

Letter to [Elizabeth?] Pyne, 22 June 1843

Livingstone, David, 1813-1873

Published by Livingstone Online (livingstoneonline.org), 2017

[0001]

Kuruman 22 June 1843

My dear friend

I am now two letters in debt to you. One I recieved on the 22^d Feb. last when I was on the way towards the Interior the other I found a few days ago on my return & now while I thank you heartily for them both I shall try to pay off the debt. This is for M^{rs} Pyne the other I shall address to M^r Pyne and though I think of you as "joined together" I wont be in the least offended though you each take separate sheets when you think of me. Every[-] thing you mention is interesting so you must not think your letter valueless. I dont advert to the topics contained in yours because I think you will be more pleased with things relating to this country. In this letter however I shall deviate from my usual customs. I beg however to say that though I do not recur to the topic mentioned in yours on paper I often recur to them in spirit. I dont feel overcomplacent towards Tho^s Prentice he got Miss Ridley simply because he was intending to be a missionary. This was the stepping stone by which he gained her affections, now he sticks up at home in a miserable climate, & I dont expect he will enjoy much happiness apart from sickness. I am truly sorry to hear of the sickness of Salome Cecil & intend writing her parents by this same opportunity. I earnestly hope the means used have proved effectual. I have had a letter from M^r Drummond He writes me he says first as he had recieved my letter before those of any others. He had recieved yours & expected the small boxes soon. He has gone to Savaii. Navigators. But I am pretty certain you have also recieved a letter or letters from him & will not on that account say more about him. O I beg his pardon I must tell you the worlds population has been augmented by a unit in the person of Jean D. the daughter of Rev G.D. of Savaii He says "a prettier sweeter little creature was never seen by me nor any other old batchelor like me" This of course I feel much obliged by your kindness in sending me the box you mention. It has not yet arrived but I expect it shall by Mr Nighs whom we expect next month. I cannot say that I have all things I need but I most certainly prefer to be as[...][I am] getting a little assistance now & then from kind friends like yourself & feeling both a light purse & light heart to being encum[-]bered with such a load as good M^r Moffat brings with him You tell me a secret I shall tell you one in return He has

no less than 50 tons of goods & luggage with him. We poor ignorant things here hold up our hands in amazement & say better he have them than we. I feel much obliged to you for your suggestion respecting the watch but I feel quite out of humour with & it its maker. It is only valuable to me now as proof of your disinterested kindness. I feel disinclined to have anything more to do with Yonge. Perhaps sometime when I become rich I shall buy another. At present I am content with the sun as my guide. However if I see a good opportunity

I write M^r Pyne & sometime I will give him some account of the state of the country I hope he will write me in return a long letter. I have recieved no letter from – I forget your little boys name with kind regards to the young ladies. believe me affectionately yours DL

[0002]

yet avail myself of your willingness to serve me. M^r Williams of Hankey is at present in England. He has taken that step in consequence of a disease in throat. He wished much to come up here & go with me to the Interior but after all was prepared at Algoa Bay a doctor there declared that the season was too far advanced & the attempt might cost him his life. What nonsense There is not a finer climate in the world. I hope going home wont cost him his life. He was an excellent man. I have requested him to call upon you. I wish he may I only saw him for a short time but I love him as much as if he had been the comp[anion] of my boyhood. If he should come & spend a day with you, you would be delighted with him. He is a real good warm hearted welshman. I hope he will find it convenient. I intend to send a few things to you immediately they are so few I am ashamed to send them alone, & as M^r W. desires me to purchase for him a few karosses I shall send yours in the same box But you mush not think this is the box I promised you I send these as a remembrance & pledge of a greater expression of my regard at some future time. I would have sent you a greater number of karosses but I am informed that the duty on them is very great & I dont like to put the professor to over much expense. M^r Williams desires me to send him karosses as a mode of transmitting money for some articles which I must be in want of & which he is anxious to serve me by purchasing for me. I shall write you again when I send off the box & specify all the articles it contains for you. They will be put into two separate parcels so that M^r W. will perfectly understand what is intended for you. The camel thorn I shall procure without difficulty. The wood is what we ~~burn~~ use as fuel & it is as you will see by the specimen very hard. Insects I have not been able to preserve with the exception of a few locusts But in my next I shall mention them all. O I forgot to give you all the secret about the 50 tons Perhaps there not 20 worth the freight for

can you believe it there are some donors who give what they cant make the least use of themselves. They must be old maids surely. Only think of lots of old dirty ball dresses which the Bechuanas wont look at as they can be seen through. Hundreds of old oblong silk buttons which I remember to have seen on ladies dresses when I was a little boy. The old worn out coverings of parasols. Old starched shirt collars to people who have no shirts. Together with nameless other old rubbish of which the Bechuanas can make no earthly use. Really some of the good people in England seem to have consciences of India Rubber. Somethings more for his transmission than would suffice to purchase new ones at Colesberg. The shirts with holes in them to bad I dont even make good bandages to bind up sores with them. It is not want of knowledge which makes them send such things. For you know as little of what was proper as they do when you kindly gave me your first box & yet every article you gave was valuable There was not a useless thing in it. And although I joked you about the babies clothes it was because I did not then

