

Letter to George Drummond, 21 November 1844

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Dont address me Rev & M. D. too
Mabotsa 21 Nov 1844
say either D^r L., if you say Rev D^r that would be equal
to D. D. which I am
not

My Dear Brother Drummond

Your welcome and excellent letter written
at some queer outlandish place where it seems M^r Chisholme among
other good deeds is doing the needful towards augmenting the worlds
population found me in my monkish all a few days ago as happy
as any of you domesticated animals and (mirerbile dictu) first on
the eve of becoming one myself. Tempus muntantar &c. But
I cannot leave the batchelor life without a sigh. What infatuation
you labour under to rejoice after having ^ had your nose held to the
"grindstone" for such a length of time and what infatuation I am
under myself. In love!! words yea thoughts fail so I leave it to your
imagination & recollection – I am it seems after all to be
hooked to Miss Moffat, (M^r Moffats eldest daughter) in about three
weeks hence. I am just finishing my house. It is something like
your own I suppose, only rather more primitive. 52 feet in length &
20 broad, containing a study bedroom & parlour - , & pantry, kitchen
apart from the house. Is it stone do you think? Nay but
a much easier material to mould, viz. plastic mud. We dash
it on about a foot thick and then cut it straight with a spade
and such is the heat of the luminary that Fairbrother would call
the sun over our heads before two hours you would wonder
where the water has gone. Indeed one hours exposure makes
it difficult to cut. We run up walls in no time after the found[-]
ation is laid and they are as hard as brick almost. Let Moore
good dear fellow know of my marriage. It will comfort all
your hearts to know I am become as great a fool as
any of you. The pickle he was in at the time he wrote
the note predicates something in the population line I suppose
But he did not mention among his other duties the washing of
the baby's unmentionables. He wont stick in the world nor will
I if I can help it.

Now after the above nonsense I must give you something
better if I can. And first of all I must tell you that this
station has been recently formed by M^r Edwards & myself
&c M^r E came out 20 years ago for the Kurrichane &

is the only one of 7 with the same destination who ever saw the locality. The Kurrichane mountains lie about 30 miles South east of us. The people among whom we have taken up our residence are called Bakhatla a tribe of Bechuanas which works in iron & wood, the founderies are of the most original description, for similies of that of the old Tukul coin. What you say of the Samoans applies in all But is farce to them, desire for property is a predominant feature in their character, greedy & mean beyond calculation

you may be sure I shall give you a character worth 7 & sixpence any day - If you see a fair prospect of doing good by a native teacher and apart from your own station let me know if you please. I think the last point

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Indeed they seem to make conscience of begging, and though refused if the refusal is in a jocular or friendly manner they dont seem to take it ill. They have cleared their conscience and had they gone away without making a trial they would have perhaps felt its stings. Deceitful, liars to a man and as proud as Lucifer if they think you are under any sort of obligation or dependant for anything on them. I should say in general we ought to place but little dependance on a native untill we get him into Heaven, and as a rule of conduct Let us act with uniform kindness to them expecting that at one time or other they will repay it with ingratitude, perhaps insult. It will be a great misfortune if we (as some have) allow our tempers towards them to become soured or disgusted. I know one who has placed confidence on many and having been ungratefully treated his talk regarding them would savour badly if reported any where. The case is instructive. I have tried as much as possible to avoid making the conduct of others to me any part of my rule of conduct to them and have got on comfortably sometimes when others got broken heads (much grief) Our chiefs are generally an imbecile race. "gawks" & "Sandy Macfarlanes" their power is of the feudal sort. And they are exceedingly jealous of our approaches. Everything we do is thought to be an attempt to draw people to our party & power The "Boguera" or circumcision is more (or rather entirely) a national civil right than religious observance. It takes place every four or five years & all of nearly the same age are subjected to it. Those who have gone to the circumcision together are bound into a cohort under one of the chiefs sons or brothers for ever afterwards & have to render service go wherever he is sent, do whatever he likes under pain of death untill that event takes place. This ceremony was looked upon by the early missionaries as sinful, They keep it secret as a measure & perhaps this was one

portion of the reason why the missionaries came to the conclusion. You will perceive that war proclaimed against this might easily be interpreted as war against the feudal system which exists & it was so, and this jealousy for the existing form of government was very extensively engendered, this has been a great hindrance to the spread of Christianity. Each chief is absolute lord of his people He knows all their affairs & they cant transact any business without his consent, this was the state of matters out at Kuruman & vicinity when the mission began - it is not so now. But it is so here. Mahura the chief of the Batlapiwas very much opposed

desirable to be attended to in order to be able to tell them of the amount of good done & thus stimulate others to support & individualize their own labourers at the throne of grace - Have you seen Morrison's (of Kilmarnock) Tracts?

