercourse his majesty again. I would rather meet with [^][members] of the Royal families among men than of beasts the former in this country at least are an insignific-race of beings, distinguished for nothing but impudence in begging & generally worse looking any of their attendants. I have been in with Waterboer the Griqua chief. He is an exception in point of intellect although bodily appearance he is a little bushman the Matebeleour chief was here a few weeks ago for the of being baptized & admitted into the church, a feeble old man tottering into the grave. After he had heard the offers of mercy for about 25 years trust he has now turned to the Lord. His has caused great excitement through the whole particularly amongst the violent opponents of the . I hope it will lead others to think of themselves

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& look for mercy before it is too late. the Bechuanas are beggars, indeed they seem to make it a matter of conscience neglect no opportunity of asking & a refusal does not by means put them out if it is done in a jocular way is only occasionally they think it worth while to tell you their opinion of you is & really it is ludicrous enough hear their epithets, instead of getting vexed by them they powerfully excite my risible faculties. Only think of an old grey headed ~~fat~~ man or woman coming forward & saluting with the epithet "Father, king, Gentleman &c &c and then a little conversation requesting as a great favour a knife or only a little bit of my shirt to bind their heads & I give them the hint that though I much wish to gratify children it is quite out of my power. My father or mother quite a different style & tells me "Verily thou art a dog " &c "and whoever marries you will marry a wolf"these paternal addresses have one good effect they usually bring to my mind which sets them off in good humour Moteeke was with us during the whole fortnight he never any & for this he formerly was notorious, the sisterhood be amused to know I was physician to his majesty but nearly got into disgrace by shouting out to him as he lay in the middle of the path at midday with his karross his head Hallo my lad this is not night. He awak with a start when I beheld who it was I stooped &

examining his eyes told him I should give him ointment for them in the afternoon. He seemed well pleased & thanked me for my care of him

When talking to him of his past life he always commen-crying like a child. this is remarkable for a & particularly for a king, they never weep the Spirit works upon their hearts & then they like children. Sometimes in the chapel they their heads in their karosses & creep under the to avoid the eyes of the preacher. this however do they then scream out & occasionally rush of chapel fleeing with all their might. It has often me wonder for in performing most surgical operations they sit both men & as if they had no feeling - In one case of 4 inches in length & nearly 2 in breadth [nearly 1/2 in height] I employed a but quick mode of getting rid of it. During the operation expected him to get up & dance from the pain But no. He immoveable & talked with as composed a countenance as he felt nothing, "A man like me never cries" said he the greatest composure. "Its only children who cry"

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There are many believers scattered up & down the country even far from & where all is opposition (apparently) the missionaries are pleased to that there is piety even in the centre of the opposition. Pious particularly are often found where none ~~were~~[are] expected often it is impossible to hold intercourse with them as it subject them to great annoyance from their heathen . Only a shred of this can be said where much needed. We hope however the Lord will uphold his work in their hearts & enable them to unto the end. the women have hard work perform amongst the Bechuanas - they cultivate the ground build the houses while the "Lords of the Creation" sew karosses the cattle & hunt or sleep. they make very neat indeed. It would puzzle their men to do half as well if the latter are spoken to about it they reply "O it is good for " "it makes them strong" &c. It is only a very few of younger people who can be inclined to do a little of women's & I dare say their own opinion that hard work makes their wives look soon old has more influence over them any of our arguments. When sitting round a fire our waggon I have sometimes tried to let the women have share of it by requesting the men to give way, but was out of the question. "We are the kings" was [...] sufficient reason for the women being compelled to [...] [quite] in the cold. How would Agnes like this system of things

The old spectacles [ks?] mother put with my bag were a most acceptable to an old woman who made great efforts to learn to but her nose not being of proper shape for the antique to adhere ~~by~~[on] their own natural way she must hold them to with the hand. the beads are invaluable - money being very little use & rather a losing concern as they will take nothing silver & they always prefer a few beads or a hankerchief it [...] . M^r Hamilton has just returned from an [^][itinerating] journey a month or nearly 200 miles towards E by north. He met opposition in some places & encouragement in others is quite well in health and so I am thankful to say we are. Fergus & David still within reach of I should have written them but feared they be removed ere my letters arrived. I hope to write

M^r Naismith soon as also S^l & Jⁿ. Remember me kindly to . Could they not write me my letter will cross on the way if they do. How is Duncan? I suppose to America - & I Wheeler? D^o. The sun shines our chimnies here. Yours affect^y D L

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I can write no more to Charles He is a shabby fellow for a . Tell him I say so. I think frequently of you but this language engages mixing thoughts. I am never with the progress I make, the natives do jumble words so together & then they are so stupid at underst-if there is any blunder in my sentences. But I hope to overcome. I shall after returning live entirely them & speak not a word of English, I must . Yesterday a man came to carry medicine for his whom I had just been to see. I gave him instructions to let her have it immediately. Before I could say stop the had it whisked into his own stomach. Although not agreeable (castor oil)[a large

quantity] he yielded prompt obedience to what he thought I wished, & the reason was I did not use the phrase most employed. the people here are much like what the must have been. they are all nomadic if they possibly find a few cattle. Some are mighty hunters, not red coated gentry after a fox - I know men here who attacked lions & killed them with no other weapons than asagai in one hand & the Kaross wound round the other to thrust into his mouth - the mill is more original than that of the two women which I have seen in use the colony, a flat stone (broad) with a little roundish one to rub a sort of shoving motion as women in Scotland do with clothes at the bottom of the tub. I can understand Rachel felt so much at being barren, nothing is so a curse to a B. wife as want of children, they are really if without & children are so valuable.

the heat is beginning. North winds sweeping over the long tract of country in that direction become heated when they come here they are like the blast of a furnace, sometimes crumble the grass into

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