[0003]

know that they could be useful in the hands of a batchelor, they have however been very useful in the hands of M^{rs} W. Phillip now of Hankey. I would not now give all to her as I did then. All these things are useful for the purpose of gaining the affections & thereby leading the natives to the Saviour. Your remarks about having one to warm to till that solitude is sweet I can fully understand, I have however usually a good stock of spirits (not artificial) & can bear up against loneliness. But it sometimes requires all my philosophy especially when away for months together from all European Society. The friends at Griqua[-] town imagined that I must be dying for want of a wife & kindly sent their daughter all the way to Kuruman by way of experiment. When that failed great anxiety was manifested to know who were my female correspondents in England. M^{rs} Ross told them that I was in love with a young widow in London called M^{rs} Sewell! My letters to her have all failed in reaching their destinations ever since She is now becoming angry with me for not writing [...] this account I beg leave to enclose one to her in yours. She has always been most kind to me & even now writes me regularly sends my publications &c although she never hears whether I recieve anything she sends unless she hears it from you I dont know who destroys my letters to her but the above circumstances make me suspicious of certain parties connected with the Mission families at Griqua Town. None of the bretheren here feel in any way satisfied with either M^r or M^{rs} Ross They have most unhappy dispositions & often grieve us all. You saw his letter in the Chronicle. It gives such a false view M^{rs} R. felt ashamed of it & said M^r R. had not written the Directors so, the conver[-]

sion of Baba was as far as instrumentality is concerned to be attribu[...][ted] to M^r Edwards alone. The first day I was in the church I obse[...] Baba weeping under M^r Es preaching. We were all astounded at the change which we were told had taken place in him. But when M^r Etold of his ^ former disparate wickedness M^r R. insisted that ~~that~~ his deeds such as offering to shoot his father were merely boyish tricks. You would imagine that he could preach when he wrote that letter. He cannot even now give an address without reading it & after all that is very little understood by the natives. In common conversation he interlards it with English. The natives have first to guess at what he means I often feel dissatisfied with myself and think there are many far better for this great work who have not been permitted to enter upon[...] it But when I see Ross's [...]seuse I am constrained to think there are some worse [...]. It was a great oversight in M^r Moffat to recommend such a man. M^r Edwards & I & perhaps Nighs will go in the course of a few months to commence a mission among the Bakhatla. I gave you some account of them on a former occasion. [...] it is the Sheffield of the Interior. And very near the spot where J. Campbell faced about to go home. He heard of oven founderies but was not permitted to see them. These are still in existence & belong to the Bakhatla, the reason why they did not allow him to look at them was they were afraid his presence should bewitch the oven. A mishap which

[0004]

always takes place when they blow too hard & burn it. They then take out the cinder & look upon it in consternation. It is clearly bewitched. The evidence is so positive no one can doubt it. It is also near to the spot where Sebegoe with the remains of his tribe have taken up their abode. I smiled when you said you almost trembled to think of my going as far North & into the same dangers as M^r Moffat. I should have trembled too had I been at home & thought of it. But the sense of danger vanishes when you are in a country of lions. I have been as far if not farther on the other side of M^r M's ~~ultimate~~ farthest point North as that is on the other side of Kuruman and in a country too where the lions are so plentiful they are [...] & roar even at midday. The place where M^r M. saw Mosilikatze is about 10 miles on this side of the Bakhatla He has been driven away North by the boors but is still living and destroying the neighbouring tribes as formerly. I walked over the site of his town when I was returning. The whole country was bare the grass having been burned off so I had a good view of the whole & a few human bones scattered about were the only relics I could discover of all the greatness of the tyrant

When I was lately at the Makalaka I saw some of his
people & sent a message to him. One took off an armlet
and gave it me as a token to my nation that I had seen him
& requested I should give him a pair of earrings to be a
token to Mosilikatze that he had seen me. I gave him two
black buttons & I suppose ere now they have been seen by M
It will be dangerous for [...]Moffat to go near
Mosilikatze for he thinks [...] & M^r M to have
apprised him of the atta[...]ck] of the boors before it took
place

Care of Rev^d D^r PhillipCape Town

Benjamin T. Pyne Esq^{re}
Wildingtree Ongar
Essex
for M^{rs} Pyne