

Letter to James Macle hose, 20 June 1843

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[0001]

Kuruman 20th June 1843

My very Dear Friend

I am sorry I cannot begin by thanking you your last. Your first I have not yet recieved, But I have

& abundant cause for thankfulness, and I would now to express it were I not conscious words are inadequate the purpose. You have got me a good friend in M^{rs} M^c Robert. I pray the Great Head of the church may through bestow on you the recompence I wish you in the of the just. But I am in distress respecting you must if you please help me out of it. She kindly of sending some things to the Bechuanas, I thought might be dresses she meant & I could not help telling her had an aversion to such things. You know how it is to say anything calculated to pain a lady. I it sorely. But a conviction that the tendency of these of clothes is to hinder the cause compelled me to speak . You must if you please be so kind as apologise my rudeness.

Some of the presents consist of good strong apparel & the distribution of them induces endless heartburnings should not object to them because they are very useful the poor of the flock But the freight & land carriage cost much to the Directors as would suffice to purchase the in the colony. I remember M^r Arundel once said me with a sigh, "I dont know what people put into these but if they gave us the money they think them worth with the saving of expense would soon make up hundred thousand." I could tell him now and only think he would stare when I assured him there are in some dirty ball dresses, old socks dirty as when thrown aside the wearer. Old dirty shirt collars for people who have shirts. Old coverings of parasols & silk buttons I remember

[0002] have seen on old maid's dresses when a little boy. What on makes people send such trash, would they themselves like go with thin ball dresses if they had nothing under & their skins ? You see acknowledgements from the directors to a string of people sometimes, I fancy if the Directors knew all would return much more grateful acknowledgements the donors would come, pay the expenses & take them away. they are in a dilmemma & like ourselves dont like to speak when harm may be done by it. No one would like refuse a present from a poor old disciple who longing the advancement of the redeemer's kingdom, should a thing of no value, grateful he or she had been permitted give to that dearest of causes. Who could refuse the old the delight he or she must feel in contributing. Other besides this would prevent us making a public of the abuses which ~~have~~ are connected with these But could we separate the ball dress contribution the rest for them I should have no bowels of comp-, married they are not, old maids they I think they must who sent these accompaniments of nonsense, M^r used to say "any thing will be useful to us" But had no idea people would have such India rubber consciences

I dont suppose M^r M^c R would have sent any useless But I have such a dislike to those which have come felt constrained to decline recieving any more. I think from way she writes she has good sense enough not to be offended me for it. Almost anything would be of [more] value to cause than the things some send.

I shall now give you some account of the state of country & the manner in which I have been employed I last wrote you. I told you of Sebeque and overseers who were sent to me last year with the of an ox. On that occasion I advised him

[0003] to to have the country of the Bakalihari to which he had driven by Mosilikatze as there was a probability if he so Mahura~~the~~ chief of the Batlapi would attack him acted contrary to my advice & having no guns many of people were massacred by Mahura - a party of the of Kuruman were with him at the very time of & as M. is their chief both Sebeque & all the heathen the interior believed they had acted the part of accomplices Mahura Some incidents which occurred during the period of visit served very much to deepen the unfavourable . The accidental firing of a musket on the preceding the attack by one of the visiting party afterwards interpreted as having been the signal by which

Mahura was apprised of the situation of Sebeque. - The at family worship was construed as the incantations success - and the collecting of Sebeque's people in the of attack (it being Sabbath) for public worship as a pretext by which ~~they~~ to aid the work of slaughter reception of these news made me most anxious to visit the interior, that by my presence & explanation might endeavour to disabuse their heathen minds of the they had inbibed. I felt if no effort were for that purpose, the prejudices against our might be transferred to our gospel & thus much be done to the cause But the natives here were certain that Sebeque would revenge himself on the party from Kuruman that fell into his hands thought it madness to think of going I was therefore to wait some months untill their fears subsided I could get a few to drive my waggon

On the 21st Feb last I left this & shaped my course Sebeque's village & after about 10 days travelling

[0004] in safety (Poor Bint lost his wife by the overturning of waggon in Caffreland. that accident I met twice and yet a hair of my head harmed. How thankful I ought to be ~~my~~[the] merciful preservation. Once I was reading, my legs the waggon & I did not know of my danger untill I suddenly ~~returned~~[transferred] from the sitting to the standing posture boxes books bed meal bags & watercask simultaneously crashing level behind me -) My driver had been one of the party visited Sebeque at the time of attack and a most recognition of him followed when we arrived at place where he & the remainder of his warriors were . I squatted down beside him & observed my poor servant was looking "unutterable things" Sebeque then of me why I had attacked and destroyed his & stolen all his cattle. I replied by demanding why had neglected to follow my advice & thus destroy himself &c. of the messengers I had seen last year being still alive recognised me and we soon became very good . He told me the reasons he left the country of the were his people were yearly diminished by fever which prevails there His heart longed again eat corn and being ignorant of the power of guns had dispised the powers of the Batlapi. I partook his hospitality for several days & was pleased with I saw of him. He is the bravest of the all the Bechuana This after he had cut off detachment after detachment of people of Mosilikatze the tyrant was obliged to . "There is only one man in this country said M.

