

Letter to Robert Moffat 1, 1 July 1846

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Chonuane 1st July
1846

My Dear Father

Having been disappointed in the time the people should leave I have time to add a few remarks to my already lengthy epistles. The most prominent topic on my mind is an attack of M^r Edwards. The poor fellow thinks that I have wickedly & wantonly attacked him. He does not know that I would just as soon [^][have] tried to perform the trick of St Dunstan as do any such thing. In August of 45/ he told me when I requested my account from him that he had sent Rogers' with it. But it never having come he said he thought it amounted to about [£]30 exclusive of the food of some Bakhatla (once a day a meal of native corn) As he thought this might amount to about £5 I gave a bill of £35 & thought it was all over. A short time ago he sent an account made up to £45..15. As I had not recieved the former I could not compare it But as there were - a bill of £2.5..6 of which I had his own receipt as having been paid to him once and two months boarding which for both himself & me were charged to the Society I thought it right to ask some questions before giving away an additional £10. The two months boarding he stated positively to me he had charged to the society on two occasions I requested to know on what principle payment was demanded twice. He once pressed 20 lbs of very bad beads on my acceptance & said O you will give me an equal number when our box comes. The box was weighed at Kuruman & a note taken of the weight on the spot 200 lbs & upwards. The beads were divided & a note of the division put with my half into the box - this note shewed 88 $\frac{3}{4}$ as my half of 200 lbs. I imagined the 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs of difference had been taken for the 20 lbs of very inferior beads & was satisfied But finding the 20 lbs charged in this account as I had furnished the half of the money I requested a sight of the invoice. A tar bucket was presented to me by M^rE. the ear of it was patched so poorly by himself before our journey was over it broke off As it seemed an old one & a new one I had formerly got from him was only charged 4/6 I demurred to paying 9/ as now

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for what I conceived an old one. I did not know that
teak never became old. As he was putting down his gifts
as debts I thought I might as well remind him of 10 lbs of tea
which M^{rs}E distinctly borrowed from me. A cap which
cost me 9/ was put down at 7/6. An American
axe he borrowed & never returned I put down cost price
then requested the production of the bill mentioned
in another sheet

I received the enclosed meek communication
lately & returned the answer I likewise send for your
perusal. I am quite positive as to the Society being
charged for every iota of the expenses but as it [statement] was
made on his own authority on the same authority
I have to retract it & beg his pardon the which
I do very willingly as you will see. Look at the last
page & you will wonder still more at my folly
in being deceived by such a character. Ross' conduct
was so galling to me that I was glad to have any one
to sympathize with me & I allowed them to go on
in their slanders continuously because of the conviction
on my mind that in reference to speaking against
Ross I had been just as bad as themselves.

You will wonder that I grudge 6^d a day for my
board 3^d would more than pay all I ate & my bed
at Mabotsa was made just once in three weeks or
once a month Did you ever hear me complain of
being illnursed in my [^][lion] sickness? No M^{rs}E scarcely even
looked near me after the first few days & to get my
arm dressed even when crawling with maggots
I had to send for M^rE. - occasionally he came of his
own accord but if I had not even when almost
dead I would infinitely have preferred Bakhatla to
dress it for me. It was evidently a grudge to him
& how could it be otherwise he & she too were writing against
me at the very time. Obligation on my part there is none
unless in addition to neglect I ought to feel grateful
for native corn and English corn boiled in milk
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my stomach was well nigh ruined for ever. It is but
very recently that I got over the bad effects of their eternal
boiled corn. Corn boild - Boiled corn like shovels full
of the Everlasting pills of the Antients might have ruined the
stomachs of ostriches. O it is a blessing to be allowed to eat as
one likes I can never cease admiring the freedom
I was far too polite in most things I would not do anything
to give offence and as I tell them I believe my guilt in silent
listening to their scandals is now justly punished in what
they endeavour to fix on my character. If he troubles
us more we shall send his epistles back unopened

If he has never been slandered how very gratuitously wicked
his & her slanders must have been-

We have put up the mill. It does well but it is rather inferior
to Hume's common mill. the latter grinds finer [^][&] makes much less bran
so we should be glad of the large one when you have an opportunity
to send it. The trouble of sifting continually would be obviated
if we had the large mill for wheat we should try & make this
the maize mill - if that can be done - some small bits of wood
came out of it when we tried it first so I took down
to see from whence they proceeded. I was sorry afterwards
for Sechele was my assistant and turning it generally the backward
way he & I bothered with it the whole day and failed after all
But I got a thorough knowledge of it by the labour &
as soon as I came out of the room next morning succeeded.

A Family Scene in Private

We had a practical exposition of your Phantasmagoria
scene lately Mary has taken up the profession of Surgeon
Dentist I was the subject operated on. The twin of that you
extracted became very bad one night so up we got to it. I scarified
& fixed on the tooth key & then the new surgeon dentist
gave a wrench & I pulled her hand away in agony. It had
come out a little way I pulled & pulled with a pair of
shoemaker's nippers but every pull was like a haul at
my entrails. On went the key again. Another wrench &
I roared out "murder" It came a little farther but was still
sticking doggedly. Another trial of the nippers forceps &c
and then another effort with the key completed the first
attempt at dentistry. We were a pretty sight in our ghost
-ly dresses. I on the floor & Mary standing over me It
was dreadful. "Teeth drawn at Chonuane /1 each"
Mouth rinsed out afterwards with dirty water gratis
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31st July. The men whom I engaged to go out for their hievers
being at a distance were sent for but a week or two having
passed ere they arrived as we were under the impression that
M^r & M^{rs}A. would be delayed thinking that the Bakwains would
pass them on the road. I then went over to the boers & tribes
in that direction & returning yesterday found that M^r Jeffries
would pass by Kuruman. If three or four hievers can be
got they will be very acceptable indeed

Will you remember to send some of my fine powder by
some safe opportunity. It is I believe among some clothes
Will you lend me your box of stones from one opportunity
to another? I mean those you recieved from D^r Young. I shall
take great care of them

The Rev^d. Robert Moffat D.D. & L.L.D. of
Maddison University
Alleghani Mountains
Via Kuruman

Min.
Fine Powder
Geological specimens
A sight of your diploma