

Women Writing Home,
1700-1920:
*Female Correspondence
Across the British
Empire*

6 Volume Set

Edited by
Charlotte J. Macdonald



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Africa

Edited by
Silke Strickrodt



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Women Writing Home,
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*Female Correspondence across
the British Empire*

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*Female Correspondence across
the British Empire*

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Volume 1
Africa

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 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2006 by Pickering & Chatto (Publishers) Limited

Published 2016 by Routledge

4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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Introduction and notes © Silke Strickrodt 2006

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BRITISH LIBRARY CATALOGUING IN PUBLICATION DATA

Women writing home, 1700–1920: female correspondence across the British Empire

1. Women colonists – Correspondence 2. English letters – Women authors 3. English letters – 18th century 4. English letters – 19th century 5. Great Britain – Colonies – History – Sources

I. Stierstorfer, Klaus

920.7'2'09171241

ISBN-13: 978-1-85196-793-3 (set)

Contents

Acknowledgments	vii
General Introduction	ix
Bibliography	xxv
Introduction	xxvii
Note on the Texts	xlvi
Bibliography	xlix
Part I: Sabina Peter Clemens, Sierra Leone, 1851–63	3
Part II: Henrietta Elise König/Knödler, Sierra Leone, 1860–5	41
Part III: Lady Florence Dixie, South Africa, 1881	73
Part IV: Jane F. Moir, Lake Nyasa and Lake Tanganyika, 1890	179
Part V: Ada Slatter, Transvaal, East African Protectorate and Rhodesia, 1904–21	207
Editorial Notes	249
Appendix: Illustrations	299



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Acknowledgments

The editor of this volume thanks the Church Missionary Society for permission to publish the correspondences of Sabina Peter Clemens and Henrietta Elise König, and the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland for permission to publish the correspondence of Ada Slatter.

In the preparation of this volume, I have benefited greatly from the advice and support of many individuals and institutions, whom I want thank in this place. First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to Adam Jones and Robin Law for their unceasing encouragement and for the inspiration and guidance they have provided ever since I first worked with them. Their numerous editions of sources for African history have set the standard of quality which I strive to achieve, and this volume is a first step in this direction. I am also immensely grateful to Christopher Fyfe for his interest in my work and for sharing his great experience in African history and editing with me. His *History of Sierra Leone* was an invaluable tool for annotating the two correspondences from Sierra Leone in this volume. I owe a great debt of gratitude to John McCracken for his enthusiasm and for generously sharing his expertise in the history of Malawi, from which particularly my annotations of Jane Moir's correspondence have profited, as well as for chasing up references to obscure trees for me, and for explaining the intricacies of military ranks and rituals. Furthermore, I should like to thank the following individuals for sharing their specialist knowledge, providing literature or looking up information in libraries that were not accessible to me: Glennis Byron, Fiona Chalamanda, Katja Füllberg-Stolberg, Annemie Joubert, Alan Kirkaldy, Alexandra Lembert, Lutz Marten and Phia Steyn. Heike Grunow and Lisa Heemann have provided invaluable help by scanning and transcribing the correspondences of Lady Florence Dixie and Jane Moir.

Very special thanks go to the following individuals for their moral support as well as for the actual assistance they have given. Alison Kennedy investigated women's correspondences in Scottish libraries for possible inclusion in this volume and read and commented on the introduction. Jana Strickrodt provided me with a home during my research trips in London and shared her knowledge of the publishing industry.

René Kriegler facilitated my work immeasurably by bringing my computer technology up to date and also assisted in preparing the bibliography.

I'd like to express my sincere thanks also to the series editor, Klaus Stierstorfer, for taking me on board this interesting project and for his generous encouragement, as well as to Pickering & Chatto's editor, Mark Pollard, for his patience.

I greatly appreciate the assistance I have been given by the staff of the various libraries and archives where I worked, particularly of the Special Collections Department of the University Library of the University of Birmingham, the National Library of Scotland, the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, the British Library, the library of the Institute of Asian and African Studies of the Humboldt University and the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, Germany. Last but not least, I gratefully acknowledge the financial support given in the form of a travel grant by the 'Frauenförderung' of the Institute of Asian and African Studies of the Humboldt University in Berlin.

Silke Strickrodt

General Introduction

Women Writing Home is a six-volume series collecting women's correspondences from places all over the former British Empire. The letters included here were written from the various colonies to what their writers variously perceived or constructed as their home in Britain. The series assembles the most comprehensive edition to date in its field. Academic specialists from a broad spectrum of arts and humanities disciplines, from history to economics, from literature to cultural and gender studies, will find a fascinating body of texts to work with. Supported by modern, scholarly editing complete with annotations and introductions, these texts offer a ground on which to test and investigate women's constructions of their place and identity in the most diverse colonial settings. For all their diversity, however, practically all of the contexts in which these colonial women found themselves share the common characteristics of being dominated by male prerogatives and male discourses as well as, frequently, of being conceived against what was generally considered a hostile, or at least alien, 'other' environment.

Narrowing the selective focus of this series to letters 'written home' has multiple objectives. Here are not only documents of colonial history, but, more excitingly, representations of the state of the Empire in far-off lands sent home to the metropolitan centre in Britain and, very occasionally, to other cultural centres established as 'home'. Apart from being open to the question of what women's situations were like and how they themselves perceived the colonial context and society where they were living at the time, often against their own preferences, all of these letters can be read as specifically constructed and often highly selective impressions of what the authors wanted their addressees at home to accept as their colonial way of life and situation. Precisely because of the predominantly private nature of the letters included, they have a biographic vividness, accessibility of style and often homely confidentiality which makes the collection such an eminently readable and 'researchable' body of texts. Their appeal as first-hand testimony to how women projected their feelings about, actions in and negotiations with their daily, often onerous routines, social boredom or permanent anxiety, and the general political and cultural context in which they found

themselves is considerable. The impact of these letters on the perception and construction of what the British at the time considered as their ‘home’ will equally appear remarkably intensive.

These letters, therefore, must be conceived as samples of a major factor of influence on the perception of life in the outposts of the ‘dominions’ and of the situation of the British Empire as a whole. Despite their mostly private nature and generally small circle of readers in terms of the circulation of an individual letter, the sheer quantity of such epistolary feedback pouring in from the colonies with every returning ship making port in Britain can only be vaguely guessed at from the immense richness of correspondences which survives in archives both in Britain and in the former colonies today. It is only a small fraction of that surviving material which has been edited and accounted for so far. As this private correspondence is mostly addressed to family at home, it usually does not reach people in authority in a direct sense and its political and cultural impact cannot be measured by the same historical instruments as, for instance, the reception of a commissioner’s report on a specific issue in a colony. The striking characteristic of these letters written home from the colonies is precisely their well-nigh omnipresence permeating British cultural history from the eighteenth century through to the middle of the twentieth century. Much profitable research still lies ahead in this field, and all the editors in this series can hope for is to offer appetizers and incitements to further prospecting work. It seems likely that, even from today’s knowledge of these resources, their cultural importance may eventually outweigh the historical prominence of well-publicized commissioner’s reports and other official, political documents, especially where the female point of view is concerned. In this general introduction, some of the prominent topics reflected in the selection processes in the individual volumes of the series will be broached to find their fuller treatment and documentation in the respective volumes themselves. As indicated in the series title, the problem primarily addressed is threefold. First, questions of genre as well as the historical processes and circumstances of letter-writing throughout the British Empire in general are connected with; second, issues of gender and how they unfold in this specific context; finally, and again intimately connected with the former topics, the wider field of perceptions of ‘home’ is reflected on, questioned or rebuilt in these letters. Comments on the choice of the constitution of the series in its individual volumes with their specific interests will conclude this introduction, together with general remarks on source texts, editorial policies and procedures.

Writing Women: Genre

The letter as a genre was brought to Britain by the Romans.¹ Although the letter (as the etymology of the English word suggests) is practically as old as writing itself, the Romans had particularly cultivated its various forms and uses. They had also established the infrastructure of a highly efficient postal system, the speed of which was only to be improved upon in Britain with the arrival of the railway. Obviously, the flowering of the genre in Roman times can, among other factors, be ascribed to the administrative challenges of controlling the Roman Empire and its enormous territorial expansion. Letters surviving from Roman times in Britain are, as can be expected, mainly written by men and concern military matters or administrative issues. Some private correspondences are also preserved, however, and there are even a few letters by women, such as the letters sent to Sulpicia Lepidina, wife of the prefect of the ninth cohort of Batavians, by three women friends.² Philip Beale comments: 'Such finds [...] provide a fascinating, sometimes intimate, picture of the people who lived at that time'.³

Fast-forwarding in history to the times when the former Roman colony Britannia had expanded into an Empire spanning all continents and claimed succession to the Roman legacy according to the idea of the *translatio imperii*, many aspects of the imperial correspondence still look familiar: the greater part of the surviving letters are concerned with administrative, military or business matters, and these are almost exclusively written by men. Letters of this description still formed the backbone of controlling and administering an empire, and the connections of transport and logistics provided by the military, administrative and commercial infrastructure also served as a useful channel for private communication.

From the late seventeenth century onwards, the aspect of letters 'written home' and bringing news from foreign lands, but also initiating reflections on the 'home' country, was highlighted by its use in fictitious or semi-fictitious works with various literary and thematic pretensions. Blaise Pascal used the set-up of letters written from the 'province' to the 'metropolis' for his defence of Jansenism in his *Lettres Provinciales* (1656–7); Giovanni Paolo Marana's (1642–93) *Letters Writ by a Turkish Spy* (first translated into English in 1687) boosted the genre of pseudo-foreign letters, here purported to be written by a Turkish spy who lived for forty-five years in Paris and sent reports on life in various European countries, including England, home to Turkey. Similar approaches can be found in Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* (1721) or, in Britain, in Mary Wortley Montagu's *Turkish Letters* (1763). These widely read and highly popular works had, of course, a significant influence of the self-awareness of all correspondents writing from abroad, both in form and

style, and the attention paid to describing and writing home about foreign lands received new impulses from these works. Travelling itself also became easier in the course of the eighteenth century and the number of travel books and diaries describing travels and extended stays in foreign countries rose, always written with a view to publication and distribution to readers 'at home'.

The special circumstances of communication by letter between Britain and the colonies of the Empire furthermore influenced the epistolary format at the time. While written communication in London could be as little as a line on a card and thus might be called the predecessor of today's phone call or email, letters from the colonies took a long time to travel and opportunities to convey them could be sporadic and hazardous. The paucity of such opportunity and the length of time it took the letter to arrive often resulted in writing processes spanning several days, sometimes weeks, so that it approached in form and content the genre conventions of the diary or, respectively, the travelogue. The letters included in this series were, however, almost exclusively written to specific addressees.⁴ William H. Sherman provides a definition for the genre of the letter he uses for his research on Renaissance letters from America; it is also helpful here:

For a text to count as a 'letter' here it must not simply be dedicated to particular individuals (in prefatory epistles or verses) or directed to a particular company or community (often named in the title), but written to specific addressees, signed and dated from specific (mostly foreign) places, and written throughout in epistolary form.⁵

The letters included in this series were thus written for a specific communicative purpose with the clear intention to send them at the next opportunity and not for collection into a longer, coherent narrative and perhaps even with later publication in mind. This distinctive feature becomes particularly obvious towards the ending of many letters printed in this series. Although the time span for answering a letter could be several weeks, it might also be the case that the next opportunity in the form of an outgoing ship came unexpectedly or at a different date from the one announced or anticipated. Although the travel times of sea voyages continued to get shorter throughout the period under consideration in the series, there were still numerous imponderables which made timing and delivery unreliable, not to speak of further complications as well as communicative opportunities occasioned by wars and other disorders in sea and land traffic. Thus, in times of war, fleets might be sent unexpectedly which could offer welcome transport for post to and from the colonies, but packet ships might also be lost or sea routes might be closed as an effect of warfare or local disturbances. This explains the seemingly paradoxical fact that letters, obviously written over several

days or even weeks, with sections that are written like diary entries, suddenly come to a conclusion in a hurried note because they had to reach a ship about to leave the port. It is obvious and has been duly noted by volume editors (see for instance the Introduction to the Volume 2) that the greater the distance to the letters' destinations, the more they fell prey to the passing of time, and the news they brought might be history by the time they arrived. No doubt, writers' awareness of the distance in time and space to be covered which can variously be observed in letters printed here had a number of consequences which call for further study and consideration.

While the writers of 'official' letters – be they military, administrative or commercial – were still almost exclusively male in the 'imperial postings' during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the proportion of women in the private correspondences fulfilling the prerequisites for inclusion in this series is substantial. As Rebecca Earle points out, letters 'provided a means of expression for more marginal members of society'.⁶ This clearly refers to the majority of women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries still excluded from the public sphere, at least from the historian's perspective. These women's lives become accessible and can be studied through the private correspondences which exist in great numbers. Although a 'special relationship between women and epistolarity'⁷ appears undeniable, it is also, as the various studies in Earle's volume show, a highly complex one. Women's personal correspondences are neither, as Earle notes, simply 'windows into the soul of the author' – a view widely held in the eighteenth century and leading to interesting developments in the epistolary genre,⁸ nor can the conviction of the superiority and particular excellence of the female talent in that genre – again an eighteenth-century development⁹ – be upheld without qualification. What is more, introducing any kind of blanket gender specifics may occlude the view on letters by very exceptional women writers, more frequent from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards, who do not fit gender stereotypes but have found their own way outside of these, be it professionally in men's domains as missionaries, doctors and lawyers such as Marie Elizabeth Hayes or Cornelia Sorabji, whose letters are printed in the Volume 4, or as highly independent personalities shaping their own ways and lives in the colonies in various walks of life.

Gendered Homes and the British Empire

T. W. Robertson's comedy *Ours*, which was first performed at the Prince of Wales' Theatre on 15 September 1866, is a 'cup-and-saucer-drama' as established on the London stage by this playwright. Robertson's major dramas of the 1860s have acquired the epithet of 'cup-and-saucer' for

their realistic stage presentation of the Victorian domestic interior, where the set in the Prince of Wales' Theatre not only consisted of real furniture and tastefully designed drawing rooms, but also had the full range of household paraphernalia to go with it, including the eponymous china cups and saucers. In his drama, Robertson explores current social issues in upper (and upwardly mobile) middle-class Victorian society, frequently contrasting 'traditional' values of honour and trust with what he casts as 'modern' considerations of money and commercialism, especially in the 'marriage market'. *Ours*, however, is a cup-and-saucer play with a twist. It takes the audience from the elaborately furnished drawing room at Lady Shendryn's 'in the neighbourhood of [London's] Birdcage Walk'¹⁰ in Act II to the equally detailed interior of 'a hut built of boulder and mud' on the Crimean peninsula in the middle of the Crimean War (1854–6) in Act III. The transfer is necessitated by the posting to the Crimean of the regiment (referred to as 'ours' by its members and their wives) where the main male characters of the play serve in various ranks. As the curtain of the third act rises, Tom Robertson's *Ours* becomes pertinent in the context of *Women Writing Home* in at least two interesting respects.

As Act III opens, Angus MacAlister 'is discovered, very shabby ... seated at table, reading by light of candle letters which are lying on an open travelling-desk'. Although his attention is all geared to news about the lady he adores, much of the information his letters obviously convey is of daily life 'at home': 'Dear Mac, – London is terribly slow, no parties, no nothing ...'.¹¹ The letters with news from home serve as his comfort; they sustain him in his sad ruminations abroad and with their memory refreshed by one of his frequent re-readings of them, he goes off to join the battle. This first part of Act III could be entitled 'men without women in foreign lands'. Then the situation dramatically changes – and here is the second and most important aspect of relevance in this act: three ladies variously connected to the military men as wife (Lady Shendryn) or (potential) paramours (Blanche and Mary) have determined to travel from England to the Crimea and visit the men in camp. This (historically rather fantastic) ploy used by Robertson serves, of course, several dramatic ends and needs in the context of the play. However, the one effect of interest here is the change which the arrival of the ladies brings about. The rough hut serving as military quarters is changed into a home away from home. While the men are off to 'work' (that is, battle) and the women courageously demand to be led to a vista point where they can watch their regiment, Mary Netley is left behind to prepare dinner, together with Chalcot, who is wounded in the leg. Left to her own devices, Mary performs the climactic feat of homeliness in devising how to cook a 'roly-poly pudding' under the difficulties of

camp life. Chalcot is fascinated: 'A roly-poly pudding in the Crimea! It's a fairy-tale!'¹² The following preparation of the pudding symbolically enacts the process of transformation wrought by female companionship in this foreign land; the lid of a barrel is turned into a paste-board; a pioneer's apron is worn to protect the lady's dress and Chalcot tears a leg from a three-legged stool to be turned into a rolling pin. On the men's return from battle, all assemble around the table for dinner, Lady Shendryn happily reconciled to her husband and the two young ladies Mary and Blanche meanwhile engaged to Chalcot and Angus respectively. Angus sums it all up when he says to Blanche at the end: 'The place is not the same now you are in it'.¹³

What happens in this short act in Robertson's comedy combines numerous features of the colonial venture as it was perceived in Britain at the time. Men paving the way and doing the rough work of fighting secure a place for a rough but robust dwelling place. This is the point when the women come in and turn it into a genuinely British home. The transformation is achieved by two changes. First of all, by the arrival of women in itself: no British home, it is suggested, is worth the name without a lady in the house; and second, by the women's knack of producing a homely atmosphere through their attention to detail and the paraphernalia of homely comforts, such as furniture, clothing and food – symbolized by the roly-poly pudding in Robertson's play. Although the setting here is a war camp and not, strictly speaking, a colony, Anne McClintock's remark in her seminal work *Imperial Leather* puts it in a nutshell: 'colonial space became domesticated'.¹⁴

Robertson's reflections of the interrelationships between colonialism or empire on the one hand and the British society he analyses on the other hand clearly merit a more detailed reading than can be provided here. It is evident, however, that Robertson assigns a central role to women in the construction of a British home, both in Britain and abroad. Britishness as emblemized in the home, Robertson suggests, has a neatly defined gender specificity connecting and shaping the British Empire. What is more, the separation of home and abroad, in *Ours*, has a salutary effect on Britain's social economy, as the truly British values only emerge in the marriage matches forged under duress in the foreign land, promising to reinvigorate British society at home on their return.

It is, however, precisely the dichotomy between 'home and away' as it shapes Robertson's play and, as it were in quotation, forms the title of this series that has come under scrutiny in recent research in the field. While the cultural constructedness and volatility of especially middle-class ideas of 'home' have been pointed out,¹⁵ the discussion has also been taken further with a view to imperial history. On the one hand,

criticism has been levelled against conceptions of Britishness in British history and culture, without taking into consideration the implications of Empire inscribed in them. On the other hand, traditional or ‘old’ imperial histories along the lines of Seeley’s classic work,¹⁶ and calls for a ‘new imperial history’ have been raised and answered, as in Kathleen Wilson’s collection of that title. In her editor’s introduction, Wilson sums up the developments for British studies:

In British studies, most of this exciting new work has been influenced by a rather remarkable re-discovery of the importance of empire in the British past, and a simultaneous interest in the methodologies of social and cultural history and criticism to address questions about identity and difference in imperial settings.¹⁷

Antoinette Burton, in her edition of essays entitled *After the Imperial Turn* (published the year before Wilson’s and not yet taken into account by Wilson), takes the innovative thrust even further, as she defines her volume’s title phrase:

We take ‘imperial turn’ to mean the accelerated attention to the impact of histories of imperialism on metropolitan societies in the wake of decolonization, pre- and post-1968 racial struggle and feminism in the last quarter century.

She goes on to point out that, what has been provoked by critics such as Said, Gilroy, Hall or Spivak, ‘is not a turn toward empire so much as a *critical return* to the connections between metropole and colony, race and nation, which imperial apologists and dissenters have appreciated at least since the nineteenth century, if not before’.¹⁸ Burton identifies the repercussions of what has been called ‘new imperial studies’ or, in Kathleen Wilson’s phrase, a ‘new imperial history’, in the fact that such work ‘materializes the traffic of colonial goods, ideas, and people across metropolitan borders and indeed throws into question the very Victorian distinctions between “home” and “away” that defined the imagined geography of empire in the nineteenth century’.¹⁹ Colonial and imperial history, Burton suggests, is always written against the imagined, seemingly naturalized entity of nation. She therefore summarizes the trajectory of further research in the following question:

Is it possible to challenge the dichotomies of ‘home’ and ‘away’ that underwrite national and imperial histories; to merge center and periphery and posit and imaginative and material space where metropole and colony emerge simultaneously, rather than in a teleological, imperialized sequence?²⁰

Title and texts of the *Women Writing Home* series do not, it has to be emphasized, give a direct answer to such questions, as they both share in the problem Burton and others have pointed out and, at the same time,

offer interesting material to tackle its central issues. Thus, the series can, of course, be read as a documentary of major routes of communication feeding back from the colonies to Britain. With its gender specifics and the generally private nature of the correspondences added in, this body of texts can show how, in a kind of hermeneutic circle, 'Britishness' was exported to the colonies and how women's colonial experiences with the 'otherness' of the foreign environment was reflected back to Britain. Thinking about the letters sent home as bridging the geographic and cultural distance between colony and metropolis, however, is open to the critique proposed by the new imperial history that the 'home-and-away' dichotomy is not a natural 'given', but a cultural and political construct. Looking at the dichotomy from a hermeneutic perspective can already suggest that neither end can be understood on its own, and that the contrastive poles are dependent on each other. But this view presupposes two poles of a dichotomy which are, for all their hermeneutic interdependence, still conceived as generally homogeneous entities. Thus, positions held by new imperial historicists are still more radical in that they question the representative quality of the dichotomy as such. They therefore try to avoid studies of either metropolis or colony or, indeed, their interrelationships as such, but propound investigations of the discourses which have given currency to these differentiations and examine the functions (and social and political groups) which the naturalization of a home-and-away contrast might serve. Thus, the letters printed in this series may not (only) be read as bridging the long geographic distances from the colonies to the British 'home', but should (also) be understood as complicit with, and indeed instrumental in, constructing this dichotomy.

If, for example, we apply this critique to the gender-specific stereotype of women's colonial mission as portrayed in Robertson's play, the positive image of the specifically female element in the construction of a British home in the colonies naturalizes and underpins this aspect of a gender stereotype as such, deflecting its critical reflection both in Britain and in the colony or, indeed, anywhere else. The conclusion to be drawn for the rationale of the *Women Writing Home* series consists in the recommendation to read its texts not (only) as straightforward historical documents (if such things exist) illustrative of the life of British women in the colonies, but to understand that these letters can be considered within wider cultural spheres which are not necessarily structured by the discourses of empire and colonialism or, indeed, the categories of the nation state as such.

After taking into account these important departures in recent scholarship, however, at least three qualifications should not be overlooked. First, the reconsideration of the metropolis-colony relation in 'new

imperial studies' does not abolish the existence of that relation on the discursive levels of the letters printed here. The texts presented in this series therefore remain a prime basis both for studies of a more traditional approach and for those setting out to critique them. Although doubt may have been cast on the validity of the home-and-away paradigm today, the contrast constituted a major cultural pattern in colonial and even post-colonial situations; it therefore constitutes an important object of historical study and an essential intertextual reference for literary and cultural studies of those periods. Second, even today, the scholarly pioneering set out by work such as Antoinette Burton's has by no means been universally accepted, as documented by David Cannadine's frequently quoted book *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire*.²¹ Finally, applying a critical focus or strong theoretical interest to a body of texts can entail the danger of neglecting the variety and diversity of the material in question and reading it against a more or less rigidly preconceived pattern. This is, however, what readers of this series will note above all beyond the common features of letters from the colonies written 'home' (mostly to Britain): the understanding of colony and empire, the cultural and political situations and the overall contexts in general of the letters reprinted here will be found highly heterogeneous and hence difficult to subsume under any cover-all conceptualization. This diversity will already be noted in the contents and structure of the individual volumes in this series, part of which is due to the volume editors' choices and the letters suggesting themselves for inclusion; but part of the diversity is also due to the choice of focus within the conception of the series. This must be briefly expounded.

The Series: Volume Selections and Emphases

Women Writing Home is a series of substantial quantity and scope, its six volumes adding up to some two thousand pages of edited text and covering all continents (except Europe). Nevertheless, the selection of material included here can hardly claim to be universally representative in its field. This has partly to do with the scholarly dispute set out in the preceding section, making it difficult to put forward a rigid definition of the kind of text which could be the object of representation in this series. More obviously, however, it has to do with the masses of material from which volume profiles had to be gleaned and from which volume editors then put together the correspondences they wanted to include. Finally, the series rationale of reprinting only material which is not readily available in print today is yet another warping factor preventing the selection from being representative in the way anthologies are expected to be. A number of important correspondences from many parts of the British Empire have already been printed, so that the series can also be

thought of as part of a larger publishing venture in which more and more letters having criss-crossed the British Empire are given the care and consideration of scholarly editions.

Women Writing Home, the title of the series, gives coherence to the type of material which readers can expect to find in it. For all the qualifications concerning representativeness, the title also indicates the common basis for the selective processes which led to the inclusion of the material which eventually did make it into the individual volumes. All material included more or less conforms to the epistolary genre; all letters were exclusively written by women; all letters have, in some sense, been written home; and all letters were sent from colonies of the former British Empire; all letters, finally, were written within the period reaching from the eighteenth century to just after World War I, a choice due to the historical development of British imperial expansion, which only started in earnest in the eighteenth century, had its high times during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and began to decline perceptibly from the years of the Great War onwards.

The assembling of letters which, although sent from all over the British Empire, still conform to the same generic, thematic and gender patterns results in a sweepingly globalizing approach. It is suggestive of a homogenizing perspective of a *pax Britannica* spanning the continents and engendering comparable cultural situations around the world from which women would be writing home to Britain. The 'new imperial studies' have alerted us, however, that such an approach runs the risk of adopting and redoubling the imperial world view and hence is in urgent need of a critical counterweight and qualifications. One option could, of course, have been to attempt to erase the traces of the 'imperial' world order in the structure of the series. Instead of introducing volume boundaries which frequently reproduce Britain's imperial maps, correspondences could have been grouped according to entirely different themes and interests, cutting across these boundaries by either purposively transgressing them or by virtually ignoring them and setting up new focal points of interest.

This is not the choice taken in the set-up of *Women Writing Home*. Descriptions of the six volumes in this series – Africa, Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand and USA – originate from a compromise of several, sometimes conflicting considerations. While keeping the ongoing discussion in recent studies of the cultural history of the British Empire in mind, some of the volumes still reflect imperial history and its political and cultural contexts; they present these contexts from the historical perspective of the correspondents, leaving them open for different readings and deconstructions: India was often described as the jewel in Britain's imperial crown; the colonial background to nation formation

in the USA and Canada are obvious and well-known, producing a boundary across the North American continent which today is fiercely debated by First Nations such as the Mohawks, whose former territories covered areas on both sides of this frontier; the histories of Australia and New Zealand have been drastically shaped by British colonization, while 'Africa' as a volume title is first and foremost a summary description of the number of Britain's much more diverse colonial ventures in that continent, as compared to the larger colonial commitments in America, India or, in fact, Australia. As much as any of the other volumes, the Africa volume could have easily been expanded to an entire series by itself.

While the imperial mapping of the colonies constitutes an important context of the letters printed here and largely reproduced in the volume titles, efforts have been made in all volumes to pay close attention to the regional and local specificities of often very different colonial situations in different parts of the Empire, from the settler colonies of North America to the feeling of isolation pervading the small group of British soldiers and civil servants trying to control and dominate the entire Indian population, and to the heterogeneous geopolitical and cultural situation and diverse British political and economic involvement in Africa. Likewise, the periods covered by the volumes, within the broader framework of the range of the series, vary significantly. Apart from the volume editors' choices and thematic preferences, this is, first and foremost, due to the very different histories of colonization to which they respond.

Finally, it cannot be denied that both some element of chance and very pragmatic considerations have had an influence on the final shape of each volume as well as of the series as a whole. This begins with the availability and willingness of a specialist in the field to undertake the selection and editing of a specific volume, the scope of which was more or less predetermined by the series rationale as a whole. The conception and formation of individual volume profiles depended on the material that could be used in the edition. Although there certainly was no lack in the quantity of letters, both in manuscript form or published but out of print, correspondences that were found suitable for inclusion by the editors were still a long way from making it into the pages of this series. The establishment of reliable copy texts could be as much a hurdle as the vexed copyright problem, especially with unprinted manuscripts. Despite the help from library staff and other sources, it was often extremely difficult to establish the current copyright holders of the letters. Sometimes, protracted searches led to no result, while in some cases copyright owners suddenly came forward when they saw letters by one of their ancestors announced for publication on the Pickering & Chatto

website. Although copyright clearance was the responsibility of the volume editors, it can only be repeated here that all possible efforts have been undertaken to ensure the fullest conformity with copyright laws, national and international. In some cases, however, this still meant printing letters without tracking a living descendent of the family of the original letter-writer. Finally, volume editors have shared the frustrating experience of coming across the most interesting persons who have, according to biographical material on them, written copiously and frequently – only to discover that their correspondence itself is nowhere to be found and has either been lost or is still waiting for its discovery in the proverbial box in the attic.

Editorial Policies

It is important to note that this series is not strictly an anthology in the sense that it offers selections from various correspondences to provide a representative survey of a specific period, area or thematic field. Completeness of entire sets of letters by individual correspondents has been given a high priority throughout. Occasionally, this priority had to be compromised where bodies of available texts would have been too large for inclusion (for example, the correspondence of Cornelia Sorabji in the Volume 4 would fill some dozen volumes by itself). Similarly, disparate matter within a correspondence, which did not fit within the thematic framework of the series, had sometimes to be excluded as well. Thus, some collections of manuscript correspondences include letters not sent ‘home’ or not sent from the colonies. This is frequently the case when letters from the time before the departure to the colonies belong to a collection.

Each volume of the series provides a full editorial apparatus with an introduction on the historical situation and context from which the letters were written and, as far as is available, biographical data on the letter-writers and their families. A note on the texts forms a set part of this introductory matter, which provides a brief outline of the status and condition of the manuscripts or edition used as copy texts and to outline editorial principles and procedures in further specification for each individual volume beyond the series conventions. The introduction is concluded by a bibliography of texts quoted or used in the volume. The editorial apparatus in the main body of edited texts is provided in end-notes, which offer information on persons and names wherever they could be verified, explanations of geographic details and place names as well as information on those local but more complex editorial problems which evade clarification through standard editorial markers in the text.

The structure of each volume thus consists of three main parts: the introduction with notes on the texts, the main part with the edition of letters and the endnotes containing editorial details. A full consolidated index appears in Volume 6.

Throughout the series, the overriding editorial principle has been to produce a readable text in print, made accessible by approaching the standard of modern spelling and punctuation while at the same time preserving something of the original flavour of the letters and the styles in which they were written. This has led to a number of compromises without, however, damaging the unity and editorial cohesion of the series as a whole. In detail, the general editorial standards of the edition include the following principles. Punctuation has been modernized throughout, so that sentences have been structured and subdivided for better intelligibility. Many of the manuscript letters were sparsely punctuated and some had run-on sentences over pages on end while others used dashes for all kinds of requirements. The scarcity of space against which letter-writers usually had to struggle led, among other things, to a scarcity or, in some cases, complete absence of paragraphing. Editors have structured the printed pages by cautiously introducing paragraphs wherever obvious breaks in the thematic flow of the letters suggested it. Orthography has been silently amended where mistakes were evidently due to infelicities such as misspellings or doubling of words. Also, variants in the spelling of words have been adjusted into the consistent use of one form; where, for example, both ‘shew’ and ‘show’ were used in a collection of letters, all such instances would have been changed into ‘show’. Capitalization has been generally modernized, but was retained in some instances where it was obviously used not only for reasons of historical orthography, but also as a means of emphasis or marking. Place names have been slightly modernized wherever this appeared helpful, but were not generally replaced by the modern names or spellings. So ‘Bombay’ would be retained in letters from India and not replaced by ‘Mumbai’ as today’s more acceptable variant. Where specific varieties of English were discernible in correspondences, the policy was to make them internally consistent; over-homogenizing into ‘standard British English’ was not considered as desirable. Editorial abbreviations are listed as part of the introductory matter. The frequent abbreviations in the edited texts which are due to manuscript style, but also, again are an effect of the lack of writing space on paper, have been provided in full in print, except for those in common usage in print today. Thus ‘s.^d’ and ‘rec.^d’ would have been replaced by ‘should’ and ‘received’; ampersands would be converted to ‘and’ in the running text but retained in company names, while ‘etc.’ would have been left unchanged.

Wherever editorial intervention became necessary in the edition itself, the volume editors had the following markers at their disposal:

word	authorial deletion
<word>	authorial deletion restored by editor
{word}	authorial insertion
<i>word</i>	authorial emphasis
[word]	editorial insertion
[?word]	uncertain editorial reading
[<i>word</i>]	editorial correction

However, these editorial processes were only explicitly marked whenever they were, firstly, noteworthy (i.e. the correction did not concern an obvious spelling mistake); secondly, when they were not part of a general editorial principle (such as giving an abbreviation in full); or, thirdly, when they were in fact part of a general editorial principle but, for special reasons, required pointing out in a specific instance.

As the greater part of the edited material is taken from original manuscripts, problems of legibility and readability were a widespread experience with all volume editors. Apart from frequently difficult and, again for reasons of space, cramped handwriting, sometimes cross-hatched, the condition of the paper often made emendations and even the odd gap in the transcription unavoidable. The tropical climate in which many of them were written and the long sea voyages most of these letters had undergone very often resulted in stained pages, corruptions at the edges and in the margin areas or faded ink, which made reading doubly difficult. All volume editors still agreed that this material authenticity in their own reading experiences was a pleasure in itself and the feeling of closeness to the writers, however illusory, worth the considerable effort it entailed.

Klaus Stierstorfer

Notes

- ¹ See Philip Beale, *England's Mail: Two Millennia of Letter Writing* (Stroud, Tempus Publishing, 2005), pp. 13–29.
- ² *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- ⁴ For further important differentiations in this field, see Amy Elizabeth Smith, 'Travel Narratives and the Familiar Letter Form in the Mid-Eighteenth Century', *Studies in Philology*, 95 (1998), pp. 77–96.
- ⁵ William H. Sherman, 'Distant Relations: Letters from America, 1492–1677', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 66.3–4 (2003), pp. 225–45; p. 226.
- ⁶ Rebecca Earle, 'Introduction: Letters, Writers and the Historian', in Rebecca Earle (ed.), *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers, 1600–1945* (Aldershot, Brookfield, Singapore, Sydney, Ashgate, 1999), pp. 1–12; p. 1.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

- ⁸ Ibid., p. 5.
- ⁹ See Elizabeth Goldsmith, *Writing the Female Voice: Essays on Epistolary Literature* (Boston, Northeastern University Press, 1989), and Earle, 'Introduction', p. 5.
- ¹⁰ T. W. Robertson, *Ours*, in Michael R. Booth (ed.), *T. W. Robertson: Six Plays* (Ashover, Amber Lane Press, 1980), pp. 57–116; p. 79.
- ¹¹ Ibid., p. 93.
- ¹² Ibid., p. 107.
- ¹³ Ibid., p. 115.
- ¹⁴ Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York, Routledge, 1995), p. 36.
- ¹⁵ See for instance Richard Helgerson, *Adulterous Alliances: Home, State, and History in Early Modern European Drama and Painting* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2000).
- ¹⁶ John Robert Seeley, *The Expansion of England* (London, Macmillan, 1883).
- ¹⁷ Kathleen Wilson, 'Introduction: Histories, Empires, Modernities', in Kathleen Wilson (ed.), *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire 1660–1840* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 1–26; p. 2.
- ¹⁸ Antoinette Burton, 'Introduction: On the Inadequacy and the Indispensability of the Nation', in Antoinette Burton (ed.), *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking with and through the Nation* (Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 1–23; p. 2 (emphasis in the original).
- ¹⁹ Ibid., p. 5.
- ²⁰ Ibid., p. 11.
- ²¹ David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001); see Antoinette Burton's comments on the book, Burton, 'Introduction', p. 9.

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Introduction

The European experience of Africa was multifaceted, reflecting the latter continent's great geopolitical and cultural heterogeneity. British colonial activities began at different times and took different forms in various parts of Africa. The settlement in Sierra Leone was formed in 1787 as a result of the abolitionist and missionary efforts, coupled with the British government's endeavours to remove the 'Black Poor' from Britain. In Southern Africa, the British colonial presence began with the seizure of the Cape from the Dutch for strategic reasons during the French Revolutionary wars. Egypt, on the other hand, was not occupied by the British until 1882, although it had been important to British imperial interests much earlier. In West and East Africa, British empire-building from the mid-nineteenth century was closely bound up with campaigns for the abolition of the slave trade, the creation of a 'legitimate' export trade and the perceived need to civilize and Christianize Africa.

European first-hand experience of Africa was very limited before the mid-nineteenth century. Before the beginning of the century most contacts were made as a result of the slave trade, and the European presence in Africa, with the exception of South Africa, was mainly restricted to coastal settlements. The interior was almost completely unknown, as the interest in the scientific exploration of the continent began only in the 1780s and was much impeded by the high European mortality rate due to the prevalence of diseases, especially malaria. The discovery of quinine as a prophylactic in the treatment of malaria in the mid-nineteenth century increased the chance of survival for Europeans and thus made possible the exploration of the African interior.¹

Even rarer was female experience of the African continent, because both the European trade with Africa and the exploration of the African interior were exclusively male domains. The few European women who ventured to Africa before the mid-nineteenth century did so almost exclusively as companions or assistants of their husbands.² It was only with the increased missionary activity in the first half of the nineteenth century that women became active in Africa in their own right. After that, European women visited Africa as part of the human colonial

infrastructure for various reasons and in a variety of roles. They travelled to Africa as teachers, missionaries, traders, administrators' wives, explorers and tourists. This volume seeks to do justice to this diversity by selecting samples of correspondence by women in different roles and from different backgrounds, who visited different regions of this vast continent.

The Principles of Selection

The selection of the letters contained in this volume was based upon a fairly rigorous set of criteria. Firstly, I limited the geographical scope of this volume by excluding correspondences from North Africa, selecting only letters which originated in sub-Saharan Africa. This can be justified by the fact that with regard to the British experience of Africa, North Africa, and particularly Egypt, was quite a different world from sub-Saharan Africa. North Africa was often regarded as part of the Oriental and Mediterranean world. By the mid-nineteenth century, Egypt in particular had become part of the 'trodden path' and the Grand Tour followed Napoleon's campaigns and included the experience of Europe's rediscovery of Egypt's classical heritage. The interest in classical architecture was a major attraction for tourists, among them women, who travelled there on tours carefully organized by travel agents.³ Moreover, there are numerous recorded female correspondences from Egypt, many of which have been republished relatively recently.⁴

Secondly, in accordance with the general publishing policy of these volumes, I have selected correspondences that are authentic. These are letters which have been written 'on the spot' and sent home, wherever that was, rather than accounts which have been merely cast in the form of letters as a literary device.

Thirdly, the length of the correspondences was another factor which influenced the selection. They had to be substantial enough and stand well enough on their own to be included. For this reason, I excluded for example a short letter by the English poetess Letitia Elizabeth Landon, known as L. E. L., written during her ill-starred brief sojourn at Cape Coast Castle, on the Gold Coast, in 1838, which would otherwise have been an interesting addition to this volume.⁵ On the other hand, very long correspondence also had to be excluded, since the policy was to include the complete texts rather than just parts. The correspondence of Julia Sass, the energetic long-term superintendent of the Church Missionary Society's (CMS) Female Institution at Freetown, is one example of letters which were simply too lengthy to include in their entirety.⁶

Fourthly, I have tried to represent the diversity of female experiences of sub-Saharan Africa, their various activities there, and also their differ-

ent backgrounds. It was important, I thought, to consider the periods during which they visited Africa, the places in which they lived and also their different roles there. The correspondences included here all date from the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. This reflects the fact that in this period there were more women in Africa and more correspondences survived. There were, of course, earlier letter-writers whose material survived, notably that of Anna Maria Falconbridge and Lady Anne Barnard, which have been republished relatively recently.⁷ With respect to regional diversity, it will be noted that there are two sets of correspondence from Sierra Leone and another two, or rather one and a half, from southern Africa. This reflects the fact that these were the two territories in Africa with a comparatively strong British presence by the 1830s, including many women.

Lastly, of course, I had to limit myself to letters that were available to me and for which I was then able to obtain permission for publication. I believe there must be many letters written by women from Africa in this period which would have merited inclusion in this volume which are still waiting to be discovered. In this respect, chance also played a role in the selection process. Furthermore, however hard I tried to be rigorous in applying the above-mentioned criteria, there always is the element of subjectivity or arbitrariness in any form of choice, as I have of course included letters which I found interesting. Nevertheless, it is by pure chance that it turned out that none of the five correspondents in this volume is English, three being Scottish, reflecting the large proportion of Scots involved in the British colonial endeavour in Africa, and the other two being of German and Swiss-German descent respectively.⁸ I greatly regret not having included a correspondence written by an African, but I was unable to find a suitable one.⁹

The Correspondences in this Volume **Sabina Peter Clemens and Henrietta Elise König**

The first two sets of correspondence in this volume comprise the letters and reports of Sabina Peter Clemens and Henrietta Elise König, who were both teachers working for the Church Missionary Society in Sierra Leone in the mid-nineteenth century. These correspondences document the important role of women in the missionary endeavour in Africa and the activities of the CMS in Sierra Leone in particular. They are just two examples from the rich treasure trove of the CMS archives in the library of the University of Birmingham. They have been chosen because they give a particularly substantial and interesting insight into the activities, joys, cares, world views and perspectives of female missionaries in Sierra Leone in the period.

The CMS, an Anglican missionary society founded in 1799 by a group of evangelical churchmen and closely associated with the abolitionist endeavour in Britain, had been active in Sierra Leone since 1804. It devoted itself to the Christianization and education of the liberated slaves, also called recaptives, who by the 1820s constituted the largest group of the colony's inhabitants. These were former slaves who had been freed from slave ships captured by the British navy's anti-slave-trade patrols on the West African coast and subsequently had been settled in Sierra Leone. Despite the efforts for its suppression, the transatlantic slave trade continued into the 1860s, and so did the influx of recaptives into the colony. This is documented in Sabina Clemens's letters, which refer to the arrival of recently liberated children at her school in Charlotte. In Sierra Leone the recaptives soon saw the value of European-style education for their advancement in the colony and often made great efforts to be able to afford such schooling for their children. For the girls taught by Clemens and König, just as for girls in contemporary Britain, the objective of a good education was the social advancement which enabled them to secure a favourable marriage match. This aspect of the rewards of education is clear from the letters written by Elise König from the Female Institution in Freetown. The period covered by the two correspondences was a period of prosperity for the colony due to the recaptives' success as traders along the West African coast. There, they assumed the important role of middle-men in the trade between Africans and Europeans. For the CMS too this was a period of expansion, as it followed these trade networks and began its mission work in Yorubaland, in modern Nigeria, where the majority of the recaptives had originated.¹⁰

The correspondences of Sabina Clemens and Elise König are official letters to CMS officials in London and half-yearly reports to CMS committees, which were requested from the superintendents or head teachers of CMS schools in Sierra Leone. The great bulk of the letters were written to Henry Venn, the honorary secretary of the CMS in London (1841–72).¹¹ There are only three exceptions: one letter by Sabina Clemens that was written to Edward Jones, the secretary of the local CMS committee in Sierra Leone (letter of 20 August 1861, pp. 29–30) and two letters in Elise König's correspondence, one of which is addressed to Julia Sass, her friend and predecessor as head of the Female Institution at Freetown (letter of 27 January 1861, pp. 52–6). There is also one to an unidentified member of the CMS parent committee in London (letter of 18 February 1863, pp. 66–7). Although these are official documents, the letters are also very personal testimonies to the special relationship between these single or widowed female missionaries and the secretary of the missionary society. To

him they wrote for advice, appealed for moral support, and complained about their colleagues. This trusting relationship and the intriguingly ambiguous nature of these letters were emphasized by Julia Sass when she wrote: 'Now, dear Mr Venn, these are only my *own private* thoughts, intended for *your private* ear ...'.¹² The presence of Henry Venn looms large behind these letters and is the more intriguing as we can only guess his side of the correspondence which is, sadly, not preserved.