& that is Sebeque" - it being Saturday when I arrived explained to him how we spend the day following. Next before daybreak I was pleased to hear his herald

[0005] kings orders that "nothing was to be done on that day but to God hearing the words of the foreigner" During the services he was a most attentive listener and he many sensible questions concerning the strange things I had to his ears. He mentioned that he had seen Mr once but as M^r M. was then young & did not the language it is not remarkable Sebeque remembered of what had been said. May the Lord enlighten his mind & lead him to the Lamb of God which taketh away sins of the world.

Leaving Sebeque I proceeded to the Bakhatla a people whom the Directors have approved of our proposal form a new mission. I told you something of them but as I hope to be building a house there long you recieve this I shall give you a little more concerning our intended stationthey are near to the spot where M^r Campbell in his progress of northwards thought

proper to turn about & home. The iron foundaries he heard of but was permitted to see, belong to them. Very likely he thought same reasons were in operation there as are in chemical works at home, nothing of the sort enters into their heads, they are only afraid their iron should be bewitched by the presence of . Iron bewitched is when it is burned to a by the the brisk application of their bellows - lest this disaster should happen they actually put medicines with the ore & sleep at a distance from own houses during the whole season of smelting connection between the bellows & burnt iron they dream of. It is all the effect of witchcraft

[0006] ore is found in abundance at the junction of the igneous & aqueous formations & nowhere is covered by any of soil, One side of the valley being the line of between the trappean & sandstone rocks latter stretching northwards gives a different of pasturage. These peculiarities will give of advantage to our station, the iron works will a temporal consideration and attach the people to spot untill by the grace of God we have imparted a sense its spiritual advantages. the different vegetation exists will probably be favourable for the cattle the natives. The want of which advantage has always a great drawback to the prosperity of Kuruman

This town is also near to what was formerly the site that of Mosilikatze. I walked over it and the place he suffered his last defeat by a handful of & a very few human bones were the only vestige could discover of all that belonged to him. He now living more than 350 miles north East of his location & still carries on his old practices

When I was at the Bakwain villages I saw several who had ~~escaped~~ been taken captive by his last year & escaped again from their tyranny tale of sorrow had no effect on their callous countrymen but it had a powerful effect the people of my waggon. A step nearer to Mosilikatze they would not go, entreaty while & were all in vain, the fellows turned noses in the sand as if the Arabian Simoom

[0007] been passing, & their very hearts seemed like to die with I was thus brought to the necessity of either my design of going still farther north, or the waggon & proceed on a pack ox, I chose latter & leaving the waggon in charge of my own people three wild Bakwains of Bubi proceeded on my . This mode of travelling has some inconveniences to me it was by far the pleasantest part of my . I visited no fewer than four villages of the where on account of the sand of the a waggon could not have come, they are poor degraded people, the slaves of the other tribes Bechuanas. They live far from water and thing we consider essential to comfort But in one sense destitute in another they are kindly by a bountiful providence. They have me more than 40 different kinds of roots

& about 30 different fruits the desert spontaneously them Some of these it is true are absolutely & others produce [such] dreadful pains in the men of those who are unaccustomed to I have been obliged to have recourse to an . Yet there are others by no means unsavoury . I suppose custom makes them all to them. Locusts & wild honey were as as any thing I got. You remember this the food of the Baptist. the locusts are than the shrimps our good friend M^{rs} Sewell to munch. Only they have just too much

[0008] a grassy taste, some swarms would were not make believe in eating them that he had become a twin of old Nebuchadnezzar. I may mention that the one ingredient of the Baptist food is dreadfully const-& the other just the opposite. And had he lived the desert of the Bakalihari he would have had no in finding a constant supply of both Of the I saw no fewer than 19 swarms in one year

& yet no particular damage was done to the of the natives, & had I followed all the calls the honey birds which invited me to hives I never have been without a sufficiency the other - The Bakalihari were very kind to me during most of that part of the journey I & my companions were dependent on my gun. Sometimes had a pleasure you never knew, "We rejoiced [as] in

the of slaughter” At other times we had to feast on we saw in our dreams only. The pleasure enjoyed in sitting [with the natives of the desert] round the fire in the evenings & when to their wild tales introducing the story of the Salvation was greater than I ever before felt this work. Occasionally our conversation on connected with Eternity were prolonged till midnight. I thus became better acquainted their modes of thinking than I could otherwise done May the Lord generously own my endeavours to make known his name to poor wanderers in the wilderness.

