

## Letter to James R. Bennett, 26 December 1845

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Chounane 26<sup>th</sup> December 1845

My Dear Friend

As I have not yet recieved any answers to my last I presume it not have reached its destination. And as I cannot without an effort to lose your correspondence I take this gigantic sheet in order to you up to think on a poor "dweller in the wilderness" the longer am absent from home the fewer my correspondents are likely to become as you are in heart engaged to the same cause, you must not me entirely to the wearisome round of news furnished in this region. We have wars & rumours of wars untill the heart is of them. Right pleasant indeed then comes the stimulus of a letter home. I have seen and was glad on reading a notice of your to St Thomas' and wish you every degree of success which be for your good. Your connection with the Sydenham society benefit which every one at home may enjoy almost made me on the long weary journey we undertake I had my books untill of their sameness. I should be glad if it were possible but I need for what cannot be. We commenced a new station about 200 North of the Kuruman or Lattakoo and shortly afterwards I was injured by a lion. The failure of strength in consequence of a discharge from eleven gashes was so great I could not move limbs. And while lying in my little native hut I often saw you my dreams and I shall not soon forget the lively disappointment as often experience on finding that all surgical and was still on the side of the Atlantic When only partially recovered I had to begin erection of my house and a jerk recieved in lifting a stone led to a false joint in my left humerus. I often think of a seton through it But never have been able to plan a six leisure. It is not however a great hindrance even in heavy - the chief inconvenience is the want of power to steady arm when extended. The fissure is oblique and being situated the upper third of the bone seems to run into the socket point of

[image of an arm]

bone indicated at A starts out when my arm extended and the hand in the supine position and appears as it would burst through the skin But the biceps being situated to it I could easily put the needle through I can use adze hammer & lift heavy weights notwithstanding and if I the seton I shall let you know how it succeeds. But I not speak so much about ego. I shall give you a little infor concerning the diseases of this country and then proceed missionary intelligence.

Compared with other countries this has very few maladies . I have only seen one case of consumption and only two scrofula in a period of four years Amongst the hottentots in Cape Colony the former disease is by no means rare but let come up to the dry and healthy climate of Lattakoo & invariably recover. I am no believer on the curability of Phthisis the general But some cases which have occured have quite

[0002] me. One young woman I carefully examined and found no evidence her former disease although that had been pronounced by a medical man acquainted with the stethoscope as a real case of consumption bacame the subject of tumour on the ovarium and this having been by iodine she is now quite well. Poor Mr William<sup>s</sup> of was dissuaded from coming up here. the medical men in colony having about as much knowledge of this climate as of the Mars. I felt extremely sorry that he followed their advice and home to your cold wet cloudy climate. I concieve there is not better than this for patients with pulmonary complaints in the . I have not seen one patient from either India or England. unbenefitted by their sojourn. It is now in

consequence the abundance of game to all sorts become very common Indian invalids who can afford it to make a trip up here & their enthusiastic statement it is probable it will become more so. I wonder why the medical men connected with society do not recommend our Indian missionaries to come here of going home. The East India company find their plan of sending the Cape good. The same plan adopted by our old society might save great deal of the funds. As I remember Mr Arundel once mentioning they considered you one of their staff I take the liberty of speaking you on this subject. And as I intend to make a series of observations reference to this subject I shall be glad of any hints you may inclined to give. We are if my thermometer can be depended on three thousand feet above the level of the sea. the climate is dry

& clear and the nights are never so warm as to prevent sleep. the are always bracing, and disease is decidedly rare. I have been the whole country and though well acquainted with the I cannot say they have more than three diseases at all among them. Neither natives nor Europeans are [to] any other maladies but opthtalmiaindigestion and , a kind of bilious fever. I have not yet able to ascertain in any part a mortailty equal to ten thousand. I have seen only six cases of Pneumonia and these were infants except one. Only 2 cases of Hydro-in native children and two in European infants have to my knowledge One only of these came under my own observation venereal disease has often been communicated to bechuanas invariably dies out. Rhumatism and disease of the heart occasionally but surprisingly seldom when we think on of the natives. In travelling they sleep on the ground & have few precautions against damp. I have heard it remarked in certain climates injurious effects are produced by exposure the influence of the moon in sleep Nothing of the sort is ever here. I have myself slept for weeks on the bare ground often looked up to the beautifully clear orb until I have fallen But I have felt nothing in consequence nor have I heard the ascribe anything harmful to her rays. If it is true that in countries malaria acts with increased virulence at certain periods, the entire absence of effects at these periods in

[0003] to the production of disease would seem to shew that malaria is abundant here. And that where it is in existence it is at least ponderable

& acted upon in somewhat the same way as the tides. There have been epidemics except influenza & hooping cough since I came into the - a kind of madness previously unknown to the natives appeared year amongst the dogs. but it differs essentially from Hydrophobia a precautionary measure I have excised the bitten parts of all those applied for assistance, the disease appeared to be communicated a child & a calf, both died. The long illness I was subjected to the lion and my subsequent building operations have produced great hiatus in my examinations &c in the materia medica of country. Many roots &c. have been spoiled by long keeping so must commence all over again

I have lately transfered my labours from Mabotsa to a new still farther to the North. It is a mountainous country but see a blank alone on the maps. The tribe is called Bakwain Baquane. the country around is populous and away towards East densely so But as we descend the country is more unhealthy descent is shewn by the deep warm channels of the rivers [rapid course] is But we hope to spread a knowledge of the gospel there by means of native teachers. I have two very men in connection with the new station, all have effected in this region may be called preperation only continue to gain influence and only a month ago two were prevented by our mediation. The chief with whom I live from attacking the murderers of his father because said to them "I have promised to my missionary not to shed blood." This is an enterprising man. He built a stone wall round his town with loop holes &c. and fruit his own invention. He had never heard of any [...] He learned to read, after acquiring a perfect know[ledge] the large & small alphabets in two days. Polygamy is the barrier. this chief often says "O I wish you had [...] to me before I became entangled with my wives." they can no idea of or rather they give no credit to historical evidence all they have recieved from their ancestors are a few and

unsettled notions. We who have had greater ad can see [...] in these notions the fragments of a wreck their primitive faith but though we often make sure their own ideas in argument to the simple & sublime declara-of the Divine word have far more effect than reasoning we tell them of the great white throne and Him who shall upon it they sometimes say "Stop now, you alarm us" But they still in unbelief and nothing but a Divine influence change their hearts. may that be granted and the Divine advanced in their conversion.

Towards the south the progress of evangelization is advancing. the fruits of the long continued labours our predessors are now apparent everywhere. I cannot any details as we have not heard from Lattakoo

[0004] many months Indeed in reference to conveyance you are as near New York as we are to Kuruman. A misanthrope did not wish to hear any more about the civilized world would this almost as good for his purpose as one of the silent system in America But all will come right at last. you kindly remember me to your honoured Father and believe . Yours ever Affectionately David Livingston

Please address me care of Rev D<sup>r</sup> Philip Cape town. It is necessary to send to the mission house

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