Biographical detail concerning Sabina Clemens and Elise König is very scarce and the little that is known comes mainly from the CMS's *Register of Missionaries* and their own correspondences. Sabina Peter Clemens (née von Ella) was the superintendent of the CMS's Liberated African Girls' School at Charlotte, a settlement of liberated slaves in the mountains, from 1850 to 1864. She was of German descent and came originally from Strasbourg, in Alsace, which at this time belonged to France. She was the widow of the Reverend John Conrad Clemens, a CMS missionary from Switzerland, and had gone out to Sierra Leone together with her husband on 10 November 1848, the day on which they had been married in London. John Conrad Clemens had been one of the many students of the Basle Seminary who became missionaries in the service of the CMS.¹³ In Sierra Leone, the young couple were stationed at Kissy, one of the settlements in the colony that had been founded by liberated slaves.¹⁴ There, a child was born to them in 1849 or 1850, but died soon after its birth. Sabina Clemens's husband too fell victim to the climate, dying within eighteen months of his arrival in Sierra Leone, on 25 June 1850. He left behind his disconsolate wife, who nevertheless was determined to carry on the missionary work on which they had embarked together. On 24 October she relocated to Charlotte and assumed the management of the CMS's Liberated African Girls' School there. This is the point when her correspondence starts, opening with a letter in response to Henry Venn's condolences on the death of her husband. In fact, this is a typical first letter for women in the service of the CMS. Many of the female correspondences in the CMS archives start with a letter by the widow of a missionary announcing the death of her husband or responding to the condolences of the secretary. The explanation for this is that as long as the male missionaries lived, their wives were regarded simply as their companions and 'helpmates' and it was the husbands who corresponded with the CMS officials. It was only with the death of their husbands that the missionary wives entered the official record in their own right and with their own voice.¹⁵ Sabina Clemens's correspondence continues until July 1863, some nine months before her final return to Europe. Her letters show that she managed the school very successfully and, although we do not

know Henry Venn's replies, it is clear that he valued her work and opinions and left her much freedom in determining the details of how to run the school. She chose her own assistants, Europeans who were exclusively Germans or Swiss, as well as Africans. Like most of her European colleagues in West Africa, she was plagued by recurrent illness, probably malaria, throughout her service in Sierra Leone, which necessitated a leave of absence in Europe between 1853 and 1856 in order to recover. She returned to Charlotte in January 1857 and resumed her work there, remaining until her final return to Europe on 21 April 1864. She retired from the CMS in 1869 and at that point disappeared from the records.¹⁶

Elise König was the head teacher of the CMS's Female Institution at Freetown from February 1860 to early 1862. Information concerning her background is given in the letters of Sabina Clemens, as whose assistant she had gone out to Sierra Leone on 24 October 1858, arriving at Charlotte in November 1858.¹⁷ According to Clemens, she was a Swiss-German and the daughter of a clergyman in the canton of Bern, and had long wished to become a missionary. Before joining Clemens in Sierra Leone, she had assisted her father in the instruction of the children in his parish and then her uncle at his school for female teachers in Bern. In Sierra Leone, she worked at Clemens's school until February 1860, when she was put in charge of the CMS's Female Institution at Freetown, replacing its charismatic superintendent Julia Sass who had returned home due to ill health. This is the moment when Elise König's correspondence with Henry Venn starts, a few weeks after she had assumed her new post in Freetown. Her first letter is an intriguing document, showing her to be on the brink of a nervous breakdown, being overworked and bullied by one of her colleagues. Interestingly, one of the explanations which she gives for this conflict is their different nationalities: 'how deeply I feel in my position here as a stranger, as a *German* amongst another nation', indicating that the international set-up of the CMS's missionary activities also provided ground for tensions.¹⁸ Nevertheless, Elise König remained at the Female Institution until early 1862, when she left her post in order to marry the Reverend Charles Knödler, a German CMS missionary who originally came from Württemberg and who was committed to the study of the Temne language in Sierra Leone. In marrying a missionary colleague she illustrates another recurrent career pattern for female CMS missionaries in Sierra Leone in the period. Many of the young female teachers who went out to this colony and who survived the first few months there soon married one of their male missionary colleagues and subsequently left their position to become their husband's 'co-helper', which for the CMS posed no mean problem as they were continually losing their staff. She remained in Sierra Leone together with her husband until at least March 1865,

when her correspondence ceases. However, given her conviction that a wife should be the committed supporter of her husband's missionary labours, it seems likely that she remained in Sierra Leone together with Charles Knödler, who was engaged on the Temne Mission at Waterloo, until his final return to Europe in May 1874 due to his broken health.¹⁹ He died soon afterwards at Steinenburg, on 22 October 1874.²⁰ She is recorded to have survived him, but information concerning her then ceases.²¹

The correspondences of Sabina Clemens and Elise König illustrate the international character of the missionary endeavour and the fact that the workers of British Empire were not exclusively British. Clearly, the Empire offered career opportunities to non-British workers and helpers and profited from the efforts of people from various nationalities and cultural backgrounds. Their letters also highlight the complex nature of the notion of 'home', which might mean more than one thing. Although the CMS recruited many of its missionaries from the Basle Seminary, which in turn enrolled candidates from Württemberg, it saw itself as the spiritual home of its missionaries, and its committee in London was known as the 'parent committee'. However, for Sabina Clemens, who was a German from the French territory of Alsace, 'home' was the place in Switzerland from which her husband came.²² For Elise König, the different national or cultural backgrounds appeared to be a source of conflict, when ideas, attitudes, and values clashed.

Lady Florence Dixie

The third correspondence in this volume was produced by Lady Florence Caroline Dixie (née Douglas; b. 24 May 1857, d. 7 November 1905), who from March to September 1881 visited South Africa as a war correspondent for the *Morning Post* in order to report on the Transvaal War of 1880–1, referred to by the Afrikaners as 'The First War of Independence'.²³ This correspondence comprises twenty letters written in South Africa and one written after her return to Britain. It stands out from the other examples in this volume for two reasons. Firstly, these are not letters in the conventional sense, but dispatches written to be published in the *Morning Post*, a major British daily newspaper which was the predecessor of the *Daily Telegraph*, and were meant to be read by a large audience. Secondly, unlike the other writers whose letters are included in this volume, Lady Dixie was a well-known public figure, for which reason her life and career are relatively well documented.²⁴

Lady Dixie came from an ancient, influential Scottish family, being the youngest child of Archibald William Douglas, 8th Marquess of Queensberry, and his wife Caroline Margaret. Bold, resourceful and

headstrong, Florence had enjoyed a rather unconventional childhood, growing up together with her twin brother as a tomboy, enjoying out-of-doors pursuits and developing little taste for the accomplishments and pastimes considered suitable for an upper-class female in the period. She was an accomplished horse-rider and a keen hunter of big game. In 1875, she had married Sir Alexander Beaumont Dixie (1851–1924), nicknamed Beau, who was of a less resolute character and, like her twin brother before, left her to take the lead in their partnership, with him usually following. In 1876 and 1878 she had given birth to her two sons. However, motherhood had little appeal for her and within two months of the birth of her second son, in December 1878, she started out on a six-month trip to Patagonia, accompanied by her husband, two of her brothers and the naturalist Julius Beerbohm. After her return from South America she published a best-selling account of her adventures there, entitled *Across Patagonia* (1880), which made her reputation as an intrepid traveller and gifted author. Her posting to South Africa as the *Morning Post's* war correspondent can be regarded as a consequence of this reputation. In December 1880, the secession of the Transvaal, which had been annexed by Britain in 1877, and the following armed rebellion by the Transvaal Afrikaners threatened another war in South Africa. However, in Britain, these events attracted little interest, as few people believed that this would be more than a minor incident. It was thought to be just another conflict in an apparently never-ending series of local wars that were quickly put down by the greatly superior British colonial forces. Lady Dixie's engagement as the *Morning Post's* war correspondent was a publicity stunt by the newspaper's editor, Sir Algernon Borthwick. He wanted to create a stir and succeeded admirably, as his controversial appointment became the subject of many published comments and satirical representations. Lady Dixie had gladly accepted Sir Algernon's proposal, which appealed to both her taste for adventure and her strong patriotic instincts. According to her own account, she imagined herself in the double role of war correspondent and nurse to the British soldiers who had been wounded in the fighting.²⁵ Her husband accompanied her on the trip.

However, events turned out very differently from what she and her contemporaries had anticipated. On 27 February 1881, the British colonial forces led by Sir George Pomeroy Pomeroy-Colley suffered a resounding defeat at Majuba Hill and Colley himself was killed.²⁶ This defeat was due to military incompetence and Colley's impatience. He underestimated the strength of his enemy and refused to wait for reinforcements. Lady Dixie was informed of these developments on her arrival at the Cape on 11 March 1881.²⁷ However, worse was to come, at least as she saw it. The Liberal government under Gladstone decided

not to avenge the death of Colley and his soldiers but instructed Colley's successor, Sir Evelyn Wood, to arrange an armistice and negotiate a peace with the Transvaal Afrikaners. For Lady Dixie, who was a convinced imperialist, as well as for the army men and many of the British colonists in South Africa, this was unthinkable and unacceptable, a humiliation worse than the defeat by the Transvaal Afrikaners itself. In her dispatches to the *Morning Post*, she voices this opinion loudly, and despite her repeated claims for objectivity her reporting was highly partisan and jingoist. Moreover, as has been noted elsewhere, her articles were a very inferior kind of journalism indeed, as for a reporter she shows an amazing lack of knowledge concerning the history of the conflict and the political situation in the Transvaal.²⁸ Nevertheless, they are interesting documents for the study of a woman employed in a very unusual occupation for the time.

Having missed her war, Lady Dixie found herself left to report on the peace negotiations as well as on her visits to various sights of interest in South Africa, including the diamond mines at Kimberley and the various theatres of war, including those of the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879. However, she soon found another object of interest to which she devoted all her energies. This was the situation of the Zulu and particularly the exiled king, Cetshwayo, whom she visited twice in his exile at Oude Molen outside Cape Town. Following the defeat of the Zulu in the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, Cetshwayo had been exiled and his kingdom partitioned into thirteen territories. The latter had been given to chiefs chosen by the British by virtue of the trust that the British could place in them, rather than on their hereditary status or the authority they commanded among the Zulu. As critics of this system predicted, this was a recipe for civil war, into which the country was descending at the time of Lady Dixie's visit to South Africa.²⁹ She became a champion of the Zulu cause and her last dispatch from South Africa is an impassioned plea for Cetshwayo's restoration (letter of 27 September 1881, pp. 152–8). This caused an outcry from the military quarters in Britain, and a response by no one less than Lord Chelmsford, who had been the commander-in-chief during the first stages of the Anglo-Zulu War, was published in the *Morning Post*.³⁰ Chelmsford's article prompted the last letter by Lady Dixie included in this volume (letter of 23 November 1881, pp. 158–75). Written after her return to Britain and after the end of her engagement as the *Morning Post's* correspondent, it was published as a supplement to the issue of the *Morning Post* of 23 November 1881 and is a long and fiery denouncement of the British treatment of the Zulu.³¹ It is testimony to her astounding transformation from jingoist agitator to outspoken critic of British imperial policy.

Jane F. Moir

The next correspondence included in this volume comprises eight letters by Jane Fordyce Moir (d. 1932), a young Scottish woman, to her father, sister and three-year-old daughter in Scotland. These letters cover the period from May to October 1890, and were written during a trading trip in the regions of Lake Nyasa (today's Lake Malawi) and Lake Tanganyika, on which she accompanied her husband, Frederick L. M. Moir (1852–1939), who was one of the managers of the African Lakes Company (ALC). This trip took them from the ALC's headquarters at Mandala, near Blantyre, in the Shire highlands to the south of Lake Nyasa, to Ujiji, on the north-eastern end of Lake Tanganyika.

Biographical detail about Jane Moir is very scarce. She was the daughter of Gilbert Beith, a Scottish MP for the Inverness Burghs in the north-east of Scotland, and had married Fred Moir in 1884 or early 1885.³² Shortly after their marriage, in April 1885, the young couple had sailed to Africa, where Fred Moir and his brother John Moir had been managers of the ALC since 1878. The ALC was much more than just a trading company. It was closely bound up with the missionary endeavour in the region and had close organizational links with the Livingstonia Mission of the Free Church of Scotland Mission, which had been founded on Lake Nyasa in 1875.³³ Missionary enterprise at Lake Nyasa was closely linked with David Livingstone's activities there earlier in the century. In the period the ALC also became actively involved in the politics of the region and in empire-building. It negotiated treaties of protection with the various African chiefs and became involved in a local war with the Arab-Swahili chiefs who had extended their influence to the region of the Lake Nyasa in the early 1880s. At the time when Jane Moir was writing, the region was the focus of intense struggle for influence by various powers. The Portuguese pressed for extension of their influence from the south-east of Lake Nyasa, where they occupied their colony of Portuguese East Africa (today's Mozambique), and Cecil Rhodes and his British South African Company from south of the Zambezi. The area to the north of Lake Tanganyika had so far been left unoccupied by the European powers, but the British had meanwhile made an agreement with the Germans that it should go to the latter. However, men on the spot like Fred Moir, Cecil Rhodes and Harry Johnston did not always care for such agreements, and tried to pre-empt them by concluding treaties for protection with the African chiefs in the respective areas in the hope of presenting the British government with a *fait accompli*. Thus Jane and Fred Moir's trip to Ujiji was not just for trade but part of such an endeavour by Harry Johnston, who had visited the region a year previously and was now using the

ALC and some of the missionaries to further his empire-building plans.³⁴ Jane Moir wrote her letters in the midst of these power struggles and, although she says nothing specific about the situation, she does give some hints about what was happening.

Although there were other British women in the area, Jane Moir's trip to Ujiji was an unusual one for a woman in this period, and even more unusual is the fact that her correspondence survived. The way she writes is very properly feminine: the trip is described as harmless, for which reason her husband allows her to accompany her. However, from her descriptions it becomes clear that she is an active partner and not just following her husband. Her letters document something of the imperial expansion in the period, and its strategies. One interesting point she illustrates is the naming of places by Europeans, which became part of the appropriation of the African continent. Thus, the names of the newly-founded European settlements often echoed the names of places at home or those of individuals. One famous example is that of Blantyre, which was named after Livingstone's birthplace in Scotland. Abercorn was named after the Duke of Abercorn, and there is the example of the envisioned 'Rhodes Port'. Other names, such as 'Forest Primeval', reflect European stereotypes about Africa. By the early 1900s the practice of giving personal or romantic names to places or landmarks had become so widespread that the Royal Geographical Society felt it necessary to publish a guideline on 'the giving of names to newly-discovered places', urging travellers to curb their imagination.³⁵ Another point that should be mentioned is Jane Moir's interest in photography. She was a pioneer photographer and took pictures during the trip, which were sent for publication to the *Graphic* and were also published in her husband's account of his experiences in Africa, which was published some thirty years later and relies largely on her letters for the description of this trip.³⁶

Ada Slatter

The final correspondence in this volume comprises private and previously unpublished letters written by a 'colonial wife', the Scotswoman Ada Slatter, née MacMahon, to her friend Laura Geddes in Scotland. This correspondence consists of nineteen letters and extends over the period from 1904 to 1921, with several gaps. Ada Slatter is writing from several places; from the Transvaal colony (1904–6), the British East African Protectorate (1909) and Southern Rhodesia (1915, 1921), documenting her career and that of her family; her husband Arthur A. Slatter and her young children, through the British colonies in Africa in search of opportunities and a good life.

Concerning her biographical background, very little information is known apart from the details that can be gleaned from her letters. She came from a Scottish soldier's family, her father being Lieutenant-Colonel D. E. MacMahon, and she had at least three sisters, Isabella ('Daisy'), Pearl and May.³⁷ She had been educated at a boarding school for young girls in Switzerland, the Chateau Marnand in the canton of Vaud, which is also where she had met and become friends with Laura Geddes. She had first gone out to the colonies, to South Africa, following the British victory in the South African War (in the period called the Anglo-Boer War by the British and the Second War of Freedom by the Afrikaners, 1899–1902),³⁸ in order to join her husband, whom she had probably married after the war had ended, their first child being born in November 1904. Arthur Slatter had gone to South Africa as part of the British forces fighting against the Afrikaners in the South African War and had subsequently decided to stay on and join Lord Alfred Milner's South African Constabulary (SAC), which policed the new Transvaal colony.³⁹ At the time when Ada Slatter's correspondence begins, in November 1904, he was a captain in the SAC at Barberton and by mid-1907 he had been promoted to the rank of inspector.⁴⁰

The first part of Ada Slatter's correspondence, covering the period from November 1904 to December 1906, takes us back to the Transvaal, continuing in a sense, although from a very different perspective, the story told by Florence Dixie in the third correspondence in this volume. Following the British victory in the South African War, Lord Milner had become the Transvaal's administrator and reorganized the civil administration, creating jobs for British people at all levels, and among those who profited from these new career opportunities were the Slatters. However, in 1905 he was called back to Britain with his reputation damaged.⁴¹ Furthermore, following the change of government in Britain after the Liberal party's election victory in 1906, the policy of the British government in South Africa changed to one of appeasement of the Afrikaners. This change of policy came much to the dismay of the British colonists, among them the Slatters, who, not without reason, feared for their privileged positions. This is documented in Ada Slatter's letters from the period, whose references to the increasing Afrikaner confidence are one of the very few instances of interest in the world beyond the narrow confines of her family and social life. Part of the change in British policy of the period was also economization, including the reduction of the SAC, which meant that the positions of its officers, such as Arthur Slatter, were threatened with 'retrenchment'. This caused insecurity and prompted the Slatters to think about alternatives and the possibility of colonial employment elsewhere in the Empire. Palestine, Lebanon and Ireland are all mentioned in Ada's letters as appealing

options. Her correspondence from the Transvaal breaks off after December 1906, probably not because she stopped writing to Laura Geddes but because her letters from 1907 and 1908 have not been preserved. When it resumes a little more than two years later, in February 1909, it shows the Slatters to have moved to the British East African Protectorate (EAP, today's Kenya). There they settled on a farm, at Machakos Road, a settlement in the interior, close to Nairobi, growing tobacco and maize, and breeding cattle and ostriches. Also, by this time they have had another daughter. Information from the archives fills in the gap, showing that Arthur Slatter had indeed lost his employment in the Transvaal in 1908.⁴² His applications for further colonial work were evidently not successful, and consequently the Slatters moved to the EAP in 1908 or early 1909. In doing so, they were part of a wave of immigration from South Africa, which in the period included British as well as Afrikaner settlers and which was due to several factors. Among them was the political uncertainty in the Transvaal and the attraction of the EAP, which in the period was still very much a frontier country for Europeans. The freedom of the frontier by this time had ceased to exist in South Africa.

There are five letters from the EAP, covering the period from February to September 1909. The main event reported in these letters is the visit of the Theodore Roosevelt, the former American president, who passed through the region on his game shooting trip in 1909. The correspondence then breaks off again for five and a half years, resuming in March 1915, this time from Salisbury, the capital of Southern Rhodesia, where Ada Slatter and her three children are staying with her sister-in-law. This last part of the correspondence opens with a very tragic and moving letter, documenting the recent suicide of Ada Slatter's husband and her attempts to come to terms with this fact. It emerges that Arthur has killed himself following the failure of his farming venture in the EAP. He had suffered from depression for some time and he had been unable to bear the thought of having to leave his family to join the British war effort in World War I.

There are three more letters from Salisbury, one from 1915 and two from 1921, documenting the changed circumstances of Ada Slatter's life as well as her personal transformation. The failure of the farm at Machakos Road and her husband's death have left her poor, with an annual income of only £30, forcing her to work in order to earn a living for herself and her children. She becomes a typist, taking on extra work sewing at night. Books cease to play a role in her letters, since she has no more time to read, working during day and sewing at night. The last letters show Ada Slatter and her two younger children preparing for a

holiday in Cape Town, the first vacation since the death of her husband six years previously.

In documenting her family's career over a period of fifteen years, Ada Slatter's correspondence gives a particularly clear insight into how the British Empire worked for individuals, and how it seemed to open up countless opportunities of new employments, new careers and new starts. It shows that people from a variety of backgrounds benefited from these opportunities, not just upper-class individuals such as the young Oxford graduates with whom Lord Milner surrounded himself in the new Transvaal Colony, but also individuals from more humble backgrounds, such as the Slatters' nursery maid who joined them from Scotland or the ordinary soldiers in the colonial armies stationed all over the world. However, as her letters also show, the promises of the Empire were not always fulfilled and not everybody succeeded. The 'lure' of the Empire could also lead to ruin and there were many instances of disappointment, failure and loss.

Notes

- ¹ See Philip D. Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Actions, 1780–1850*, 2 vols (Madison, Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), pp. 343–62; Curtin, "'The White Man's Grave': Image and Reality, 1780–1850", *Journal of British Studies*, 1 (1961), pp. 94–110.
- ² One exception to this rule was female convicts and other undesirables, who in the second half of the nineteenth century were sometimes transported to West Africa. For example, in 1783 the Governor of the British settlements on the Gold Coast complained that thirteen convicts, among them several women, had recently been landed at Cape Coast and left to fend for themselves (National Archives, Kew, T70/33: Richard Miles, Cape Coast Castle, 1 February 1783). Anna Maria Falconbridge also reported that during her visit to Sierra Leone in the early 1790s she had encountered a group of prostitutes who had been shipped there against their will: Anna Maria Falconbridge, *Narrative of Two Voyages to the River Sierra Leone*, ed. Christopher Fyfe (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2000), p. 39; cf. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York, Routledge, 1995). Fortunately, however, this practice was soon abandoned due to the outcry it caused among observers.
- ³ For an example, see Mathilda Barbara Betham Edwards, *Holiday Letters from Athens, Cairo, and Weimar* (London, Strahan, 1873). M. B. B. Edwards (1836–1919), a cousin of the famous traveller and Egyptologist Amelia Edwards, visited Egypt in 1871 together with a female friend as part of a sea voyage from Southampton to Alexandria which was to include visits to Egypt, Greece and 'perhaps Constantinople' (p. 1). Their naive approach to this trip and complete reliance on the P&O Company shocked the agent in Egypt: 'That two English ladies should entertain the notion of travelling in Egypt and Greece alone, did not surprise him; but he smiled satirically when he discovered that we could not speak a word of Arabic or modern Greek' (p. 10).

- ⁴ Examples include Sophia Poole, *The Englishwoman in Egypt: Letters from Cairo written During a Residence there in 1842, 3 & 4*, 3 vols (London, C. Knight, 1844–6); Florence Nightingale, *Letters from Egypt* (London, for private circulation, A. & G. A. Spottiswoode, 1854, reprinted in 1987); Lady Lucie Duff Gordon, *Letters from Egypt, 1863–65* (London, Macmillan, 1865, reprinted several times); Mary L. Whately, *Letters from Egypt to Plain Folk at Home* (London, Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, 1879); and Alice Anne Temple-Nugent-Brydges-Chandos Grenville, *Letters from Egypt; Reprinted from the 'Stockport Advertiser'* (Stockport, Swain and Co., 1896).
- ⁵ Letitia Elizabeth Landon (1802–38) went to Cape Coast in 1838 as the wife of governor George Maclean and died two months after her arrival there in mysterious circumstances (see Glennis Stephenson, *Letitia Landon: The Woman behind L. E. L.* (Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 50–1). Her grave can still be visited in the court of Cape Coast Castle. During her brief sojourn in West Africa she wrote some very unhappy letters to her friends in England, one of which is preserved at The Huntington (HM 27935–27936, Letitia Elizabeth Maclean to Samuel Lamon Blanchard, Cape Coast Castle, n.d.). I am grateful to Glennis Byron for showing me a copy of this letter.
- ⁶ Her correspondence, comprising eighty-nine items, is held at the CMS Archives at the University Library of the University of Birmingham under shelf mark CA 1/0 187/1–89.
- ⁷ Anna Maria Falconbridge's *Narrative of Two Voyages to the River Sierra Leone during the Years 1791–2–3* (1794) uses the form of letters to a friend and is the first eye-witness account of West Africa by a woman. Two modern editions have appeared recently, by Deirdre Coleman (1999) and by Christopher Fyfe (2000). Lady Anne Barnard's letters from the Cape Colony to her friend and patron Henry Dundas were written during her sojourn there from 1797 to 1801 as the wife of the colonial secretary in this colony. However, they were first published only in 1901, under the title *South Africa a Century Ago: Letters Written from the Cape of Good Hope 1797–1801*, and have since then been republished several times, most recently in South Africa in 1973.
- ⁸ For a discussion of the disproportionately large number of Scots active in the Empire, see John M. Mackenzie, 'On Scotland and the Empire', *International History Review*, 15.4 (1993), pp. 714–39.
- ⁹ An example of an African-born woman for whom Britain became 'home' was Sarah Forbes Bonetta (c. 1843–80). She was an Egba Yoruba born in West Africa who as a small girl had been captured by the Dahomeans and intended to be sacrificed. She was rescued by a British naval officer and taken to Britain, where she was brought up and became a ward of Queen Victoria. For her life and some of her letters, see Walter Dean Myers, *At Her Majesty's Request: An African Princess in Victorian England* (New York, Scholastic Press, 1999).
- ¹⁰ See Christopher Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone* (London, Oxford University Press, 1962); T. C. McCaskie, 'Cultural Encounters: Britain and Africa in the Nineteenth Century', *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol. 4: The Nineteenth Century*, ed. Andrew Porter (Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1999); J. D. Y. Peel, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 2000).
- ¹¹ For Venn, see Peter C. Williams, "'Not Transplanting': Henry Venn's Strategic Vision", in Kevin Ward and Brian Stanley (eds), *The Church Mission Society and World Christianity, 1799–1999* (Grand Rapids, MI, and Cambridge, William B.

- Eerdmans Publ. Company and Richmond, Surrey, Curzon Press, 2000), pp. 147–72.
- ¹² CMS Archives, Birmingham: CA 1/0 187, Julia Sass to Henry Venn, Freetown, Sierra Leone, 19 October 1857.
- ¹³ For a discussion of the CMS's reliance on the Basle Seminary for the supply of missionaries, and for the Basle Seminary's enrolment of recruits from Württemberg, see Paul Jenkins, 'The Church Missionary Society and the Basel Mission: An Early Experiment in Inter-European Cooperation', in Ward and Stanley (eds), *The Church Mission Society and World Christianity, 1799–1999*, pp. 43–65; Jon Miller, *The Control of Religious Zeal: A Study of Organizational Contradictions* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, Rutgers University Press, 1994), pp. 41–50.
- ¹⁴ Church Missionary Society, *Register of Missionaries (Clerical, Lay, & Female), and Native Clergy, from 1804 to 1904* (Church Missionary Society, for private circulation, n. d.), pp. 72, 265; Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, p. 119.
- ¹⁵ For other examples, see the correspondences of Sarah Heighway and Anna Pope in the CMS Archives, Birmingham (shelf marks CA 1/0 116/1 and CA 1/0 177/1 respectively).
- ¹⁶ CMS, *Register*, p. 265.
- ¹⁷ See Clemens's letters of 18 June, 1 July and 16 October 1858, pp. 14–19.
- ¹⁸ König/Knödler letter of 27 January 1861, pp. 52–6.
- ¹⁹ CMS, *Register*, p. 107.
- ²⁰ I have been unable to locate Steinenburg with any certainty as there are several places of this name. However, a likely guess seems to be the small place of this name in the Swiss canton of Thurgau, to the south of Lake Constance.
- ²¹ CMS, *Register*, p. 107.
- ²² See Clemens's letter of 5 March 1851, pp. 3–4.
- ²³ D. Hobart Houghton, 'Economic Development, 1865–1965', in Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson, *The Oxford History of South Africa, Vol 2: South Africa, 1870–1966* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 1–48; p. 12.
- ²⁴ See ODNB, vol. 16, s.v. 'Dixie (née Douglas), Florence Caroline'; Brian Roberts, *Ladies in the Veld* (London, John Murray, 1965), pp. 75–186; Catherine Barnes Stevenson, *Victorian Women Travel Writers in Africa* (Boston, Twayne Publishers, 1982), pp. 41–86. In the following paragraph, I rely on information from Roberts, pp. 77–86, and the ODNB.
- ²⁵ Roberts, *Ladies in the Veld*, pp. 85–6, cf. Florence Dixie, *In the Land of Misfortune* (London, Richard Bentley and Son, 1882), pp. 2–3.
- ²⁶ Bernard Porter, *The Lion's Share: A Short History of British Imperialism 1850–1995*, 3rd edn (London and New York, Longman, 1996), pp. 94–101; Leonard Thompson, 'Great Britain and the Afrikaner Republics, 1870–1899', in Wilson and Thompson (eds), *The Oxford History of South Africa, Vol. 2*, pp. 299–300. For details of the engagements between the British forces and the Transvaal Afrikaners, see Dixie's correspondence, n. 1, pp. 261–2.
- ²⁷ Dixie, *In the Land of Misfortune*, pp. 2, 7.
- ²⁸ Cf. Roberts, *Ladies in the Veld*, pp. 99–100.
- ²⁹ John Laband and Paul Thompson, 'The Reduction of Zululand, 1878–1904', in Andrew Duminy and Bill Guest (eds), *Natal and Zululand from Earliest Times to 1910: A New History* (Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal and Shuter and Shooter, 1989), pp. 193–232; pp. 201–7.

- ³⁰ Lord Chelmsford, 'The Release of Cetewayo', 2 November 1881, *Morning Post*, 3 November 1881, p. 5.
- ³¹ See Roberts, *Ladies in the Veld*, pp. 151–66, for the assistance from Bishop Colenso of Natal which she received in composing this article. The public discussion about the British policy concerning the Zulu continued beyond Lady Dixie's article and she continued to take an active part.
- ³² Fred L. M. Moir, *After Livingstone: An African Trade Romance* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1923), p. 126.
- ³³ For discussions of the activities of the Livingstonia Mission and the ALC on Lake Nyasa, see P. A. Cole-King, 'Transport and Communication in Malawi to 1891, with a Summary to 1918', in Bridglal Pachai (ed.), *The Early History of Malawi* (London, Longman, 1972), pp. 70–90; H. W. Macmillan, 'Notes on the Origins of the Arab War', in Pachai (ed.), *The Early History of Malawi*, pp. 263–82; John McCracken, *Politics and Christianity in Malawi, 1875–1940: The Impact of the Livingstonia Mission in the Northern Province* (1977; repr. Blantyre, Malawi, Christian Literature Association in Malawi, 2000). For the ALC, see also F. L. M. Moir, 'The Story of the African Lakes Corporation', in Leo Weinthal (ed.), *The Story of the Cape to Cairo Railway and River Route, 1887–1922, Vol 1: The Recorded Romance of an Imperial Project, How It Materialised to Date, and the Story of its Creators* (London, The Pioneers Publishing Company, [1922]), pp. 441–9.
- ³⁴ Roland Oliver, *Sir Harry Johnston & the Scramble for Africa* (London, Chatto & Windus, 1957), pp. 171–2.
- ³⁵ E. A. Reeves (ed.), *Hints to Travellers, Scientific and General*, vol. 2, 9th edn (London, The Royal Geographical Society, 1906), p. 273.
- ³⁶ Moir, *After Livingstone*.
- ³⁷ *Who Was Who, Vol. IV: 1941–1950, s.v.* 'Couchman, Sir Francis Dundas'.
- ³⁸ Leonard Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, revised edn (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1995), p. 141.
- ³⁹ Theodore Roosevelt, *African Game Trails: An Account of the African Wanderings of an American Hunter-Naturalist* (New York, St Martins Press, 1910; repr. 1988), p. 48; ODNB, vol. 38, *s.v.* 'Milner, Alfred'.
- ⁴⁰ National Archives, Kew: CO 639/2, Register of Correspondence, vol. 2, 1904–, no. 525, 24 June 1907, Col. Employment Appl. by Insp. A. A. Slatter.
- ⁴¹ ODNB, vol. 38, *s.v.* 'Milner, Alfred'.
- ⁴² National Archives, Kew: CO 639/2, Register of Correspondence, vol. 2, 1904–, no. 525: 24 June 1907, Col. Employment Appl. by Insp. A. A. Slatter; *s.v.* 'S': '1908 HE 9245 Slatter Insp. A A retrenched'.



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Note on the Texts

Sabina Peter Clemens and Henrietta Elise König

The correspondences of Sabina Peter Clemens and Henrietta Elise König as reproduced in this volume have been transcribed from original letters and reports which are preserved in the CMS Archives at the University Library of the University of Birmingham. The originals of Sabina Clemens's correspondence are held under shelfmark CA 1/0 72/1–21 (21 items) and those of Elise König under shelfmark CA 1/0 136/1–11 (11 items) as well as among the letters of her husband, Charles Knödler (shelfmark CA 1/0 134, items 3, 7, 8, 13 and 15). I have reproduced the complete correspondences, with the exception of only one document by Elise König. This is a balance sheet, comprising an account of the Female Institution's receipts and expenditures in February and March 1860. I have excluded this because it only repeats in the form of a table the information given in her letter from 18 February 1863 (König/ Knödler correspondence, letter of 18 February 1863, pp. 66–7, CMS shelfmark CA 1/0 134/7). While in the CMS's collections the documents are arranged according to their nature, with letters coming first and the reports following, I have rearranged them in a chronological order, interspersing the reports among the letters.

The letters have not been published before, but parts of the reports were probably printed in the publications of the CMS, particularly the *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, which were intended to gather support for the society's missionary endeavour. I have been unable to verify this as I have not had access to these publications, but it is indicated by the annotations made in the original reports by CMS officials, probably by Henry Venn himself.

Lady Florence Dixie

Lady Florence Dixie's correspondence from South Africa, comprising twenty dispatches, was originally published in the *Morning Post* between 5 April and 1 November 1881. These articles were not signed by her but are given as coming from the paper's 'special correspondent'. To these articles I have added her article 'Cetewayo: An Inquiry and Defence' (Dixie's undated letter published on 23 November 1881, pp. 158–75),

which was written after her return to Britain in response to the public reaction to her last dispatch from South Africa. It was published as a supplement sheet in the *Morning Post*. These articles have not been previously republished. However, in 1882, Lady Dixie published a book-length account of her experiences in South Africa (*In the Land of Misfortune*), which basically comprises an enlarged version of her dispatches from South Africa to the *Morning Post*. This account also includes illustrations of several of the places and events described by her, made from sketches by two British army officers who accompanied her in South Africa, Major Fraser and Captain C. F. C. Beresford.

Jane F. Moir

The correspondence of Jane Moir presented in this volume is a reproduction of the first edition of her letters, which was published in 1891 as *A Lady's Letters from Central Africa: A Journey from Mandala, Shiré Highlands, to Ujiji, Lake Tanganyika, and Back* with an introduction by Rev. T. M. Lindsay of the Free Church College, Glasgow. I have been unable to locate the original letters. It is obvious that, for the first edition, her letters have been selected and edited. It can be assumed that this was done by Lindsay, although no information concerning this is given in the book. What is certain, however, is that she never edited this herself, for she was still in Africa at the time of the publication, returning only in 1892. A second edition of *A Lady's Letters*, with a preface by one of Jane Moir's grandsons, a new introduction by Colin Wilshaw and several contemporary photographs was published in Malawi in 1991. Her letters were also the basis for parts of her husband's account of his experiences in Africa (*After Livingstone: An African Trade Romance*), which was published only in 1923.

For the present edition, I have reproduced her letters as they appear in the first edition, including the illustrations, which comprise three sketches and two maps. Reproductions of a photograph of herself and her husband, Fred Moir, and of two of the pictures which she and her husband had produced during their trip, appear in the appendix, pp. 299–301.

Ada Slatter

Ada Slatter's letters to Laura Geddes have been transcribed from the originals, which are held in the National Library of Scotland (MS 10790, ff. 1–85). They were acquired by the library from a bookseller in 1961.¹ For this volume, I have reproduced the correspondence as it is preserved in the National Library of Scotland, including the seven sketches with which Ada Slatter illustrated her letters. However, as

noted above, the library's collection is not complete and there are clearly letters missing. This is indicated by the long gaps between the three extant batches of letters, as well as the latter part of Ada Slatter's letter from 28 December 1906 (see pp. 222–3). Furthermore, the library's collection also contains two letters by Ada Slatter's children to Laura Geddes, one by her daughter Kathleen, dated 'Gardenhurst', Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset, 8 June 1921, and one by her son Billy from the Beach Hotel, Sea Point, Cape Town, undated, which I have excluded from the present edition.

In all the letters presented in this volume, the texts have been presented in full and without omissions. The original spelling has generally been retained with all its idiosyncrasies and inconsistencies. I found this particularly important in the cases of Sabina Clemens and Elise König, whose spelling mistakes and loan translations from the German are part of their story as foreigners in an English-dominated environment in Africa. Particularly in the case of Elise König it is tempting to interpret her continually changing signatures in the early part of her correspondence, from Eliza Koenig to Elise Koenig and Elise König, as expressions of her personal crisis and ill-adjustment to her environment. However, there are a few exceptions to the general rule of faithful reproduction of the texts. One exception concerns punctuation, which in a few cases I have changed to conform with modern usage in order to facilitate comprehension. Another exception concerns misspellings that obviously were slips of the pen, which I have silently corrected. Furthermore, in accordance with the general policy of these volumes, I have replaced '&' with 'and' and provided full words for abbreviations that are no longer in common use. Words or parts of words that I have been unable to decipher I have marked with ***. All other editorial matter added to the texts has been inserted in square brackets.

Notes

- ¹ Personal communication, David McClay, manuscripts curator, National Library of Scotland, 25 July 2005.



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I. Sabina Peter Clemens to the Reverend
H. Venn (CMS headquarters, London),
Charlotte, Sierra Leone, 1851–63



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Charlotte, 5 March 1851

Dear Sir!

Your kind, comforting and encouraging letter has reached me in safety and I cannot but express my heartfelt thanks for your kindness and sympathy, towards me a poor, desolate widow, it is my prayer that the Lord may bless you for it, and I am sure He will: "God moves in a mysterious way".¹ He has taken my dearest husband, who had been full of strength and zeal, working faithfully in the Lord's vineyard, suddenly away, whilst we are all praying for more labourers "because the harvest is great."² So his sudden death has been a severe loss to the Mission here, as he was truly a upright and sincere servant of God; it *is for me*, much more a sad bereavement, a cross which seemed heavier than I could bear; but the Lord's promises are precious, and in trials and sorrows like mine, we can experience their truth and the deep treasures which lie in God's Holy Word, when all earthly consolations are gone. So can I say to the praise of the Almighty: "my strength was as my day"³ and now, through His grace the bitterness and vehemence of my grief is, by incessant prayer so much soothed, that it does no more disturb the peace of my soul. Disinterested love should rather rejoice, because my loss is to him, who was to me dearer than my own life, great gain, and after a short time we shall meet each other and be no more separated; but I am a weak, sinful creature and can not help weeping after my beloved husband, though I feel deeply the truth of such meditations.

Nothing can better calm and console my mind than to teach and be in the midst of my children. I have a large number, forty two liberated girls in the Yard and sixty eight day scholars from the village, these hundred and twelve girls I have to instruct with two assistant schoolmistresses and thanks to God, I have great hope that it will not be in vain; the children give me much more pleasure than trouble, some show great attention and much feeling when I try to tell them as simply as possible Bible histories and especially of our Saviour, big tears can fall from their eyes whilst their black faces have a pleasing, bright expression. I am very thankful that I am allowed to serve the Lord amongst these poor little ones of his flock. On the whole my calling to the Missionary work is through the sacrifices of the nearest and dearest to my poor heart, child and husband, only the more precious to me, and I would consider it as a privilege if I could spend my strength in it, and then be laid to rest, near my dearest husband. God's will be done!

Forgive me dear Sir, my letter is getting rather long, I have still to add that I wish in remembrance of my beloved husband, to present to you the idol of which he spoke in his last journal, which he got from a dying man only about eight weeks before his own death. He brought it home himself, as glad as if he had got a great treasure, and made plans how, when going home, this idol could awaken fresh interest for the Mission. Plenty Kissy people heard that Master got from the wellknown Idolater his God, whom the poor man before carefully hid in its own proper house; and came to see it with astonishment, and all, the black people as well as Missionaries said that they had never seen sich a large and fine (in his kind) idol. It is a man, cut out of one piece of wood, sitting on an ass or elephant, his face is just as those of the Aku people⁴ really are and has their marks,⁵ he is adorned with plenty of beads; a shield, sword, ring, something for cast lots etc., had been near him, and rice, palmoil, dead rats, fowls, which had been sacrificed to the idol stood and hung about, all whitened, which shows that they are thunderworshipper.⁶

The first things I will pack together in a box and send it by the first opportunity. I must say, I would have liked very much to send it as a kind of monument of Mr Clemens's faithful, though short labours in the heathenworld, to our home in Switzerland; but in England, it can be oftener seen and consequently do more good in stirring up double endeavours to abolish these works of darkness. And so I know dear Sir, I can not trust it in better hands than yours; also I wish to show you with it, my respectful gratitude.

And now I would ask the continuance of your prayers, that God in his way would supply all my need, that I may be able to carry on my appointed duties without fainting: and that He would, in His good time, allow me to see some little fruit of my feeble labours for these poor little Africans. For we know that He can turn the heart as rivers of water, if it pleases Him. Remember also our Mission in general, that by the united labour of His humble servants, many may be persuaded to cast away their idols to serve the one true and living God.

Praying that God's blessing may ever be with you, and all your dear family,

Believe me, my dear Sir, with very respectful, sincere regards,
Your afflicted S. Clemens

**Report of the Liberated Girls School at Charlotte, Charlotte,
September 1851**

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

According to the usual custom I am called upon to send a Report of the Liberated School at Charlotte now under my superintendence.

On the 24th of October 1850 I removed from Kissy to enter upon my new duties in this place. I met forty-two girls in the School; as every beginning is hard, so I found it here especially. The children were very shy, ran away when I appeared, and when they could not do this, I got no answer to my questions, or only this “me no heary, me no sabby.”⁷ Very often there arose a dreadful noise in quarrelling, cursing each other in their country languages and fighting together, wherein many joined, as the different tribes kept together. Stealing and lying was so common that I had daily some heartgrieving cases; especially their wicked boldness in denying and calling God to witness, what they afterwards were found guilty of and then confessed the same, made me often shudder and nearly despair for these poor children. In School I found them, as was to be expected, behind the Colonyborn Girls from the village, who all, I must add, sixty eight in number, come to School in these premises, – but they showed very much desire to learn and when a little awakened, not in the least less capacity than the Colony-born children.