[0009]

You may have heard that the Bechuana have no idea of a state. I know this was the opinion of most missionaries lately. But we have discovered a parallel a form in all their traditions are embodied and this shews clearly have always had the idea of future existence. The knowledge this parallel is universal, even among the poor Bakalihari it served as an excellent introduction to a conversation you may like to hear it. It is as follows. The walks very slowly. The black lizard very quickly sent the former with a message to men, saying, Go tell that when they die they do not entirely perish shade flies upward, they will again return, the was sent afterwards with a message from the Devil

(Barino or evil spirits) & being swift of foot outran the & came first to men. His message was you die you die like the game, there is an end of . You will never return. A messenger is coming me to say when men die they will again return believe him he tells lies only.

I had experienced some merciful preservations during late tour. Seeing an animal on a tree one day I drew for the purpose of securing it for our pot. But within a few feet of some brushwood near the of the tree, a tiger lurking there seized the little dog preceded me & shook him as if it had been a mouse his jaws. He at the same time growled horribly, which me think it was a lion. I retreated a few steps in to to take aim for flying is of no use in the case a lion. He then came out from his covert & I got good view of him. But as he did not seem to an encounter I was quite willing to be of the mind & allowed him to move off into the forest I been first instead of the dog, it is probable I should

[0010] been seized instead of him. Thanks to the Lord for care over me.

You remember the lofty black volcanic rocks of the Bakaa I was nearly starved there, a native who went with last year was affected with fever while there. After departure a report was spread that he had been poisoned Bakaa were determined to give no cause for such an in future & gave neither poisoned nor wholesome , except a few watermelons & sweet reed for three days. But I had reason to be thankful for the low they put me on, for when descending on the morning the second day from their airy abodes to our sleeping place , I unfortunately broke one of my finger bones testatment in my hand served as a point of resistance which & the sharp angle of rock my finger was , a piece of their sweet reed served as a splint

& the low diet saved me from an attack of irritative . The chief & people were quite amicably disposed me But my patience could hold out no longer the morning of the third day. When they saw us to depart the chief & all his wives came down

& entreated us not to depart. They did not wish to give lest people should say they had posioned us, they not like us to go away without eating anything lest should say they were niggardly & refused food to a . For my part I was glad to get away from both & their dilemma in order to get something to eat same evening I got to the Makalaka & there got . Their boiled beans were so good we during the night again & again to eat them & I the very buttons off my trousers to give them as of my gratitude. they we had tried a piece

[0011] rhinoceros skin roasted the day before but though my teeth good it fairly beat me My jaws were quite tired ere I two mouthfuls. I dont tell these things to make pity me, I dont pity myself the pleasure of this work outweighs the disagreeables of it. We sit here & tell tales as these & laugh over them, I mention them to you you may be entertained by

the recital of the different which happen to servants of the same master in countries. You must not publish this, I to a friend of mine quite a confidential letter & I ashamed to see it afterwards flourishing in all the papers & even in the English Record without a emendation, the circumstances I state freely here should not were it designed for the eye of the public could tell you a long story about hunger &c. How I almost dead in the wilderness & unable to trust my which I was using as a hunger belt But about it.the men of the world suffer as & more than ever I did for the sake of the of Him who has done so much for me

But I must rush the story of the finger lest you it hindered me greatly, I can bear a little pain well so it did not require any attention. But night a lion approached very near to the bush which we were all fast asleep and then his hideous roaring. My ox leaped in us. My poor Bakwains shrieked for fear

& I half asleep & stupid seized a pistol with the disabled but the rebound hurt me much more than bullet did the lion, it rebroke my bone. The however made him move off. My poor

[0012] on seeing the blood again running said by of comforting me "You have hurt yourself but you redeemed us. Henceforth we will swear by you" wished they had felt the value of the blood which was shed for redemption of their souls. I had three such escapes lions. this last was the heaviest fellow I have , I can resemble it to nothing better than the noise by the letting off the steam in a steam boat. If were some breaks in it, the likeness would be complete - — - —this journey on ox back was than 400 miles in length. the pleasures far the pains. Will you join me in thanksgiving the marvellous loving kindness of the Lord to one of the of all his servants No one had ever such of his care & had such a cold heart afterwards he forgive me. And may he help me to devote my being to His glorious service. O that my time may run to waste that I may do something for Him has done so much for me

Many many thanks for the Magazines Especially for own congregational. there's life in it now, 's a living moving active thing. But formerly it was grave as a quaker & readable by people with spectacles I enclose a note respecting payment &c. one for M^{rs} Sewell who will inform you my reasons for doing so. Now as you get the mag. so well I give you the privilege of corrector of this parvum in multo letter in all the words that are left out & put out all those ought never to have been in Affectionately yours

D Livingston