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to the gospel until lately, and so long as he continued so, no one living near him embraced the gospel. He has lately become more favourable & Mr Ross has gone to live with him & we have hopes of good being the result. Did you notice that Mr R mentioned in the report that he had been "the first to get Mahura to listen to the gospel" This was a lapse of language with a vengeance after Mr Moffat, Hamilton &c had preached to him so long. But we must be charitable & hope against hope that it was true. The French missionaries have been very successful among the Basutos to the eastward of us and a great deal under God has been owing to the influence of an enlightened but unbelieving chief. He has never like the others thrown obstacles in the way, on the contrary has encouraged the people to attend to the instruction of the missionaries. Our chief is a real Johnny Raw but he is kind as yet & civil & encourages the people to attend our meetings. You speak of the expedition to endeavour to make peace. Had you been here church members would not have been deemed acknowledgement of the teachers as chiefs & a certain attack would have been made. Churches here are notwithstanding all our efforts regarded still as sort of political communities You seem to have been shocked by the indecency of the dress of the males. A short apron reaching half way down the thigh is the Bechuana female dress when working. The men have a nondescriptum always and the Caffres go stark naked. I have seen the men stand in the presence of European females with as little consciousness of impropriety or shame as G. D. does with his trousers

on. The Matibele too go in puris naturalibus & one
& all of them wonder what makes us thrust our pins
"into bags which can only hinder us from running fast"
Your language seems a curious pointless one, the mouth
cant get a hold of so many vowels. You say "I thank
you for your advice. This in sitchuana is "Kia gu
itunelela ka enutla kakololo ea gago. I ^ do thee thank for
by means of advice of thine. How different the two tongues
We have much circumlection to express a very simple idea
and have to make use of words frequently which have very
little meaning. Witness the above "for by means of" or on account of
I now do thank your for all yours & hope I have profited by it
The hand writing however is beyond my power. I am getting worse

M^r Williams has been ill since he went to England & I fear wont get better. This
prevents his fond project
of a Welsh magazine. If however I hear again I shall let you know Peace and mercy be with
you & Mrs D & children
give her my most affectionate salutations .D.L.

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and worse the more I write & dont know where I shall end. You of
course have heard of Radford's death. He wrote me the most affecting
letter I ever recieved. It came in a box of medicine he sent & that
arrived long after I knew he was dead. He told me the state of his lungs
& with the full consciousness of his approaching dissolution said
"Now write soon as I wont be here to recieve it." Salome Cecil
too & Miss Marshall - I have recieved letters from M^r C. Weldingtree
often At the latter place they were lamost despairing of hearing from
you ere you first arrived & when it did it caused great joy
Prentice a Plymouth brother is gone to the wall as far as mission
are concerned. Poor Chatharine, she has not enjoyed the maroned
state since. In perpetual pain & unable to stand without support
[...] well & of Fison I hear nothing

Care of Rev. D^r Phillip, ~~Cape Town~~
Rev^d Dr Ross
Sydney
Rev^d George Drummond
Falealopu, Savaii
Navigator's Islands
South Seas.

You say if I children pulling my coat tails &c could not take the breeks
off a [...] could you? I dont know when I have had a coat on my
back, I wear jackets. & I say if you were as near Egypt as we are
you would have worse plagues than children only a great deal smaller
How is with respect to native agency? I have £50 at my disposal
if I like some or most of it from persons I never saw for native
teachers. I have not yet been able to appropriate more than £12

on account of paucity of suitable individuals. I cannot conscientiously recommend the unsuitable. I have thought perhaps you may be more favourably situated for that mode of propagating the gospel & a lot of ladies & gents in D^rWoodlands's church having sent lots of things now on their way here, and pressing me to mention what may be useful in order to assist me. If you wish it I feel inclined to direct some of their benevolence to you & friend More. I dont know if I should succeed as I am not

reasonably acquainted with a single individual of them but it is always well to set people in the way of doing good. I intend writing to them tomorrow by way of taking their pulse on the subject and you may be