The 21st of April our number of liberated Girls was increased to thirty more from Wellington, as Miss Hehlen,⁸ under whose care they had lately been, left for the Continent. When these poor young pilgrims, every one with a small bly⁹ on her head, containing her little property, through burning heat arrived, they looked weary, sorry and fearful, and I could not, in thinking how much they had already been thrown to and fro in the world, otherwise than with tears of compassion receive them, so I tried to encourage them with love and kindness; but soon the scene changed, when they met with my girls there was great joy and gladness as many of them recognised and found again some of their own relation, or country, or fellow sufferer in their former wretched state of slavery and my children did then all they possibly could to make it homely for the new-comers. From that time I thought it expedient for seventy-two Girls that there should be a guardian for them, who could have them constantly under sight, when other duties required my attention, and we found a motherly Christian woman, the widow of the late visitor at Bathurst¹⁰ for this duty. This person resides in the premises, and also gives some assistance in the School.

In the way of Instruction, our plan is the same as in all the other day Schools. I take daily from 9 till 2 the first class of twenty-five girls, of whom eight are colony-born; two Schoolmistresses and one Schoolmaster teach the others. We always begin with reading scripture, explaining

nearly word for word as we go on as simply as possible. Then at the usual hours they write copies and dictation, do Arithmetic; a little Grammar and Geography, on Fridays they all have two hours' instruction in singing with the Schoolmaster. From twelve o'clock till two every day, the children sew and knit, and I can say in truth, that their progress in these and also the other mentioned branches of instruction has been very satisfactory and their delight in learning truly encouraging.

And now after nearly one year has passed over I can to the praise and glory of God with deep-felt gratitude say, that His mercy has been great upon us, in temporal and spiritual blessings; except two severe attacks of fever in April and May I have without interruption laboured with pleasure in this important work; also the children have enjoyed, on the whole, very good health; and when I compare their moral state and behaviour with the troubles in the beginning, the change is really surprising to me. For months we had never to punish one for lying and stealing. They live in peace and love together, are generally obedient, clean, more industrious. In their playhours they no more think of walking out to see bad company or their heathen country-people in the village – at first it seemed so very hard for them to leave this bad fashion that I was obliged to put a watch over them – but they amuse themselves in a useful way mainly by works in their own garden, and sewing and knitting little things. This reminds me to say, how thankfully received would such articles as the following be for my children; as it is very difficult to supply them constantly from my own stock: little pieces for patchwork, or bags, a little canvas, coloured cotton balls or reels, knitting needles and cotton, indeed, any thing of working materials or little rewards from any kind friend would be most acceptable to me. On the whole, most of the children are no more trying to behave well before my eyes only, as I have ground to hope, also where only the eyes of the Almighty God sees them.

I would just mention that, as I always felt it much that not one of these poor children are baptized, and heartily wishing them to be also partakers of the privileges of other Christian children, I spoke with them one day on the subject, I mean to say, with those who were the most steady, and shewed more interest in religion. They seemed very glad, and I hope and believe were sincerely desirous for baptism. Having spoken with some of the Missionary brethren about it, they agreed that it would be well to have a class for them as candidates for baptism; so I did begin since March on Tuesday and Friday morning every week, one hour before the other School is opened, and I earnestly hope that God's blessing may rest upon these poor endeavours to train them for *His* service, who hath done such great things for them in bringing them from a heathen land within the sound of the Gospel.

In concluding this Report I desire again humbly to acknowledge God's goodness to me in supporting me in my deep affliction and widow's loneliness – for truly to teach effectually, and to be active and an example at all times to those around us, requires the whole energy and good spirits instead of my poor broken heart, so that I sometimes feel, dear Sirs, it a great effort to get through the daily duties and bear my appointed burden all alone. But my Heavenly Father has shewn me abundant mercy and loving kindness, and help from above has been granted to me according to my need. In Him is all my trust and confidence for the future.

Begging you to remember me at the Throne of Grace,
I remain very sincerely, Your S. Clemens

**Report of the Liberated Girls School at Charlotte, Charlotte,
March 1852**

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

Another half year has passed over my solitary life, and my allotted duties have gone on its quiet way without much variation. Thanks to our gracious God, I enjoyed all the time perfect health; my large number of children, with the exception of one who died in January last of Consumption, had been very well too. They continue to learn in School zealously so that it is quite a pleasure to me to teach them. In their behaviour and manners they improve, as much as I can judge, getting much more civil, mild, and in their appearance more pleasing and neat. But I am often grieved to see that this good effect of careful instruction and constant overwatching is till now only in outward improvement, has not yet touched the heart. Any temptation, especially to anger and wrath, can call forth their wild passions, from which, I see it daily, nothing can cure them than the heart-renewing grace and power of God as they have now the knowledge what sin is, and are sorry afterwards, but are still always soon overpowered by it. Therefore it is my ardent desire and constant prayer that a rich blessing from above, the outpouring of all His holy Spirit in an abundant measure, may graciously be granted unto us, that this wilderness may be changed in a Garden of God, full of plants of righteousness, to his honour and praise.

My Bible Class I continue as before, and I hope it is the means, thro' God's mercy, of impressing the young minds of some with the importance of seeking above all things, to 'remember their Creator in the days of their youth.'¹¹

On the 24th of October last year, eight of our eldest girls were married to respectable men from the different stations, all recommended by their ministers. It was a very nice, joyful and solemn day for us all. The Rev. N. Denton¹² had the kindness to marry these couples here at Charlotte, all the children, neatly dressed, proceeded by two and two in a long row before the eight couples to the Church; after them the witnesses with us. All the people at Charlotte took a lively interest, and rejoiced with these girls, now so very differently treated than they had seen before. Many more offers from good young men for our girls to be given in marriage are made than we can accept, for the Girls are discreet and modest and wish rather to stop longer here to learn more before they get married. One of the young wives, I am sorry to say, seems not to agree well with her husband; but the others are all happy, industrious, good wives, join the classes, and show much affection, in visiting us as often as possible, always with a little present as rice, fruits or eggs in their hands.

In January I got from the hospital two nice new Cosso girls,¹³ one, now my youngest child, only about four years of age; the other about seven. They were received with shouts of joy by my children, and though they did not understand a word of English, seemed to be immediately at home here, never cried, and learn and imitate all that they see and hear very cleverly. In washing, ironing, making their own cloth indeed in every kind of needlework and knitting they all improve greatly.

I wish just to mention one poor girl who is especially clever in all such works, but is deaf, it seems, from her birth, and consequently, though she has a good voice, has not learned to speak. This poor child, about fourteen years of age, is in diligence, obedience and steadiness, quite an example to all the others, she understands easily all what I tell her by signs, only of the 'one thing needful', in heavenly concerns, she must of course be quite ignorant. As she sits day by day near me, never idle, always attentive to my wishes, I am urged to pray for her with tears of compassion; and then, as well as in our family prayers she kneels with such devout, serious expression, that it sometimes gives me hope that the Holy Ghost might have in a discreet way, his work in this young heart. Therefore I can't help earnestly wishing that some good, pious friends of the Africans might pity this promising girl, and place her for a year or two in an establishment such as there are at home on purpose for such poor children. It would be a work of great mercy, not only for herself, but I hope and believe she could afterwards be in the Schools very useful.

I recommend this petition and the spiritual welfare and prosperity of all the children committed to my care unto our Lord Jesus Christ and to your frequent intercessory prayer, and am

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

very sincerely yours, S. Clemens

Charlotte, 17 May 1852

Dear Mr Venn,

Miss Sass¹⁴ had the kindness to make for me a sketch of the burial ground at Kissy, which I sent to the parents of my beloved husband; many of the Mission friends at home, who had known and loved him, wished that it might be lithographed. So I received lately a few copies of them and take now the liberty of sending through Mr Beale¹⁵ one to you. As you take so kind and lively an interest in our Mission here, I thought the place where so many precious lives had been laid down to eternal rest would not be without its interest to you. I hope you also received safely the idol of which I wrote to you about eighteen months ago, but for want of opportunity, only transmitted lately through Mr Frey.¹⁶

A letter is to be sent to you by this mail by the Secretary of our School Committee about the deaf and dumb girl of whom I spoke in my last Report, and you may see by it, how wonderful and soon the Lord has heard and answered my poor imperfect prayers on the child's behalf. I hope the School Committee will have no objection to accede to the very kind offer, made to me through Miss Chi***, by some benevolent Christians, to place her in the Bath Institution.¹⁷ From my former notice of such poor children, this girl appears to me quite an 'exception': so tractable and so good and even tempered, and compared moreover with her comrades she has a very intelligent and thoughtful turn of mind. Altogether, from the intimate knowledge I have of her, I should think there will be no difficulty to find some suitable place or employment for her on leaving the Institution, being in my opinion very apt to make herself serviceable in one way or the other.

Hoping that you will kindly excuse that I have taken so much of your time with this letter, I remain,

Dear Sir, respectfully Yours, S. Clemens

Report of the Liberated Girls School at Charlotte, Charlotte, September 1852

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

The last six months of which I have to give a Report, have been to me a time of many and very different experiences in the midst of my children, more than any time before. Many of the girls in my Bibleclass grew evidently, not only in knowledge of the the word and will of God, but applied it to their hearts and showed the blessed fruits of it in their daily behaviour, so that I could recommend them to Mr Denton¹⁸ for

baptism; he examined them to his satisfaction, and so thirteen of the eldest, after careful preparation, on the 13th of June were through his holy Sacrament, admitted to the fold of Christ.

I rejoiced with great, undescrivable joy over these firstlings in the Lord, out of my numerous flock. The girls themselves took it very serious, and met, as I was just in the week before sick, and could not attend them as I wished, of their own accord every evening together, to read the word of God and to pray, which latter, as I could overhear them unseen, they did with a touching simplicity and ferventness. It was a pleasant, heart-refreshing sight – these young confessors of Jesus, with mild, meek, thoughtful expression of countenance, so different from what they had been a few years ago, and as we see so seldom in young females in this country. Through the goodness of a kind friend and benefactress in England, I was enabled to dress them all neatly in white, as it is the custom by the natives for such an occasion.

On the 15th of June five of the baptised Girls were married, which brought us another nice feast-day, though inferior to foregoing; the end of this, when the new-married have to leave us and to follow their husbands, is always very painful and brings much crying on both sides; but I am thankful to say, the young women are till now very happy and in good circumstances, some of the husbands seem indeed to be experienced Christians, who know and apply to the secret source of every family blessing, united prayer and supplication before the Lord. Thanked and praised be God, none of these baptised children have till now given me reason to complain or to fear that they were not sincere and faithful; they are indeed babes in knowledge and understanding, but cling with a simple, childlike faith unto Jesus, and I trust that ‘He, who has begun a good work in them, will perform it.’¹⁹ Many more children begged very much to be allowed to join my Bibleclass, and when I ask why they wish this, they say, often with tears: I wish to save my soul, or: because I am not a good child and want to learn better. To such, I can not refuse it, even if they are of those who are generally more troublesome than many of a reserved, more quiet disposition, which I find often indifferent and unsusceptible to religious impressions. They are thirty in the Class, held twice weekly, and many of them are hopefully pious.

But alas! I have not only to rejoice and to speak of the blessed work of the Holy Ghost in these young hearts, I have also to mourn and to tell that Satan is unwilling to loose his hold and seems to be mighty in some to their destruction. With deep sorrow I must experience that the word of God proves, even in our midst, not only a “saviour unto life” but also “a saviour unto death.” If it is earnestly and daily brought near, and such a heart continues wilfully in the old sins, oh then it gets dreadfully hard-

ened and desperately wicked! – So far it did go with one of my children, a big girl, who had been long in class, in stealing, lying and deceit of every kind did she become so extremely bold and dark that she was at last really as one possessed with an evil spirit. I was within these few days obliged to beg the Committee to take her out of the School, because she disturbed all our peace, and was too bad an example to the other children. That these may be kept by the power of God unto salvation, and may learn daily their dependence upon Him alone, that they may be followers of the Lord Jesus in *deed* and in *truth*, is my unceasing fervent prayer.

I am, Reverend and Dear Sirs,
very sincerely Yours, S. Clemens

Report of the Liberated Girls School at Charlotte, Charlotte, April 1853

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

The Lord was pleased to send me, since the beginning of this year, much sickness, and latterly especially I was for several weeks laid down with fever and rheumatic pains, which is the cause of my sending this report rather late, and written hastily and short, for which I must beg to be kindly excused.

I can with a thankful heart to God for His goodness say, that in the course of the past half-year, my children have given me on the whole, much encouragement. I have many good, promising girls, who show a sincere desire to do the will of God and walk in his ways. On the 16th of January I had the great satisfaction to see again twelve girls from my Bibleclass, after having been carefully examined by the Rev. E. Dicker,²⁰ brought into the visible Church of Christ by holy baptism. These, as well as the former who were baptized, have an influence for good, like the leaven in the Gospel, over the whole School, for I can trust them, and hold them up as examples to others. Six of the eldest girls were soon afterwards married to steady young men.

In November eight new girls were admitted to our School, six of them are quite young, from three to six years of age, since January again I received twenty three. Some of these new-comers looked very sickly, others dull, stupid and inattentive, others again quite the contrary, being sly and cunning and bringing bad habits and anxiety, one little child particularly was stealing daily any thing she could get, and though she only could utter some few words in English she lied and denied fearfully, even what she was seen to have done. But thanks to God, she and all the others have already changed favourably, in bodily health and turn of

mind; some of these little ones are very affectionate, always keeping near me, and admiring greatly all the new, wonderful things which they now see. It is astonishing how quickly they pick up so much English as to be able to converse a little about the common things in life.

Through the godness of God, and the kind interest of some dear Missionfriends in England, I was permitted to send the deaf and dumb girl, mentioned once in my report, to an Asylum for such afflicted children at Bath.²¹ Oh that she may there learn to know and love her God and Saviour, grow in grace and improve in every thing needful for this life and for the life to come!

The number of girls at present in the School is 81, a healthy, hopeful and happy looking set of children, whose innocent merriness, often gladdens my lonely, bereaved heart, and makes our solitary place here in the mountains a scene of rejoicing.

Begging you to remember them all and me at the Throne of Grace,
I remain, Reverend and Dear Sirs,
Yours very sincerely,
S. Clemens

Report of the Liberated Girls School at Charlotte, Charlotte, September 1857

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

Thus am I once more allowed to give you a report of the state of this School from which I had been absent three years. Before I allude to it further, I wish to praise and thank the Lord, in deep humility for all His unspeakable goodness in restoring my health so far, in making my way so clear that I could not for a moment doubt it was His gracious will that I should return to the Missionwork in Africa again, to which I had the privilege to take with me from my own country Switzerland, two help-mates as assistants in the much enlarged School; for bringing us safely so far over land and sea to our destination, and for having spared our lives till hitherto, especially through the very serious attacks of country fever which my new-comers, Miss Bleuler²² and Mary Hohermuth,²³ had to undergo, both taken ill in March at the same time, and the latter particularly was given up by the Doctor.

When we arrived, on the 10th of January in the Colony we could not, as we wished, proceed at once to Charlotte, on account of the necessary repairs in the dwellinghouse, but after a short stay in the Missionhouse at Freetown where we felt extremely hot and uncomfortable, the Rev. G. Nicol at Regent²⁴ very kindly offered us accommodation in his house,

which I thankfully accepted for a month longer. From Regent I could easily go to Charlotte and visit the School now and then, and it was really touching to see and hear with what joy and gladness my coming again was welcomed by the good people at Charlotte as well as by the girls in the School; it made me with a humble feeling of my nothingness pray earnestly that the Lord would enable his poor instrument to be indeed a blessing in every way to them, as they seemed to believe and expect.

I met 129 children in the Establishment, many of those whom I had left three years ago still here; much is to be done amongst them, and it is indeed up hill work, as Mr Nicol, who had for a short time the Superintendence of the Institution, justly remarked; some of the children are very cunning, deceitful, and this brings us much more trouble and grief than more open faults; but there are also pleasing features to comfort and encourage us, they are in general very affectionate and sympathizing, they like much to learn new things and are quick in picking it up. We try to introduce different new and useful occupations for our large number of busy hands, which seem to answer well, only all is yet in the beginning, therefore I cannot yet speak of results.

The agricultural attempt repays our diligence already richly, we earned of our first fruit plenty of Indian corn, *part of it* the mill, which the Parent-Committee kindly allowed us, turns into beautiful flour; Coco,²⁵ Yams, Groundnuts, Cotton, Cassada [= cassava] etc. stand in sight; the three large farms which we have shew to advantage above all others around, which I hope may make the people anxious to imitate our more careful and profitable way of husbandry. The children like the change of work very well; when the weather allows, morning and evening they work in garden and farms, from 9 to 3 o'clock school and sewing. Daily from 7 to 8 in the morning I have one part in Bibleclass, and as only few of these girls are baptised and several have come forward to express their wish to become members of the Christian church, I am thinking of having by and bye a preparation class for this holy rite, for those who seem to be really in earnest about it. May the Lord in His own good time, cause a spirit of inquiry amongst all our poor children after the way of salvation!

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits,”²⁶ is the language of our hearts, He has helped us on all sides and through all difficulties; depending upon His love we are going on with firm confidence, for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day and for ever.

We recommend ourselves and our work to your kind remembrance and prayers, and remain, Reverend and Dear Sirs,
very sincerely yours, S. Clemens

Charlotte, 18 June 1858

Dear Mr Venn,

Much sooner than I wished or expected, am I obliged to bring a new proposal for a teacher for my School before you. – The young lady Miss Bleuler,²⁷ whom I brought out with me with your assent, has made the acquaintance of Mr Hamilton²⁸ who came six month[s] ago to Sierra Leone, and has received by the last mail news that her father consents to a union with him, which I fear will shortly take place, as Mr Hamilton presses it very much.

Seeing what the event would be, I wrote at the same time when Miss Bleuler sent to her parent in March, to a dear young friend, the daughter of a clergyman at Bern, Suisse, who I knew had the desire to give herself up to the Mission work, whether she and her parents could not make up their mind to come and assist me in this interesting field of labour. I was led to think of Miss Koenig²⁹ by remarkable circumstances, and since I sent this important question to her it was my constant, ardent prayer that the Lord, in mercy as hitherto, might look upon our need and guide and overrule all to the prospering of the School. As much as men can say, I know Miss Koenig to be especially fitted for the duties here. Trained up under pious, excellent parents in a quiet country parish, and having received a very good education, she cherished, since quite young, a hope that she might once be employed in Missionary labours, as several members of her family had this vocation; she therefore did all she could to prepare herself for the same, and instructed first the young in her Papa's parish and was afterwards called to assist an uncle of hers at the head of a training School for female teachers in Bern. From there she wrote to me a few weeks before Mr Hamilton made his offer to Miss Bleuler and inquiring kindly after all the details of my School and black children, said how much it had long been her heart's desire to be personally engaged in the blessed service of teaching poor heathens the salvation in Christ, but that it seemed the Lord's will that she "tarry by the stuff." 1 Samuel 30, 24.³⁰ Soon after when Mr Hamilton came forward I felt as if the letter from Miss Koenig was an indication from the Lord whereon to turn in my embarrassment and indeed I received on the 11th instant a most satisfactory, comforting answer. Miss Koenig is willing to follow the call, and to make preliminary preparations for a speedy departure, her parents have given their sanction, they are now only waiting, dearest Sir, for yours. I hope that the Committee will have no objection, and kindly make the usual allowance for an outfit and the expenses from Switzerland to England and Sierra Leone, and to save time, make it kown at once to Miss Koenig also, if possible that she could leave Bern in August to come out with September mail, it would be a great relief to me, as Mr Hamilton will marry perhaps in less than 6

weeks, and for the time between I do not think I shall look for another assistant, but will try to do as well as I can alone.

Recollecting with gratitude your kind proposal to supply my children with a rocking horse, I would venture to mention instead, *a Globe*, which would be a truly valuable addition, and the want of which had been much felt by Miss Bleuler.

I am thankful to be able to add my humble hope that the Lord in mercy owns our poor labours, and preserves us and our numerous charge from serious illness, though we have all been suffering from the usual ageish afflictions of this changing season.

One month ago I received the mournful news that death had visited my dear family, the Lord took to him my venerable, much beloved father; it was painful to be so far away; but I had much to console under it. In humble faith we can at all times, look up to those everlasting habitations, prepared for us – where we shall no more go out, but be *for ever with the Lord*.

With respectful Christian regards, believe me Dear Sir,
very sincerely, S. Clemens

Charlotte, 1 July 1858

Dear Mr Venn,

I was so very sorry and grieved at myself when it came to my mind, but too late, that I had not given you, in my latter of the 18th the address of Miss König, it disquieted me so much that I only found comfort in prayer that [the] Almighty god also might overrule this for the best. The address is: Miss Elise König, Pfarrhaus Radelfingen, Aarberg, Ct. Bern.

On the 22nd I received a letter from Mr Ehemann³¹ in the name of the Finance Committee which makes it necessary, as it seems to me since the matter has been referred to the Parent-Committee, that I should give you ‘some explanation’ about the expences of my School, said to have exceeded within the last 17 months, the income from the Government payments by £379.15.0.

When I arrived in January 57 in Freetown, the first thing which I heard from Mr Jones³² about Charlotte School was that all the buildings were in a very decayed state, that the expences for the repairs were necessary and had several months before been begun and superintended by Mr Nicol,³³ must by the extensive establishment run very high etc. Nor was it surprising that it was so. The buildings when given over by Government in 1850 were already to be called old for Africa, where every thing falls so soon to ruin. As of all the other Government Schools at

Bathurst, Leopold, Regent, [built] at the same time when Charlotte, scarcely a trace more is to be seen, and since we had the School, nearly nothing had been done in repairs until that time.

The three large houses with [the] storehouse, 2 kitchens, 3 privies and stable, were to be shingled, floors and chairs in the Schoolhouse and a sickroom had to be made new, in my dwelling house partitions for the accommodation of three Europeans, two School- and Classrooms and other alterations were necessary; and as the native Schoolmaster and Matron had lived in it, it wanted for [cleaning], so the partly white washing, painting and papering, much of it, to save expence, we did ourselves. In March, when the worst noise and bustle with workmen was over, we removed from Regent to Charlotte, then Mr Nicol had sent his account for repairs of £163.11.9 to the Secretary and I had with the occasional advice of Mr Wilhelm³⁴ to finish what he had begun; in June I sent an account of £53.7.0. to Mr Jones, but there was still much repairing needed all round the premises, walls, gardenfences etc. to be done, also tables, benches, doors, shutters, windows, locks all were in miserable condition; which I thought it my duty to look to; and gave in the expences no more separately; but added them to the vouchers under 'repairs' every three to four months; and this must in a smaller scale continue, as it is every where with buildings, if things shall remain in order, and would indeed have been desirable had it been kept on so before, that they would have not accumulated so much. Now those expences cannot justly be accounted to the fifteen (not seventeen) months only that I am again at the School, but belong to the past *eight*, and I hope for *many* future years such large *repairs* will not be needed again!

For our seven Farms in different places I paid £15.7.6. of course also the implements, seeds, labourers to clear and partly to fence in the places did cost a good deal, but that must be so in the beginning, and will surely come in with interest by and by. The soil of the farms which are too far off, or too steep to be manured, does best in this mountainous part of the Colony for Cassada [= cassava], and therefore it is the chief thing, which we can plant, very useful when prepared for Foofoo,³⁵ Starch, and a good food for our cows, goats and hogs, but can not be gathered in before 18 months or 2 years.

Food is very dear at this time and is likely to be, for the younger Colony people have so entirely given themselves to trading that they seem to have forgotten their farms, however I hope they will alter again. It is the common complaint, and Mr Jones can tell you of it, that Foofoo, Rice, Palmoil are very much dearer than in former years, and with such a large family, 120 healthy, quick-growing children, the difference of these things must be seriously felt. I can assure you it is not a small matter to

get all the provisions, and it is a great help that we earn from our large gardens the vegetables as: Greens, Ocro, and also Arrowroot and Pepper. With regard to the clothing and all the other simple house and kitchen furnitures or utensils, cups, kettles, large pots, mats, blies³⁶ and boxes, even to the schoolmaterials there was scarcely any suitable or whole thing here; could I then otherwise than try, to this moment, to bring all to [a] better state as it is now thank God. If only the gentlemen of the Finance-Committee, or rather Mr Ehemann with an eye free from prejudice would come and look, for I am sorry to be obliged to say in confidence, that from the first he has not shewed a brotherly or friendly spirit (the reason why I cannot tell) unless it be that this School is naturally prospering more than that at Gloucester, which he calls 'my School', under a black Schoolmaster. It must be evident that all the improvement is real, and I trust will be lasting, [and] the expenditure will also soon be considerably smaller, though with the salaries of three Europeans and board, still greater than under the former system.

Knowing the earnest desire of the Parent-Committee for the wellbeing of the School, temporal as well as spiritual, I will yet cling to the hope that the expenditure, thus fully explained, will not discourage them for the future, though at the same time I would assure them of my sincere wish and intention to use all needful economy.

Wishing you the blessing of God in all your consultations, and asking your prayers that our work here may be also owned and blessed by Him, believe me

Reverend and Dear Sir,
yours very faithfully, S. Clemens

Charlotte, 16 October 1858

Dear Sir,

I was extremely astonished and truly sorry to hear from your letter of September 23rd that Miss König should have expended such a sum of money on account of the School. I remember not that I had *ordered* any thing that I wished to bring in the School account, I named to her several things which would be useful if she could acquire a little knowledge of it, and explained at the same time the reasons and our circumstances, namely cutting window glasses – the many glasswindows in our large house had hitherto been a great trouble and expense; as much care as we take, when such sudden tornadoes rush in some panes now and then get broken, and I have to send to Freetown to get them mended, and sometimes mischance happens again even before they reach back. The

diamond which I thought the most costly concern, which I had pointed to Miss König to being out, our carpenter here wishes to buy, only he does not yet understand to cut glass. Tailoring had I *never a thought* that such a young lady should learn, would in the contrary think such a proposal very improper, and Miss König can not have understood me so. Mary, who had made at home the clothing for her father and brother, wished me to beg Miss König to bring her from a tailor, in paper cut out patterns of drowsers [= trousers], etc., that *she* might teach our girls also this part of future useful work, now in doing it for the liberated boys at Kissy and Gloucester, as their *shirts* partly are made in our School. Then did I also mention how desirable it was that we could give to coloured cloth which washes and fades in this climate so soon away, again the simplest die, I proposed that she might inquire about it, and if found practicable would get a prescription and some pigments (*färbestoffe*)³⁷ also of bleaching, and how to solder, the simple tool and materials to the latter, which we needed so much for all the tin plates, cups, pans, kettles in constant use, I had before this, sent for, but Mary and myself can the never learnt art not yet manage to perfection and hoped a good advice might help us further. These things I remember having named to Miss König and I said at the same time that *I* would pay her back what she might have to lay out, never thinking that it altogether could come above *one* hundred franks. Several things I and Mary wished her to bring for us from Switzerland but this of course is a private matter. I had also told her that we are for our large number of girls always short of working materials, and if she found at Bern Missionary friends willing to assist us a little, things of every description to this purpose would be most welcome.

I do now not know till I see Miss König, but can scarcely believe after all, that she should have acted so imprudent and run into such large expenses for the things mentioned, but hope that it must be a misunderstanding which arose from her imperfect knowledge of the English, that she perhaps had drawn all the outlay for outfit etc. together on the same list, and the error be now found out. Such expense brought before the School Committee here, would give me much upraising and real trouble, and rather would I bear alone all the unexpected and unwished for costs than to wish such unpleasantness again. I beg therefore that you kindly *wait* and I shall write to you as soon as I have an explanation from Miss König.

I must beg to be excused for my bad writing, am obliged to do it in great haste, now and then a line. Am quite alone at the post here, Miss Bleuler married at the beginning of August, and of the assistance of my good, faithful Mary I am also deprived, she suffers much from boils and moreover has a sore, sick foot, so that she for more than 6 months was

unable to walk and attend her usual duties. We try now a change; she is since September at Gloucester. I have much, very much reason to thank and praise the Lord, for it is only by His strength that I am kept up, bodily and spiritually, under my multiplied work and responsible charge. It was impossible for me this time to write a report, I hope to do it next time the more fully.

Believe me dear Sir, with Christian regards
very respectfully yours, S. Clemens

Charlotte, 11 March 1859

Dear Sir,

I must beg to be kindly excused for having not sooner written again to you concerning the expenses brought in by Miss König. After her arrival here in November, when she just a little was settled and began to take part of the work, I fell very sick, and recovered only slowly to some strength again, and then I had so much to make up for, in writing and other necessary business.

Miss König's two boxes with the requested things which I wished first to see and speak over with her, also were unfortunately not shipped with her at Liverpool, but came with much more than usual cost only in January to our hands. Now by going all through with her, we found that she, by not understanding me, and our circumstances here fully, had indeed gone a little too far in bying different material too much at once, but nothing that will not by and by come in very useful for our School. Miss König says that she had laid out for these things, and received back from you in London £23.12.6. and that it was a misunderstanding afterwards cleared up, when you wrote to me of 1,300 franks. She also tells me that she gave you the account in detail; therefore I think it is not necessary that I should write down all again. I would now propose to bring these things in my monthly accounts by and bye in, at the time we are using them, and I could for the first, if so agreeable to you, pay towards the £23 to Mr Ehemann £10 and at a later time the remainder. The freight etc. from Switzerland to Sierra Leone amounted to £8.17.7. to which on consideration of the unhappy misunderstandings Miss König paid £2.10.0 and I the other £6.7.7. I hope my dear Sir, in this way may the affair get settled acceptable to you; at the same time I can assure you I shall take good care, never more to give you trouble and involve myself in such difficulties.

With respectful regards

Believe me, dear Sir, very sincerely your S. Clemens

Report of the Liberated Girls School at Charlotte, Charlotte, April 1859

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

At the time when the reports had to be sent in last September it was quite impossible to me to fulfill my duty in this point, and I have therefore now to tell you briefly a whole year's events and experience in our midst.

A real trial and loss to me as well as to the School was the engagement and marriage of our dear Miss Bleuler to Mr Hamilton. On the 4th of August did she leave Charlotte, the separation cost many tears on both sides, and our prayerful sincere wishes for the best blessings from on high followed her. I had a hope to get by and by another assistant from Switzerland for our School and was obliged until that time to fulfill her duties as well. Meanwhile my faithful and very useful Mary, who had been afflicted with a sore foot since May, suffered much pain and was more and more unable to attend to her usual work in teaching and superintending the bigger girls in farm, garden and domestic work, in consequence of which I sent her in the beginning of September first for a change and total rest to Gloucester; still getting worse there, the Doctor ordered her to Freetown, that he might be able to see her daily. So I was then left quite alone and had from morning early till evening late not a minute's rest. From the very excitement, cares and troubles of the day, I could often not obtain the much needed rest at night. But blessed be the Lord – his almighty arm held me up, and gave me strength according to my day!

In November to the great joy and thankfulness of us all the new teacher Miss König arrived, who very willingly made herself acquainted with her new sphere of labour. By this time poor Mary, who had long been at the Missionhouse at Freetown, could also send better news about her foot, that it began to heal, and she hoped soon to return to us, but then in December when providentially Miss König was just a little accustomed to the work, my own health broke down, and Mary was called home, as we thought to my deathbed. I arranged my affairs, prepared myself for the last solemn change and was willing to live or die, as it pleased my God, assured: Till *He* bids, I cannot die, When the time He wills is come, Nought can keep me from my Home. But it was not then His good time, I recovered, but slowly, with intervals of low fever and much weakness for more than 6 weeks longer. Now we are all three, thank God, quite well, except that Mary's foot needs still great care, it was, though much better, never quite healed, and gives us some anxiety in looking forward to the approaching rainy season.

Our children enjoy on the whole good health, though we are never quite free from some having sores. In June, July and August we lost three children; one died quite unexpectedly in the Hospital, where I had

sent her only two days before to have better medical attention for a complaint in the back; she was a dear, affectionate girl, exemplary in her whole behaviour, on whom we had placed much hope for the future, which now the Lord has realized, but only in a different way from what we, shortsighted as we are, thought of. Of these, Alice Mason by name, and another sweet little girl Lina Weeks, who had long suffered from consumption, we felt sure that they were trained and prepared for a better world, that our loss was their gain and they had entered into the presence and joy of our blessed Saviour, they both were about 10–11 years of age, could read their Bibles well and gave satisfactory answers from it.

Five girls were in May and December married to respectable fisher- and farmer-men at York, Hastings and Kissy and six more are now engaged, when we shall have a grand marriage feasts on the 12th of the next month. The young men who wish to ask for wives, have usually in the village of Charlotte some of their country people or friends to whom they express first their desire and with whom they take counsel as to which of the girls (as much as possible of their own tribe) would be suitable for them; they try to see, but very seldom speak to the girl till they are ready, that is to say when they have a house and farm of their own, and some money to buy the customary present of wearing apparel, then they come forward with an influential friend to speak for them, and a recommendation from their minister to show that they are Christian members, bearing a good character etc. When I feel satisfied in all these points, the girl concerned is called and asked as Rebekah of old Genesis 24, 58 and often in childlike natural confidence the same answer is given as we find there.³⁸ And I can say with thankfulness toward God whose guidance I always entreat in such cases especially, that scarcely any have come to my knowledge that proved unhappy.

In our agricultural work our attempts are encouraging, and the pains taken well paid; we earned in our farms from September 58 till February 59: Arrowroot 56 lb, Yams 806 lb, Groundnuts 4 blys or big baskets,³⁹ Coco [= cocoyam] 35 blys, Indian corn 50 baskets, Cassada [= cassava] enough for starch for our whole family use, and to feed daily twice our cattle consisting of three cows, three calves, eight goats and six hogs; cotton in abundance for our children to spin and weave their own tapes, cords, wicks and wadding for counterpanes. In the three gardens in our premises surrounded with walls, and in two places outside where we have farms close to brooks we plant through the whole year sufficient vegetables for the children and our own table, only ocro and peppers I have to buy in addition, as our own makes but a small part of what we want.

So, even in an economical point of view we may see it is good to combine some farmwork with such a School, but the much more weighty object for doing so, is to have a change of wholesome occupation for our many children, and to teach, and give them a taste for such employments as will best fit them for their future sphere of life, and which at this time, to the great disadvantage of the colony, is deplorably neglected by the rising generation.

Again I would commend myself and helpers with our important charge to your kind interest and frequent prayers, that each and all may have more of the Spirit of Christ, realize more and more His presence and blessing, and in the last great day, find many who shall be our joy and crown of rejoicing.

Believe me, Reverend and Dear Sirs,
very sincerely yours, S. Clemens

Report of the Liberated Girls School at Charlotte, Charlotte, September 1859

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

It is with a heart full of overflowing thankfulness that I can give a brief account of our experiences through the last six months though the sad events of sickness and death in the Colony and our Mission particularly affected us deeply.⁴⁰ Miss König had had her climate fever⁴¹ in June very severely and Mary, who is just now at Wellington for recovery from a fall which shook her whole constitution and brought on nervousness and debility, as well as myself were not exempt from occasional attacks of fever, and perhaps never before had felt death nearer. Still we are the living to praise our merciful God, and it was sweet through numerous cares and anxieties to realize his constant presence and unchanging faithfulness.

No disease came near our dwelling with so many inmates, most of the children enjoy to this moment perfect health. But much more than for the gift of bodily life and health, have we abundant reason to be thankful that it has pleased our gracious Lord to send his all-quickenng Spirit on the dry bones of our School. Yes He has visited us with his Divine grace, therefore “will I praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all they marvellous works!”⁴²

There appeared among many of the elder girls more attention and seriousness concerning spiritual things a good while since, and it was last June then that I, in the class preparative to holy baptism, asked them whether they would not like a weekly Prayermeeting in which they

themselves also would try in their own simple way to bring their petitions before their Heavenly Father, just as free as they were used to tell me all their wants and troubles. They all agreed to it at once heartily and now this union for prayer every Saturday evening, a little earlier than the usual time for family worship, has been greatly blessed to us all indeed. The very first time where we all moved by the heart-stirring prayers of several of the girls, their confession of sin and their trust and faith in Jesus, which they uttered with trembling voices and many tears, and I felt sweetly assured that our blessed Lord indeed was in our midst. The matron who sleeps with these elder girls, 58 in number, told me afterwards that she never before in life had seen such a thing, the children that night were continually praying, when some laid themselves down, others bent their knees, weeping and calling unto their Saviour for mercy and grace.

And, what gives me courage to mention something of our hope and joy in the Lord, it proves not only a momentary excitement, but a spirit of prayer is awakend in these dear children, till now are not only the Saturday evenings set apart for fervent prayers, to the true edification of us all; but often do soft voices of singing and suplication of a little band from some remote corners meet our ears and gladden our hearts, and the blessed effects of it are well seen in the daily behaviour of many of the girls, yes I can in truth say, a satisfying influence is felt over the whole School. Of course the old Adam does even in the best of the children still often show itself, but they are then soon convinced of their faults and confess and repent sincerely; they manifest an earnest desire to make their calling and election sure through grace. O may the Spirit of the Lord cause these tender plants to prosper for his heavenly kingdom, may He preserve, strengthen and stablish [sic] them to the glorifying of His name!

Under these circumstance I could joyfully recommend eighteen of these girls to holy baptism. Four younger from 8–10 years, gentle well-disposed, but sickly children, and six infants from the age of 15 months to 5 years, were after prayerful consideration and with the approbation of Missionary friends with whom I took counsel, thought right to be also made partakers of the same blessing. On Sunday the 18th September was the memorable day, when 28 of our children were before a large congregation given solemnly to the Lord Jesus, and by the Rev. G. Nicol from Regent,⁴³ baptized into his death. I had invited as Godmothers former pupils of this School, who are married and continue to stand in friendly attached relation to us; and I had the hearty satisfaction of being on this occasion surrounded by these my African daughters from all quarters, a set of truly respectable, good women, who naturally take a deeper interest in the welfare of our children than any one else. In the

evening we all had in the bigger girls' apartement a sort of love-feast. I had some day previously a great many loaves of bread baked, more than 120, with a mixture of American flour, mais [= maize] from our own farm and mill, and grated sweet potatoes; that was something, every child to have a whole bread quite for herself, and greatly were the little loaves praised and enjoyed. We served the elder girls, after the younger had gone to bed, with a cup of tea to their bread, by which they were extremely happy, and thanked with us with grateful hearts the Lord, who had crowned this day with mercy and joy and many good things till to the end.

It remains to communicate that we received in May and June new children, together eighteen, all Sherbros⁴⁴ who were in consequence of the late war with the Timanees⁴⁵ made slaves, but caught and rescued, of those accompanied by their poor mothers, who wished to see how their children were placed, and who parted from them not without hard struggle and many tears. Many touching scenes of mother's love have we witnessed which impressed us most forcibly, the misery of this people and our bounden [sic] duty toward the dear children so providentially brought under our care. Whilst they by Government are sent to School, the adults are left free and find usually some of their settled country-people ready to take them, till they get a home for themselves near them.

Our girls received the new-comers with shouts of joy, suffocating them almost with their embracings, and very willingly shared with them all they had; take also till now good care of the little ones, so that they soon were at home and happy here, and gave altogether much less trouble than one might expect. Our good 'Big mamy' as the Matron of the younger children, who had been now eight years with us, is called, especially deserves my thankful acknowledgement for all what she motherlike does for the infants.

Two good Christian girls, already communicants, were in July married in Kissy and Waterloo, the latter to a Schoolmaster; she assists him now, and keeps sewing School and I sincerely trust she will have an influence for good. One of the new children, of about 13 years, we lost by death; she was only a short time sick and understood but little English, still she liked when we prayed with her, and always thanked afterwards so sweetly that we saw she had a kind of faith in it, and felt it was for her best, the same morning when she died she said, in pains and short-breathed as she was, the Lord's prayer and some parts of hymns she had learned, distinctly. We all are hastening to the same last, most important change! Oh that we might the remaining time, short as it maybe, spend faithfully, holily and more for eternity, that the abundant

blessings of the Almighty may rest upon our poor labours for the conversion of many precious young souls!

Begging you, dear Sirs, to remember us, and the work entrusted to us at the Throne of Grace,

I remain very sincerely, Your S. Clemens

Charlotte, 17 August 1860

Dear Mr Venn,

By the last mail I received a letter from Miss Sass⁴⁶ which I think best to answer to you. Since January last I had no communication at all with Miss Sass and was now the more surprised by her announcement that she was seeking an assistant for me, that she has just been disappointed of one but another party desired to engage in the work, that she only waited for Mr Venn's opinion, and if the one who had proposed herself would not be decided upon, she would try in other quarters.

This way of acting and settling matters of so great importance for me and my School without knowing in the least my mind, appears to me as strange as the secret arrangement and proposal to the Parent-Committee of Miss König to the Female Institution, of which I was kept in *entire ignorance* until the very latest moment, when she was requested at once to remove. I will not enter more into the *very painful* circumstances of that case. All things must work together for our good. The Lord wanted [to] show anew how entirely He can suffice and help me; though He is an unseen friend and helper, He is not unfelt. But I would beg to say that *at present* I wish for no change.

For nearly three months I had to keep the School, and do all the work in the midst of 150 children myself, and I felt often as is I *must* sink under it; but – after disappointments wherever I asked for a Schoolmaster – as an answer to special prayers, one, Cole from Wellington,⁴⁷ came to offer himself; and thanked be God, he fulfills till now his duties very satisfactorily, the School is in good order, and he seems with his whole heart in it. I am glad to add that I, and also my faithful Swiss servant Mary, who is a great comfort and help in external business, enjoy good health; and as long as the Lord grants this, I count it a great honour and privilege to be allowed to remain in His service and say from all my heart with the Psalmist: “The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places.”⁴⁸

For future time, when I shall be called from my labour, I rely, with regard to the School, humbly on the good providence of my Heavenly Father, whose love to these poor children is infinitely greater than mine,

and who is able to do exceeding abundantly more than I can ask or think. I also know well that the Parent Committee will always be ready to do their best for the welfare of the School.

Please remember me kindly to dear Miss Venn, of whose delicate state of health I with sincere sympathy heard and with prayerful good wishes, I am, honoured and dear Sir, yours sincerely with the Lord, S. Clemens

Report of the Liberated Girls School at Charlotte, Charlotte, September 1860

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

Owing to the sudden removal of my dear assistant and teacher in the School, Miss König, in January last, for which I was quite unprepared, and my being, for the space of three Months, left alone for the School, Bibleclasses, accounts and all the other innumerable duties connected with such a large establishment, it was impossible for me to give you in March a report of the state of the School, and it remains therefore to tell you in short our proceedings for a whole year.

In October 1859 we received again 29 new children, all Cossos,⁴⁹ and since then three more, one Soosoo⁵⁰ and two little Sherbro⁵¹ girls. It is well known that the Cosso people, old and young, are on the whole of a rather fickle, quarrelsome and obstinate disposition. Having such a number of them at one time, in the lowest state of human nature, with the after-effects of their former course of life, bad, sinful customs and the unchecked natural evil of the heart, brought in the midst of the others, who with much pains have been just a little elevated and civilized, does not exert a good influence, and renders our aim of a truly Christian education, as may be easily comprehended, for a time much more difficult. Still we have reason humbly and thankfully to acknowledge that our work in the Lord was not in vain. Undeniable are the blessings of an education which has but only an outward discipline in view, but the divine direction and admonition, the application of the word of God in the daily family devotions and in Bibleclasses. I always find these the most effective means to subdue and soften the wildest subjects, just brought in from the most degraded heathen state; it produces also the blessing that the elder children themselves warn and exhort each other.

On the whole I can with joy, to the praise of God testify, that a good disposition reigns in the midst of all the children; our continued Prayer meetings on Saturday nights, and since January also every Wednesday from 11 to 12 o'clock, are very edifying, refreshing seasons, which being consistent fruits, visible in the conduct of the children, especially

amongst the older girls. They keep on their own accord separate Prayer-meetings in smaller numbers and pray in simple faith, though deficient in words, and I can in truth say: the work of the Holy Spirit has its blessed progress. I regard it also as a grace from God that the childrens' hearts are in cordial love bent to me, so that correction and punishment, when such are necessary, does but very seldom lessen their child-like attachment.

The School is thank God, in the elementary branches well conducted by a Schoolmaster, Mr Cole, from Wellington, who has from 9 to 12 in the morning the first class, and from 1 to 3 in the afternoon those bigger children who are most backward because they began late to learn, and attend in the morning only the Infant-School. In every kind of female work the girls are clever, and could in this respect stand honourably at the side of many girls Schools in Europe.

All the children without exception have, adapted to their age and strength, their regular part of employment in domestic work, gardening and washing before and after School; I have no servant, except a messenger. To work from time to time in our farms is their greatest pleasure, and whilst so employed, they fill mountain and valley with their hearty singing, of which they seem never tired. We have again earned [= harvested] plenty Indian corn and Yams, Coco [= cocoyam] and Cotton are in a promising state, and Cassadas [= cassava] are through the whole year weekly 4 to 6 big baskets, all planted in our farms, fetched for starch and food for the cattle, which latter, notwithstanding the occasional slaughterings for feastsdays, is still increasing, so that we have now 7 cows, 20 goats and 6 pigs.

Our health has thank God been very good, only of late I had some severe attacks of fever; Mary has long time been remarkably well and strong. The new set of children is rather sickly, as it is nearly always with such the case, in consequence of ill treatment before their arrival here. Five of them have already died, of whom four in their lingering illness were baptized. Three girls were in April married; in School are now 144 children. But of my large class of girls under regular instruction for baptism, I trust I can soon recommend some to be ready for the holy rite, many have repeatedly come to beg for it with tears; oh may they be taught from above, and made a blessing unto others!

When I overlook [= survey, look at] all that our gracious Lord has done, and continues to do, daily on this His plantation, I am constrained to bless and praise his goodness, and to take courage.

I remain Reverend and Dear Sirs, respectfully your, S. Clemens

Report of the Liberated Girls School at Charlotte, Charlotte, May 1861

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

Though the last six months have passed over particularly quiet in our retired and yet so busy life, and therefore I have not much to communicate, I would nevertheless be sorry if I had been unable to send in a short report and beg to excuse that through different causes it comes a month after the proper time. I know you will be glad to hear that “The Lord hath been mindful of us, and blesses us.”⁵² Not only have we all enjoyed what we for Africa may call a very good health, but the Lord has been cheering our path by an increased manifestation of the Holy Spirit’s work in the hearts of many of our children, that they are indeed “looking unto Jesus”⁵³ and turning their steps into the narrow path which leads to eternal life.

With full satisfaction could I select and recommend thirty six of their number to holy baptism, and the happy event took place on the 10th of February when our faithful, in trouble as well as in joy sincerely sympathizing friend Mr Nicol from Regent kindly came to perform the solemn act, in the presence of a crowded congregation. Two days later our dear Bishop⁵⁴ held Confirmation at Regent, and seventeen of the elder girls were confirmed and partook on Good Friday the first time of the Lord’s supper.

I cannot describe my feelings of deep thankfulness that I was spared to see such days in Africa. Since the week of Prayer in the beginning of this year, in which all the District joined so heartily, there was much fervency of prayer to be felt with our children who met continually in small groups among themselves for common edification, and among the village people, especially the younger classes. The work begun gradually and very quiet, which is, by the generally so excitable natives, the more to be valued. A few began to keep prayer meetings, once a week by turn in their own houses, by and by was the place too small, they hired one of the larger houses, and separated males and females, chose very properly the later morning, the first evening time for their assemblies. They have come forward to attend class, and a goodly number was confirmed. Many made in their meetings confessions of their sins. Very remarkable was it to me that two young men did so openly with trembling and tears, who had most grievously sinned, and offended me, one in seducing a miserable, sickly, silly girl from my School; and the other, being my messenger, had stolen and burried a large sum of money, £59, which he ought to have brought me from the Secretary, and it was only by God’s merciful interference and Mr Nicol’s wise, judicious assistance that I got the money again, with the exception of £5, which he had already used, but is now honestly trying to pay his debt by bringing wood; and the other also gives hopes of a real change, he wrote to me a very penitent

letter and attends his little children and a sick wife well now. Many more are the good fruits which we, in their habits, daily life and conversation with thankful hearts can acknowledge, but we still hope and pray for more. I could not call the state here now a 'revival' as we read of wonderful changes and events in other parts, at this remarkable time, and to which I am rather afraid to mingle my voice in speaking of our comparatively "day of small things,"⁵⁵ but that you also be refreshed by the cup of our blessings and may help us to pray more earnestly that the few droppings may soon turn into Heavenly showers on us and all this Colony. With these prayerful wishes
I remain Reverend and Dear Sirs,
very sincerely yours, S. Clemens

Charlotte, 20 August 1861

Dear Mr Jones,⁵⁶

I hardly know what to say to your questions. Who is able to judge rightly in such matters? God alone sees in the hearts. I am afraid on different accounts, as I already mentioned to you, to say much.

A work of grace is going on amongst my Schoolchildren of all classes, those who are longer here and those who were the last brought; as even many of those pray from their heart very earnestly in our prayermeetings for new hearts, the Holy spirit and other gifts – and the same can be said of the people in the village; many seem deeply impressed and mourning over their former sinful life and coldness towards god and religious duties, and express themselves full of love and thankfulness to their gracious Saviour, always saying what change they experience, how they can through all eternity not thank enough for what this year 1861 brought to them etc. They are on the whole more quiet, industrious, peaceful, but to judge this or that to be truly converted or not, I could and dared not say, you know how often our best hopes in such regards are blighted, how unstable, easily falling into temptations these our people are. Time will prove and show what it is in reality. Still I feel assured where the Lord has given such a spirit of prayers, awakened such an ardent desire for more holiness and spiritual gifts, He will also give, and satisfy the hungry souls. You mention Mr Attarra,⁵⁷ that he perhaps might give you more information, but I am sorry to say, he does take little notice of the religious movement or where he is touched by it and can not avoid, he rather grumbles and scolds, looking with jealous eyes upon all what is not by him arranged. The prayermeetings among the people does he not like at all. At such a meeting, a formerly troublesome, thoughtless young

man, brother to Fine [sic?], prayed very earnestly for Mr Attarra, mentioning that he was getting old, weak and rather dull; when, unknowingly, his daughter Abigail sat outside in the piazza and reported to her father; after which Mr Attarra called the young man, made big palaver and wanted to exclude him from the class, and I do now know whether it is quite settled now. Mr Sawyer⁵⁸ takes a very active part amongst the young, who seem to be attached to him, through him. I distribute tracts, the British works, and he visits from house to house, but Mr Attarra does check him as much as possible. From Mr Sawyer could you hear more than from any one else, his wife can tell you about the meetings of the females, I believe she herself is under serious impressions, but she may be too shy and timid to speak freely before you. If you could once come over a Sunday to Charlotte, it would do us all good and we would rejoice greatly, poor Mr Attarra though he feels offended at it, preaches sometimes dull and tiresome. But you must not expect to see extra things, we have none of those excited feelings all is quiet and sober, and I thank God for it.

Am very sorry to hear such news from the dear boy who was once so stout and strong, should sooner have doubted Edward's heart. My arm is the same, don't know whether I should no more send to the Doctor, only patiently wait for the warmer season.

With very kindest regard believe me sincerely yours,
S. Clemens

**Report of the Liberated Girls School at Charlotte, Charlotte,
5 April 1862**

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

"Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name!"⁵⁹ This is the deepfelt [= deeply felt] language of my heart in giving once more a report of a whole year. I have little to say; there are no great and interesting events to communicate; time passed on the whole happily, quickly in the regular routing of our duties, but how great has been God's mercy under [= among?] all, towards me and my numerous family!

Through last rainy season I had to suffer from various complaints, so that it for a time seemed as if I could no more remain long with my dear children in Africa; but a change of air to Kent, and the seabaths which I took daily there for three weeks, quite restored me. I was since October hardly one day indisposed, and have been able to go through a double portion of work, occasioned by the failure of health of my faithful Mary;

however I hope also she is once more strengthened, having been for a month near the Doctor at Fourahbay [= Fourah Bay], where she also used seabaths, and just now returned with a much better appearance, thank God.

The children have had very good health, among 140 *none* died, not even had I for the past twelve months to send *once* for the Doctor, or a child to the Hospital. Five girls from the above number have respectably settled in marriage to Christian young men, and live happily at their different places, renewing their attachment to us, like their older companions from my School, by occasional visits to their first home here. I am happy to say, they also keep up much sisterly affection towards each other after they have long gone out, and been separated from us, and show always a lively interest in each other's welfare. I can with much confidence recommend the newly married, inexperienced girls, to the elder ones living in the same village, they act like mothers, with good care and advice to them.

I can't help to mention the affecting death of one among those; one who had always been a particularly good, affectionate, pious girl here in School. She was for years a monitor to the little one, and very useful in bringing newly rescued children in a gentle way to regular, orderly habits, before they understood English; as this dear girl, Elisabeth Thomas (for that was her name) could speak Cosso, Sherbro, Timaneh and other different dialects.⁶⁰ Around *her* they would kneel and pray first, and *she* implanted in their hearts the first ideas of Christian religion and better principles; *she* taught the little barbarians the hard lesson to sit for some hours quiet, learning the alphabet, sewing, spinning etc. and it was wonderful how willingly they obeyed, and how attached they got to her. When Mr Taylor asked for one of my girls as assistant teacher to the Niger,⁶¹ I knew no better one to recommend than dear Lisabeth, she was willing and prepared herself conscientiously for the call. When the plan failed, she wept and was sorry, but meekly took again her former position among her companions. Many offers of marriage had she declined, out of attachment to us, and a desire "to learn more first" as she humbly expressed herself; until in the beginning of last year she was joined to one of the best young men in this village, and left the School with many tears among us, and our full blessings. We missed her much, and when first my own, and afterwards Mary's health were so weak, I took her as a regular, daily assistant and found her more valuable than ever. She was indeed ripening for heaven, a sweet severity was effused over her person and actions, at which we often wondered; she was generally much beloved and esteemed, very happy in her union, and still so truly humble. We had Christmas holidays, and prepared to go with all the children, teachers and matrons for a little treat on a mountain on the 2nd

of January, when on New-Year night we all were awakened by the fearful message that Mrs Davies, our dear Lisbeth, just had expired, after she had given birth to a little girl! O what an unexpected, heavy stroke and great loss was this for us all! The strong feelings of the children gave way to loud lamentations and weeping which could not be kept back. Instead of the anticipated joy we had deep mourning, and in the morning we went in parties to see the dear remains, and in the evening followed with sad hearts the funeral. The poor infant I took at once, as no nurse was found, she is thriving well by our goat's milk, and is very much loved by all. So had we a very solemn entrance of the year, and my young people were drawn to many serious reflections, as we could hear in our private prayer meetings, and see in their eager attention to the united assemblies in our District through the second week of January. The lines so remarkably written out by their departed sister, only three days before her death, found afterwards in her box, made also a deep impression, and are constantly alluded to by them, it is the following:

'Am I ready? I am young, but I must die,
 In my grave soon I shall lie –
 Am I ready now to go, – If the will of God be so?'

The good hopes which I expressed in my last account, I can to the praise and glory of God confirm, the work is a *real* and a *growing* one, amongst my children and the village people. Prayer is answered exceeding abundantly above all what we ask or think. We often feel, as it were, our gracious Saviour in our midst, and our souls are stirred up to desire to serve the Lord more fully. In a few weeks I trust to have again about 20 children taken into the visible Church of Christ by holy baptism; they have been under long preparation, and are very anxious for it, only pressure of work, through the afore-mentioned illness and absence of my assistant, made it impossible to have it before this.

The meetings for mutual edification and prayer are not only kept up by the beginners in this place, but they are multiplied and spread like a net over all the village; still of late the Eku people⁶² seemed very hard, taking no part in the religious movement; but they as well as some remaining heathens are now visited by the others, and a weekly Prayer-meeting is held by turn in every house of the, so called, Ekutown,⁶³ to which none dared refuse admittance, and of which good fruits are already seen. Only very few young persons of both sexes are still untouched, many [are] truly zealous disciples of Jesus. A young men's Christian association has also been formed, which meets weekly twice, under the guidance of our two able Schoolmasters.

Is it not a great privilege to serve such a faithful, loving God! Have we not every reason to thank Him for His past mercies, to work and pray to

be instant in season and out of season, and to trust Him for the future! He has fulfilled in us the precious words: "With favour will I encompass them, as with a shield."⁶⁴

I remain Reverend and Dear Sirs,
very sincerely your Sabina Clemens

Charlotte, 19 July 1862

Dear Mr Venn,

"Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."⁶⁵ This precious promise of our true, faithful God came forcibly to my mind, when I received, and with tears of humble gratitude read your very kind, encouraging letter of June 23rd. Not I was thinking, nor have I expressed to any one the wish, to leave my post, as long as the necessary health was granted; [and] my truly pious, devoted Mary, who has now for nearly six years shared most faithfully all my trials, cares and joys; suffered of late so continually of indigestion and general debility, that we can no more doubt what the Doctor some months ago said: she needs change of climate; and it is decided that she returns home with August Mail.

The consideration that then all the manifold work will rest alone upon me, fear that my health would hardly be equal for a lengthened time to the double exertion; and what was then to become of this dear, *under the Grace of God* so prosperous field of labour, caused me, with more than usual fervour, 'to lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.'⁶⁶ In the Colony I knew no one to take my place; nor to help me instead of Mary. Mr and Mrs Knödler,⁶⁷ I feel almost sure, would not like to come to Charlotte, and another difficulty, they may go home next year. I had some plans prayerfully on my heart, and feel now relieved from much anxiety since I by your letter can hope, that success in them will be agreeable to the Committee. Consequently I made by this Mail inquiries about a Swiss lady at Dresden; to my knowledge an earnest Christian, well educated, very able and gifted, middle aged, with sound principles and wise judgement persevering in what she takes to hand. If the Lord makes her willing, and she could come soon, I am sure she would quickly improve in English. A good person of Mary's capacity, one of her younger friends, I also hope to get a little later.

The Lord Almighty has been hitherto so undeservedly good to us, his poor, miserable instruments in such glorious work; well may we trust Him for the future and fully believe that He will surely fulfil the word Isai 58, 12⁶⁸ which he had given us in regard to the School for this year,

and which we kept fast in faith, though it had so soon to go through a test, when such a “breach” seemed broken in by the death of dear Lisabeth. When I receive a positive answer, I shall take the liberty of writing again to you.

Am truly thankful for the kind approval of the Committee, but I desire to lay *all* “by evil report and good report”⁶⁹ to the feet of our blessed Jesus, who alone shall be praised for ever!

In Him I remain, Dear Mr Venn,
very respectfully your S. Clemens

Report of the Liberated Girls School at Charlotte, Charlotte, March 1863

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

Having been prevented by illness from writing in September last a half yearly report, it remains for me to give now a short survey of a year’s toil, cares and pleasures, all mingled up, and divided wisely by an unerring father’s hand.

On Easter Sunday 1862 we were so happy as to have again thirty-one of our children baptized, under a sweet feeling of the presence of our gracious Saviour. Two of this number were after a few months removed by death; one, a nice, clever girl of about thirteen years, died quite unexpected, after a short, very painful disease in the throat which deprived her of the power of speech, though she showed presence of mind to the last moment in her expressive face, folded and lifted up hands, depression of her groaning and eager attention when we prayed around her. The other was one of my older girls, Elisa Huber by name, she had been afflicted with a consumptive disease, which was the means to bring her near to god. She was one of the less gifted children, retiring and timid, little noticed among so many, she begged with tears to be admitted to the candidates for baptism, because, she added, I am sickly and may not have long to live. It proved she was powerfully held up to the evening of the blessed day, joined our love-feast, when we with the newly baptized partook of tea and bread, sung, prayed, and dear Mr Quaker from the Grammar School,⁷⁰ who was then my guest, alternately a questioned and spoke to them in his kind, interesting way. From that time Elisa could no more visit the house of God, but was filled with joy and peace from above in a most remarkable way; she had laid aside the world and all earthly thoughts entirely, spoke with touching love, of her Jesus, and wished to hear nothing but of him, she often repeated texts and hymns and begged that they should be sung, when we paused she would con-

tinue with soft voice her favourite hymns which were: Around the throne of God thousand of angels stand,⁷¹ and: Behold, behold the Lamb of God, on the cross⁷² etc. Her swollen face lighted up as an angel's. She was so grateful for all that was done for her, and admonished affectionately all her companions to flee from evil and to do good. Her suffering from cough and at last dropsy increased, but though she longed so much for her Saviour's call, she uttered never one impatient word or complaint, when we pitied her she would sweetly say: never mind, Jesus is near me, soon he sends his angels to fetch me poor sinner, then all is Glory! So she waited from morning till evening, from evening to the morning till the holy messengers came and the redeemed, happy spirit triumphantly left the perishing clay. One little one more died lately of consumption.

Married were through the year to different places, and as near as I could ascertain to respectable, Christian men, ten girls. The present number in School is 124. Several of those are also engaged to be soon married and if no newly rescued children will be brought in, the School is on a rapid decrease. The failure of health of Mary Hohermuth, my devoted assistant, to which I referred in my last report a year ago, seemed to leave no hope that she in this climate could get better; she was ordered home by the Doctor. With heavy hearts had we prepared all for her departure, singularly enough, she slowly improved and myself became weakened much by repeated fevers. However, we thought we *must* go on; Mary with regret, amid many tears on all sides, left in August when the mail from the coast was expected, to wait for it in Freetown, at length, after several days delays, news arrived that the 'Cleopatra' was wrecked.⁷³ She saw at once the finger of God in it that she must try to remain longer at her work – and very necessary it was, wonderful before our eyes to this moment how graciously our merciful Lord overruled all for our best. She got better and was able to nurse me in the severest attack of fever which I have had in Africa and from which, humanly speaking, I hardly could have recovered if alone and having the care and anxiety of my large family all on my mind. This was in September, jaundice and great weakness followed.

In November I undertook for the benefit of my health, a trip to the Sherbro, to which I had been long before invited by the American Missionaries who have three settled stations there.⁷⁴ It was not only very interesting, but I trust I derived much good from this visit for body and soul. From the observations I made of land and people – to which a great part of my children belong – from the way in which these zealous, excellent brothers and sister, consisting at the time of eight persons, arrange their affairs and try to operate for their Lord and against Satan, in those places where the enemy of souls still holds strongly his seat and

abounds in extreme wickedness. Where I beheld their difficulties and trials of faith and patience in this hard, unbroken ground, how thankfully did I, after a months' absence, return to my own appointed work and troubles.

I must also mention that our beloved Lisabeth Davies' infant⁷⁵ is still with us, growing well, her mother's very picture, an intelligent, promising child, much advanced for her age, walks and talks and gives us all much pleasure.

I still find much comfort and encouragement in trying to lead my black children in the path of knowledge and salvation. At the same time, I have constant cause to mourn over their defects, sins and errors, which require much watchfulness and anxiety, but I am not alone, He who has so dearly bought also these precious, im[m]ortal souls, stands graciously at the side of his weak instrument. It is true, I sometimes feel, more than in former years, the heat and burden of the day, and have an ardent wish for quiet and rest, but the Lord seemeth to will otherwise, and the Christians true happiness is to be where He has sent us, and to fulfill as long as it pleaseth him the work He has entrusted us to do! With earnest prayer for God's guidance and that He may be glorified in all,
I remain Reverend and Dear Sirs,
sincerely yours, S. Clemens

Charlotte, 19 July 1863

Dear Mr Venn,

It is now just one year since I wrote to you in answer to your kind letter of June 23/62. Since that time I had taken much pains, and my dear friends at home were very anxious and active for it, that suitable, devoted persons should be found to replace myself and my faithful assistant Mary at this School. But all our efforts seemed in vain, our proposals found every where difficulties of various kind. I felt sorry, but not at all discouraged, knowing that our blessed Lord will surely not forget his children's need, white and black here at Charlotte; but at His own good time select and make willing such as he pleases.

He also graciously gave the necessary measure of health that we could toil on and patiently wait on our posts. Yea feel it to this moment an inexpressible privilege to be spared for such blessed work.

And now I have the pleasure of informing you that after I had given up all hope of help from Switzerland, my dear sister came quite providential in contact with a lady, Miss Susette Kleiner,⁷⁶ who had offered herself and given me a very pleasing impression in 1856, but I had then

already fixed on Miss Bleuler. She is a truly pious, devoted Christian, who had a constant wish to spend her life in Missionlabours, but humble and unassuming, she feared nothing more than to go her *own* ways. She acted as a teacher all these seven years in Baden,⁷⁷ hoping and praying that I would write for her; but very singularly had I lost sight of her totally, till a much esteemed mutual friend, of whom you perhaps before this have heard, Mrs Jolberg from Karlsruhe, living now at Nonnenweiler,⁷⁸ mentioned to my sister and spoke highly of Miss Kleiner, her insitement [?] and matured conviction that her destiny be to work amongst the heathen. It happened that just then Miss Kleiner spent her vacations with her relations in Thurgau,⁷⁹ not far from my home; my good sister invited her to a visit, when they opened their minds fully to each other, and wrote both to me satisfactorily; Mrs Böhringer⁸⁰ that she felt convinced I would receive a very devoted, useful assistant, and Miss Kleiner how joyfully she would come to Africa. In all the circumstances connected, which I cannot communicate at length in writing, I most gratefully recognise the wonderful guidance of our Heavenly father and an answer to our prayers. I wrote to Miss Kleiner back, and gave her the necessary advices for a speedy preparation, and that a written certificate from a pious minister must through Inspector Josenhans⁸¹ be sent to you: I doubt not this was done, perhaps it came to your hand before you receive this, and I sincerely hope it meets your and the Committee's approval. I trust Miss Kleiner may come to London in August or September, shortly before the mail for Africa leaves. She intended to go to Mr Josenhans herself, and I feel sure he will counsel and help, as well as write to you. I need indeed an assistant with fresh strength. Mary is again ailing since the beginning of the rains, if needs be, she can then go home this autumn, and by the by my God will surely make ways to relieve me also in the meanwhile. He does abundantly comfort and strengthen me out of the riches of His own grace. Was thinking perhaps dear Miss Bywater⁸² and Mr Brierly⁸³ would like and be suitable for this place; but as Charlotte became [= got] of late a native pastor,⁸⁴ a change in ministers might perhaps no more be easy.

All this, so closely connected with the future welfare of this School, do I earnestly recommend to your kind favour, wise consideration and fervent prayers and beg to remain, much honoured and Dear Sir,
respectfully yours, S. Clemens



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II. Henrietta Elise König/Knödler
to the Reverend H. Venn
(CMS headquarters, London),
Sierra Leone, 1860–5



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Female Institution, Freetown, 14 March 1860

Dear Sir!

I was highly surprised at the contents of your dear letter I received yesterday. I thought not one of us had written to you about our affairs of late; yet your note was as an answer of [sic] my last letter, by this time only in your hands. My heart is so full that I scarcely know where to begin. Has not the Lord, our Almighty, gracious God worked wondrous things? I can but humbly look up and thank Him for His Mercy and my heart rejoices in Him. I have been in deep, deep waters, thought them too mighty for me to overcome and feared they would flow over my head and drown me. I could not move in the matter; only once I went to Mr Jones, as to the Secretary,¹ and told him my position. I had to wait upon my God and to His Promises I took my refuge. I felt alone but was assured that He, who had called me, who had set me upon a higher place than ever I had thought of, *He* would be faithful. I had to sow in tears, that I might reap in joy,² He allowed the ground under my feet to shake to establish me and to strengthen me. I had to *wait*, and it has been a trying time, seemed so long – too long to bear for body and mind. I asked Miss Freimuth³ for her advice and she knew I would have been thankful for it, I would have done anything for the improvement of the School. She would *never* talk with me about it; though I begged of her to tell me what was not right and what wanted a change, rather than speak about it with others from whom I had to hear it; she declined decidedly her advice. I knew she wanted my place, I asked her to wait for Mr Venn's decision, said also to Mr Jones, if indeed she is the right person for the place I would be glad to see her here & I would never think of an unjust treatment with me, only open and not try first to bring shame and disgrace upon me and then to let her take my place. Miss Freimuth said the very first evening something of not taking a place under anyone and by the by said so positively. I would rather have behind what is behind having suffered so much about all this. I would rather not stir it up again. I will as you ask me speak without hesitation at present. As it may be of consequence what I said about her objections to the Church of England, I would say one word more. It is true she has been only once in the Chapel, yet she decidedly said she would go there every Sunday and if I had not refused Children to accompany her there, she would have gone oftener. I know well my effects, my failures, I try to come forward, to improve and would not have courage to stand any

longer on so important a post as mine is, if I were not sure of the Lord's Will in it. Only want of faith and Love to Him would be the reason from shrinking back when my way is gloomy and very lonely.

Dear Sir, you speak about faithfulness, I try to be faithful, not that I have attained to it, yet it is my aim. The duties of my place are so various and every thing wants constant watching or it falls back in its old way; the Climate sometimes trying; our house small, the Children always with us, from 5 o'clock till after 9 when they should be asleep, there is seldom a quiet hour and I have a poor human nature, and far from what I wish to be. Dear Mrs Clemens⁴ example is always before me, she does things so quietly and steadily, takes the children so gently and kindly and yet friendly and goes on from day to day the same.

When Miss Bywater⁵ is going to leave me is uncertain, at present she remains: I know no English Lady whom I would like to have out here and no German who knows English so well as to take the place of an English; till this moment also no Native. But this, I am persuaded, is of great importance even to our glorious God, He for His own promises' sake will bring it to a good end. As Miss Freimuth declared that she is never going to assist in the Institution, it was thought best to find a house for her. This was her wish and Mr Jones found soon a suitable one, so she has left us the 8th of this month.

I have to communicate to you another matter of importance and to ask your advice on its behalf. A girl of 9 years of age, but very small, came out with the same mail as the Bishop⁶ and Miss Freimuth, she has an Irish father and a half-bred mother, living on the Coast, to whom she has been sent out, after the wish of her father's wife in England. Katie Cobbold enjoyed a good education in England from Childhood up.⁷ The Bishop as well as all the others, took a great interest in her, she is a superior child thrown into the world without any protection and left entirely to herself. His Lordship was kind enough to write down to her mother, promising to take care of the child, if sent back to Sierra Leone. Katy was sent and lived for some weeks with the Bishop's family as one of his own children. Miss Freimuth begged of him to let her have Katy, but after all what has happened she is not to have her. Some days ago the Child was sent to me very suddenly, she had got an eruption and Mrs Beckles⁸ feared for her own Children, so she came. I love Katy, she loves us, I have her in my own room and do for her what an elder sister would do for a younger. The Bishop likes her here and desires her to remain with me; he would like to see her on the foundation, in order to secure her the place. It is not my intention to ask your permission to do so. I know of past troubles and resolutions about this question. Katy will always be an exception, would as a foundationpupil never in any thing be treated as one of the others, she is as any well brought up English

child and requires the care and attention of one. I would ask you, could you allow me, dear Sir, to have the Child with me; the expences will also be my own, as long as we are here together. Her name shall not be set down and she will be kept as far as possible aloof from the others, yet her society could only be an advantage to them. Our little ones with Katy accompany me sometimes on my evening walk, or we sit together upstairs, the Children playing and reading. As long as I am well, I could do so and am sure it is good for them. If there are no objections in granting my request, I shall be most happy to keep my little Katy, she will be a comfort to me. I suppose His Lordship the Bishop is writing too; asking you to let her become a foundation pupil; if also she is to become one, she has to wait a good while – there is no opening at present. The foundation pupils are all of the age from 9 – 14 and will most likely enjoy the advantage of the School a good while longer. There is already another little one, a schoolmaster's child here, at Mrs Caiger's⁹ expences, with whom she had lived when at Pademba Road.¹⁰ This Child, Lydia Grant is her name, ought to have the first place. Others are waiting, too.

I am quite sure if Ladies in England were better acquainted with our Institution they would like to bear the expences for poor interesting Children, who would be taken in for them if desired. The Society pays for one £8 a year, on these terms many more would find a place in our house and if they were to send clothes out for them we could do with £5. I try to bring them up as to be useful once. They have all [the] housework to do – there are no servants – yet I do not allow lessons to be neglected. The more work they have to do, the healthier they are, the more we gain our aim, the more is done [of] what our Society has in view. I indeed would like to give them gardenwork, too.

Before the last Holidays their lessons went on very regularly and they took a delight in them, during the short leisure hours you could see them all on the steps before our door, writing and making their sums. I thought it an improvement, till I am persuaded of the contrary. Two of them fell sick, recovered yet are subjected to attacks of the same. The Doctor forbids them to schoolroom for some months altogether. Not that they learn much, but it is too much for them to be treated as English Children; they are too weak, their mind cannot fix itself steadily and with energy upon one matter; so the Doctor says and I have found it so with Colony-born children.

When we see into the deep corruption of our young girls here, at this place especially, how sad we feel and many a thought crosses my mind; how to help, how to be able to preserve them. Isaiah says: "Who is among that feareth the Lord; that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walkes in darkness and has no light; let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon His God."¹¹ I hope and trust he will show clearer

what He wants us to do and does he not come already with judgements and does he not fulfill what He says Zechariah XIII 9: ‘I will bring the third part through the fire and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried’ etc.¹² This very time is such a time to me and I acknowledge: I have deserved it – it is a trying time that will be remembered as long as we live. After the earthquake saw the prophet a fire and then the still small voice.¹³ As we have had and shall have the first, so we will also hear the small voice when it is time.

Miss Freimuth used to say that it is a great mistake of the Society to have two agents from different nations together in one place. This has been one of my first thoughts when called hither. Miss Sass¹⁴ comforted me very wisely, telling me that it is not the Society’s will or wish to bring the children up with pure *English* ideas and manners [but] to bring them up as useful ones; as true Christians; as far as it lies in our power. It is difficult that’s true; to work together as long as the wills and views are different, not that the whole is disturbed or interrupted by it but the whole would and could better prosper if the hands were joined. At Charlotte they work together and are greatly blessed.¹⁵ We shall be blessed too. Those who sow in tears, shall reap in joy!¹⁶ There is a *gentle* spirit amongst our children, not one is a naughty one, the Lord has done great things, but there is not a longing heart for Jesus and His Love; it has not yet touched their hearts. We wait and see! May the Lord remove whatever hinders his coming etc. etc.

Dear Sir, you would like to see a prayermeeting between us. I wish it too and shall see what we can do; if we could do it humbly it would open the door to the Lord and to all his blessings for which we pray in England, Switzerland and here. May Grace be given to begin it, a firm resolution to obtain it. Mrs Maxwell¹⁷ is a friend and as she belongs to the Committee she knows all about our affairs. Mrs Beale¹⁸ is very dear, she lives a little too far as that we could see each other often.

I beg, dear Sir, to excuse my three sheets – it has not been my intention to trouble you with a letter this time; may the Lord lead it! Believe me, dear Sir, to remain yours faithfully, Eliza Koenig.

**Report of the Church Missionary Society’s Female Institution,
Freetown, 28 March 1860**

My dear Ladies!

It is rather with a trembling hand that I take the pen to write this my first Report of the School. I have been so short a time here and am not yet, I suppose, sufficiently acquainted with all my duties in this Institu-

tion to enable me to give such an account as would satisfy the Ladies of the Committee. I came from Charlotte the 7th of February, after having received from Mr Ehemann, the Secretary of our Society,¹⁹ the appointment of the Parent Committee to take the place of Miss Sass, who was to leave it for health's sake. It was rather sudden, as I had never before had an idea of succeeding her, nor any wish to take up her work.

I came from Switzerland a year ago last November; my circumstances have never allowed me to enjoy the society of English friends, by which my imperfect English would have been improved. The high responsibilities of my new appointment stood solemnly before me. I thought nobody is less worthy and less fit for such a place than I; on the other side what a blessing could it become to me, if the Lord were to use me as an instrument in His hands to do His holy will. After some weeks fever and many anxieties and prayers I could with more willingness leave my first situation and follow the call of my God. I left Charlotte with dear Mrs Clemens' blessings and best wishes and reached the Female Institution a fortnight before my dear friend, Miss Sass, left our shore for England. I now saw for the first time Miss Bywater, the assistant of this Institution, and have reasons enough to thank the Lord for her, as she had been here a year, is well acquainted with the rules of the house and with the Children of the School. This is indeed a very great comfort and of great value to me. We both follow Miss Sass's plans in the school as well as in the household matters.

You are well aware, my dear Ladies, of the difficulties of such a charge: the children, especially the elder amongst them, have neither the confidence in, nor the Love to, a new teacher, which they bore to her, who had been the beloved and honoured superintendent for many a year; yet the Lord has also graciously provided for me in this matter and directed the hearts of the Children. I do not find so many difficulties as I expected; they seemed never to look upon me as an unknown newcomer; we welcomed each other, as if we had been only for a time separated. The number of Boarders as well as dayscholars is the same as when Miss Sass left; she took with her two orphans, who had lived in the house some years, enjoying the particular care of their benefactress. Harriet Winslow returned to the Institution as Mrs Hamilton,²⁰ her mistress, had to leave the colony for her health's sake.

Miss Sass had been unable the last half year to attend much to school-duties, Miss Bywater was left alone and not long before the school had [had] three teachers which was not too much; such a change must be felt sadly, especially by these children who want a strict and continuous oversight [= supervision]. The conduct of the girls has not always been satisfactory, but on the whole we have cause to be thankful for the blessings we had had with regard to them. On Friday afternoon the pupils

work for missionary purposes, in which the dayschoolers gladly join, during this time one of the children reads aloud the green Children's book²¹ and other missionary intelligences. We hope by thus doing to infuse a missionary spirit among them and to teach them the blessedness of doing something for others. We feel also deeply the truth of Jesus' words, when he says: "The labourers are few."²² Our institution is not a large place nor is the number of the scholars great, yet to attend the schoolduties and to keep the house with all its details in respectable order, is often rather more than we are able to do. We need an Assistant to survey [= supervise] the children after schoolhours, when it is not always possible for us to do it and yet it is very necessary. We hope our elder girls will by the by better understand that it is their duty to assist us willingly and joyfully in our important work.

Our eyes are fixed on our Saviour's faithful promises, to be a father to the fatherless, a friend to those who need one and often, when we are in any trouble, we feel the Lord's almighty hand putting the things straight and dispersing the gathering clouds; therefore we humbly trust that He will daily draw us more nigh to Him, that we may grow in grace and wisdom and be a blessing to the dear children for life and eternity.

My dear Ladies, I beg you to bear with me patiently, to advise me motherly and to bring me and these our Children often before the Lord with supplication.

I remain, my dear Ladies, very respectfully and affectionately, yours
Elise Koenig.

Female Institution, Freetown, 19 May 1860

My dear Mr Venn,

I received your kind note with the April mail when I was at Mr Caiger's²³ spending there my first holiday in Sierra Leone. I am much obliged to you for having addressed me so kindly, I was indeed sorry for not having been able to write to you the last time when the mail left but was not well enough to do it. I wanted rest after a year and five months almost uninterrupted schoolduties and I found with dear Mr Caiger's a home and true friends.

Our Children have returned this week and Miss Bywater and I with some foundationpupils came the week before. I am happy to say that the Children seemed to come gladly back to the Institution. Three new Pupils arrived. I was rather anxious for the first week, as I feared the children would be difficult to bring to order and discipline, and we have much to do to train them in the right way, yet it is much better than we

expected. Oh, dear Mr Venn, our Lord is a good Shepherd indeed, he hears the secret prayers and answers them openly. How often have I experienced it and been enabled to approach the next time with more boldness before the throne of grace to intercede and to pray for those who are put under my care.

I am very glad to have an occasion to write to you, to tell you how often I remembered you and your kind words to me; which sounded like a father's blessing. The Lord Jesus knows how deep the impression was of all I saw and heard. I promised to our Lord who had brought me so wonderfully to London and who had so many blessings in store for me, to be faithful to the dear Society of which I was made a member, and to do any thing that would lay in my power; often, when the climate was oppressing or other trials were gathering like clouds over my head, the remembrance of the last moments at Salisbury Square²⁴ was sufficient to disperse them.

You have now my first Report in hand and are acquainted by it a little of [sic] the state of our school. I like my place here, I see fully what grace it is to be called hither; I feel myself also at home among the children, whom I call "my own." It is a place of much importance, of much labour, of great responsibility toward God and men, *but* it was not my own choice and this is a great comfort, and great strength lays in it. He who calls us *is faithful*, he gives each day what we want and prepares us in labouring for others to a fuller enjoyment of the Rest and the Glory which is the lively hope of us, who had seen and tasted the Love which is in Christ Jesus.

It is very interesting to me to be able to compare colonyborn and liberated children together; 'tis a great difference. The School here is a school as we can see them anywhere at home. The natural heart is always the same and the pupils of the Institution have enjoyed more or less education and instruction before they came to us. Some take a great interest in their lessons, they know that they are soon to use what they have learnt, in the shop or other business of their fathers. Not thus the liberated Children; but they are dear and happy girls. I was often astonished to see by a girl coming just from the heathen country lovely dispositions, natural simplicity, gentleness and hearty affection. Some quiet, sensible Little Ones will cling to us from the very first moment they feel our love to them, with their whole heart. The image of God is still to be seen at times and where there is a little, we may hope for more. What a difference when the Children have not been a long while in Slavery [= slavery], where they are treated as creatures, the better feelings are almost crushed and they seem not to know if they indeed will and can trust and love.

You will like to hear that Mrs Clemens is well satisfied with her Schoolmaster. She is quite well and the School is in its usual [state]. Oh! I knew that she would see the Lord's hand in my removal and bless Him for that, which was such a trial to her. The Children from Charlotte come sometimes to see me and little Conrad passed a few happy days with me. Miss Bywater spent a fortnight of her holidays there, enjoying it greatly. Miss Bywater is a very precious assistant to me, how faithfully she works! untired from 7 o'clock till late in the evening. I am very glad to have met with her here and to be allowed to work in the same school with her.

Dear Mr Venn, I beg you to excuse my long letter to you and I pray you to remember us in your prayer, before the throne of Grace. I remain, dear Mr Venn,
faithfully yours, Elise König.

Female Institution, Freetown, 16 June 1860

Dear Mr Venn!

I take the liberty of writing to you a few lines by this mail about a matter concerning our Institution. Miss Sass may have heard that Revd Maxwell²⁵ withdrew his little daughter from the school before the holidays, having never spoken with me about it, thus that I indeed [do] not know what the reason was. I believe the terms £4.4/: were more than he could afford. Miss Sass writes me that it is the wish of the Parent Committee to give to the native Pastors all the assistance they can and I therefore had to take a second daughter of any native Minister free of all charge, in case the parents pay for the first; this either as boarders or dayscholars. I opened my books where the rules and letters are copied but could find nothing about this. I would ask you, dear Sir, to write me about it. It is of too great a consequence; as that I could do so without a sanction from the Parent Committee. And in case the elder daughter is given to us as a parlour boarder, who is to pay for the second child? Is it to be charged in the monthly voucher? These Children whose mothers or fathers have been in England will never be given a boarder's downstairs.²⁶ Revd Taylor²⁷ and Mr Wilson from York²⁸ have both had two of their girls here, but they belonged to the ten foundation Pupils for which the Society allows a certain sum.

Dear Mr Venn, will you excuse me, when I am to mention a matter which I but timidly bring forward. Mrs Maxwell²⁹ is appointed by the Parent Committee a member of our Ladies' Visiting Committee; but Miss Bywater does not yet belong to it. I do not know, but it may be that

this is not done on purpose as it seemed to me to be of no great importance. The Natives do not know that she is not a member, by this time they will perceive it and I fear will suppose that something is not right between the Parent Committee and Miss Bywater. Please, dear Sir, do excuse this word and do not think me to mingle in matters which I have not to touch.

Believe me, dear Sir, to remain most respectfully yours,
Eliza König.

I spoke yesterday with Mr Jones about a roof which wants new shingles and will cost about £10. He told me I should ask you for a grant for the necessary repairs, because this Institution as well as the Grammarschool have a particular fund for themselves. £25 would be sufficient for this year. I do not know if the Estimate I sent to Mr Caiger last April was sent home, but remember that Mr Jones said at the same time the same to Mr Caiger. I beg you, dear Sir, to excuse this long letter. Mrs Caiger is at Wilberforce or I would have spoken with her first about all this.

Female Institution, 20 June 1860. Eliza König

Report of the Church Missionary Society's Female Institution, Freetown, September 1860

My dear Christian friends,

The time having arrived when our Reports are expected by the Ladies of the Committee, I also will try to take up my pen to trace an imperfect sketch of the events of the past few months of our labours in the Institution. I feel in body and soul as a weary traveller at the end of his day's journey, but it is with gratitude to my heavenly father that I look back on the past. He has faithfully protected us and has been in many a perplexity my stronghold.

It is his good pleasure to work that which is to remain for Eternity, by feeble creatures, to humble the labourers and to show them day by day: "It is I who do it, come to me, I am the source of every blessing."³⁰ All our wants, which he alone can supply, constrained me to pray with earnestness daily for the "daily bread" for me and our children, for Wisdom and Grace and a willing heart to obey. To know that many a devout Christian takes an interest in our work and brings our necessities before the throne of grace, this indeed has been a great comfort and a motive for increased exertion when the hands have been tired and the knees feeble.

We returned from the Holidays the 5th of May, and being strengthened by the Rest we had enjoyed through the kindness of the friends

with whom we spent them, we returned with love and courage to our labour. I had the pleasure of receiving 5 fresh Boarders and 3 dayscholars; thus we had this half year 33 Children in the school. Five of the elder girls are going to leave us; they had been in School as Boarders from 2 to 5 years. Three return to Lagos to their parents. They were willing to learn and have a good store of useful knowledge. My prayer is that they may become shining lights among the benighted families and nations, where they are going to live, yes! may the good seed rise in them, when they see heathenism practised by those who are Christians in name and who walk not better than the worst of those, who have never heard the glad tidings of our Saviour's Redemption.

The rains set in and it was so very damp in our house; the roofs leaked everywhere, one of the Schoolrooms had often more the appearance of a pool of water than of a room, and of course could no more be used. The roof was shingled fresh yet very badly and we had to wait because of the rains till now to have it shingled once more. We had often sick children, some had chickenpox, other fevers and colds. Two of them fell sick very suddenly and strangely, were speechless for some days and one of them had fits besides. Dr Bradshaw³¹ attended them very faithfully; he as well as the Natives believe that they had eaten poisonous fruit without being aware of it and as [the] Doctor thought they would shortly die, we fulfilled their parents' wish to have them nursed at home; both are, after some weeks, restored again. The parents and friends of our pupils are in times of sickness a great trouble to us; as soon as they know that a Child is not quite well, they come immediately, even from distant places and want the girl home; they beg and intreat of me to let her go; if I object to her going, they get their friends to come and ask for them; thus the most respectable men, teachers, catechists, merchants, intreat of me to let the child go, as they know if she is taken away, without my consent, she will not be received again. Lately one of our Boarders felt not quite well and desired to return to her mother, who is a Mohamedan; her girl, 19 years of age, has been sent to the Institution by her brother, who is a Christian and Martha herself often expressed a wish to be baptized. No kind words, no persuasion [sic] could remove the idea from her mind of going among her own family; her mother and sisters remained the whole day with her, though she was under the care of our Doctor; mother as well as child desired their own Mohamedan Doctors; the mother at last brought with her several countrymen into the yeard. I could prevent their entering the house, but the mother took her child forcibly home, and had it not been a particular case with her, as she on the whole is a steady and in her way earnest minded girl, she would have been dismissed from the school, but here such a step might have proved too fatal and would probably have led to

her ruin for time and eternity. Her friends and she herself begged humbly that she might be received again and after some hesitation, which I hope will be blessed to the other children too; she is allowed to return as a Boarder. Since then she has been baptized and we hope will prove a steady christian girl.

Others of our pupils have given us pleasure by their industry in learning and by an improvement in their behaviour. Also with thankfulness I acknowledge the essential help and willing mind of our Assistant to have been of use and also a comfort to me. Another of our Foundationpupils, who after her sixteenth year was not qualified to be used as an Assistant in the house, has been now at Mrs Caiger's for six months. I thought a thorough change may probably exercise a good influence upon her mind and indeed I hope to find in her a willing underassistant on her return to us after the Holidays. It is a great comfort to have our own children here; they are attached to the house and know the rules of it and feel at home.

We are sometimes much encouraged in our work by seeing the parents grateful for what we do for their Children. A woman from Magbelly,³² who could happily escape and afterward redeem her children, who were made slaves in the last struggle there; came to Freetown and her first work was to fit out her daughter, a girl of about 12 years, for our school. It is cheering to see her care for the child and her anxiety that she may learn something. She herself knows scarcely any English and has been deprived on any instruction. She is our neighbour, but she will not rest till the father consents to send her as Boarder instead of a dayscholar to us. She comes sometimes to me to thank me heartily for the trouble we take with the child and she will look into the schoolroom with such a happy expression in her face. Some fathers from Magbelly have entrusted their little boys to her care, that they may be sent to school, which she does with pleasure and faithfulness.

The conduct of our Pupils has been on the whole satisfactory: in school they are generally industrious and attentive and encourage therefore those who teach them. During Bibleclass and Morning and Evening prayers, they show very often much interest. We are sowing and have no right to expect fruit in our time; they have a good deal of scriptural knowledge, but hitherto, I would say, grace has not prevailed and shown its blessed influence in the whole demeanour of the children, as we desire and pray for without ceasing. But God forbid that I would judge in so deep a matter; which the Lord alone is able to discern; I hope some of them are not far from the Kingdom of God. I trust that some indeed are convinced of the sinfulness of the heart and believe that their own endeavours to get better are too weak and altogether insufficient – this is the first step toward the true way; may they be strengthened to look to

Jesus during their staggering steps and trembling resolutions, till they walk with firmness in the Light of the Lord's Countenance.

My dear friends, I have rather tired you and proved your patience by my long Report; I conclude thanking you for all your sympathy shown to me and begging of you not to faint in well doing, pray for us; oh pray that our Instituion may prosper and become a place in which the Lord delighteth to dwell.

I remain affectionately and faithfully,
yours H. Eliza Koenig.

Female Institution, Freetown, 27 January 1861

My dear, dear friend,³³

You will no doubt often remember us, often think of me, often desire to know how we are and wish to be acquainted with all our ways, all our doings, our fears. Oh dear friend, I wish I could lay open before you my whole house from the store to the accounts. I have often nothing else than tears, so it is this very moment. You have always had a heart for me, could always sympathize with me, I therefore come with a full and heavy heart to pour it into yours. Yet be not anxious, the most essential of our Work is visibly in the Lord's hands, my kind should sing praises to Him, who has done great things for me, the children are obedient, willing and gentle-minded girls – there's not one *naughty* one amongst them, I mean one who disturbs the others, who tries to bring them in disorder and to lead them wrong, as poor Hariette Winslow, Selina Turner, Rebecca had been. There are much trials and many a difficulty it is true, this very moment is a deep night round about me and not one Star will appear in my way; there is one, our Jesus, who has given unto us sweet and firm promises – on these promises my heart's trembling is fixed. Suffer now with me, my friend, and when the Lord shows his gracious hand we will sing praises together to Him, who is able to wake up from death, to turn the Night into joy and gladness.

You will easily understand me and dear Mrs Caiger, whom you probably will see;³⁴ will also tell you about it. You know by this time Charlotte School is in good order and is a very blessed place. Mrs Clemens is not *in want* of an assistant, thus Miss Freimuth has to remain a little longer with us in the Institution. She is an English lady indeed, and has I fear brought with her very different views and opinions of the Missionwork here. She tells me, she would never take a class and be an assistant – she had been a superintendent and could never stand under any one. She is a visitor entirely. I do not know why she does neither talk about our

Work, nor try to do something handy. I have worked hard and did it joyfully to prepare a room for her to make it look as gentle, as convenient as we can possibly. Our table is as good as any one and only complaints and words of dissatisfaction have I to hear. O dear, as I sigh now, as I weep now [as] I have seldom done, how deeply I feel in my position here as a stranger, as a *German* amongst another nation. The Lord knows I try to do whatever such a lady may require but our Work cannot be neglected, my time not spent in housework etc. alone. O, dear, dear Miss Sass, have you a comforting smile, a faithful Love to me – it *will* be a comfort to the tryed, weary mind of mine. O dear, I will just tell you what I think, and what Mrs Beckles³⁵ said to Mrs Clemens whom she asked if true Miss Koenig has not been appointed for this place, till to the time another could be sent out? You know I cannot come forward, I rather choose the last place, and to hear such language is very hard – more pretensions and demands and yet no help or advice.

8 February. Dear friend what are you thinking about all the above mentioned difficulties? I am very glad that Mrs Caiger is returning at this very time. She as well as Mr Caiger know sufficiently about all this, she may best tell you, she knows both of us. We have had lately our usual Prayermeeting here. Our friends being unwell remained at home, except Mr Caiger who kindly came before breakfast and went downstairs to the children. I hope they have been pleased with the order we try to keep upstairs and down also. There are still so many wants but it is not possible to me to arrange all *as it ought to be*. I try and see a good deal of my own mistakes, but to hear a third person tell me over and over again in the rudest, meanest way, that I do not know how to manage a house, that I am the most unfit person for this work, that she would do everything, would be able to do it, [and] so on – o dear Miss Sass – you should see her, how she walks about and orders things, how she tries to keep me under, talks cheatfully about the table if there is not everything in abundance. She talks about ill management and being very *hungry*, tells with such sneers that she has not been able to sleep because she felt too hungry, and yet there is plenty of fresh meat and pudding.

Often I think notwithstanding all this, it could be she would be the right person for this house if left alone and entirely to herself. I cannot tell you how this thought troubles me often, yet I cannot move in the matter, cannot give up my place by my own accord and she has not one friend amongst our circle. How Mr Jackson³⁶ thinks I do not know, but all others are more or less offended by her. I have to loose so soon dear Mr Caiger's and then who will take care of me? Mrs Beale is dear, is my friend but not the friend of the Institution as she ought to be. {I think so, it may not be true.} Miss Bywater is dear – this moment sometimes

in a strait, she wants to comfort Miss Freimuth and yet wants to be with me, but this time cannot endure much longer.

I will try to tell you about the Children, you will like it. Miss Bywater as well as the girls themselves are writing [to you], thus I hope you will get news enough this time. Mary Macaulay returned at the beginning of the year to the Institution. The schoolroom is not any longer her abode. The doctor will not have it, so I try to use her for housework and Lenobia too, they have the pantry and the rooms, have to do it themselves or to see that it gets done by others. They have both a *very good will* and this is indeed thankworthy and to be valued. They are careless and thoughtless, yet I am very glad and thankful for the good qualities they have and hope they will improve and be of more use by the by. Martha and Mathilda have left us, they are still in town, by the next mail they intend to start for Lagos. They have been very nice girls, so different from what they generally are and have also had good impressions too. Time will show how deep the seed could fall and be fruitful, I hope they will become a blessing wherever they may happen to be.

14 February. Some of our girls are going to be confirmed: Christiana P., Priscilla Pairs, Rose Th., Mary Macaulay, Lenobia, perhaps Martha Davis and Susannah Harding. They come to me for preparation – all is very imperfect. They as well as I want more *life* – spiritual life – and life we cannot give. They are good girls so far and try often well to conquer their tempers, but it could be very different. Christiana has often a bad temper, gets so quickly angry and knows then scarcely what she talks. Poor child she thinks herself so very good and this hinders her improvement. Till of late she indeed has been a good child, this time [sic²] she shows her proud nature often, we have to make great allowances and to be very patiently, I know it. There has lately been talk about an engagement of hers with Martha Davis' brother³⁷ but I suppose it is all nothing. Martha Davis is engaged, we saw the young man several times here. He is Mr Davies' – Captain – partner at Lagos³⁸ and left Sierra Leone yesterday again with Martha and Mathilda and Mr B. Savage married to Ann Goody.³⁹ Dr Harrison with his Lady⁴⁰ are on board ship, Mrs Harrison did not know of Mrs Buhler⁴¹ death till it was told her here. They have been as sisters when at home, she must have felt it deeply. The Consul's Lady for Lagos is with them and has with her a gentle little girl.⁴² They came all to Pademba Road with Mr Benns⁴³ appointed for this station. Mr and Mrs Caiger arrived this very evening from Waterloo, where they have been spending some days.

You will know of Mrs Bywaters engagement with Mr Brierley, who is to be ordained so quickly and afterwards sent to the Gambia.⁴⁴ Miss Bywater is not to leave at present, but I suppose if everything goes on as usual she will follow him after the rains. Miss Freimuth is not to remain

probably, she speaks of going home. We wait for an answer from Mr Venn and it may be she will have it before the holidays. It will change a great deal everywhere and we lose our friends, what I feel a great trial. Throughout dry season Miss Bywater and myself have been quite well, as healthy as we possibly could be at home. The trials have been of a different kind from those of the last Rains. What the next half year will bring we do not know. You will remember us and the vacant place that is in view. I am glad that the Lord has ordered things so with dear Miss Bywater. She will everywhere be a good Missionary and I hope will become a zealous co-labourer with Mr Brierley. I fear she will often feel deeply the separation and both will like to be joined together, when once far from each other, more so than now. Daddy Cook is still the same, a comfort to me, as he is a very faithful man and one who likes the place. Joe is still here and tries to go on a little better than some time ago. Essang [sic?] sends kind regards to you. He is also the same, grows a little, and is a very good fellow, always ready for any work he is able to do; keeps the play ground in nice order and cleans the knives and forks well. Annie is getting older [and] remains the gentle creature she always has been, and a good number of fowls occupy the yard as it used to be.

The Prayermeeting at Kissy has been one of the loveliest. Dear Miss Hehlen⁴⁵ had very much to do, so Mr Bockstatt,⁴⁶ I went there a day before the meeting to help a little etc. As I had never seen Kissy before this, it was very interesting to me to see the School and the place where the last liberated Slaves reside. We saw their plays, their happiness, their good spirits and could have wished English friends to see them too. Mr Menzies⁴⁷ and Mr Hamilton⁴⁸ stayed a night there and left then for Waterloo. We sang in the evening many of our German hymns. Misses Bywater and Freymuth returned the same day, as all the others. The Bishop was present and the Chaplain, the later [sic] left Kissy before dinner, I was not yet seen him [sic]. Mrs Clemens came too and paid a visit afterwards here. I was very happy to have her a little. The Children wanted her for evening prayer, and she kindly came and saw them all. Miss Freymuth is probably going to see her at Charlotte, she will be pleased to see the school and the friendly faces of the girls. 36 of them have been baptized late Sunday. 15 others will be confirmed this week, others are going to be married. Mrs Clemens' health and Mary's too is quiet good. Who will take the place if once she has to leave we would anxiously ask but we may believe: it will be provided. When you return, perhaps with Mr Caiger next year, you will find great changes. Probably Mr Menzies and Mr Hamilton the same. I am going perhaps to spend my holidays at Wilberforce and at Waterloo, time will show it.

15th February. I am very glad the Parent Committee has kindly bought the furniture of your's left here – if only I had known it before; in your

last note to me you write “if they are not too expensive.” I got therefore a bed from Pademba Road for 6 £ 10 s instead of yours for £2 without the under mattresses. I will see what may be done. Miss Bywater’s bed does belong to herself, we will see to sell one again. Your tea things etc. all stayed at Mrs Caiger’s, as they are on the list. We supposed you will rather like them sold. Did I not write about them last Mail? I want a nice set of tea things badly. We are so very far in the place and are therefore going to have prayermeetings etc oftener than before. You know it looks so badly to have cups of diverse colours on the table at such an occasion. If ever you can make up your mind for love’s and pity’s sake, do send them to me. They remain at Mr Caiger’s till you tell what you will like. Every thing changes too quickly nowadays, at Pademba Road they began to be as unstable as others and how quickly will a cask with so fragile a charge become unfit for use. I wait respecting your answer. Mrs Caiger will tell you about the Woolen things in your drawer. We tried well to sell them and sold but a very few a pound I have from them. The wool is discoloured and rather the patrons’ old fashion. The Ladies of Sierra Leone want you know the best. I have them still. There is not much time in our school for such works, if I want some little I take it and the Bazaar has brought it in a sad disorder till I get time to arrange again.

I wonder, dear friend, if you will come out with Mr Caiger’s next year. How fondly would I like to go with them down on the Coast or in the interior parts. Yoruba Country is nearly desolated by Mr Townshen’s⁴⁹ and Mr Gollmer’s⁵⁰ leave. And Mrs Buhler died so quickly. I wonder if you come out with Lucy and Lizzy when the new building is finished? They work now over there well, thus we can expect it finished in two years. I for myself would prefer the Country and I hope, o how I cherish the hope, of being sent there some day.

Dear friend by this you will get acquainted with many of our trials and pleasures, I am glad for it, you will always continue to be a friend and to give us your advices. The way is so long, the time passed rapidly from one letter to another, and the affairs change between yet I like to tell you all.

Affectionately yours, E. Koenig.

Female Institution, Freetown, 12 February 1861

Dear Mr Venn!

I beg you to excuse me for not having answered your letter ere this. As Miss Freimuth arrived a month later than expected I thought it better to wait. She was friendly welcomed in our house, when coming on shore,

according to your wish and every thing, as far as possible, was arranged to her convenience. She expressed herself very happy in our midst and I thought it a privilege to have her with us.

As Mrs Clemens did not want her assistance your Committee appointed her for the female Institution; but Miss Freimuth told me before as well as after her appointment, that she is not going to take the place of an Assistant neither to take a class for herself. As this is the only work our Instituion offers, there was not any other choice. My own place it is not in my power to give to another, yet we indeed tried to find out what might suit her in order to retain her at Sierra Leone as a co-helper. She has always been and is now our visitor. She believes herself sent out by the Committee to examine all our affairs, which has often been very trying to us all. As she had been in India in a very grand Establishment for girls of the higher Classes,⁵¹ our place, our whole order seemed to her too common and too mean. She spoke a great deal about it with others, so that all our friends and those who know us, got acquainted with all the little things of our house; which has not only been very disagreeable but often I feared injurious to the school. Miss Freimuth positively refuses to take even Miss Bywater's place, which will be vacant some day, as she is engaged to Mr Brierley. Miss Freimuth objects to attend the Church of England and goes to a chapel in the Neighbourhood; you will be aware of the difficulties that arise from the want of union. She tells me she is waiting only for an answer to a request of hers brought before the Parent Committee, to take future steps; so we are awaiting the Committee's direction. Mr Caiger knows us both and Mrs Caiger as a Lady of the Visiting Committee is well acquainted with all the detail of the house.

I would remind you, dear Sir, of the small number of Ladies belonging to the Committee at present. Mrs Beale and Mrs Maxwell will probably be the only one at the next Meeting. I shall sadly miss dear Mrs Caiger,⁵² who took a great interest in the improvement of the School and who stood as a true friend at my side.

Dear Sir, believe me to remain faithfully and sincerely yours,
Eliza Koenig.

Report of the Female Institution, Freetown, 30 March 1861

My dear friends,

We are at present few in number. Mrs Caiger, who has been for three years a member of the Committee, has lately left us; yet I hope other ladies will soon be called to fill up the vacant places. Half a year quickly

passes over our heads; by constant and regular work the months fly as days. I acknowledge with hearty thankfulness that our Children as well as both of us have enjoyed good health the whole of the time with very few exceptions. The holidays spent at Kent were of great benefit to us. We returned and recommenced the duties of the school the 2nd November and though we had many an interruption, scholastic duties have never been neglected. I took advantage of the dry season to have the necessary repairs done. The Westside of the roof of our house was covered with fresh slates, the well with new boards and other repairs were executed, the playground was improved and supplied with some walks and green benches to the great delight of the Children and comfort of us all.

The numbers of the Scholars at the end of the season is 32 of whom two are employed as underassistants. Two of our boarders were kept back after the September holidays, one by her father from Lagos, who believed her sufficiently improved and wanted her in a situation; another left for Lagos, where her father lives, who desired her to join the newly established School there; two others were taken away without the previous notice. Three of our eldest pupils, who had taken leave of us, at the end of the quarter begged instantly their guardians and fathers to let them return some months longer, and it was a great pleasure to welcome them back. Four young girls entered as dayscholars, three as Boarders, one of them as a foundationpupil, taking Lenobia Taylor's place. The Ladies' Committee resolved to keep the foundationpupils as such till their sixteenth year, during this time they may enjoy all the advantages the Establishment offers, afterwards they ought to earn their own, living by being useful as teachers or assistants in the house if necessary, or with friends, who watch over them, if required.

A day or two after Christmas a treat was given to the Children, tables with cakes and tea stood in the shade of the lime and palmtrees of the playgrounds. The Ladies of our Committee and several of our friends were kind enough to join us. His Lordship the Bishop and Mrs Beckles gave us the pleasure by spending the evening with us. After tea the Christmas tree in the decorated Schoolroom was lightened, the Children sang several hymns, repeating suitable texts between, after which his Lordship spoke to the Children, addressing especially those about to leave for the Coast and delivered them presents from their former schoolfellows, at present in England. The intended presents, for which I had been asking some loving friends in London, were detained at Liverpool. To hear of it just when I expected them seemed to lessen the pleasure of the evening; we tried however what we could and the Children were happy and thankful.

I try to form with my dear girls one family, to let them feel what ties of love and affection are, I try to bring them nearer that they may see rather a sister and friend in me. Our Friday missionary party was changed into a Juvenile Association and is held on Friday evenings, to the great delight of our Children and the elder dayscholars, who asked for admission; one of them is treasurer and collects the pence the members are requested to subscribe. The schooltables being covered with white clothes, with the large lamps from upstairs set upon them, the happy Children round about, with fancy work according to their abilities. Children want little to be made happy and yet we want much wisdom to find this little out and much grace to do it in the right Spirit. On Sunday afternoons some of the eldest pupils go with Miss Bywater to the parish Sundayschool, where they are employed as teachers; during this time the younger ones come to me to see the fine pictures in the large portefeuille, which contributes much to their instruction. Hymns and texts are repeated, questions asked and stories told. The eldest six pupils form a confirmation class, help me to pray that a blessing may rise from it, may they become hungry and thirsty after the bread of life, then will it be a blessed and happy time for those who instruct them; o pray for Wisdom, for a sincere Love to teach them; may our own life and our daily walk teach them the best of all lessons; teach them that true religion only makes happy and unites in Love more than anything else. Some of the foundation pupils have tried for a first time to go steadily on, not only can I depend upon their faithfulness and veracity, but I know by principle they try to improve. Without grace it could not be possible to deny themselves and to give up their own wills so quickly and without murmuring as I can prove it very often. We have sufficient reason to take courage and to go on, knowing that our work is not in vain in the Lord.

I fully understand the importance of my place and know the improvement and welfare of the Establishment depends a great deal upon myself: may the Lord direct and guide me and give me especially in the Ladies of the Committee wise and kind counsellors and cohelpers. You know, my dear friends, of the particular trials and anxieties of this last half year; we shall see that it has been good for us to be afflicted and proved and I am sure it has been for the best of the Institution and myself. I have learnt a great deal by it and we shall ever look back upon a time when many a good seed had been sown, whose benefit we shall not fail to gain.

My dear friends, I remain yours sincerely and faithfully,
H. Eliza Koenig.

Female Institution, Freetown, 14 June 1861

Dear Mr Venn!

In your kind letter last May you ask me to write to you about the progress of the new Institution.⁵³ The foundation stone was laid the 7th of May, the anniversary of our dear Society, by the Bishop. We tried to make the day pleasant to the Children and to the former pupils and teachers of the School, who all had received invitations. Mr Quaker⁵⁴ very kindly did what he could toward the celebration of the day; with his help a banner was made with the following Inscription: “The foundation stone of the Church Missionary Society’s female Institution; laid the 7th of May A.D. 1861. That our daughters may be as the polished corners of the Temple. Young Men and Maidens, Praise the Lord.” This whole School was present, the two oldest boys carrying the Banner before them, others bearing flags we [had] made for this purpose, they proceeded in a long row followed by our girls and Mrs Beale’s School, through an arch opposite our gate, across the grassfield to the place of the future Institution, which was decorated with many gay looking flags. The Bishop and all the Clergymen of the town and some from distant villages followed accompanied by the Ladies, who had friendly joined themselves to the party. Mrs Beckles and Miss Freimuth were among the number. Mrs Beale was sick, her absence was much regretted. With a hymn the ceremony began. Revd Jones offered with his peculiar [= particular] talent a prayer and the Bishop’s Speech followed; he had made himself a little acquainted with the history and the purpose of the Institution by perusing the former Reports of ours. A hymn was sung by the Children and we separated after the blessing. Our friends returned with us and we sat friendly to the refreshment prepared for the occasion. [We] went later in the playground where the tables of the Children were laid circled with fruit, cake and bunches of flowers. Everyone was happy and merry, we were much gratified to notice that not one of our dear Children wished to clap their hands or sing and dance their country dances, as is so common here.

The greatest part of our friends left then, others remained for the prayermeeting, which was to be held in the evening; as the 7th was the first Tuesday of the Month, when the monthly district prayer meetings take place. Mr Maxwell led it and we all feel glad for its falling on the same day; it was very late ere we separated. A blessing must remain. May the new building, whose walls so quickly rise before our eyes, indeed become a blessed place for the colony, which needs so much good and useful women.

Dear Sir, you told me you would kindly send me an assistant out as soon as she is wanted. Miss Bywater would probably have gone with Mr Brierley to the Gambia, if her place would not have left vacant. You can-

not believe how grieved and sorry I still am about all that happened with Miss Freimuth. It is not possible for one European alone to do the work here, as long as we have not able native assistants; there is sadly missed the needed energy and perseverance, or I would have liked to see her taking my place. I am so sorry if I should be the reason of many cares of yours. We have it all in the Lord's hand! Miss Bywater wishes to leave with the October holidays. If the lady you are sending could leave home with the October Mail, I suppose this would be the best time for herself as well as for the Institution. The right one, the Lord himself may elect. The females stand still very low, and if also we try with great pains to rise them by descending to them and showing them we cannot look down upon them, it is hard, hard work and if it were not the Lord's, we would long ago [have been] discouraged. Then before men all the great pains spent upon them are scarcely to be seen, what they learn is soon forgotten and they do not care about it; yet when we compare our children with others, there is a great undeniable difference. There are always exceptions and of these we like to speak in Reports etc. I often thought it would be the best to divide the pupils so as to bring them up very differently and in different houses. In Reports of the past years I saw the same idea suggested, I have heard from elder members of the Society that a great deal about this subject had been spoken and we may be sure after due consideration left it as it is at present. I thought the European as well as the native friends approved of it to have a female Institution of a higher order for the richer girls and I will not say a more common but a different one besides, where the girls would be brought up in view of their becoming wives of ministers and schoolmasters, who – we know it all – are in great want of them; there is seldom one who is her husband's co-helper and I know they feel it deeply. If there are many boarders of rich friends in the house, who do not know the value of money or Clothes, the others, who will probably spend their future life in limited circumstances, desire much. Indulgent parents do more than their means allow to satisfy the child's will and wish. She may look as smart as those whose circumstances are so different. It is a sad fact that the native ministers' wives scarcely know what their duties are, as wives and as the head of the women of their respective parishes. One of our most valuable Natives expressed himself lately so. I do not know what the best will be, but it is of great, great importance to find this out. May the Lord condescend to make it plain unto us.

As regards dear little Katie Cobbold,⁵⁵ I was truly grieved to read it was not possible to make an exception in her favour as she should be no expense whatever to the Institution. When your letter came she was with us and his Lordship asked me to keep her a little longer, as the

Carpenters were working at Fourah Bay. Since then she has returned, but comes occasionally to spend a little time with us.

Dear Sir, believe me to remain sincerely and faithfull yours,
Eliza Koenig.

18 June. I am glad to add that our dear Mrs Beale has kindly undertaken to have Katie with her⁵⁶ and as Miss Freimuth has refused to have her, she is going there, as soon as she is better. She as well as some members of his Lordship's family are in fever at present.

Report of the Female Institution, Freetown, 5 October 1861

My dear friends!

At the close of another half year I will try to give you an account of the last six months. The 22nd of April I returned from the Holidays spent in the refreshing mountain air of Charlotte, where the dear girls of Mrs Clemens' School welcomed back their former teacher with great joy. The 10th of this month we intend to dismiss the Children for their October vacations.

Many have been the mercies we received from the gracious hands of our God, during this time; to Him be all the glory and all the thanks which at present fills our hearts, when surveying the past. Often he changed mourning into joy and anxiety into thanksgiving. Some few days after the return last April, four of our girls were confirmed and have since been partakers of the holy Sacrament. The 7th of May the foundationstone was laid by his Lordship the Bishop, the Building is rising, we may hope of seeing it finished in about a year. If we had not the removal of the whole establishment in view, we should have to take steps immediately for many necessary repairs, which by the present state of things is not possible.

There are at present 30 Scholars connected with our School, 20 are Boarders, maintained by the Society and European friends, only four are provided for by their parents. It is much regretted that the parents of the girls seem so careless about their daughters' education; for the boys they do much more, yet the girls, who have been so long neglected, require special care; educated women are necessary to our rising colony, but women who have Christian Principles and who seek after the adorning St Peter speaks of in His first Epistle III. Cap.⁵⁷ or she proves rather a hinderance to her husband, especially when connected with Mission-work. Not that we can change the heart, as we too well know that those on whom good hopes were set, proved afterwards useless for the work

in which we engaged and for which we try to train all the Children up, let their future situation be whatever it may.

One of the greatest blessings we enjoyed has been good health during the rains, the Children have been kept up wonderfully and Miss Bywater and myself have not been more than a month absent from our daily duties. During the last half year the Children were divided into two Classes, thirteen in the first class and 15 in the second, having so many in a class has occasioned more patience, earnestness and anxiety to the teachers during the hours of study than smaller classes would; but being most anxious to bring the elder foundationpupils forward, so that they might indeed be capable of taking a junior class in case of an absence through sickness or any other cause, and most thankful are we to be able to say that they have repaid us for our extra exertion. On the whole they are much improved, there being a quiet and gentle spirit among them all, though there is still an earnest need for watchfulness and prayer on their behalf as indeed there always will be where there are children; but we cannot help say with humble gratitude to our prayer-hearing God that our work now is a pleasure instead of being a weary, weary task. At the close of the half year an examination was held. All the friends, parents and guardians of the pupils were invited; Revd E. Jones, the Secretary of the Society,⁵⁸ was kind enough to be present, the Ladies of the Committee, also the native Ministers and Catechists, who took part in the examination, they expressed themselves satisfied with the progress the Children had made and many said they had never expected them to know so much. They were pleased with the fancy work and plaid sewing as well as with the hymns and songs sung at the occasion. After a refreshing lunch all reassembled once more and the prizes were given to them by Revd E. Jones; these consisted especially of workboxes furnished with cotton etc., books and writing materials, after which Mr Binns addressed the Children in a plain and friendly way. We then concluded with the dayology [sic]. Our friends took dinner here and we parted with the feeling that the Lord had done more for us than we ever deserved or expected.

Begging you to remember us and our precious work at the throne of grace.

I remain sincerely yours, my dear friends,
Eliza Koenig.

Wilberforce, 15 August 1862

Reverend and dear Sir!

I would have answered your kind letter by the last mail had I not on account of Mr Jones absence from town received it very late. Many sincere thanks for your kind congratulations. I was so glad to hear from you directly that you were not opposed to the important step which I took lately.⁵⁹ It is often very difficult to judge from afar and I almost feared you would not like me to leave my Station at the Institution before my place was provided for by another Lady. You know well, dear Sir, Miss Bywater and myself differed in many things, she, being an English lady and having been engaged in the Institution before myself, found it very hard to occupy a secondary position and the more so as she had expected to take Miss Sass' place and therefore it was sometimes very difficult to steer on quietly and peaceably. Miss Bywater is a person of great energy and as she enjoys good health she can do a great deal and do it well too if left to herself.

At present the Female Institution is I am quite sure of it in a much better condition than it ever was before. The number of Scholars has increased and amounts at present to 42 and a most perfect order pervades the School, which I confidently believe will be proved by an examination to be held at the beginning of October. The people of Free-town and other parts of the Colony take a much greater interest in the School than they did before and I sometimes hear from Natives that they are quite pleased with the present state of the School. Therefore, dear Sir, you need not fear that on account of my removal the School has suffered in any thing of consequence. If I had had misgivings on these points, I would not have left it. Miss Bywater feels herself happy and cheerful in her work, the elder girls do assist her with a right good will in and out of School and as far as I can judge by several visits, which I made to the female Institution, I think that all try to do their best to keep up the whole.

Miss Bywater though at present fit and able to do her work cannot remain too long alone, for as she has been nearly four years in the Colony. I am afraid that her strength must give way at last; but to judge from what I know of her I should think it would be best to have her alone until she is obliged to return to Europe. Against that time [sic] it would be desirable that the Committee should if possible engage as Principal an accomplished English Lady able to give instruction in the higher, educational branches [such] as music and drawing, together with a more humble assistant, who would confine herself to common instruction and other minor duties.

You ask me, dear Sir, what I think of Miss Freymuth. I know that Miss Freymuth and Miss Bywater could never work together. Miss Freymuth

speaks of the Institution at the present time not better than she did eighteen months ago and we believe she would upset everything without having the perseverance and the strength to beat her own new and self-made way. She is not strong enough to do all the work herself and a teacher from home of that standing as she would require would be difficult to get. This is the opinion of the several Ladies who at present compose the Ladies' Committee. However, man composes and God disposes and things turn out sometimes very differently from what we expect.

You wish further to know whether I could take any part in the duties of the School if my husband would be engaged in Freetown too; you are very kind to favour me with so much confidence and I am truly thankful. Certainly I would do this with great pleasure and indeed at first we had hoped and had had some information that this would be the case. Mr Knödler would have been glad to be so much engaged in the School as his other duties would have allowed him, but at present it seems very unlikely that such an arrangement could be made, since Kissy Road Church is attended by Revd E. Jones⁶⁰ and the church at Pademba Road will soon be provided for by Mr Caiger or another Missionary.⁶¹

For the present my husband and myself try to be useful in our Great Master's service at Wilberforce and its three outstations, where we certainly have a most interesting sphere of labour, which bears perhaps more the character of Missionary Work than any other in the Colony, but nevertheless we look with hope and pleasure forward to the time when we shall be sent by our honoured Committee into a heathen land to make the Name of Jesus known to those who are still sitting in darkness and in the Shadow of death. We shall gladly avail ourselves of Mr Schlenker's books⁶² to begin the Study of the Timneh language.⁶³

Hoping that the Lord may richly bless the endeavours of our honoured Committee to the welfare of the benighted Nations of Africa and with many kind Regards from my dear Husband and myself, I remain,
Reverend and dear Sir,
yours very sincerely, E. K.

You will see by the date of this letter that it was written a month ago, but on account of the sad accident which happened to the Mail Steamer⁶⁴ I could not send it last month.

E. K.

Fourah Bay, 18 February 1863

My dear Sir!⁶⁵

The last mail brought me a letter from you containing some inquiries concerning the pecuniary management of the Female Institution, which was lately intrusted to my charge and I hasten now to give you the necessary explanations. With regard to your first question about the Balance-Sheet dated September 1861, I have to say *that there is a mistake* and I am only sorry that this mistake was not corrected so obviously and promptly as to render any future misunderstanding impossible. But I hope, my dear Sir, that the following explanation will exonerate me. At the time I made the above mentioned Balance-Sheet I was just recovering from a fever and consequently still very weak. I was however obliged to make the account myself and at the appointed time and so it happened that I set down £12.9.0. for soap instead of 12 s /9 d. This mistake was unfortunately not detected here in Sierra Leone and the incorrect Balance-Sheet was sent home. It was not till after some time that I myself discovered this mistake to my great dismay in our books. I squared the sum which amounted to £11.16.3 in the next Balance-Sheet ending March 1862, when I included it with the money received for materials, the sum under the head of materials being £35.15.7. whereas it should be according to our books only £23.19.4. I made notes of this mistake at the respective places in our books and acquainted our friends with it; but I am sorry to say that I did not send before this an explanation to the worthy Parent-Committee and I hope they will kindly forgive this negligence.

As for your second inquiry concerning the supposed decrease of funds I can only hope that you will find by comparing the successive Balance-Sheets of the last 4 or 5 years that the funds have not decreased but were considerably increased. Perhaps you will kindly allow me to write down the results of some of the latest Balance-Sheets.

Miss Sass: September 1858: Balance in hand: £82.10.6.

--- March 1859 --- £79.8. ½.

--- September 1859 --- £49.19.8.

--- January 1860 --- £62.1.2.

(N. B. When Miss Sass left in September 1860 she handed over to me only £41.17.5 ½; £20.3.10 ½ having been expended by Miss Sass from the sum shown above by the last balance-sheet of January 1860.)

Elise Koenig March 1860 Balance in hand: £50.7.4.

--- September 1860 --- £107.18.0 ½.

--- March 1861 --- £124.4.0 ½.

--- September 1861 --- £108.0.4 ½.

--- March 1862. --- £123.8.11 ½.

From this statement you will see that I found only £41.17.5 ½. when I first came to the Female Institution and when I left it, there was a fund of £123.8.11 ½. The next Balance-Sheet from dear Miss Bywater was lower but this will be satisfactorily explained by Miss Bywater herself and there is every prospect that the next Balance-Sheet will be considerably higher.

Also the question about the free pupil will as I hope be answered fully by Miss Bywater and besides this I think you will have received already some information concerning this point from the minutes of the Ladies' Committee which were sent home last month.

Mr Knödler is completely recovered from his recent fever and hopes to go at the end of this month again into the Temne-country⁶⁶ where he intends to stay this time at least four weeks in order to learn the language more rapidly from the natives themselves.

With our united kind regards to dear Mr Venn and yourself I remain, my dear Sir,
Elise Knödler.

Fourah Bay, 20 February 1863

Reverend and Dear Sir!

You will have received last month the minutes of the Ladies' Committee by which you saw that the Ladies asked me to take the Female Institution after Miss Bywater's departure again into my charge. Seeing then that under the present circumstance it was difficult to make another arrangement, I thought it my duty to consent to this proposal though not without some misgivings, for I was afraid that I should not be strong enough to meet all the cares of such an important Institution. The Ladies knowing this did not expect me to keep it on the same footing as it was kept hitherto, but my dear Sir, I feel and see more and more that I have not the physical strength to enter into the arduous duties which this work involves. There are at present about 50 children in the school who stand under the direct supervision of the Mistress and who even if the present regulations should be simplified would require to receive their daily lessons without interruption, for otherwise their parents would be dissatisfied and withdraw them.

We cannot get a competent native teacher or orderly matron and so the whole task lies on the superintendent and I am sorry to say that at present I do not feel equal to this task; besides this I do not receive the slightest encouragement from anyone here and fear that if the female Institution should suffer in any point I would be blamed for it. From my

dear husband I cannot expect much assistance for since he was set aside for the Temne mission⁶⁷ he has entered into that work with all his heart and would be sorry to be in any way detained from it. Mr Knödler is very anxious to get soon the Temne grammar which he heard was in preparation by Mr Schlenker,⁶⁸ he is now able to read and understand Mr Schlenker's lately published book⁶⁹ without the English translation and intends now to remain several weeks at Port Lokko⁷⁰ in order to learn to speak the language from the Temne themselves. There he will also have a good opportunity to be useful in our Master's cause in other ways among the natives and Sierra Leone traders of whom the latter, though nominally Christians, lived there for years without Christian instruction.

I hope, my dear Sir, you will kindly pardon the preceding intimations for I can look up only to you for paternal advice and direction in this matter.

With kind regards in which my husband joins we remain, Reverend and dear Sir,
yours faithfully, Elise Knödler.

Waterloo, 24 March 1865

Dear Sir,

I am sorry that I could not send you the inclosed receipt before this. I send it now with many thanks. I received your kind letter containing the 5 £ note just as I was on my way to the Mailsteamer with Mrs Sutton⁷¹ [who] accompanied me. I had called at the Hôtel and asked for letters several times before, but did not receive yours until the very last moment. Many thanks for all your kindness and the trouble you took on my account. I am also very much obliged for the telegram you sent to the Revd Mr Sutton,⁷² which saved me the trouble of going up to London. Mr Sutton kindly called on me just when I was at a loss what to do, when I was without money and without friends.⁷³ I was very thankful indeed for this opportune assistance, may the Lord reward you and Mr Sutton for your kindness.

As you know I was only a very short time in Liverpool and was then occupied in bying again the most necessary things. We arrived in Sierra Leone on the evening of February the 19th when the 'Calabar' with the mail from the coast was just ready to start for England, there was no time then to write and this is therefore the first opportunity I have of sending you a few lines.

As many of our friends did urge us to try whether we could not get some compensation for our loss and as our loss is not inconsiderable, but one which will be felt for a long time by persons in our circumstances, I hope you will not take it unkind if we make an effort in this direction. We do gratefully acknowledge what the Society has done for us already but at the same time we would ask you whether they would kindly grant us some further assistance. We have also some hope that the Steam Company might perhaps do some thing in this matter; we should be very thankful if one of our honoured Secretaries would drop a few lines to [1 word illegible] & Co. We think that a few words from you would have much more weight with them than a long letter from us.⁷⁴ I take the liberty to send you a general list of the articles lost by the wreck of the 'Armenian'. I saved nothing than what I had on my body. But I am far from forgetting how merciful the Lord was in saving my life and I shall never forget how graciously the Lord helped me in this dreadful night.

I am sorry to say that my husband is since several days ill with fever. He is also very much suffering from boils which are a wellknown plague of the Europeans living in Africa. He has finished his Temne primer⁷⁵ but is unwilling to send it home without having first looked it over very closely. He is now trying to do this and if he can accomplish it before the mail leaves you will receive it with this letter. He is too poorly to send by this mail any letters, but he us going on with his work among the Temnes and has many reasons to rejoice though his two native assistants from Sierra Leone are a great hindrance to the work.

Mr Knödler joins me in respectful regards to the Revd Mr Venn and yourself.

I remain, dear Sir, yours respectfully, E. Knödler.

Estimate of my loss by the 'Armenian'

	£.	S.	d.
Provisions	25.	0	0.
Drill and Calico	4.	0	0.
worsted stockings, flannel trowsers, waist coats etc.	3.	0	0.
14 shirts of calico and 3 shirts of flannel	5.	10	0.
12 pairs of shoes and boots, for Mr Knödler and myself	4.	0	0.
Books, stationary, album, etc.	5.	0	0.
Linen: sheets, towels, tablecloths, napkins, covers	7.	0	0.
Stockings, stays, petticoats, jackets, prints, etc.	7.	10	0.
Workbox, sewing material	4.	0	0.

18 night dresses, chemises, etc.	8.	0	0.
Hats for Mr Knödler and myself	2.	10	0.
Black silk dress and two woolen ones	7.	0	0.
Muselin dress	4.	0	0.
Shawls and Jackets	3.	0	0.
Umbrella	1.	0	0.
Seed, pan, boxes, baskets, watch chains and guard, etc.	4.	0	0.
Lamps and lantern, wicks, etc.	1.	10	0.
Writing desk fitted and teacaddy	2.	10	0.
Knives, forks, sugar tong, 17 spoons of silver	6.	0	0.
Press, spectacles	1.	10.	0.
Combs, brushes, soap, razors, etc.	1.	10.	0.
Trunks, boxes, carpet bag, strap, etc.	4.	0.	0.
Sundries: collars, sleeves, gloves, petticoats, bodies [= bodices]	4.	0.	0.
		<hr/>	
	115.	10.	0.
Received from the C. M. Society	22.	0.	0.
		<hr/>	
	93.	10.	0.
		<hr/>	

Elise Knödler.

III. Lady Florence Dixie,
South Africa, 1881



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**‘The Fight at Majuba Hill’, Capetown, 11 March 1881
(published in *The Morning Post* on 5 April 1881, p. 5)**

The disaster to our arms in the fight at Majuba Hill¹ is making itself apparent among the Cape colonists. Every one watches with anxiety the result of an armistice which, though inevitable, following as it did so much misfortune, is nevertheless received with dark looks and sinister forebodings of future disgrace and humiliation. The continued defeat of our troops and the apparent desire of the Government to come to terms with the Boers produces a bad feeling amongst the inhabitants of this town and the surrounding districts. The universal expression of opinion is that, though we have suffered defeat and humiliation by these many reverses following so quickly one upon each other the greatest defeat we can now experience would be in endeavouring to effect a peace which would reflect still further discredit on our arms and intense humiliation on Englishmen, more especially on her Majesty’s subjects abroad. The lamented death of Sir George Colley² is acutely felt and universally deplored. The defeat at Majuba Hill is accompanied by stories not pleasing to British ears. Time alone will prove their authenticity and veracity, though when we hear, as we do in Capetown, of expended ammunition, panic and confusion, which resulted in our defeat, it is not to be wondered at that the Dutch inhabitants, eagerly seizing upon any rumours of this sort, are not slow to circulate and magnify their importance, turning them into weapons whereby they can inflict on Englishmen the deepest humiliation.

The feeling is therefore, as I have already said, anything but pleasing or amicable between the English and Dutch inhabitants of Capetown, while the confidence of the former in the actions of our Government at home becomes every day more shaken. Full particulars of the fight at Majuba Hill will ere this reached England from correspondents at the scene of action; it would, therefore, be repetition on my part to forward any further details beyond a cursory description of how it is received and understood in the colony. It appears that this steep ascent was undertaken by Sir George Colley almost before day had dawned, and that by sunrise he had already gained the plateau before the Boers came aware of his movements. Then it was that he discovered how much larger the plateau was than he had imagined, and upon the advance of the Boers would have retreated to this camp only this manoeuvre was found to be impossible. Attacked on all sides, a fight was found to be

inevitable. Our troops were weary and out of breath with their long and arduous climb, though the example had been gallantly set them by Sir George Colley, who himself accomplished the whole climb on foot. The enemy, at home in their native mountains, found no difficulty in quickly scaling the precipitous sides of Majuba Hill. Under cover of huge stones and rocks they were not long in placing themselves within range of our troops, whose continued fire fell harmlessly against the rocks behind which the Boers had stationed themselves. Then, as ammunition began to fail, return volleys issued from every crannie and vantage-point, straight, swift, and sure, with unerring and deadly aim, to create havoc amongst our troops. Means of all kinds were resorted to for defence, but proved unavailing. Closed in on all sides, with expended ammunition and a hidden enemy sweeping them down, what wonder if many lost heart and wavered. The reports here say that the soldiers entreated Sir G. Colley to surrender when the aspect of affairs had reached this irretrievable state, but that the gallant but unfortunate general was shot dead. The rent which followed was complete, many of our men breaking their necks in their precipitate attempts to escape an enemy against whom they had no means of defence. This, then, is the account of the disaster of Majuba Hill as it is received and believed by the Cape colonists. The following report of Joubert's,³ which was handed to me today by Sir Hercules Robinson,⁴ may be interesting to the readers of the *Morning Post*. It runs as follows:

“Bloemfontein, Wednesday.

“Last Saturday evening I was sitting writing copies of President Brand's⁵ letters, and also [a] letter for Herbert Stewart.⁶ At four o'clock I awoke every man to his position, and I commenced a report for General Cronje.⁷ I was still writing, and the sun had just risen, when it was reported to me that the troops were coming up the right-hand hill. Then it was – ‘To saddle! to saddle!’ But to our astonishment we saw the enemy had entire possession of the hill, and that a considerable number were on the summit. Apparently one would have thought that everything was lost to us, and so it would actually have been if they had retained possession of the hill. But, beyond all our expectations, the Lord assisted us, and we all ascribed it to the most wonderful deliverance and help by an all-governing and mighty God. Our men climbed the mountain with a courage and energy beyond description. The troops, under the personal command of Colley, would not surrender the position. They fought like true heroes, but our God, who gave us the victory and protected us, excelled gloriously all acts of courage and tact. The most wonderful thing to us is that on our side only one was killed, and, so far as it has come to my knowledge, one severely wounded and four slightly. The one killed is Johannes Bekker, Middleburg district.

The wounded are Groonewald, Van der Merve, Muller, Labuschague, and Vormaaach. The dead on the other side are not accurately known, through the unevenness of the ground, but can be estimated as more than 150. Unknown how many officers fell with Colley, nearly 27 wounded, and more slightly. Seven officers, 45 men, and a sergeant made prisoners, which prisoners I have been compelled to send to you to Middleburg. I hear that the English have been reinforced by 2,000. The soldiers who fought against us were the 92d Highlanders, two companies of the 58th and 60th Rifles. The cannon were not brought within range, but fired upon our men from camp when they stormed the last ***cha***. I have now so much to do that I cannot write more, therefore I conclude with wishing your Honour joy at the successful issue of to-day's battle, and that this day may be considered for the future a day of thanksgiving and prayer."

So runs Joubert's report, and, if it be true, disaster has indeed once more befallen the British arms. Is it possible that England will not make every effort to retrieve her dying prestige, which fading away so quickly? The eyes of the whole of South Africa are turned towards the Transvaal. With the settlement of this question rest the future hopes of peace and prosperity. Are we to be shamefully defeated, and, without further effort, to sue for peace? Such and many other questions are anxiously asked by the inhabitants of the Cape Colony. The Government at home would do well to study the public feeling of her colonies before it hurries on a peace which in the present aspect of affairs would be a triumph to every Dutchman, but a terrible humiliation to all her Majesty's English subjects. If we would hold our vast and fair possessions we must establish respect, we must command and be obeyed, we must dictate, we must not sue; and above all, we must carry our arms successfully. This we have not done; but, though there has been disaster, there is yet time to retrieve it, and this can be done by energy, firmness, and determination. In writing these opinions I feel that I am expressing and making known to England the true feeling of Englishmen in the Cape Colony. To-morrow I leave for Durban, thence to Maritzburg,⁸ and from thence to reach the front as quickly as possible. I go with the sincere hope that my next account will contain a report more pleasing for Englishmen to read; one which will recount success and honour instead of defeat, timid policy, and humiliation.

'A Visit to Cetewayo', Capetown, 14 March 1881**(published in *The Morning Post* on 7 April 1881, p. 6)**

By the kindness of Sir Hercules Robinson⁹ I was to-day enabled to pay a visit to Cetewayo, the captive Zulu King.¹⁰ A good deal of formality has to be gone through before the visitor is allowed to enter his presence. To begin with, the permission of his Excellency the Governor has to be obtained, then a message has to be despatched to Cetewayo himself with the request for an interview, which it lies in his power to grant or refuse. The King did me the honour to signify his pleasure that I should visit him, appointing the hour of four o'clock in the afternoon for my reception. I accompanied Lady Robinson,¹¹ who had not yet had an opportunity of seeing his Majesty, and, attended by Colonel Hazzard, Captain Beresford, and Mr. Hedley, of the Royal Engineers, we drove out from Capetown to the little farm which has been granted to Cetewayo by the Government as a place of residence. It is a small square-built white house situated in a sandy tract, and shaded by one or two stumpy and burnt-up looking trees. Table Mountain rises up dark and frowning before it, while the distant beauty of the landscape is sadly marred by the dried up and barren appearance of the nearest surroundings of this exceedingly unkingly-looking place of abode. Pulling up opposite a humble and unostentatious-looking door we were met and received by Mr. Aywill and Mr. Lister, whose duty it is to undertake the charge of the prisoner. Entering a small wooden hall totally devoid of a chair, mat, or table, and with no other article of furniture or adornment to relieve the bareness of its aspect beyond a framed print of Queen Victoria hanging on the wall, we were ushered into the presence of Cetewayo. The King was seated in a round wooden armchair; near him stood a white man who acts as his interpreter,¹² and a little further off a Zulu youth of unprepossessing appearance, who occasionally undertakes the same office. On the entrance of Lady Robinson and myself the King rose and threw his right hand above his head, a token of submission, and then advancing shook hands. A row of chairs placed in a circle were here pointed out to us, and in these our party seated themselves, upon which Cetewayo resumed his chair. Through the interpreter he conversed at some length with Lady Robinson and myself, evincing the greatest interest in my visit to Natal and the Transvaal, and expressing a hope that the Boers, whom he described as dogs, would soon be severely punished and humiliated. Cetewayo frequently alluded to the interest he took in the success of the English, and expressed his surprise that our great Queen should send so few soldiers to settle the dispute. "Why does not your Queen send a large number of men and crush the dogs at once?" he inquired. I replied that reinforcements had been ordered from all quarters and would shortly arrive. "Good," he replied, "may the Eng-

lish be successful; my sympathies are on their side, for they have been kind to me." He further added that if the great Queen would only allow him to settle the Boers with some thousand Zulus it would become the work of a few days.

Cetewayo is to my mind every inch a king. His demeanour was quite and dignified, he made no complaint, and agreed with the interpreter that the house in which he lived was a fine one. In this opinion I could not but differ. If bare wooden floors, naked walls, and a dreary sandy-looking out-door aspect is considered by the captive King as fine I must say I could not bring myself to see it. Probably, however, Cetewayo had no choice in the matter. He is given food and drink, he is provided with four wives, and he has a house to live in. What more can he want? As I watched this once powerful monarch seated in a rough wooden chair, clothed in blue serge English clothes, with a smoking cap on his head, apparel that he had donned for our reception, a deep feeling of pity filled my heart. Did his thoughts never turn to the lovely country which was once his; was this undoubtedly great man never to return amongst his people again; was he for ever doomed to pass a monotonous existence in this exceedingly uninviting-looking place of the abode? To watch him gave me pain; it seemed somehow as if the injustice of England showed itself in the keeping this unfortunate Chief a captive. He has learnt our power, he acknowledges it; he professes a friendship for the English; he is eager and willing to fight for us if we would permit him. Cetewayo is no ordinary man. As our ally he would be invaluable in helping us in South Africa. I cannot but think that, as a chief once more of his own people, he would, from a once savage enemy, become out staunch and faithful friend. This, of course, is a matter of opinion, but I am sure it would be so. In all he said during the interview I had with him his belief in our power showed itself strongly, his anxiety for the success of the English arms in the present war was remarkable, and he frequently alluded to the joy it would cause him to learn of our ultimate triumph. Greatly did he dwell on the gravity of the mistake in sending too few troops at a time. He begged me to tell the Queen to cheer up, as the Boer dogs would not withstand us long. Not long ago Cetewayo sent a letter to her Majesty, a copy of which I have read. I hope that the English papers have published it and made it known to the public; it should become a record of public interest, and breathes a spirit full of nobility and truth.

Leaving Cetewayo, I proceeded to an adjoining room, where, seated on three or four mats in a corner, I beheld his four wives. The first to whom I was presented was Umpansi, a fine, good-looking woman, with close, curly black hair, and the whitest of teeth. Next to her sat Ugenioile, neither so good-looking nor so nice, but very talkative. Then came

Upiwase, Cetewayo's favourite wife, with whom I was much taken, and who evinced a lively interest in my clothing, watch and chain, silver belt, and other ornaments. Finally, Unoyixobo, a silent, sulky, or rather sad-looking woman, who appeared to regard us with a mixture of nonchalance and contempt. They were all very big women, the heaviest weighing 17 stones and a half. A mug of native beer of their own brewing was presented to me. I tasted it, but found that quite sufficient; it had anything but a pleasant flavour. Upiwaso [sic], I found, had developed great trading instincts. She produced bead necklaces which she eagerly pressed me to buy, and upon my presenting her with some half-crowns she at once made them over Colonel Hazzard, begging him to purchase her a black and white shawl. This appears to be the favourite colour, a red or blue one being barely appreciated. On taking leave of them they crowded round me, patting me on the shoulders and chest, seizing my hand and pressing it and endeavouring in many ways to express their gratitude for the present of beads, shawls, and silver belts which I promised to send them.

Returning to the room in which I had left Cetewayo I found him still seated and conversing through an interpreter with Lady Robinson. On informing him I had come to say goodbye he took my hand in his and held it for some time. "Natale, Natale, ah! ah!" he kept on repeating, and a sad, wistful look came into his bright and intelligent eyes. I gave me great pain, for I could feel of what he was thinking, and knew it to be his far-away land. Cetewayo has a fine and intelligent face. The expression is full of gentleness and good humour. No one looking at him could bring himself to believe him the cruel and bloodthirsty tyrant which he has always been represented during his days of prosperity and freedom. He has the whitest of teeth and an exceedingly pleasant smile; his manners and general deportment are quiet and dignified, and he bears his captivity with a patience and resignation which is truly admirable. Let us hope that better days are coming for the captive; that a time will arrive when he will cease to be a prisoner; and that some day he will revisit his native land, his love for which his every word and look bespeaks. It was with the deepest feeling of respect and pity that I bade him goodbye, and I left him with a painful impression, which was equally shared by the rest of my companions. At least, if this man must be our captive he should be treated like what he truly is in every sense of the word – a King.

'English Opinion at the Cape', Durban, 17 March 1881
(published in *The Morning Post* on 21 April 1881, p. 6)

With to-morrow expires the prolongation of the armistice, when the telegraph will inform the world of the result of the negotiations which have been now carried on at some length. Public opinion in these quarters is averse to conciliation. British feeling is humiliated by our many reverses, and the pugnacious side of John Bull shows itself strongly. "Let us retrieve our lost prestige, then will be time enough to offer terms and make peace," is the universal cry which I have heard on all sides. There are, however, as in all things, many sides to this question. The British public at home are scarcely aware of the immense amount of party feeling which has been aroused by this war, which has to be seen and studied to be understood. I have made it a point to learn the public feeling on all sides as accurately as possible, knowing as I well do what erroneous representations find credence with the reading public, who are therefore placed in anything but a fair position to judge of matters as they really stand. The result of many conversations with persons of varied classes on the British side, both here and in Cape Colony, has impressed me with the fact that their vanity is deeply wounded, that peace under any conditions would at this moment be distasteful, and that their opinion is that we must show our power by force of arms and complete military mastery before we dream of entering into peace negotiations. The British public at home may therefore judge for themselves with what anxiety and impatience the result of this armistice is being looked for, and the disappointment and discontent with which a cessation of hostilities will be received should such prove to be the case. It is, however, hopefully expressed as a matter of public opinion that the Boers will not accede to our proposals and confidently asserted that the peace negotiation will fall through. I had a long conversation with an English farmer, who owns a large quantity of land in the Transvaal. Though a great loser by this war he patriotically expressed himself content to cheerfully accept these losses if only we would finally prove and exert our power towards the future preservation of peace in the Transvaal. "If we do not prove our power and exert our authority amongst these Boers, this country will not be fit for an Englishman to live in. We may as well sell our lands for a song and get out of the way as quickly as possible." These remarks, or words to that effect, were the expression, of his opinion; it was an opinion worth having, for he spoke from experience as an influential and well-educated man, who, having toiled and earned, is entitled to an impartial judgment and hearing. He represents a class of men who have invested their all in the land and fortunes of the Transvaal, to whom peace means plenty, war ruin; and yet, though war robs him of his home, his comfort, and highest prospects, he advocates

it, supports it, and strenuously opposes a peace that, unless made after our power was fully established, would be useless to reinstate him in his former position in country. It is therefore a matter of small wonder that the English farmers look with anxiety to the issue of an armistice which will inform the world whether we are to continue under the advancing and prosperous rule of a British Sovereign, to whom we cheerfully pay our taxes, knowing that the money accruing therefrom will be profitably laid out, or are to relapse once more into the hands of a feebly managed and bankrupt Government, who squander the taxes, neglect improvement, and foster feelings of distrust and hatred amongst the surrounding tribes. To have to give up their farms and leave the country means to the English farmers little short of ruin; with their ruin comes the sudden cessation of all energy, prosperity, and improvement to the country or advancement of the various rising settlements. Placed once more in Boer hands the Transvaal will return to its original state of bankruptcy and confusion; the value of everything will fall; and the English farmer, forced to leave a land whose rich and varied inducements for improvement tempted him to cast his all in a venture, will have to retreat before the new state things. So much for the English farmer. There is, at the same time, another class of farmer who deserves our equally interested attention. There are in the Transvaal three kinds, viz., the Boer farmer, who hates the English, and rather than live under his rule would forsake his land, inspan his oxen, trek away into distant and unexplored countries; the farmer, or rather the warlike shepherd, to whom fighting is his highest pleasure and aim, who, if his rifle were not turned against the British, would be employed against some of the surrounding tribes, to whom peace is irksome, war a boon, agricultural employment a thing never attempted. Thirdly, there is the Boer farmer, to whom the British rule is acceptable, to whom the idea of a return to the old state of things is disheartening in the extreme, who secretly favours the English, but dares not openly avow his sentiments and unwillingly is pressed into the cause which bears arms against the side he inwardly has espoused. With one of this latter class I to-day had a long interview. Unwilling to bear arms against the English this gallant old man forsook his farm and belongings, inspanned his oxen, and trekked to Natal. Had he remained his farm would have been respected, but at the same time he would have been obliged to join the remainder of the rebellious Boers and fight against the English. This he would not do, and the result is that if in the end the Boers are given their independence the country will be too hot for him to live in, while at the present time his once happy home and farm has been laid waste, his cattle driven off, and all his effects stolen or destroyed. In the course of our conversation he informed me that there were many amongst the insurgent farmers who in their hearts

favoured the British cause, but in order to preserve their property were forced to bear arms against the English. He also said that if this war went on much longer many of the inhabitants of the Orange Free State would rise and advance to the aid of their friends and relations in the Transvaal. In this statement I can quite concur and believe. During my visit to Capetown the ill feeling of the Dutch to the English was very apparent and shown without the slightest attempt made to disguise it, while in the colony of Port Elizabeth, in Algoa Bay,¹³ open threats in public meetings have been used to declare that they will not long submit to have their friends and relations in the Transvaal shot down by an usurping nation. At this moment, when our arms have sustained so many unfortunate reverses, it would be a serious catastrophe were the Dutch to rise and rebel against our authority in the various and by no means to be despised settlements of the Cape Colony. In numbers they are greatly superior to the English, while the troops quartered in the various discontented districts would be inadequate to put down an insurrection. Nearly all the forces of the Cape Colonists are in request for the Basuto war,¹⁴ which is progressing slowly and unsatisfactorily and by no means successfully. It is strange how much in ignorance the English public are kept of all these things, [a] consequence of which is that when the storm bursts it takes them unawares. For a long time they do not arrive at the real cause which has occasioned it, and become apt to form hasty judgments on what they hardly understand. Grave, indeed, is the aspect of South African affairs, graver far than people imagine or dream of. It is a rich and fair country, but still in its infancy, and it will require all the tact and ingenuity possible to keep it together, for there is more discontent and dislike of the English than is universally imagined. My object in sending these few lines is to place the truth as much as possible before the British nation, and in quoting the opinions, expressions, and ideas of those people of the country I have come across, I feel that I am setting the matter in an unbiased light, totally from any of my own private ideas or opinions. The result of the negotiations will be made known to-morrow in the event of the armistice not being renewed in case nothing is settled, and time will prove whether those fears which have found expression in the mouths of people interested in the country have any real foundation or not. To-morrow I shall proceed to Maritzburg. I hear that the roads from there up to Newcastle are in a terrible state, the post carts have almost all ceased running, and letters are many days late. Horses are scarce and treble in value, and the most common means of conveyance difficult and expensive to obtain. I also hear that the road up country is by no means clear or free; small parties of Boers have been seen patrolling in many places, and the risk of losing one's horse, rifle, ammunition, and personal effects is anything but small. However, I trust

that all these difficulties will be overcome and that I shall be able before long to send you some good, reliable, and interesting news from the front.

March 18. Once more has the telegraph announced to the world the prolongation of the armistice, in order fully to discuss the terms of peace which Sir Evelyn Wood¹⁵ and Joubert¹⁶ have been considering. It is with the deepest anxiety that this country awaits the results, and as each rumour of approaching peace is brought in, the discontent, humiliation, and shame which such a peace would cause all English subjects out here make themselves hourly more apparent. “When shall we learn exactly what the terms are?” asks the *Natal Mercury* of to-day. “The Boers want to be more directly represented on the Commission. What Commission? They object, it is understood, to British troops being kept in the country.” That goes without saying, after what they have done and are doing at Laing’s Nek, to prevent British troops getting into the country.¹⁷ Before troops can be kept in the Transvaal they must get there. The mere mention of such an objection points to a very considerable modification of Boers’ demands, and suggests that they may have given way on the point of sovereignty. If they concede that we shall not be surprised to hear that peace has been arranged; but as it will be coupled with a show of force, and the retirement of the Boer forces from the Nek, and the occupancy of that position by the Queen’s troops, it may probably prove too bitter a pill for the Boer to swallow in his present high and haughty mood. Let us hope so.

The *Natal Mercantile Advertiser* of the same date says: “What the ‘general propositions of the British Government’ are we have no means of knowing. The want of information on this point causes the greatest uneasiness and alarm amongst the loyal public. In the face of the oft-reiterated statements of the Boers that nothing short of the granting of absolute independence would induce them to lay down their arms, and that that should be a condition precedent of any terms offered to them, and especially in the presence of the very emphatic public announcement of P. J. Joubert at his interview with our special war correspondent – people naturally fear that England has given way on this all-important point, and that once more there is danger of a patched-up peace. Such a peace undoubtedly could not be made without injury to the honour and prestige of England. We are, indeed, fain to hope that England has not given way on this point – that surrender has come from the Boer side, not ours. At the same time we confess that the hope is not strong within us that peace on any terms is about to be made. England has her lost prestige to regain. Let her regain it, and then discuss terms and propositions – not till then.”

Another of this country's papers remarks on the subject of the peace negotiations and granting independence to the Boers the following words: "It is absurd to speak of the Boers striving for 'freedom and independence' when it is undeniable that the Transvaal Republican Government was the most unjust and tyrannical that could be conceived, and so bad that hundreds left to perish in the desert rather than live under it. Mob law was paramount; the liberty of the press was a myth. The editor of the first paper in the Transvaal – *De Oude Emigrant* – had to run away from an infuriated mob and close his paper. Compare that with the toleration of such organs as *De Patriot*, *De Volksblad*, and others in the colony, and let an 'international jury' decide which was the free country. As for their 'independence,' the Boers are certainly the power to make laws that nobody obeyed, to levy taxes that nobody paid, to appoint officials with salaries they never got, to have the most ridiculous farce of a lot of ignorant clod-hoppers – tools in the hands of Dutch and German adventurers – sitting as a 'Volksraad,' but as for real independence it was a chimera."

This is the general tone and expression of opinion which meets one on all sides. That the prestige of England, her honour and her pride, is damaged if she does not first by success of arms force the Boers to sue for peace is strongly felt by every one. The very fact of negotiations after our many and severe reverses is indeed a bitter pill for Englishmen to swallow, while we are made the laughing stock of every Dutchman. Amongst all the native tribes surrounding the Transvaal the sympathy is entirely on the English side. The chief Mankorana brought together nearly all his people¹⁸ for the purpose of protecting his border, which he affirms is threatened by the Dutch of the Bloemhof district and by the Korannas. It is said that Mosheti¹⁹ and the Korannas have given their adherence to the Boers, but refused to help them by force of arms. Montsiwe²⁰ stands fast in his adherence to the English side, as, indeed, it is his interest to do; for the extensive and beautiful district of the Molopo was some years ago nearly lost to this chief and his people until Governor Keate made it over to him.²¹ The Moilwe people,²² vassals many years of the Republic, refused to join the Dutch against the English, and, when the Boers of the Zeerust district threatened them for disobedience, Montsiwe informed them that he was one of Moilwe's people, and that if the latter were attacked he (Montsiwe) would come to their assistance. The sympathy expressed for our side all round does not say much for the past connection of the Republic with the native tribes, who evidently prefer an English government to the unjust and tyrannical ruling of the Boers. "We have heard a good deal," writes the *Independent*, "of the statement of the 'patriots' that if the English want the Transvaal they will find it a desert, in as much as they, the Dutch

inhabitants, mean to go elsewhere. It may surprise some of our readers to hear that this 'going elsewhere' has long been near the hearts of some of our Transvaal worthies. We are liable to correction, but our information is perfectly reliable that the desire to trek into Mashona Land²³ has been long entertained by a section of Transvaal Dutchmen. Some of them had mortgaged their farms to the shopkeepers; and, as their personal interest in the country decreased, their desire grew to form a party to conquer another land. But when some years ago the Mashonaland project was mooted and names were privately subscribed of those who would join the expedition it was found, to the disgust of the leaders, that the number of subscribers was not sufficient to cope with the Zulu conquerors of Mashonaland. Doubtless the leaders of this trek think they have gained their object at last by inducing their slower and less restless compatriots to fight against the English. Their hopes, no doubt, was that when their forces were dispersed – as they know they must have been in the long run – they would then be able to lead a large following 'to pastures new.'" Here have the true key to the Dutch movement; interested motives on the part of at least some of the leaders and many in the ranks, and general impatience with what they call "troublesomeness" of the English Government. In the meantime the Dutch of the Bloemhof and Marico districts are devoutly thankful to the Kaffir²⁴ chiefs Montsiwe and Mankoroane for assembling their forces on the borders. They have been able thereby to report to head-quarters that attack from these potentates is imminent, and that it is imperatively necessary to stay at home and protect their own district. Yesterday there arrived in Durban by the Union [steam ship] *Natal* two gentlemen who had recently made their escape from Middelburg. Their account of their adventures and of life amongst the Boers lately are very interesting and thrilling. Their names are Mr. A. Cumming of Pretoria, clerk to Major Clarke on the Native Reserve Land Commission, and Mr. John H. Walker, assistant surveyor to Mr. Rissick, surveyor, and engaged on the same commission. The statement of Mr. Cumming is, that on October 26 he arrived at Middelburg, Major Clarke having gone on to Natal. That officer is now a prisoner at Potchefstroom.²⁵ On hearing of the slaughter of the 94th at Broncker's Spruit²⁶ the English and loyal Dutch inhabitants of Middelburg held a meeting to arrange the means for defending the town. It was found that on account of the scarcity of provisions this would be impossible. On the afternoon of the 22nd December Jacobus Coetzen and de Klerk galloped into the town, and dismounting cocked their rifles and presented them at the breast of the magistrate, Mr. C. Von Brander, demanding the keys of the Government offices and the post-office. Mr. Von Brander was in peril of his life, and seeing resistance was useless, delivered up the keys. There were about 40

Englishmen in the town. The two Dutchmen who received the keys were intoxicated. On the 23d (next day) from 80 to 100 armed Boers entered the town, took possession of the of the Government offices, and hoisted the Republican flag. They gave out that all who committed themselves would be punished according to the laws of the South African Republic. On the 24th meetings were held, the English being summoned to attend them. At these meetings the war was discussed and the names of the new officials to be appointed in the town were announced. Mr. Cumming had a waggon and 10 oxen, also a quantity of provisions, which were confiscated by the Boers. On the 24th (Christmas Eve) 15 Englishmen were arrested, and kept in the Court-house for a night and part of Christmas Day. About half-past five on Christmas morning Mr. Cumming was taken out of bed by six armed men and marched off the Court-house, where he remained two hours. He was then taken to the gaol until five o'clock that evening. They were then liberated, with a caution to remain quiet and not to leave the town without a pass, and not to be out after nine o'clock at night under a penalty. If they did not answer when called upon after that hour they were shot at. On Christmas Eve Commandant Grove said he had authority to shoot the whole 15 Englishmen he had taken into custody, and he felt a great inclination to do it. A young Englishman told him that it was more than his head was worth to shoot any Englishman, although he might speak of it. Nothing more came of that, but later on the same Englishman, Freeman by name, was wounded by a shot, and fined £5 next morning. Every one had to pay 6d. for a pass to go outside the town. Every storekeeper was commanded to pay £300, and some had to pay £350; but the largest store in the town, that belonging to Mr. Barrett, and having goods worth £5,000 or £6,000, was taken entire possession of by the Boers. Tea and coffee soon ran short, as well as candles and paraffin, the latter being sold at £5 a case. Some kind of tallow candles could be bought from a woman who made them at five for a shilling. Hotel keepers had strict orders to serve no Englishman with liquor who had not a pass granted by the Boers. One young loyal Dutchman refused to act on guard, and he was tied hand and foot and put in the stocks for four days. He was then put in prison, having suffered very much from the treatment he had received; but he steadfastly refused to assist the disloyal Boers, and was in prison when our informant left. Two English storekeepers were brought from the farm at Fort Burgers and put into prison, where they still were, getting food as best they could from the hotel. Mr. Walker was surveying in Mapoch's country²⁷ with the chief. They were at Mapoch's stronghold with a strong guard of 150 natives. Mapoch took Mr. Walker and his chief under his protection; but the Boers riding near one day saw them, and by treachery lured them away. They then

told them on the 17th January that they would give them a written guarantee that their lives and property would be secure if they left and accompanied them to Middelburg. Thinking they were honest they left Mapoch's stronghold, but the moment they got out of Mapoch's country their guns, horses, and property were taken from them and they were sent with a waggon to Middelburg. There a charge was brought against them of attempting to incite Mapoch's men against the Boers. Mr. Rissik was allowed out of prison on bail of £1,000, Mr. Webber [sic?] standing bail, and Mr. Walker was allowed out without bail. He was told, however, that he would have to go through a mock trial and then be shot. He was afraid that Mr. Rissik may be shot by this time. He heard three or four Boers say that they would shoot Mr. Rissik. On the 24th Dr. Forbes came into Middelburg for medicine for the troops wounded at Broncker's Spruit.²⁸ He reported that they were all doing well, and that Lieutenant Hume, the only surviving officer, was able to walk about. Captain Eckersby, a native commissioner, was also imprisoned at Middelburg. Many of the Boers behaved very insolently to the English, saying they would like to cut every — Englishman's throat. One day, when they had got a pass outside the town, Cumming and Walker saw the road was comparatively clear, and they made a run for it. They only had their horses with them, a dog, and a tin of biscuits. On this they lived for a week and endured great hardship, the dog always getting his share of the small daily ration. When they got to the Swazie King, the refugees were well treated by his Majesty, who was fervent in his protestations of loyalty to her Majesty.²⁹ He had issued strict orders that his army should sleep on their shields to be ready to fight for England if necessary. He gave our informants an important message for the Commander-in-Chief of the English forces, and this they are now about to proceed to the front to deliver. They left their horses at the Swazie king's kraal,³⁰ and endured great misery from swollen feet in their walk to Delagoa Bay.³¹ Mr. Walker has friends in Durban, but Mr. Cumming is a stranger. They have both left to have an interview with Sir Evelyn Wood.³² With this perfectly reliable account of the Dutch treatment of [the] English in Middelburg I close this letter before leaving for Maritzburg. Will England disgrace her name and prestige by allowing herself to be defeated on all sides by men of this sort, and then calmly, without one victory, come to terms? Can we hide from ourselves, much as we would like to, that if we do this we are disgraced? Shame must fill the heart of all Englishmen, if such things are to be.

‘The Transvaal’, Fort Amiel, 27 March 1881

(published in *The Morning Post* on 12 May 1881, p. 6)

So what Englishmen out here most foreboded has really come to pass, and peace has been announced!³³ When I despatched my last letter from Maritzburg nothing had been settled, and, although appearances were somewhat in its favour, up to the very last every one clung fondly to the hope and anticipation of a renewal of hostilities. I scarcely know in what light these negotiations have been regarded in England, or how public feeling has received the announcement of peace, though I have been informed from a high source that it was with a feeling of satisfaction. Certain am I, however, of the disgust and indignation which has greeted it out here amongst every class of Englishmen, from the richest to the poorest, from the most influential to the least important inhabitants of Natal and the Transvaal. The turn affairs have taken has filled both officers and men with disappointment, humiliation, and pain. Could Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues³⁴ but hear the opinions expressed on all sides with regard to this humiliating peace they would scarcely feel honoured or gratified. Yesterday the infuriated inhabitants of Newcastle dragged an effigy of Mr. Gladstone through the streets, and, amidst groans, hisses, and general expressions of disgust, burned it to ashes. I only arrived here yesterday from Ladysmith, having received a telegram at Estcourt on the 24th announcing the unwelcome news, and I can truthfully state that since then, until my arrival at Newcastle, a distance of 121 miles or more, I have heard nothing but anger and unconcealed disgust on all sides. As I said in a former letter, it is my wish as well as my duty to relate the real state of things; it is but right that the public in England should be made aware of the expression of opinion out here, and the opinion I speak of is that of civilians, officers, and men. Some people may reply that it is the business of soldiers to obey, and not to express any opinion whatever; but no generous-minded man can blame the army for the disgust and scorn which it feels, and take no pains to conceal, for these strange and humiliating proceedings. Was it for such an inglorious ending as this that the lives of so many gallant officers and men [were] chucked away? Is so little notice to be taken of the prestige and honour of our soldiers, who are eager and willing to retrieve the many disasters of the last few months? Has all this taken place with the only result of making us ashamed of our country, shy of being called an Englishman, and the laughing-stock of every Dutchman out here? Every one out here felt very much for Sir Evelyn Wood in the trying position he occupied during the peace negotiations. All who know the gallant general must feel certain how greatly against his own inclination and judgement these negotiations must have been. To have a victory snatched out of your grasp at the very moment when it would have been

so easy to obtain, to see opportunities lost and chances thrown away just as the right time had arrived to retrieve our disasters, prestige, and honour, and make good of the blood of our gallant officers and soldiers which has been so uselessly spilt and shed in vain, – all this must have been galling and trying in this extreme, as we know it to have been, and for this reason public sympathy was entirely with the general during his unwelcome task, and no one blamed him for the result, which received its credit exactly from the source from which all knew it emanated. Englishmen out here declare that England has forsaken them, and great fear and distrust is expressed. There is no doubt that the position is humiliating and embarrassing in the extreme. Dutchmen are [elated and] have good cause to be so; no opportunity is neglected of showing the poor estimation in which they hold our countrymen. That peace has been arranged is certain, but it is by no means so likely that it will be observed. Never was the bitter feeling of hatred so deep and rooted between Englishmen and Dutchmen as at present. Frequent brawls take place, and the popular and cherished opinion on both sides is that peace will be shortlived.

This peace came at a most opportune moment for the Boers, who, weakened by sickness, want of food and ammunition, could not have long withstood the continuation of the campaign. We, on the contrary, had had our reverses, reinforcements were arriving with all speed, 1,000 of the 15th Hussars had received orders to move round and cut the Boers off, their whole string of wagons would have afforded an easy capture, and the day would have been ours. Sir Evelyn could have followed up this success by a victory which would have forced the Boers to content themselves with terms more to the advantage of British subjects in the Transvaal, more to the honour and prestige of England and her army, and more preventive of future war and bloodshed, which must assuredly arise again before long. As it is, the Boers have outwitted us on all sides. They have caused us to suffer several disasters, and when the time has arrived for us to turn the tables on them they enter into negotiations and obtain for themselves terms which they hardly dared to hope for – terms which, out here, are regarded as humiliating and disgraceful to England, rendering the country unfit for Englishmen to live in unless they care to calmly sit down and endure the overbearing airs and superiority of the Dutch. Such is a brief sketch of public opinion out here. Is it possible that the English public and her Majesty's Government are aware of the painful and bad feeling which has been created by these proceedings? In recording it I feel that I have truthfully stated the reality of the discontent as it stands.

Sir Evelyn Wood leaves Fort Amiel for Pretoria³⁵ in a few days, but it is not exactly known how long the general will remain away. There is a

great deal of work to be done when one's duties embrace those of a general who has an army to command and the position of Governor of Natal and High Commissioner to represent as well. If energy, determination, and skill will attain the required end, then I think all Englishmen may be sure that they have got the right man in the right place. To-morrow I am leaving to visit Laing's Nek and Amajuba Mountain, and, on my return, will send as faithful a description as possible of those melancholy spots, which must ever remain as a sad memory to England.

The Camp, Mount Prospect, April 2. My pen has been somewhat silent since it was last occupied in writing from Fort Amiel on the state of public feeling in Natal and Transvaal. Since then this feeling has not a whit abated, but grows stronger and more irritated every day. The Boers are insolent and contemptuous, the colonists ready and eager to avenge the slightest insult, the consequence resulting therefrom being a succession of quarrels and brawls, some of which may later on become of a serious nature and lay the foundation for future war and disturbance. I may here mention an instance of what I describe as being only one of many that have lately taken place. Standing outside in the porch of the Masonic Hotel at Newcastle a few days ago my attention was attracted to a scene that was being enacted not far from where I stood. About half a dozen Boers were congregated together smoking, laughing, and talking in a loud voice. Close to them were one or two colonists, who appeared to be listening to the subject of their conversation, and not a little angered thereby. Wondering what was taking place, I drew a little nearer to try and catch and understand what was being said. The subject of conversation was the recent war, and the opinion of one of the Boers was being loudly and lavishly given anent the conduct of our troops in the recent engagements. "We've beat the cowards once, and we'll do it again," was one of the triumphant exclamations which caught my ear. "We've beat them at Laing's Nek and Colley's Mountain (the Amajuba) and soon made them run for it. Let them try that game again, and we'll give them a like result. English soldiers can't fight; they can only run." The words were hardly out of his mouth when speech for the moment became effectually closed, as one of the aforementioned colonists walked up to the Boer, and before he knew where he was, and with a "Take that," laid him with one well-directed blow between the eyes flat on his back. I could not help laughing at the look of surprise which came over the faces of the remaining Boers or the stupid and cowed expression which overspread that of the fallen one. The least I expected to see was retaliation of some sort, but he contented himself by picking his carcass out of the dust and slunk away, followed by his friends, who made some remarks which I was unable to catch. The scene was witnessed by several officers of Majesty's army and one or two English bystanders,

but affairs of this sort being extremely common little notice was taken thereof.

The following leading article on the position of affairs appeared a few days ago in the *Natal Mercury*, which breathes the sentiments of every one out here so exactly that I think it is worth sending a copy thereof. It runs as follows: "... South Africa has stood this weak around the grave of English honour and British prestige. English colonists have felt shame of their nationality, and the loyalty of the Queen's subjects has been, and is, strained to the last degree of tension. The name of Englishman at this moment in Natal is owned with no sense of pride. It is a term of apology and reproach. *Civis Romanus sum*, 19 centuries ago, was the proud avowal of every Roman citizen. It is with no sort of pride that the colonist of Natal to-day admits himself with deprecation to be a British subject. How can he? Is it any privilege to be the citizen of an empire that has bowed itself in the dust? Is it any matter of pride to bear a name that is a term of scorn in the ear of the outer world? Is it any boast to belong to a country that can bend only when its forces are beaten and its generals are slain? It is mere folly to talk hereafter of British sovereignty, or of British prestige in South Africa. These phrases have vanished for ever. They have been put to flight by the bullets of the Boers. After a high-handed policy of annexation and a braggart policy of occupation the Queen's Government has succumbed to the force of arms. We cannot put the fact forward too forcibly or too plainly. It is the simple truth. Had we won at Laing's Nek all would have gone well – from an impartial point of view – and the dignity, the prestige, the authority of the British empire would have been maintained. But we did *not* win. We were beaten again, again, and yet again. Nine hundred British soldiers were killed or wounded. Every grade and every service of the Queen's forces – officers from general down to sub-lieutenant in the army – a naval commander, artillerymen and engineers, special staff officers of high standing, together with a host of brave privates and seamen, have all fallen victims to the unerring and relentless marksmanship of the rustic foe. Hence this peace – the saddest incident that has stained the modern history of Great Britain. [Sad], because there is no element in it that comports with national dignity or civil self-respect. Nearly three years ago Lord Beaconsfield, then the Premier of Great Britain, on his return from the Berlin Conference, said to the citizens of London – 'Gentlemen, I have brought to you peace with honour.'³⁶ If Mr. Gladstone, now the Prime Minister of the Empire, addressed the Parliament last Wednesday in words of absolute truth, he must have said – 'Sir, my Government, after engaging in war without honour, has concluded a peace with dishonour.' The telegraph has told us that the terms of peace were 'generally well received.' Unless we are grossly misinformed as to

what these terms of peace are, we can only say that if the British Parliament reflects the sentiment of the British people it is high time that we, South African colonists, took our own course and consulted our own interests. Those terms are in the fullest sense our terms of submission. The Boers have gained all they fought for. Their victory is full, all round, and complete. England is as completely defeated and worsted as Turkey was after the last war – only in Natal the Boers, not the British, have had their Plevna; but the British have not, like the Turks, had their Shipka Pass.³⁷ Not only has self-government been granted, but we hear nothing of the ‘flag,’ nothing of confederation, nothing of Imperial sovereignty. The whole fabric of British rule goes by the board. The Boers are to be compensated for ‘the arms and property taken at the time of the annexations’ – why were these claims never put forward before? – and a mutual amnesty is graciously permitted on both sides. Downing-Street for once has humbled itself in the dust, and has pointed out the true way to exact freedom from its requirements and its interferences. It has held out a premium to rebellion, and has encouraged the spirit of sedition everywhere throughout the British realms to manifest itself in active and offensive form.”

In this way does the *Natal Mercury* express the universal feeling out here. Once more is the Transvaal to be given up to the license and liberty of Boer mismanagement and evil rule. Considering how pluckily the garrisons of that country have held out against Boer beleaguering, they at any rate deserve, and must receive, all our sympathy and acclamation. They, as do all the rest of her Majesty’s forces, lament as bitterly as any colonist can do the degrading outcome of Imperial policy; and it is not surprising that they feel borne down by a sense of national dishonour. The “terms,” as made known, surpass anything that could be deemed possible. Much was expected, but it could not be believed that the Republic would precipitately be recognised; that the Boers would have accorded to them the fullest belligerent rights; that an indiscriminate amnesty would be accorded, even to men who had sworn allegiance to the Queen and accepted pay from her representatives; that the troops already in the country would be hurried out of it, and that those on the border would be arrested where they stand; that compensation should be made to the “Republic” for what now, it seems, was misappropriated at the time of annexation; and – most astounding of all – that the liability of the Natal Government for the payment of compensation should be admitted as a point to be determined by the commission. Why should Natal, who has scrupulously kept clear of any kind of participation on the late strife, be hinted at as liable to be held responsible for the cost of this campaign? We must remember that much was exacted from it on account of the Zulu war, and to a great extent. Previous to this Boer war

the Legislature solemnly repudiated any responsibility for the cost, direct or indirect, of the campaign. Its neutrality was proclaimed by its own magistrate, and its non-participation has been recognised by all sections of the community. It seems hard that this colony should be asked to bear the burden of losses caused by imperial blundering, and from the public tone out here it seems probable that should such prove to be the case the representatives of Natal are preparing themselves to resist what they consider as gross injustice. The account of how they treated the British ensign at Maritzburg has doubtless ere now reached England. The *Times of Natal* describes the scene as follows:

“On Saturday morning a flagstaff was found stuck up amongst the trees in the middle of the Market-square, bearing the British ensign reversed, with the Transvaal flag above. The display was so suggestive that every one knew the meaning of it; it was intended as an anti-peace demonstration. Crowds of people gathered on the square to attend the morning market, and the excitement was considerable, nearly everybody sympathising with the passive but significant rebuke thus administered to the powers that be for the humiliation of the empire sanctioned by them. About 9 a.m. a party of soldiers in mufti came upon the scene, it being supposed that they were sent by an officer residing in the neighbourhood. They indignantly resented the display, regarding it as an insult to the British army, but they were assured by the bystanders that it was not intended as such. In deference to their feelings, however, and to prevent a breach of the peace the flagstaff was removed, but it stood for some time against a wagon at the side of the square, around which a crowd of people remained congregated, and the policy of the imperial Government was freely canvassed. At last one of the Jingoese tore the ensign from the staff, rent it in pieces, and dragged it through the mud, others treading it under foot, in condemnation of the policy the humiliating character of which was thus suggestively symbolised. But there was not the slightest disturbances after the soldiers left, merely a passive and dignified demonstration against the false peace that is being attempted with the Boers.”

As I write this letter, preparing it for the mail which leaves to-night, the great square-topped mountain of Amajuba and the winding road which leads to and joins the one passing over Laing’s Nek stand out clear and distinct in the ray’s of a setting sun. Where a short time ago death and warfare reigned, now all is peace and quietude. Far off the hills of Zululand can be seen fading away in the shades of approaching evening. On all sides stretch vast desolate plains, hills and valleys bare of trees which would make the country so beautiful, while in every direction columns of smoke float slowly and lazily aloft, lending themselves as objects on which to rest the eye as it wanders over all this sea of

mountain and hill, monotonous, unchanging, and bare. The scene is one of sadness, while the sight of the Amajuba Mountain and Laing's Nek conjures up unpleasant thoughts and painful memories. It is the monument of many brave men who rest on its summit, while it overlooks the little churchyard at Mount Prospect where are laid Sir George Colley and many officers who fell beneath its shadow. I came here to-day with some members of the staff and several officers of the 15th Hussars, and to-morrow is to be employed in going over these scenes of unhappy memory, an account of which shall be furnished in a future letter.

'Battlefields in the Transvaal', Camp, 15th Hussars, Signal Hill (near Newcastle), 10 April 1881 (published in *The Morning Post* on 19 May 1881, p. 6)

Time is the fairest judge of past events when the excitement and passions of men have had time to cool and sensational reports and false representations no longer seize the public fancy. How much of truth does England know anent the late war, and will she ever learn the whole? To be conversant with truth's sad tale she must humble her pride and bow her head, for, unless garnished and furbished as it has assuredly been, the story of the Boer war of 1881 must ever be a stain on the English annals, a blot on the prestige and honour of her army, a slur on the Government which has humbled the power and pride of a great nation. Time, let us hope, will bring to light the real state of things, which, though painful, may serve as a warning for the future and a guard against the repetition of mistakes on all sides so disastrous and humiliating. It is not for me to judge, neither is it my place to send home accounts of what never took place – my object is to speak the truth of what I have seen and faithfully account what I have heard from authentic and undeniable sources; for is it not better that the English public should learn the facts rather than fiction, should read the truth, which, though bitter, is better told than a crowd of sensational fabrications without any foundation? Accompanied by Captain Maude, aide-de-camp to Sir Evelyn Wood, an officer of the Royal Engineers, and several officers of the 15th Hussars, I rode over the other day to Mount Prospect, distant some 19 or 20 miles from Newcastle, to visit and go over the several battlefields connected with the late war. We arrived too late to do any good that day, and put up at a little inn of small and insignificant appearance and somewhat scanty resources in the way of food, which would have been found wanting had it not been for the kindness of the 60th, whose camp lay not far distant, and who kindly supplied us

with meat and bread. Beds there were none, with the exception of that used by the proprietor of the inn, and which he kindly handed over to me. As, however, it was thickly infested with fleas, I preferred the hospitality of the open air, and was able to sleep as soundly as a king amongst the saddles and horse gear which lay in picturesque confusion strewn about outside the porch. My companions made themselves comfortable on some shakedown laid out on the floor of a stuffy-looking room, but I must confess I did not envy them their night-quarters. Early the next morning we were up and busy preparing what available breakfast there was to be found in the shape of some of the mutton of overnight dinner, and some tough beef or "trek" quite hard to eat. We were anxious to procure as good a meal as possible, as we were expecting Sir Evelyn Wood, who was to leave Newcastle that morning on his way to Pretoria, and we calculated that 20 miles drive would have stimulated the appetite of our gallant general. At 7:30 Sir Evelyn arrived, but instead of being seated in the spider in which he left Newcastle the general appeared mounted on one of the gunner horses which had started from Newcastle in that same carriage. His coat was dusty and soiled, and he walked stiffly, and as if in pain. In reply to our anxious inquiries he informed us that some three miles from our present quarters his spider had upset, throwing him with some force to the ground, the wheel passing over him as he lay thereon. Fortunately no serious injury was sustained, and he was able to mount one of the gunner horses ridden by the postilion and gallop on to the inn to obtain assistance. Despatching Captain Maude to a neighbouring post house to procure another spider, the general entered the inn and joined us in doing justice to the mutton remains and hard trek which we had prepared with so much care. Ere we had finished Captain Maude made his reappearance, having succeeded in obtaining a fresh spider, to which were quickly harnessed a relay of gunner horses that had been awaiting the arrival of the general. The broken carriage having by this time been brought up, the baggage and traps it contained were transferred to the other vehicle, and within three-quarters of an hour from his arrival the general was once more on his way to Pretoria, distant some 180 miles or more. We rode over to Mount Prospect that morning, and thence along the line of route pursued by the troops on their first attempt to take the Nek.³⁸ The tract of country between these two positions is slightly undulating, but not hilly enough to hide from view the movements of our troops as they advanced forward from the camp at Mount Prospect. The view afforded from the Nek is of most extensive character, and the enemy could overlook the surrounding country with the greatest ease. Laing's Nek is not a steep and impracticable mountain pass, but simply a gently rising hill, over which runs the high road leading to Pretoria. Until within three or four

hundred yards of the summit the ascent is very gradual, and numerous natural cuttings running parallel with the road afford a certain amount of cover to troops who might advance in skirmishing order. On the right of the road, some thousand yards distant, and running also parallel with it separated by a piece of the Velt [sic] almost level, there rises up a somewhat steep incline on which several Boer trenches command an excellent view of the road. Very effective and destructive fire could be opened from this position, which is situated admirably for defensive operations. The summit of Laing's Nek is also securely guarded, trenches being thrown up on either side of the road, those on the right being placed at short intervening spaces from one another up a steeply-rising hill, while on the left a complete line of earthworks guard the entire face of a long sloping ridge which leads up to and adjoins Majuba Hill. Description is very inadequate to convey to the reader's mind an idea of the position; it must be seen to be thoroughly comprehended, but once seen, how forcibly does it strike the looker-on that the place is not the impregnable and difficult pass it has hitherto been represented. A few shells thrown from one of the heights adjoining Mount Prospect, artillery brought to bear upon the Nek, would quickly have wrought havoc in the Boer trenches and kept the enemy's attention directed elsewhere than on the breathless line of troops who, struggling in close order up the hill, strove to take the Nek under a hot fire and against overwhelming odds. Secure behind the trenches, the position of the Boers must have been an easy one, while that in which our troops found themselves, advancing as they did in such close order, was simply, as in the Balaclava charge, walking into the arms of death.³⁹ What wonder, then, that defeat followed, and that under such destructive fire fell that day many of our bravest officers and men. On reaching the summit of Laing's Nek the road begins a very steep descent, and the whole of the Transvaal, so to speak, is laid out far below at our feet. It is a grand sight, for the eye commands almost a bird's eye view of the two countries, divided as they are by this range of forbidding mountains. Bearing off the road to the left one can follow on horseback the ridge line which I have already described as forming one of the strongest defences of the Boers. On all sides are evident traces of a late occupation. The grass is close cropped and the soil bare and dusty. It was from this position that the Boers first caught sight of the Majuba heights crowned by the enemy, and it was from here that between 130 to 150, after the first scare was over, rushed forward to take those heights, which should have been sufficient to have withstood 10,000. From the spot of the Boer encampment we rode about a quarter of a mile, following up the ridge until it adjoined the sides of the Majuba, then dismounting we clambered up its steep slippery sides, following in the tracks of those nimble

mountaineers who a little more than a month ago struggled forward on a harder and sterner business than that on which we now engaged.⁴⁰ More and more forcibly does it come back to one as one climbs the slippery slopes of Majuba, that the force on the summit should have been amply sufficient to have kept many thousands of Boers at bay. Alas! is it and can it be true that that force would not fight, and, seized with panic, forsook their general in his hour of need? Great deeds were done upon that hill. Gallant was the stand of the 92d, and many died nobly. But how many more ignobly and in the hour of their flight? Confusion and disorder reigned throughout that mountain garrison. Panic seems to have seized upon many. Let us close the tale, and leave it to a more willing pen in the future to tell the sad and bitter story. Up that difficult hill they had struggled for many an hour, not like the Boers, armed with only with their rifles and cartridges, but labouring under the weight of their sleeping gear, three days' rations, and 70 rounds apiece of ammunition. Weary they reached the summit, this band of many regiments divided. A few of every regiment composed the force, everything was strange to them; officers and men did not know each other, and all organisation seemed adrift. What wonder, then, that in the hour when man and officer should have worked in one accord disorder reigned, and panic lost us a great opportunity and brought about such a bitter end. Yes, to quote the words of a gallant officer whose word we must all respect, "they broke and ran like a flock of sheep, the Boers picking them off in their ignoble flight." There was one who, whatever mistakes he may have committed, did not seek his safety in this manner. On the summit of that table-shaped mountain which he had hoped to win he there died a soldier's death; of the idea which brought him there, grand in itself if it had been more effectively and wisely carried out, let others judge. He is dead, and praise and blame fall on his ear alike. I can only say God rest his soul.

From the base of the mountain Majuba has the appearance of being square in shape, but on reaching the summit it is more roundly fashioned than one would imagine. The sides are very irregular – now falling in almost sheer precipice, to appear the next moment in grassy slopes or rough, rocky paths. In some of the big crevices or cuttings, which run almost perpendicularly downward, a mass of shrubs and trees grew thickly, affording excellent covering to hiding parties, but too dense to allow of quick passages through their midst. The summit or table of Majuba is not flat but undulating, a rough estimation of its breadth would make it between 500 and 600 yards, but the surface being so uneven it is impossible in some places to see one side from the other. Many stones hastily raised as a cover still stand, and the marks of bullets show thickly on some, especially where the 92d made their stand. The spot

where Sir George Colley fell is on the side of a little hillock leading to a slight hollow, close to the graves of Captain Maude and the soldiers who fell on the Majuba heights. The bird's-eye view obtained of Natal, the Transvaal, and the Orange Free State is from this position most magnificent. What a position it would have been could it have been held, and what a different story England would have had to tell. I came down the side up which the English forces had toiled. It is not nearly so steep or so impregnable as that scaled by the Boers, but it must have proved a weary climb to men heavily laden as our soldiers were, and sufficient to exhaust many of their number, who were mere boys. The first part of the climb, which is all grass, must have proved exceptionally severe. Later on in the day I rode down to Schein's Hoogte and over the battlefield of the Ingogo.⁴¹ Of this spot there is little or nothing to be said. It is a succession of ups and downs, undulating hills, dongas, and spruits, which must have made the retreat of our troops no easy matter. Stones hastily erected as means of cover also show numerous bullet marks, and the signs of recent fight are still apparent. In some places the smell of dead oxen and horses is horrible, and all the carcasses of these animals are left unburied to putrify under the hot sun. Asvogel or vultures hover about loth to quit a spot where they have made many a sumptuous feast, but the battlefield of Ingogo has nothing special about it to warrant description. The river over which Sir George Colley managed under cover of darkness to pass his troops is narrow and insignificant, though it swells largely, I believe, after rain, and the Boers believed it that day to be unfordable. The country all around is hilly, dreary, and monotonous. Were it not for the lights and shades on the landscape it would be positively desolate. One hears of Natal as "Fair Natal," but the Desolate Land would, to my mind, be a more appropriate term. Scarcely a tree or a shrub is visible as far as the eye can reach – nothing but a succession of undulating hills and plains covered with the long brown grass of the country. The climate is certainly magnificent but most changeable and varied. Head-quarters still remains at Fort Amiel, but the remaining regiments have been moved higher up on the other side of Signal Hill, which lies some three miles or so from Newcastle. My tent is pitched close to that of the 15th Hussars, below Signal Hill, while near it are those of Inniskillings and Artillery, and in a continuing circle the camps of the 92d and other regiments on the spot. Far away stretch the Dragensberg, and Majuba rises up directly facing us some 20 miles distant. I am riding over there to-day to attend the races, which take place at Mount Prospect to-morrow. It is with amusements of this sort that the officers and men beguile the time which to many hangs heavily on their hands now that the war is at an end.

‘The Transvaal’, Head-Quarters Camp, Fort Amiel, 15 April 1881
(published in *The Morning Post* on 27 May 1881, p. 6)

Considerable excitement has been caused in Newcastle to-day by the announcement, freely circulated everywhere, that on the 19th of this month the Boers have arranged a meeting to elect their own President. The belief everywhere expressed is, that if such should be the case it may become the basis of future war and disturbance. There is no doubt that as every day goes by the Boer inhabitants of Natal and the Transvaal wax more defiant and contemptuous of England and Englishmen, and anything bearing relation to aught British. This is hardly to be wondered at after the undivided success and triumph they have attained, and they can hardly be blamed for their behaviour when we consider in what antipathy they hold us. In the Transvaal itself continual infractions of the peace terms are constantly occurring. The property of the loyal is frequently seized, upon their refusal to give up the possessions of farms and their households. The law seems to be powerless to protect. Mr. Pring, assistant to Sir M. Barlow,⁴² returned a few days ago from the Swazi border. He brings news of the plunder of a man called Newman, who was trading in Swaziland. All his cattle and goods were seized. Since the peace a Kaffir captain and two of his tribe have been shot, after a sham trial, for treason. The country appears to be in a state of anarchy and confusion, while the natives are losing confidence in the power of England to protect them from Boer oppression, of which they already begin to feel the effects. One of the first steps taken by the victorious Dutchmen on their dispersion from the Nek was to levy a tax of cattle on the Kaffirs in the district of Wakkerstroom and Utrecht, telling the natives that they had retaken the whole of the country; consequently all natives were under Boer rule and law, and would be fined for not assisting them in the late war. Undoubtedly the eyes of the black natives are upon us. Already we know of Boer agents who are endeavouring to circulate amongst the Swazies that we are beaten, and threatening them with future punishment, while the Zulus are informed on all sides of our defeat and humiliation. What effect will all this have upon our own natives in Natal? Up to now they have had no reason to call in question the Queen’s power and superiority, for though we have sustained reverses we have always been successful in the long run, and the Queen’s sovereignty upheld by force of arms. Strength is the savage’s symbol of the right to govern. Might with them is right, and the power that wins is that which should command obedience. Far and wide, stories are being circulated amongst the native population of a most mischievous and seditious character. In every kraal throughout the colony they are taking effect. It is the Boer, and not the Queen, who is in future to dominate the country; we have been beaten and humbled, and are unfit to reign

and command. It is to the victorious side that they must bow in submission. The pernicious effect of such teaching will surely before long make itself felt. I leave it every one to read and judge for themselves. I fear it is a case of peace at any price, and the colonists feel it is so. But what amends are to be made to our refugees from the Transvaal, those men who left their property in the hands of the Boers, preferring to remain neutral rather than take up arms against England? They have trusted to British justice and protection, and this is how their confidence has been met. Then, again, there are the loyal Boers, who, trusting in the assertion that the annexation was irrevocable, have put their faith in the power of England's rule. They have had great losses by the war, and their only reward for past loyalty is the announcement that the old rule of incompetency and oppression is to be revived. What compensation can avail those who have fought for their liberty, honour, and the interests of their country? Pretoria, Wakkerstroom, Marabastad, Standerton, Potchefstroom, and Rustenberg⁴³ all have valiantly struggled to preserve their freedom against their hated enemy, the Boer, to find their heroic efforts wasted, their loyalty and patriotism thrown away. For of what avail is this large force, which has been sent out here to no purpose or end? While our numbers were small and out of all comparison with those of our enemy we three times attacked and were repulsed. Reinforcements were eagerly asked for and quickly despatched. They arrived to find a patched-up peace concluded and the honour and prestige of England and her army tarnished. Are we encamped here to be the laughing-stock of surrounding countries? Of what avail all this expenditure and paraphernalia of war if it is only to be a sham and a delusion? Have not the loyal and well-affected a right to be heard as well as the rebel Boers, and are the latter to be allowed to govern a country which they have already proved their inability to rule? In the Transvaal, which is still under English rule, the Boers have already committed and are daily committing infractions of the peace terms. What will be the state of things when the protection of England is withdrawn, except in the hollow and helpless person of a British resident who will find himself powerless to enforce justice? Is it for such an ending as this that the humiliating and disgraceful scene has taken place, to remain as a blot and stain which can never be effaced? All this that I am writing I quote from fact and public opinion out here; it is the universal expression, and should accordingly receive the attention and sympathy of all desirous to see justice done and law respected. The following letter with the terms of peace has been forwarded from Wakkerstroom to the editor of the *Natal Mercury*:

“Wakkerstroom District,
Transvaal Republic, April, 1881.

Sir, – We are told the terms of peace (if such they be) are as yet kept from the Natal public, for what reason than the shame and disgrace they brought on the British arms, we cannot say. Since the war is over we have had copies of various papers, but to read the infamous reports and villainous lies in some makes one ashamed to read them. Truth is truth, no matter how much against our unfortunate troops, and do not brighten over their ignominious defeats in any way. Tell them the worst, that they may take shame and try to wipe it out. Now, it is perhaps too late ever to re-establish their name in Africa.

I annex a statement of killed, wounded, etc., on both sides in the three fights at Laing’s Nek, Ingogo, and Majuba, challenging contradiction as regards the Boer losses:

	Killed	Wounded	Prisoners
LAING’S NEK – Boers	14	28	0
INGOGO "	8	9	0
MAJUBA "	1	5	0
Totals	23	42	0
LAING’S NEK – English	83	111	2
INGOGO "	66	65	1
MAJUBA "	89	183	58
Totals	238	310	61

Will send down the names of Boers killed and wounded in above three fights.”

There are some scenes of heroism and stoical resistance which still serve to lighten the dark page of this unfortunate war. Amongst these, perhaps one of the most touching is the valiant defence of Potchefstroom, and the brave resistances of men who held the fort for many weeks and months against the Boers, exposed almost continuously to their deadly fire. Small was that band commanded by the gallant Colonel Winsloe, but their hearts were in the right place, and both men and women in that beleaguered garrison held out until it was possible to do so no longer. It seems hard that after so much sacrifice and courage they should not have shared with the other besieged towns all the honours of war. It was no fault of theirs, but to the blame of the Boers, that they were not advised in time of the armistice and subsequent peace. For three long months they had eked out a precarious subsistence on tinned provisions and water obtained from wells dug in the entrenchments, and during that lengthened period they had resisted the attack of an enemy whose numbers greatly exceeded their own. All honour to Colonel Win-

sloe, his gallant band of soldiers and determined garrison, which, in ignorance of England's defeat and humiliation abroad, fought hard in defence of her honour and prestige.

The general health of the troops out here is excellent. The positions occupied by the different regiments for their camping ground have been wisely and efficiently chosen; most of them are on a high position, while the long grass affords good feeding for the horses. The tents of the 15th Hussars stand pitched on a slightly rising ground to the left of Signal Hill, situated some three miles or so out of Newcastle, and distant from Fort Amiel about two and half miles. Below the 15th, bearing to the right, are the camps of the artillery and Inniskillings, while following round in a circle of a couple of miles or so are those of the 60th Rifles, 97th Regiment, 92d Highlanders, etc. The view obtained from these positions of the Majuba Mountains and Laing's Nek is very effective, while a slight rising hill at the back of the 92d camp hides from sight Schain's Hoogte and the battlefield of the Ingogo, which otherwise would also be visible. The surrounding country is monotonously alike, consisting of continuous rolls of mountains, hills, and plains; scarcely a tree visible, and nothing but eternal grass on all sides on which to rest or catch the eye. Life in the different regiments is somewhat stagnant, varied by occasional shooting and fishing parties. The mounted infantry had planned and got up an exciting race meeting near Mount Prospect, which promised to afford great amusement. Ever one that could possibly get away started off for that place the evening before, when late night a message arrived to the effect that the races had been forbidden by the authorities, as most of the horses entered belonged to the remount store, and were not the private property of their owners. A pleasant meeting was therefore done away with, and the harmless enjoyment of a few hours forbidden. Talking of remount horses, I may here mention that a more lamentable sight than these unfortunate beasts present as a rule is seldom witnessed. Every one has read and seen pictures of Rosinante, the horse which carried Don Quixote and his fortunes.⁴⁴ Let my readers picture to themselves a large number of animals presenting the appearance of the said horse, and they will be able to form an accurate idea of the beasts on which many of her Majesty's officers are mounted. Why so many wretched animals should be chosen by the authorities who have the task of buying up the remounts is a matter of some curiosity to me. When I arrived at Maritzburg I bought several very nice animals that had been rejected by that department, I presume, on account of their being under a certain height, while several officers who accompanied us up country were mounted on sorry jades, the best that could be chosen from the remount depot, and which had cost in several instances more than my own sleek and well-to-do purchases. Up here the same system

seems to be practised, and the animals are of a similar wretched class. While encamped by the Ingogo River the night before the day on which the races at Mount Prospect were expected to come off an officer of the Royal Engineers was forced to take shelter with us for the night, as he could not get his horse along. It had only been in his possession about three days, he having effected an exchange for it of another useless brute belonging to the remounts. The horse in question had only come about 10 miles, but the poor animal was perfectly incapable of proceeding any further – lean, dirty, and weak. His half-starved condition was a cause of great commiseration to us, and we clustered round to have a look at him. One of the officers who formed our party, a captain of the 15th Hussars, recognised the horse as one formerly belonging to his own troop, which had been drafted therefrom as unfit for service. So it was sent to the remount depot and accepted therein. And these are the animals on which our mounted regiments are supposed to do good service. Transport in this part of the country is very dear, the result being that stores, forage, and any kind of merchandise becomes ridiculously expensive. There appears to be no fixed price on anything, and storekeepers and innkeepers charge what they please. The price of forage is enormous, and on my journey up country the food for horses was always the highest item in the bills. I will give an instance of the usual extortions that are practised on unwary travellers. A party of five of us made a two nights' stay last week at the Mount Pleasant Inn, close to Mount Prospect. Our food was supplied us by a detachment of the 60th, whose camp lay pitched not far off; beds in the hotel there were none, we slept on the ground, and during the daytime were always absent. Our bill on leaving was £17. This is certainly not the country for a poor man to live in, at any rate during war time, though to the working man and artisan it affords high and liberal wage. Labour out here is very expensive, and this in a great measure accounts for the large price placed upon articles of all kinds when offered for sale. Doubtless the presence of a large number of troops conduces to this end, and during the period of their stay in the country it will remain so. Opportunities of this kind are not to be thrown away, so think the good people of Natal, who act accordingly. Certain it is that this war has proved a great boon to the Boer farmers, who possessed a large surplus of cattle this year, for it has enabled them to sell at an advantage the greater portion of their live stock.

The English public will be sorry to hear that Sir Evelyn Wood is still suffering from the effects of his carriage accident, an account of which I gave in my last letter. It appears that the gallant general was more shaken than he thought or cared at the time to acknowledge; nor has he since then had much opportunity to wear off the effects of his accident by a few days' rest. The long rough journey to Pretoria and back must

have proved wearisome, while all who know Sir Evelyn are aware of the energy and vivacity he possesses, which refuse to spare the ***** framework in the execution of his manifold duties. At Heidelberg and Pretoria on his arrival the general found the Republican flag flying, and at once caused it to be removed. The Boers appear eager to show on all sides that they no longer consider themselves as under any flag or Government but their own. What will be the final settlement when the commission sits forms among many a matter for much discussion and speculation. Yesterday Sir Hercules Robinson left Capetown, *en route* to join Sir Evelyn Wood at Newcastle. On his arrival he will be accommodated in a comfortable farmhouse, which has been engaged for that purpose. There is not much accommodation about here, and the price asked is enormous. The proprietor of the Masonic offered the use of his hotel for a month at £2,000. This amount is the actual sum he paid a year or so ago for the entire premises, but like the rest of the Natalians he knows how to coin money and reap his harvest while the sun shines. At present there is a great dearth of news of any kind or sort; every one is heartily sick of this place, and, if there is to be no further war, is longing to get home.

‘The Transvaal’, The Leokop, Ingagane, 5 May 1881

(published in *The Morning Post* on 17 June 1881, p. 5)

Refugees from the Transvaal keep streaming into Newcastle. They declare that it is no longer possible to remain in the country if it is to be given over to Boer management. Over 400 families have already commenced to trek in different directions, protesting loudly against the treachery, as they call it, of the English Government. Their case is certainly, and without doubt, a hard one. Upon the empire they have depended for protection, assurances after assurances have been given them that they would ever be kept under British rule. Under them the country has developed and advanced. To their labour and industry the prosperity of the Transvaal is indebted. Suddenly they find themselves without protection, stripped of home and property, their position and local standing no longer of any account, and security of life at an end. To the British Crown, to their Queen and country, they have been loyal, in the strength and might of England they have trusted to protect them from the after-vengeance of the Boers. What is the price of their loyalty and fidelity? To the colonist of the Transvaal how many must answer in the word – ruin. Who is to listen to their cry for justice? Who is to make amends for their hard sufferings and save them from the future? Has

national honour in these degenerate days become a thing of naught, and will their appeal be made in vain? They are told that a British Resident will be appointed to protect their interests, but they know that unless he acts the part of a dummy he will never be able to remain in power six months. Meantime can the government of the Transvaal be carried on while the Commission sits, if at the very outset it finds itself powerless even to have telegraphic communication with Pretoria re-established? An influential meeting of loyalists was held here the other evening, April 29. Many people from Pretoria were present, and it was decided to send P. L. Zielman, of Utrecht, to England, along with C. K. White to represent them. Deputations from northern native chiefs, also from the eastern boundary, are arriving to protest against being committed to Boer rule. There is no controlling power to check them in case their appeal is unheard. Probably we shall pacify them, as we have done the English colonists, with false promises and assurances, made to be broken, but it would be as well for us to refrain from a continuance of such practices unless we wish the natives to rise *en masse* and kindle the flames of a fierce and exterminating war. As it is, the Government has the greatest difficulty in preventing the native tribes from falling on the Boers, and it is reported that Mapoch and the Swazies may break out at any moment.

Last week the Boer leaders arrived to await the conference. They consisted of Vice-President Kruger,⁴⁵ Commandant-General Piet Joubert,⁴⁶ M. W. Pretorius,⁴⁷ Dr Jorissen,⁴⁸ P. N. Montevilliers, Advocate Buskes, Mr. J. O. H. Shuter.⁴⁹ I made acquaintance with the most important of these personages, who, although they possess high-sounding and over-awing names, are very ordinary in appearance – indeed, had I not been informed previously who they were I should have taken them as representatives of our ordinary English labourer. Joubert is the only one who talks English tolerably well. He appears a quiet, plain-spoken man, calm in his argument, and decided in his opinion. M. Pretorius impressed me most favourably, but taken all in all they are a rough-looking lot. Speaking on the probability of future disturbance, and the fact that our army was greatly increased, I was informed that should war break out again the Boer ranks would be enormously swelled by volunteers from the Orange Free State, while all available grass land would be fired in advance of the British troops, in order to add to the difficulty of foraging cattle, horses, and mules. That the life of Sir Evelyn Wood would be in continual jeopardy I was also informed, and that he would lose it appeared a foregone conclusion. On April 28 Sir Henry de Villiers⁵⁰ arrived and on that date, although Sir Hercules Robinson has not yet made his appearance, the commission commenced sitting. Joubert and his companions appeared somewhat excited on leaving the conference,

though I believe the only subject discussed was that concerning the capitulation of Potchefstroom. The Boer representatives have promised to bring responsible persons to book; it remains to be seen how their promises will be kept. Every honour should be accorded to Colonel Winsloe and his gallant band who defended the fort; the story of its siege will prove full of historical interest, forming as it does one of the bright points which illumine the dark page of this humiliating war. The behaviour of women and children, I am told, was brave and heroic, though the sufferings they had to endure sounds almost incredible. One little girl was killed by a bullet, another severely wounded, fever and dysentery attacked that devoted band, and famine well-nigh overtook them. A few handfuls of mealies, which each separate individual had to smash and cook for him or herself, a couple of pints of water every other day was the meager allowance doled out to keep body and soul together. Such was the fare, and upon this the defenders of Potchefstroom struggled bravely and loyally to uphold British honour and prestige. When famine at length seized them they capitulated with honour, and had it not been for the treachery of Cronje, the Boer leader,⁵¹ who withheld from the garrison the news of the armistice, this would have been saved them. As it is, the capitulation has been cancelled, and while history lasts upon the page of Time the story of their valour must ever remain bright and glorious.

Something has gone wrong and failed to please the Boer leaders, for they have all departed as they came. M. Piet Joubert has gone to Heidelberg, the remainder trekked in different directions. Sir Hercules Robinson's luggage has arrived, which is doubtless the forerunner of his Excellency's arrival in person. It has been sent up to the neat and comfortable abode in the shape of Cochrane's farm, which has been taken for the period of his residence in these parts, and to use General Buller's⁵² expression when speaking of the coming of Sir Hercules, 'it is to be hoped that his arrival here will be the beginning of end.'

In the meantime, as day after day goes by, and the hopes of renewed fighting becomes less likely, discontent shows itself more openly amongst the ranks of the British army out here. Officers and men are alike disgusted, and the universal wish is to get out of a place where their very presence appears a mockery and a sham. And so it is. Only those present upon the scene can realize and see for themselves the farce and expense of it all. How can I describe the land in which we are stationed? A vast, bleak country it appears, far or near, scarcely a tree visible, nothing but a succession of undulating hills and plains, covered with rocks and long, dry, burnt-up grass. Lakes there are none, but numerous streams and small watercourses irrigate the country. Here and there the kraals of a few Kaffir villages strike the eye, but the monotony

of the scene is wearisome and unrelieved by any object of interest. It is only at sunset and just before sunrise that the fading tints of day and creeping colours of early morn make this country look beautiful. Then when the varying shadows and changing lights strike upon the scene the whole country fades and the monotonous dreary waste becomes for a short time transformed into scenes such as Doré would love to paint.⁵³ Here where the *hartebeest* and *wildebeest*, buffalo and lion roamed in numbers, a few small herds of the former species of antelope are now to be seen. In the Transvaal they exist in greater quantities, but in Natal they are now a thing of the past. Ten years ago the last lion was shot near Newcastle; it is many years since buffaloes have been seen. I am writing this letter in our camp under the Leokop Hill. Our party has the addition of two officers of the 15th Hussars, and we have come here on a hunting expedition after *hartebeest*. The Leokop is only fifteen miles away from Newcastle, but it is refreshing both to the mind and sight to be absent for a few days from the close proximity to that dreary-looking spot, and we are accordingly making the most of our few hours of freedom and indulging in the pleasant stalking *hartebeest*! I ascended the Leokop this morning before sunrise. It is a steep, precipitous hill to climb, but all weariness is forgotten in the reward afforded by a magnificent view which is to be obtained from the summit. Unfortunately Amajuba shows itself, and that mountain brings to mind sad and unpleasant memories. Upon its summit and beneath its shades sleep buried in their last rest friends whom on this earth we shall never meet again, men whose bright faces full of hope and eagerness a few short months ago one met and bade farewell to, little dreaming that they were to fall on such disastrous scenes. Lives sacrificed and thrown away, not grudged if they had died to gain renewed honour and prestige for Queen and country, but wasted, inasmuch as the fruits of their life's blood has resulted in ignominy and humiliation. Was it for results such as the present that they fought and fell; was it for this they died?

The news of Lord Beaconsfield's death⁵⁴ has created a very painful sensation here. Men looked to him to remove at a future period many of the evils resulting from the policy of Mr. Gladstone's Government in the Transvaal. That this policy has been one of fierce opposition to that of his late glorious rival no one could doubt for a moment; but it was hoped that, with the return of the Conservatives to power, many alterations might take place in the present state of affairs. That faith will now be transferred to Sir Stafford Northcote,⁵⁵ in whom the hopes of the party mentioned rest. News there is none to send, and very little of interest occurs. To-morrow our party returns to the camp of the 15th Hussars, which, during our absence, has been shifted for a short time to the Drakenberg [sic] range, some seven or eight miles distant from New-

castle. In the meantime, pending the arrival of Sir Hercules Robinson, affairs must remain more or less stagnant, and Newcastle is as uninteresting as ever, though the influx of refugees brings in fresh tales of what has been and what it is expected is yet to be.

**‘The Transvaal’, Camp, 15th Hussars, on the Drakenberg, 12 May 1881
(published in *The Morning Post* on 18 June 1881, p. 5)**

The following statement has been made by a Kaffir chief named Johannes, and residing at present on the Mission Station, Botsabel, near Middelburg:

“I received news that the country was again to be handed over to the Boers after peace had been made between the English and the Dutch, and so did other chiefs formerly supposed to be under the Boer government. We at once determined that, should this be the case, we would oppose them (the Boers) as we were always treated by them as serfs or slaves, and since the annexation by the British Government have always been treated as free men, and enjoyed the blessings of liberty. The chiefs Mapoch (Injabele), Mampoer, Pockwaan, Tsekie, Utlamen (a Zwasi [Swazi] chief), Paslete, Sebedee, and Maga***ilie, are determined to remain under British rule, and, when required, will assert the supremacy of the English by force of arms and Kaffir commanders. They all deny that the Boers have any right to the ground claimed by them from the above mentioned chiefs, and declare never to have submitted to Boerdom as yet, and are willing to assert their rights by force of arms when permission is granted them by the British Government, which they respect. They have further determined that, should the government again devolve upon the Boers, they will harass them to the utmost of their power and ravage the country; if need be, retire to the Zulu mountains as a stronghold, and defy their supremacy. British subjects will be spared when they overrun the country. Greenwald’s cattle are already taken by certain Kaffirs, and will ever be given up without bloodshed to the Boers; but if the English Government were to order their restoration they will obey. The above information, by messages and otherwise, has been forwarded to me personally by the respective chiefs above mentioned. They all agree that if the line is made so as to include all the native tribes under British rule the greatest satisfaction will be given; if not, they throw down the gauntlet, and will wage eternal war with the Dutch.”

This declaration I consider important, and have therefore forwarded you a copy of it. It is a true expression of public opinion amongst the

Kaffirs and native chiefs in and around the Transvaal. Never were people so fixedly determined that the Boers shall have nothing to do with them of any kind or sort, and the declaration they made is no child's play, but a determined expression of universal opinion amongst them. Yesterday I had a conversation with a chief of some importance who has come to Newcastle to learn the true state of things. He declared that nothing short of British rule would satisfy them, and that if forsaken by the English they would be compelled to take up arms to defend themselves: "The great Queen's people have been kind to us, and we will not harm them; to them we will submit and live as brothers, but to the Boers – never. What are they but dogs, who trample us under foot as they would a worm? We will kill them by fair means or foul. The country in which they live and which they claim is ours. The great Queen's people may have it, for they let us live and be happy; but the Boers try to take what is ours, and then ill treat and make us slaves. The dogs shall never reign over us."

This little speech was delivered with the greatest animation, and I replied that it was my hope, as well as that of the British nation, that the loyal chiefs and natives should ever live together in harmony and peace with their neighbours. "With our English neighbours, yes," he replied, "but not with the Boers, unless they be ruled by the great Queen. For her we will fight and die, for she has been kind to us, and we are grateful." Who will say that the black man, uncultured and ignorant though he may be, is not full of a nobility of nature which is not so often found amongst the white races? This little speech from the mouth of one of the chosen representatives of his people breathes a greatness of soul which should not be despised. We have treated them with kindness, and they are grateful; the Boers have treated them like slaves, and they will not forgive. One point in this man's speech struck me forcibly. He said, "The country in which they live and which they claim is ours. The great Queen's people may have it, for they let us live and be happy; but the Boers try to take what is ours, and then ill treat and make us slaves." He is right; we have taken this country from a people to whom it really belongs, and now we are about to hand it over to men to whom it does not belong. Surely the former have a right to raise their voice in this matter and say under whom they will live and serve. Are we to consider the rebel Boers before the loyal natives? The former would not lend a finger to help us, the latter are willing, eager, and ready to fight for us. England, who loves justice, should consider the claims of these people; should remember that if we lower ourselves in the eyes of the native population we do our power and might a grievous harm. Hitherto they have looked upon us as superior beings, but let them lose that respect

and admiration and our progress amongst them will be slow and of little avail.

Newcastle was unusually full yesterday. This is owing to the numerous deputations from native chiefs, as also from a great influx of refugee from the Transvaal. The members of the commission began to assemble in the court-house about three o'clock yesterday. The first signs of anything taking place was heralded in the approach of Messrs. Kruger, Pretorius, and Jorissen, whom I caught sight of sauntering leisurely down one of Newcastle's sandy streets. I rode up and shook hands with them, and after a few minutes conversation they proceeded on their way. The next personages of importance to arrive were Sir Hercules Robinson, Sir Evelyn Wood, and Sir Henry de Villiers, who drove up in an uncomfortable-looking equipage drawn by six mules, and attended by Major Fraser, Captain St. John, and several other gentlemen. Sir Evelyn has quite recovered from the effects of his carriage accident and appeared in excellent spirits. Sir Hercules Robinson did not look as well as when I last had the pleasure of seeing his Excellency in Capetown. However for this he made up by the neatness and completeness of his attire. Altogether the stately figure of the Governor of the Cape Colony had a very imposing effect. I hear the sitting of yesterday and to-day was of a somewhat stormy character, there is some difficulty anent the restoration of the guns at Potchefstroom. The *masse entière* amongst the younger Boers is for complete concession on our part of the whole of the Transvaal, or renewed fighting in the event of our refusal. Even Joubert is by now beginning to feel that a defeat on their side is necessary to bring them to their senses, and I expect it will sooner or later end in this. As I write, the news has come in of Kaffirs having risen in the Potchefstroom direction and a fight ensued amongst themselves. No accurate information has yet been received as to whether the English or Dutch factions have been successful, but Sir Evelyn Wood has taken steps for the immediate departure of an officer in that direction to inquire into the matter. Thirty or 40 natives are reported killed, and this action has every probability of assuming a more serious aspect. The telegraph troop having arrived from Ladysmith, preparations are to be actively carried forward to carry on the line of wire up to Pretoria, and as soon as this is completed the commission will move forward to that place. It is almost settled that troops will be sent forward to garrison Potchefstroom under an escort of two squadrons of cavalry. It is not known yet whether the 15th Hussars or Inniskillings will be selected for this duty, but I am inclined to think that the former will be eventually chosen. In any case disturbances are anticipated, and as I expect there will be more food for detail in that direction than in this part of the world I propose to proceed up country with them. If the 15th Hussars are to be sent as escort it

will be a pity if the whole regiment is not despatched instead of only a portion. The men are a magnificent body, but I fear inefficiently mounted, and it seems unfair that such a fine regiment should not have English horses. It is hardly to be expected that any soldier can properly execute his duty unless fairly treated, and though I may not be mistaken I do not think the animals on which they are mounted do justice to the splendid body of men of whom the 15th Hussars are composed. At present the regiment is employed on the Drakenberg cutting wood, and have little or no time for parade or conditioning horses. I should have thought that the occupation of wood-cutting is more adapted to foot regiments than cavalry, the latter having work enough on hand in the aforementioned duty. To-morrow Sir Evelyn Wood rides out to Ingagane, I presume for the purpose of examining the position. It is distant from Newcastle some 17 or 18 miles, and is the bill commanding the river and flat below, and close to the place where the Boers assembled in force and during the war looted several waggons. In the meantime affairs to begin to look once again more threatening, but possibly ere long the cloud will pass over.

‘The Boers as Riflemen’, Buffalo River, 24 May 1881

(published in *The Morning Post* on 4 July 1881, p. 8)

This morning Sir Evelyn Wood held a review of troops in honour of her Majesty’s birthday. The inspection of the troops took place on a large plateau immediately overlooking Bennet’s Drift, and on which are encamped the regiments of the 15th Hussars, Inniskilling Dragoons, and Artillery. The march past of the 92d Highlanders and 60th Rifles was unique and brilliant, and they certainly carried away the palm from other regiments. Of the cavalry the 15th Hussars presented a very smart and soldierly appearance, as, indeed they are bound to do under the command of so keen and brilliant an officer as Colonel Luck. It is unfortunate that the regiment is only mounted on colonial horses, which would never do justice to the fine body of men they carry. The horses of the Inniskilling Dragoons have improved wonderfully, and the doubt may assuredly be set at rest as to the suitability of this climate for English-bred animals. It is to be regretted that the Hussars are not similarly mounted; if this were the case it would be hard to find a match for this splendid and brilliant regiment. A great concourse of spectators assembled on the platform to watch proceedings, and amongst them was a goodly sprinkling of the Boer element. In several quarters I overheard disparaging remarks passed upon the troops in the march past, and

sneering appellations awarded them from the lips of lookers on. I shall not repeat them, sufficient to say they were painful and humiliating, and filled me with shame and indignation. Present at the review were General Buller and General Drury-Lowe,⁵⁶ attended by the staff.

I had a long conversation to-day with a very intelligent specimen of a Boer, who forms in Newcastle one of the guard that accompanies the Boer leaders attending on the commission. He spent the afternoon in my camp, and gave me rehearsal of the different modes of fighting amongst the Boers. First of all he began by trying his hand at shooting at bottles, distant 100 yards, with a 15 Winchester repeater which I lent him for the purpose. With this weapon, however, he failed to accomplish any decided success, the bullets falling close all around, but the bottles remained untouched. He was somewhat surprised when a person standing hard by took the rifle from his hand and successively succeeded in knocking over the bottles in question. "I cannot shoot with your rifle," he observed, "but give me a Martini-Henry, and I will pick off the bottles at 200 yards." I sent up to the camp on the 15th Hussars for a Martini-Henry carbine, which the Boer laid hold of with a great deal more apparent confidence, and in the first two shots verified his boast, for the bottles were immediately shattered to atoms. He next proceeded to show me the Boer mode of shooting from behind rocks and stones. "The great mistake your soldiers make," he observed, "was to aim over the stone at the enemy, but we always fire round the corner." Throwing himself flat on the ground, he proceeded to put this remark into practice, and dragging himself lithely along, peered cautiously round the right-hand corner of a low stone that only just concealed his form from sight of the supposed enemy. Removing his hat, he raised it slowly aloft in the top of his ram-rod and manoeuvred it so as to cause it to have the appearance of a man's head cautiously taking note of the enemy. At this hat an English soldier is supposed to have taken a pot shot, when the Boer suddenly let it fall, and, bringing his body round the corner, took a steady aim and fired at a black bottle some 150 yards distant, which in another moment was smashed to atoms.

Another method of shooting on horseback he showed me in a brilliant and effective manner. Mounting his horse and uttering a loud cry he sent it galloping up a hill as hard as it could go. Suddenly, without a word of warning the left foot was pressed to the stirrup, the right leg thrown backwards over the saddle, the man was on his feet, and the horse stopped instantaneously and as if spell-bound. Standing erect, the Boer aimed coolly at a distant bottle and knocked it over, then, springing into the saddle, he executed the same manoeuvre in two opposite directions with signal and unerring aim and effect. This man was one of 180 who first stormed and took the Majuba heights. He says that

Joubert's only words were, "Fellows, take that hill," and they hastened to obey. The reason why so few men advanced to the attack was because Joubert anticipated and made sure that the English would endeavour simultaneously to take the Nek, as well as surprise them on their left, and he retained men to defend the positions mentioned. Finding, however, his fears were groundless, he despatched fresh men to the assistance of their comrades, but by the time they arrived the Majuba Hill had been taken. The 92d, he informed me, were the first they encountered, and this regiment fought stoutly, but were driven back on the plateau towards the 58th. Both bravely defended the positions until Colley fell, when panic, he affirms, seized our men. The whole scene was, however, so enveloped in smoke that he could make no accurate note of anything, and confusion prevailed everywhere. Sir George Colley he declares to have been shot while in the act of tying a white handkerchief to a ramrod. The Boers did not know at the time that this personage was Sir George. This is one of the few Boer versions of the Majuba fight that I have heard from men who actually took part in the first advance to storm the plateau. Each tale tallies similarly with the other, and I am inclined to think it is truthfully told. This man wound up his visit by shooting at bottles distant 200 yards. The person I have already alluded to challenged him to shoot six shots, the Boer with the Martini-Henry and the challenger with the Winchester repeater. I am glad to be able to say that, though the Boer shot well, the challenger, for the honour of Old England, was equally successful, the same number of bottles falling to each rifle.

The guns taken at Potchefstroom have at length been given up, and in a few days the regiment ordered to garrison that place will commence its march, accompanied and escorted by the three squadrons of cavalry mentioned by me in a former letter. It is not known exactly in how short a time the march will be accomplished, but with General Buller at their head we may be certain it will be a smart and expeditions affair, and well worthy of that hard-working and brilliant officer.

'The Transvaal', Head-Quarter Camp, Potchefstroom, 15 June 1881
(published in *The Morning Post* on 28 July 1881, p. 5)

In the arrival here yesterday of the column which left Newcastle on the 28th of May the farce enacted by the Home Government well nigh completes itself. How it is viewed by the English public I know not, though I trust it is with a sense of shame und humiliation; but out here the greatest contempt and disgust is exhibited, and the confidence and trust of

the English colonist and Kaffir population in the honour of integrity of England has completely vanished. The baseness of it all strikes one the more forcibly from being on the spot, and the cruel wrong done to these people stands out the more apparent. Potchefstroom of all others held out most gallantly, and under circumstances of privation and hardship, which, while the annals of glorious deed and heroic action last, must ever be remembered. The brave defenders of the fort maintained a long and determined resistance against overwhelming odds. Not until famine at its last stage compelled them to surrender did they evince the slightest desire to capitulate, and even then this capitulation was the result of Boer treachery and dissimulation. For what good has all this been done? What is the reward for their loyalty and heroism but to see their freedom taken from them, and the land they defended with the pluck and courage of the old English style handed over to the rule of a hated and incompetent enemy. Bitter must have been the pill which General Buller found himself compelled to swallow yesterday as he rode into Potchefstroom at the head of his column and marched through the town with all the paraphernalia of a conqueror. It was truly laughable to watch the Inniskillings advancing slowly in half sections, their swords drawn, their whole carriage betokening the glorious entry they were making in the little town which in a few days they were again to evacuate. In silence the column wended its way along the principal street in Potchefstroom. Silently it was greeted by that portion of the English population who turned out to watch the parade past, while with sneering looks and sarcastic remarks the Boers clustered together to gaze on men whom they despise and underrate. The impressive pageant passed along under the weeping willows which line the Potchefstroom street, no sign of joy or welcome greeted it with the exception of some frantic tokens of delight exhibited by an old negress who danced about in the middle of the road laughing and clapping her hands; and as the way was cleared for the triumphant troops of her Majesty to pass along the old crone retired to a secluded spot and there continued her ebullitions of delight. Warily in the wake of the Dragoons marched 94th Regiment, dusty, footsore, and weary; truly their appearance could not be classed as smart. Most of the men's helmets were battered in, their clothes hung about them loose and ill-fitting, many of the helmets had been replaced by black or grey wide-awakes, and the *tout ensemble* was not calculated to inspire attention or admiration. I fear the men would not have been flattered had they comprehended the various remarks passed upon them; perhaps it was just as well they did not understand; the unwelcome job set them has been as it is bad enough without adding insult to injury. Last in the procession came a troop of the 15th Hussars, whose smart and soldierly appearance elicited words of approval and admiration from on-looking Boers; and

with the Hussars came to an end the column of advancing troops, who, passing on their way, turned off the main street and proceeded to their camping ground on the right of the fort which was so long and gallantly defended. With their disappearance, as I have said, the procession ended, and the farce which has been enacted to please the English public and uphold the honour and integrity of England has well nigh closed; but to all who took part in that march and entry into Potchefstroom, to all who that day witnessed the painful scene and who have the honour, prestige, and glory of Old England at heart, that day will ever be remembered as one of disgrace and shame, a black stain on the page of English honour which has never before known disgrace.

The feeling in Potchefstroom is one of bitter and undisguised hatred of Mr. Gladstone and the members of the Majesty's home Government. Forsaken stores and empty houses tell their own sad tale of ruin and desolation. During the war property was unspared, large stores were looted and pillaged, and the loyal owners suffered grievously. Will the Royal Commission entertain these claims and grant redress? It is to be hoped it will, for truly the loss has been very great. Along the main street, but more especially in those running at right angles, the houses show unmistakable signs of the late war. Many are riddled with the bullets, and some remain only in the shell. One of the churches is deeply indented with these marks, while in the street in which it stands not a single house has remained untouched. The fort itself stands in the centre of a dreary plain not far removed from the town, and is constructed of bags filled with stones and sand and covered over with earth. It measures between 100 and 150 feet in circumference, and is divided inside into several partitions, enclosed all round by deeply dug trenches. In this diminutive fort the heroic band of besieged men, women, and children held out for months; but history will do its work and recount their deeds. A better pen than mine, I hope, will tell the story of the gallant defence of the fort at Potchefstroom. The powder magazine adjoining this fort is built of stone and stands removed from the place some hundred yards distant. A deeply dug trench connects it with the fort, while the English trench is carried still further on to within a few yards of the Boers laager and trenches. The magazine is almost entirely in ruins and riddled through and through with bullets; most of the fort is likewise demolished, and as I write this a party of men of the 94th are engaged in removing the heaps of rubbish which lie around and inside its precincts. The cemetery walls, which adjoin the Boer trenches, are in many parts all ruins, and a general air of disorder prevails. The very sight of the place fills one with regret and sadness as one recalls the past with its loyal and heroic actions and faces the present so full of humiliation and infidelity. The prestige and honour of England is now but a byword amongst our

brother colonists; scorn and contempt of Mr. Gladstone and his government are hardly terms sufficiently strong to express the feeling exhibited, while the respect of the native populations, its trust and belief in the power of England, has vanished. Headed by the English colonist a great native war will ere long prevail; the massacre will be terrible, for it will be a war of extermination of a hated and persecuting race. With the Bible in one hand the Boer breathes prayer and cant, while with the other he oppresses the black man and tries to behave likewise to the English colonist. Let him beware that he does not try their patience too far. Mr. Gladstone and his Government have given in to the Boers on all points, but this example will not be followed out here, and resistance will be the sole reply to persecution. What England could not or would not do the English colonist and native population will accomplish; much blood will be spilt, and the whole tragedy that must come sooner or later will be the result of the cowardly bungling of the present Government.

On Friday General Buller and the column, after making a two day's stay, will evacuate Potchefstroom and commence their march down country. We have marched up to uphold the honour and prestige of England, and we leave the country every man believing that her honour and prestige are gone. These may be strong words, but I state the case as it stands, and represent the public feeling as it is. England and the home Government should do something to make amends to General Buller for the unwelcome task they have imposed upon him. We are scarce of generals and capable men. A more gratifying and honourable occupation might have been given the gallant general than to send him on such a mission; the very act is but a continuation of the series of bungles and mistakes executed by the present Government. The march from Newcastle to Potchefstroom was executed with a speed and precision worthy of the general in command of the column; it deserved a fitter reward than to find on opening the sealed orders on arrival that the aim attained by marching into Potchefstroom had accomplished the intentions of the home Government, and that the troops were to commence their march back again with as much speed as possible. Never in the annals of England or other nations has so undignified a farce been executed before, or a nation so tamely to disgrace at the hands of its Government. To-morrow I leave for Pretoria, distant 108 miles, which I hope to reach in two days and catch this column again at Heidelberg or Standerton on its returning march. There is very little left now to tell of the English doings out here; England has forsaken her countrymen in their time of need, and many will try to forget that they are Englishmen – most are ashamed of the very name.

‘The Transvaal’, Pretoria, 22 June 1881

(published in *The Morning Post* on 8 August 1881, p. 6)

On Friday, June 17, the troops, which a few days previously had entered Potchefstroom amidst so much pomp, prepared to take their departure. The honour of England had been upheld and asserted and her name was vindicated. What matter the trouble she left behind her, the loyal she abandoned, the injustice she perpetrated by this act? Had not England (preceded and protected by a Boer peace-maker), in the person of her troops, marched through the Transvaal and entered Potchefstroom without the slightest opposition? Surely this act is sufficient to satisfy the British nation that the prestige of their country has been upheld and vindicated beyond the shadow of doubt. But in spite of this magnificent demonstration of power, is England satisfied that her honour is upheld? Time will ere long, I doubt not, answer in the word no. I did not myself wait to witness the departure of the troops as I had a long journey before me that day in my ride to Pretoria. Colonial horses appear to have great powers of endurance, and if you are careful not to press them too hard or too fast at the outset of the journey it is astonishing the amount of work and the great distance they can accomplish a day. During a distance of 30 miles I off-saddled twice, the last time being at Oberholzen’s Farm, where dwells a loyal Boer. This fine old man has suffered much by his fidelity to the English cause. Two of his sons who fought against us in the late war he has disowned, while his younger children are brought up in profound respect of the English. His farm is close to Wonder Fontein, and forms a very welcome place of rest to the weary traveller in these parts. As soon as the horses were sufficiently rested I saddled up once more, and with an off-saddle at Sterk Fontein (Jacoby’s) reached Grobler’s Farm that night, the gallant little horses having accomplished a distance of 65 miles. During the off-saddle at Jacoby’s I had hard work to convince the owner of the farm that the English troops had indeed left Potchefstroom that morning. The news, which I was the first to bring him, he would not credit. “Surely England has not so fearfully disgraced herself?” he kept on repeating, and I had hard work to make him understand that what I had told him was the truth. All along the road I found it the same. No one would credit me. No one could believe that England was capable of such an action. That such a farce had never been acted before was in the mouth of every one, and many could not, or would not, grasp the fact that the troops which had marched so far would not remain at Potchefstroom. At the Grobler’s farm I came across a fellow-traveller in the person of a prisoner, one of the murderers of the man Malcolm, who was kicked to death at Edgson’s store, on the Crocodile River, during the late war. This prisoner took his captivity quietly and comfortably enough, averring that he

knew he should escape scot-free, the whole trial being a mere sham and farce. I think he spoke the truth; the entire proceedings on the part of England out here can receive no better name. The following morning, continuing my journey, I passed Edgson's store. It is a lonely little house by the wayside, and one passes it soon after crossing the Crocodile River. It is now little more than a ruin, and completely deserted. The windows are boarded up, but beyond this slight attempt at repair the house remains exactly in the same state in which the Boers left it. Not far off lies a lonely grave. It is that of the unfortunate man whom the Boers so brutally murdered. There he will lie lonely and unavenged, for doubtless the trial instituted to bring the murderous to justice is only what one of murderers himself jocosely styled – "a mere farce."

I reached Pretoria that day about three o'clock, the horses somewhat tired after their double day's journey of 104 miles. Of all the towns of the Transvaal which I have seen, Pretoria strikes me as being the most pleasing, both to live in as well as to look at. It is a scattered town, many cosy little houses budding out from amidst foliage, which, pretty at any time, appear doubly so after the monotony of the dreary and barren outside *veld*. The whole place is well watered, and the entire town bright and cheerful to the eye; this remark being hardly applicable to many of the Transvaal towns which I have seen before, with the exception of Potchefstroom. Surrounded by hills, Pretoria nestles in a basin, and occupies a position of great strength.

At Government House I found on my arrival the members of the Royal Commission hard at work. A busy scene presented itself in the coming and going of orderlies, the arrival and departure of telegrams, and the general air of occupation which seemed to pervade the atmosphere. Anon, Major Fraser might be seen to issue from the office-room, and, with a bundle of papers in his hand, shout loudly for an orderly. Then along the garden walk appears Mr. Hamilton or Mr. St. Leger Herbert, each or both generally loaded with documents of some sort, while from the drawing-room in which the commission is sitting issues out into the verandah a subdued hum as of many voices mingling together. People come and go, some inquire anxiously for Sir Evelyn, others for Sir Hercules, while some content themselves with an interview with Mr. Slade, aide-de-camp to Sir Evelyn Wood. The whole morning is thus occupied until relief comes to the unfortunate commissioners in the sound of the luncheon bell. Out from the drawing-room pour the peacemakers, and the day's sitting of the commission is over; Government House becomes cheery and pleasant, President Brand has gone home to lunch, Sir Henry de Villiers has followed his example, and duty is for a short time set aside to indulge in the serious occupation of refreshment.

On Sunday last I rode out with Sir Evelyn Wood and a large party, amongst them was Colonel Gildea, of the 21st Fusiliers, to visit the Zwart Koppie, where was achieved our only English victory during the Boer campaign. Colonel Gildea was good enough to give us many interesting accounts of the various incidents of the fight, and conducted us over the Zwart Koppie rocks, which rise to a height of a hundred feet or so, and consist of sharp-pointed crags tumbled together in a shapeless, disjointed mass. The position is a strong one, and, had it not been for the smart and determined attack of Colonel Gildea, the repulse which took place of the Boers might have been counted to our side. The wood in which he posted some of his men, and the farm-house close by which he took, and from which he opened his principal attack on the hill, were admirably chosen positions. Heavy must have been the fire on both sides until the Boer treacherously hung out the white flag when Colonel Gildea ordered his men to cease firing and sent forward his orderly, posting himself not far distant from the Boer position. It was at this juncture that the Boers recommenced firing and took long shots at both his orderly and himself. Their punishment came sooner than they expected, for, renewing the fight, Colonel Gildea forced them to fly and took the position. The kraals of the Bapedo tribes,⁵⁷ strongly fortified, cluster together in large villages all over this portion of the country. Differently shaped are the dwellings of these people to those of their southern neighbours the Natal Kaffir and the Zulu. They are in many instances beautifully situated amidst trees or in the vicinity of a pretty winding stream. These natives are warlike, and I pity the Boer when he is, later on, left to their tender mercies. Nothing but English rule will content them; when that is withdrawn they do not intend to submit to that of the Boer. Many of these latter people with whom I have lately conversed are already beginning to repent the withdrawal of British authority. They are beginning to discover that things will not go as well with them as they expected. Speaking to one of the Boer leaders the other day I asked him whence he intended to raise a loan to pay the expenses of the nation. "From England," he replied; "it is the only place from where we shall be able to raise it; other nations would not do it." No, I do not suppose there is any nation that would care to run the risk, unless it be that one to which the speculative Britisher belongs.

On another occasion I rode with Sir Evelyn Wood and a party of officers to visit the Wonderboom Pass, a position in possession of the Boers during the late war. It is a defile of impregnable strength, and no attempt was ever made to take it. It is the resort, or rather was formerly the resort, of a great quantity of baboons, who on one occasion, assembling in such numbers, gave rise to the report that the Boers were massing together for the purpose of attack. These Boers proved eventu-

ally to consist of baboons who were assembling together for the purpose of evacuating their stronghold, finding it had become too hot to be pleasant during the occupation of the Boers. Scares of this sort are not unfrequent amongst our young soldiers. During the march up country to Potchefstroom one of the scouts belonging to the advanced guard of Inniskillings came galloping down from a high hill with the startling announcement that a large number of Boers were advancing towards us. On further inspection being made, however, this advancing army of Boers turned out to be nothing but 200 head of cattle driven along by a few harmless Kaffirs.

England ought to be very grateful to Sir Hercules Robinson and Sir Evelyn Wood for the trouble and worry they are undergoing consequent upon settling the affairs of the Royal Commission. Praise is all the more due to these gentlemen, inasmuch as the task set them must be anything but a pleasant one. It would be an injustice to Sir Evelyn Wood to ascribe these proceedings to him, as I hear it is done in England, as a bed of his own making. Sir Evelyn Wood is doubtless skilled in diplomacy, but he is also a gallant and experienced soldier; the sword he loves better than the pen, and were the whole truth laid bare we should doubtless find that to lay the blame of the sudden peace upon his shoulders is an injustice which he does not deserve. During my stay at Government House I have noted with pain the tired and careworn expression of the general. Continual work and anxiety is bound to tell its tale ere long, and it would be but scant courtesy on the part of Englishmen to blame him for the turn affairs have taken. None who knew Sir Evelyn Wood could do so, while all who have served under him become attached to their brilliant, kindly, and courteous chief.⁵⁸

Yesterday morning a large deputation of native chiefs and Kaffirs solicited and obtained an interview with the general. Between two and three hundred of these swarthy personages presented themselves in front of Government House and squatted down on the ground in long rows under the shady trees of the carriage drive. Chairs were placed for Sir Evelyn Wood and the interpreter, who, through a third person in the shape of a native, communicated to the general the purport of their mission. It was to the effect that they had come to protest against the Transvaal being ceded to the Boers, and to declare that, rather than submit to this, they would take up arms. They intimated that they could bring many men under arms, several hundred thousand if need be. Sir Evelyn addressed them in a few soothing words, and promised to interview them again as soon as affairs were definitely settled. With this reply the chiefs were forced to content themselves; with the respectful salutation *incose*⁵⁹ [= inkosi] they departed, but these men, though they are quiet now, will not remain so long, and if England hands this country

over to a hated race they will take the law of self-defence into their own hands. No one in the future can blame them for treachery, for they have given full and fair warning.

To-morrow I leave Pretoria, and shall ride to Heidelberg, thence the following day to Standerton, there to join the troops on their march down country. General Butler [= Buller] is expected to reach Standerton on Saturday or Sunday. The 94th Regiment will remain for the present to garrison the place and look after the guns, the 58th accompanying the column to Newcastle. The distance from Pretoria to Standerton is only 116 miles, and I should easily be able to reach the latter place by Saturday, if not before, for, as I have already said, there is no faster or better conveyance than the colonial horse, if you only treat him well. From this date there will be very little further news to send home, the Transvaal farce of 1881 being now nearly drawing to a close. What interest remains centres in the Royal Commission which is sitting here; but of the commission the same tale once told is told for aye – history repeats itself, and so does the commission. Its doings will be made known quite soon enough; perhaps it would be as well could this page of England's handiwork be blotted out and forgotten; it is a tale that men, having once perused, would fain never read again.

'Travelling in the Orange Free State and Griqualand', Kimberley, 22 July 1881 (published in *The Morning Post* on 16 August 1881, p. 5)

In the uncertain, unsettled, and somewhat vague state into which affairs had fallen I determined on a visit to Zululand. But no sooner was I on the point of departure than a telegram arrived at headquarters from John Dunn⁶⁰ conveying news of the deposition of the Chief of the Umlandelas by his people, of his flight to John Dunn for protection, and the expressed opinion of this latter personage that the revolt would spread.⁶¹ For this reason I was advised to forego my journey until some more light could be thrown on the subject, and, not exactly knowing in the interim of "light being thrown the subject" what to do with my time, I decided on riding down from Newcastle to Ladysmith, thence to a small wayside inn on the road to Maritzburg called the Rising Sun, and distant from Ladysmith twelve miles, there to join on the 15th of July the post cart which was to leave at an early hour for Harrismith. To leave on a visit to the Diamond Fields⁶² has doubtless pleasant enough sounding, but since testing the reality I cannot speak of the result with as much satisfaction. To enter a rough springless cart, and varied only by successive changes into various others, each one as the journey

progresses proving more rough and springless than the last, and to continue for over four days and four nights without sleep, and decidedly without rest, is doubtless the reverse of pleasant. Smooth roads are a thing unknown; the stony, holey, rocky highway made along the veldt is the only path which leads from one place to another; and along these the post-cart bumps and jolts, bangs, and occasionally capsizes, with as much *sang froid* as though the whole business were quite the reverse of disagreeable or dangerous.

The road between the Rising Sun and Harrismith enjoys the privilege of being run over by the best-appointed post cart and post horses that can be found between Maritzburg and the Diamond Fields. The relays are good, and the horses in well-fed condition. The driver, Mr. Welch, is evidently an old hand at his work, and managed his horses with ease and dexterity, which in a measure atones for the terrible bumping that for twelve hours or more has to be endured before in the twilight of the evening one reaches Harrismith. The most tedious part of this portion of the journey is the ascent of the Drakensberg, a climb proving too steep for horses, and consequently undertaken by oxen. I myself preferred to do the passage of the berg on foot, and awaited on the summit, the slow, snail-like approach of the eight panting, struggling oxen, who drew the cart. From the Drakensberg one of the most extensive views I have ever yet beheld can be witnessed. Upon reaching the summit of the pass I climbed to the top of a high toppling crag that stands out conspicuously visible on the right hand range coming from Natal. Far away below along the plains I had but lately traversed stretched "Fair Natal," while to the west Basutoland, with its grand, gaunt, and rocky heights, flashed stern and defiantly in the distance, the trembling mirage lending its aid to transform and distort into many shapes the curiously-formed crags of that wild, uncivilised land.⁶³ Ahead of me stretched the hideous barren plains of the Orange Free State, and away on the east glimpses of the Tansvaal could be distinguished and a range of curiously-shaped mountains belonging, if not to the Drakenberg itself, at least to a spur of that far-stretching and mighty belt of hills. The scene which I here attempt, but find myself quite inadequate, to describe could not be classed as lovely. Rather the expressions of grand, majestic, awe-inspiring, should be devoted to the panorama in question, as, bathed in all the wealth and warmth of South African sun, it lay mighty and glorious beneath my gaze, until, trembling silver mirage, it faded gradually in the far distance beyond the sight of human eye. The entrance to Harrismith is neither interesting nor striking, with the exception of a few massive flat-topped crags, which rise up on the right of the town as one enters it. They are remarkable from their sudden uprising in the midst of an otherwise exceedingly flat plain and present the appearance of gigantic

fortifications. The town of Harrismith much resembles in its iron houses and dreary-looking sandy streets any other South African town – treeless and barren in its aspect, truly by no means a spot favoured by nature. Here, as the sun began to decline, the post cart reached its journey's end, a distance of sixty-three miles, and from it we were transferred into a nondescript sort of vehicle drawn by six horses, on which, after taking our seats, we found the greatest difficulty in retaining them, inasmuch that the driver paid no attention whatever to the enormous stones, cavities in the road, and other obstacles which lined our path, and, regardless of every obstruction, dashed wildly over them, the two-wheeled cart in which we were clinging rather than seated springing frantically in the air with every movement of its wheels, and threatening on many occasion to completely capsize. I was not sorry when daylight dawned upon the world and we drew up at a wayside inn for breakfast.

With the disbanding of volunteers connected with the late wars in the Transvaal and Basutoland, and in consequence of the many desertions from the British ranks, the roads of the Orange Free State are infested by a class of men which in a lonely road and dark night are by no means "Hail fellow well met!" At Harrismith a gentleman has been robbed of £5,000 but a few days before we arrived, and as we entered Bethlehem we came across a riderless horse, who, with one girth missing, the saddle slack on his back, and that back sore and tender, was trotting into the town, or village, as it should rather be termed. The horse proved to be one belonging to a young man who a few hours before had left Bethlehem with £200 in his pocket for the purpose of rejoining his waggons, outspanned not far from the place. Inquiry served to show that he had bragged in a public-house about the money he held in possession, and small doubt was entertained of his subsequent fate. A blanket which he carried rolled on his saddle, and one of the girths being missing, it was evident that they had been removed for a purpose, and the conjecture that he had been made away with and deposited out of sight, where all search would prove fruitless. The affair was, however, treated with apathy and inattention, and the unfortunate man will doubtless lie where his murderers have hidden him, until chance some day may perhaps throw a light on his mysterious disappearance. At Bethlehem we were given a couple of hours to rest and refresh our weary frames! – but this was hardly possible, and we contented ourselves with a slight wash and limited repast, then mounting a post cart even more rickety, more fearfully constructed and more hopelessly uncomfortable than the one we had but lately quitted, we settled ourselves for another long dreary night's drive to Winburg, distant from Bethlehem ninety miles. Our driver, Dirk by name, was a villainous-looking personage of the Hottentot race,⁶⁴ and I was informed that, though the nights were dark, he was

well acquainted with the road, and a splendid driver withal. I must confess I was nevertheless already prejudiced against him from the first moment I set eyes on him, and the assurances which I had received as to his good driving became quickly dispelled with the very first movements of the cart. Starting at full gallop he whirled round a sharp corner, made for a deep ditch, over which horses and cart flung themselves, and dashed down a hill at the rate of forty miles an hour. To our remonstrances he replied only by a drunken leer and a few inarticulate words, and continued on his mad career. Ere daylight faded and the dust of evening set in we had gone through several hair-breadth escapes. Suddenly he drew rein, and mysteriously inquired if I or the master possessed a watch or money. I replied, "No!" and settled myself to watch the man, as not knowing the road, the night being dark, and the way lonely, I apprehended foul play. A few miles further on I suddenly became aware that he had turned off the road, and was driving rapidly over the bare Veldt. Twice over I spoke to him and inquired the reason of his divergence from the route we had been pursuing. To my inquiries he would not reply until he had got some distance, and he then informed me that he wished to outspan. To this remark I replied that he was at once to return to the road, upon which he whirled the cart once or twice round in a circle and then continued his veldt wanderings, imagining that I was probably deceived by the manoeuvre. Fortunately, I was too much on the alert, and, hearing voices in the distance, by a quick movement I snatched the reins from his hands and before the man was aware of my design, had put the horses into a gallop and made for the road once more. By good luck my bump of locality served me in good stead and presently I came across it again. I must own that though not gifted with bad nerves, a sense of relief came over me upon regaining it, and the horses had put two or three miles between myself and the "voices on the veldt" ere I consented to restore Dirk the reins. So on we jolted and my eyes began to grow heavy, sleep very nearly fell upon me, and had such thing really taken place I do not think I should have been alive now to describe "Travelling in the Orange Free State." A sudden jolt made me spring to my feet and I was just in time to become aware that we were once more off the road, while a couple of yards ahead yawned a precipitous cleft in the Veldt quite twenty feet down. In another moment horses, cart, and occupants would have been a struggling, or rather I should imagine, an inanimate heap had I not sprung forward and seized the reins. With an immense effort I was able to pull the horses up in time, but it was only just in time, and a great shave. As you may imagine Dirk came in for a good deal abuse at our hands, and it took us some time to find our road once more. Even then danger was not over, and I began to discover the fact that Dirk, if not filled with

villainous intentions, was decidedly drunk. While trotting quickly down an unusually steep hill he suddenly let go all his reins and fell backwards into my lap, from which place he was quickly ejected, while I endeavoured to regain the reins. From this point, much to his indignation, I retained them, and through that dark, lonely night I acted Jehu while my husband watched Dirk, as we were both apprehensive of foul play. It is as well to be able to turn one's hands to most things, but I could not help laughing as I found myself driving along a strange road, with six hard-mouthed horses pulling at the reins, and her Majesty's mailcart under a my direction. Glad was I when the moon rose, and the matter of finding one's road became easier; nor did I draw rein, except on two occasions to change horses, and then continued on the way. In the early morning we reached Senegal, distant some forty odd miles from Winburg. Here I stopped the post cart, and, tying one of the leaders to a waggon, we employed Dirk to knock at the door of a wayside inn until the sleepy occupants awoke. Here coffee was served to us, and Dirk, who had been secretly indulging in potations, sank speechless on the ground, nor could any remedies bring him to his senses. After waiting for over an hour, and finding him still incapable, we were obliged to make the best of the matters, and, leaving Dirk to sleep out his drunken torpor, we started once more on our journey. It was four o'clock in the morning as we drove out of Senegal, and we reached Winburg after six hours' driving, bringing the post cart safely in to its proper destination. Several times we chuckled to ourselves over the dismay and consternation that would fill Dirk's manly breast when, awaking at Senegal from his drunken sleep, he discovered his post cart and horses gone and he 42 miles distant from Winburg!

This little town consists chiefly of one large square, and presents a cleanly, neat appearance, though the *tout ensemble* is *morne* and *triste*. Everything is ruinously expensive, and the post cart traveller is looked upon as a prey to be swindled and overcharged. Though only at the hotel a short time awaiting the post cart which was to take its departure for Bloomfontein our bill came to £2, though for what that £2 was charged I failed to perceive. The post cart shortly made its appearance. Into it we stowed our weary frames, already somewhat limp with the want of two nights' sleep and the prospect of yet two more to come, and travelling without intermission until eight o'clock on the following morning, Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, hove in sight. Here two hours was allowed for refreshment, and having partaken of a light breakfast we strolled out to look at the town, which, though still in its infancy, is superior by a great way to any South African town I have yet come across. We paid a visit to the Volksraad, where Mr. Blenau, the Deputy President,⁶⁵ was sitting in council with the members

of that august assembly, and then proceeded to call on Mrs. Brand at the President's house. The President himself is absent in Pretoria, but we were cordially received by his wife, who entertained us with her views on Boers and Englishmen and Kaffirs in a somewhat amusing fashion. Taking leave of the lady, we hastened to join the post cart, in which we found ourselves doomed to remain until the following morning. Another weary night was passed in the jolting, rickety conveyance, and with the exception of occasional stoppages to change horses nothing occurred to vary the monotony of our fourth night's drive. Boshof was reached on the morning of the 10th of July, and here we were met by a conveyance closely resembling a prison van, into which we were told to enter. This proved to be the passenger's cart for Kimberley, and on inquiry I learnt that we had only 30 miles more to undergo before reaching that long-looked for city. After jolting for four days and four nights in vehicles that can only be compared to our springless carts at home we reached our destination, and Kimberley dawned in sight. To that town and its attendant wonders, the diamond mines, I propose to devote a separate letter, and can only conclude this description of travelling in the Free State and Griqualand by remarking that, if all travelling in those countries is the same as that I experienced, I would strongly advise people undertaking the same journey to engage a private conveyance with four horses, and accomplish the journey in peace, safety, and more comfortable fashion, which advice I mean to adopt myself on my return to Natal, for "experience makes the mind wise," and I trust it will never be my lot travel by post cart again in any country, more especially in the Orange Free State and Griqualand.

'South Africa', Kimberley, 25 July 1881 (published in *The Morning Post* on 9 September 1881, p. 5)

Kimberley has been called the bloodstone of South Africa, and the name is befitting and appropriate. The Kaffir who in 1867 discovered the diamond that has led up to the vast discovery of hidden riches, smothered deep down in the earth far from the ken of human eye, might well have shuddered could he have foreseen the wars and bloodshed that have become the result of this chance find of this. Had the discovery of these diamonds never been made the call on black labour would not have been so enormous, nor would the coloured tribes have trekked from all parts of South Africa to obtain that labour which brought them the rich and high pay they coveted. Nor was this desire for high pay without its object; it was not for nothing that the immense stream of blacks found their way

from all parts of South Africa into that fast rising, fast-increasing town which had sprung almost instantaneously from amidst a vast, barren, and hitherto uncivilised desert. The money received for their labour became quickly converted into arms and ammunition, then, as quickly as they had come, they passed away into their own countries, adding one by one surely and effectively to their store, with which ere long they intended to wreak their vengeance on the white man for his usurpation of their country, while that white man, revelling in his diamond digging and oblivious of danger as he ever is until that danger overtakes him, superciliously underestimating the power and strength of his foe, worked on in happy ignorance of the wolf that he was allowing to steal upon him unawares. So the blacks worked on, received their pay, invested their money in arms and ammunition, then retreating to their homes found themselves in a position to oppose the encroachments and demands of the white man. War after war has followed in quick succession since that time in South Africa, the disasters of many a campaign is the result, and owes its origin, not entirely, of course, but in a great measure, to that shining stone which in 1867 the wandering Kaffir picked from the ground, that ground from which Kimberley, the bloodstone of South Africa, arose. Since that day years have come and gone, and changes followed each other in rapid succession. The many thousand claims where at one time each owner worked for himself independently have vanished, the wonderful scene that presented itself around the mouth of the pit, whose jaws seemed curtained by myriads of ropes that, entertwining like vast cobwebs amidst themselves, almost concealed from the view of those above the sight of that black, swarming multitude, who, in infinitesimal numbers, toiled at their work below. What it once was Kimberley is no longer.⁶⁶ Where, in olden days, thousands of tents formed the habitations of that thronging crowd, houses now occupy their sites, and have taken possession in the shape of innumerable streets of the wilderness that once reigned around. The town extends over a great space of ground, uniting with the outlying townships that appertain to the different mines. Of these mines there are four, consisting of the Kimberley one, itself the largest, richest, and most important of them all, the Bultfontein, the Dutoitspan, and the Old De Beers.⁶⁷ I visited them all in succession, each separate mine producing machinery for the washing of the diamonds more perfect and unique than the other until the visitor grows lost in wonder at the marvellous invention of man's brains. The process of washing the earth that is brought up from the bottom of those vast pits is the most interesting part of a visit to the mines. All lighter stuff floats away with the water and is carted off and cast aside, while the heavier stones and pebbles sink to the bottom of a place formed for the receptacle of such matter, and

amidst these the diamond also finds its level. Later on in the day the large amount of accumulation is removed from its hiding place, re-washed, and then strewn on tables for assortment. With thin wafer-like sorters men turn over the gravelly soil amidst which the diamonds are found nestling, the gem discovers itself, and is seized and placed amidst its fellows which have been previously found. In one small bucketful of gravel from the Kimberley mine I discovered seven large diamonds of goodly size and brilliancy, some so beautifully shaped as to present the appearance of having just quitted the cutter's hands. Some of the earth (the blue quality) which is brought up from the pit is so hard that it requires long exposure to the sun ere it becomes fit to break up for the purpose of washing. It is therefore carted away to ground laid aside for the purpose, strewed about, and left to pulverise. As soon as the hot sun has rendered it sufficiently brittle to be broken up gangs of niggers, closely watched by white overseers, are employed to effect this, and it is on these occasions that the largest diamonds are discovered. Many doubtless pass into the Kaffir's hands undiscovered, but the punishment which awaits them if the theft is detected is so severe that many would rather not run the risk. Illicit diamond stealing and buying is nevertheless carried on to an enormous extent in spite of the snares and vigilance of the detectives who are set to watch the interests of the companies working the pits. During my stay at Kimberley I visited the trunk or prison, and was surprised to find many of its inmates men and women who ranked high in the chief-class of people of the town. Their offence was all diamond stealing, or illicit buying, for which five years' penal servitude was a mild punishment. The arrangements of this gaol are a model of neatness, cleanliness, and perfect order. The only fault I could find with the place was that, to my mind, the whole arrangement appeared too comfortable to give on an idea of the gaol as a place of punishment. The prisoners all appeared as happy and contented, more especially the black portion of the community, who had never before, I should imagine, partaken of food in such plenty and quality, or slept on beds so warm and comfortable as those afforded to them within the walls of the prison. A sad contrast to this luxurious scene presented itself in the aspect of the Government hospital, over which I was conducted by Dr. Mathews, one of Kimberley's leading men. The ward in which the white sick are accommodated is cold, draughty, and uncomfortable. Into it in rainy weather the rain beats, and the cold blasts pierce the whole place. In the barn or darkened dungeon where the Kaffirs are kept, the visitor has first great difficulty in finding his way. Twenty-six miserable wretches were huddled together, seven of them unprovided with beds and forced to lie on the floor. Attendance they have none, the only persons attached to this dismal place being one man whose work

consists, with the aid of his wife, in attending to the entire wants of the whole hospital. Nurses there are none, and the place is a disgrace to the Government which supports it. In the native ward I was shown one poor Kaffir who was stoneblind. His one prayer was to be sent back to his parents at Maritzburg. The Government authorities on this being represented to them offered £5 towards the expense of conveying this poor fellow to his home. A passing wagon offered in the person of its owner to take him thence for £8. This sum was considered too great, and rather than give the extra £3 required the authorities preferred to keep the unfortunate man an inmate of their wretched abode which is termed a hospital. How is it that those who have done wrong should be so well treated in the gaol while the unfortunate hospital inmates, whose only offence is that they are sick, ill, and in want, should be so miserably treated? It was a sight that, once witnessed, will not easily be forgotten.

The feeling in Kimberley about the settlement of affairs in the Transvaal and its antagonism to all the acts of our present Government in South Africa show themselves as strongly and pointedly as everywhere else where I have been. Never was man so unpopular before as Mr. Gladstone is amongst the Afrianders. His deeds will never be forgotten out here. To-morrow I leave for Basutoland, thence to Zululand, though I fear the latter country is still a good deal disturbed.

'The Boers in the Transvaal', Port Amiel, 10 August 1881

(published in *The Morning Post* on 15 September 1881, p. 6)

General Wood has at last bidden farewell to Pretoria and the unwelcome and weary task on which he was engaged. Before leaving, however, he held a meeting, at which there assembled some 300 native chiefs and headmen. Nearly all the principal chiefs were present, as also Joubert, Pretorius, Brand, and Hudson. A telegram from Pretoria from one present says that after the address and the clauses of the draft Convention⁶⁸ referring to the natives had been read, the natives themselves were not allowed to speak, at which they were highly indignant. The same telegram remarks that they aver that they are treated like a piece of tobacco and handed over from one to another without being allowed a word in the matter. In talk among themselves they say – “England says she is a strong country and gives back the country to the Boers because it belongs to them. Natives contend that the country is not the Boers’, but theirs, their forefathers having owed the land before the Boers came.” They say also that they will not acknowledge the Boer gov-

ernment, and, if necessary, will fight; they are much disgusted with the meeting.

The natives' threat that they will not acknowledge the Boer Government is not unfounded. Time will ere long prove the wisdom of the present Government's tactics with regard to the settlement of the Transvaal affairs. Though many may not know it, it is still no less a fact that there exists a confederation of English colonists who have sworn to effect what England refused to do. With them will be banded the vast mass of natives, who are eager and ready to exterminate from the country a people they detest. But only patience will attain their desire, and in patience they will await the disappearance of the English troops. Ere long, if I mistake not, the Transvaal will once more be the scene of a fierce and bloody war. In what position of danger will Natal then find herself, in close proximity to a land in which law and order will probably prove a thing of the past, the future alone will solve, and what the end of all this turmoil and discontent shall bring forth is yet but vaguely foreshadowed in the gathering cloud that is arising and has yet to burst.

Commenting on Mr. Joubert's letter of May 13, which this gentleman addressed to the *Daily News*, the contents of which were directed against Sir Owen Lanyard⁶⁹ [= Lanyon], the *Natal Mercury* observes: "For a specimen of Boer simplicity again, read Mr. Joubert's letter to the *London News*. In Newcastle Mr. Joubert saw in the columns of the *Daily News* a statement that Sir Owen Lanyard had sent to London a despatch stating that the Boers had shot loyal natives during the war. That statement is literally and absolutely true, as witness the massacre of natives who left the fort at Potchefstroom during the siege; as witness the murder in cold blood of Kaffirs found *en route* to Potchefstroom from their own country. Joubert is so scandalised at Sir Owen Lanyon's audacity at telling the truth that he indulged in a dreadful tirade against the gallant colonel, and asks that he may be decorated for his service. After animadverting on the past service of Sir Owen Lanyon, which *Mynheer* Joubert cannot consider brilliant – an importation of prejudice into the dispute which does not touch the allegation of Sir Owen Lanyon in the remotest degree – Joubert, subtle man, demands with emphasis, 'Let Colonel Lanyon give the names of the farmers who killed the Kaffirs; and if the English Government cannot punish the guilty during the remainder of their term of office the Republic will when it gets its country back.' It is, it seems, impossible to get even the names of the Boers who committed murders of Englishmen, and this notwithstanding the hatred Joubert had of these malefactors, and his promise to bring them to justice while he was the governing spirit on the Transvaal during the war. Of course Joubert does not know Sir Owen Lanyon was shut up in Pretoria when these murders were committed 100 miles distant, in

the vicinity of Potchefstroom; equally is it unknown to Joubert that the Boer murderers, like other cowards, took care that no hostile eye should witness their brutality. It is not only Sir Owen Lanyon who has made the charge against some of the Dutch farmers.”

Enough has been said and oftentimes repeated regarding the manner in which the present Government has settled the affairs in the Transvaal. Far and wide this policy has been condemned, in some quarters approved. The vote of censure has been rejected by a majority of 109, but nevertheless there are assuredly more voices that curse this act of Mr. Gladstone than there can be found voices to approve. While history lasts, unless history tells a singularly false tale, the story of the Boer war and its final settlement will bring shame and remorse to many a mind. In the whole narrative only a few bright points can be scraped together to endeavour in their narration to brighten the entire aspect of what has come and gone. It would be better if this story could be forever be blotted out, but this cannot be. Only in point of fact will it for ever show how, under the growing influence of Radicalism, a great nation can err and fall. He who would have pressed the war until it had been crowned by success and honour, and brought to England glory and brilliancy, has passed away.⁷⁰ Can it be that with [the] great and patriotic spirit has vanished the prestige and renown of a country who, while he led her onward, was powerful and respected, but has since shown herself a laughing-stock of nations, the tool of weakness and incompetency. Truly the actions of England's Government during the years 1880 and 1881 will never form aught but a black-edged border to a story of fallen greatness and stifled prestige.

In the meanwhile affairs in Zululand are giving cause for grave anxiety. Though Chief Dunn,⁷¹ with a large impi,⁷² has fought and proved victorious on several occasions, Sitimela is not yet captured and dethroned, nor is Umlandela reinstated.⁷³ Believing no longer in the power and prestige of England, Umlandela's people have evinced their scorn by the dethronement of the chief placed over them by England and the substitution in his place of Sitimela, in whom they stand in great awe and dread. The trekking of a large body of Boers on the border of Zululand may have grievous effects should quarrel arise betwixt them and the boarder tribes. It is not yet definitely settled, but almost certain, that Sir Evelyn Wood and General Buller, with four squadrons of cavalry, will before long march into Zululand there to investigate the position of affairs. Until this is effected I can send little news home, but as it is my intention to accompany the column I shall be able at a later period to furnish you with a true account of all that takes place during the stay of the generals and the cavalry in Zululand. The early visit of Sir Evelyn depends on whether Sitimela is shortly captured or slain. Should

he continue, in spite of John Dunn's exertions, to remain at large, it is very probable that disturbances will spread and the presence of a large force be found necessary to effectually quell the insurrection. It is now only two years that Sir Garnet Wolseley interviewed and awarded to the defeated Zulus their various portions; so soon have difficulties arisen, and the many kinglets uniting together may, if not now, in the future, prove more terrible a foe than the great Cetewayo once proved himself to be.⁷⁴

'South Africa', Bennitt's Drift, 14 August 1881

(published in *The Morning Post* on 20 September 1881, p. 5)

The advance of the generals with their escort of three squadrons of cavalry into Zululand is again delayed, though it is now confidently expected that the cavalry will make a start at the end of this week at the latest. Now that John Dunn has succeeded in defeating and driving from Umlandela's country the usurper Sitimela there seems to be no anticipation or fear as to further outbreak, though it would appear that as long as Sitimela remains at large there ought to be every cause to anticipate disturbances. Umlandela's country is inhabited by a warlike tribe; it is the most eastern portion of Zululand, its shores being washed, by the Indian Ocean, and therefore the most difficult of access. The country is hilly and broken, and affords, as I am told, fair hiding ground for fugitives. That Sitimela is young, ambitious, and exercises great influence over the Umlandela tribe is no secret, while the reigning chief himself is an old and incompetent man and possessed of little authority. It is true that he has been replaced and Sitimela vanquished, but the latter is still at large, and able and willing to work further mischief. North of Umlandela lies the Somkeli district, bounded by the Lebombo Mountains, and away to the north-east are the chieftainships of Usibebo and Umkojana. Then, lower down, come the Oham and Tshingwago tribes, and off to the south-west the districts inhabited John Dunn, Faku, the Basuto chieftain Hlubi, and the kinglets of Gaozi, Umgitywa, and Seketwayo on the west. In the centre of all these tribes lies that of the Umfanawenhlela, names taken from that borne by the reigning chief. It is in Umfanawenhlela that are situated Inhlazatye and Ulundi, distant from each other about twelve or fourteen miles.⁷⁵ To the former place the generals with their squadrons of cavalry intend to proceed and interview the assembled chieftains.⁷⁶ If the natives have any wish to rise the present opportunity would be a rare one for them to seize, and if Sitimela has any enterprise or common sense he ought to profit by the prize that

would be worth securing. An ordinary impi of Zulu could soon destroy the tiny escort of 250 mounted men, and if managed aright not one should escape. It is now only two years ago since we gave this nation a lesson which it ought not forget, but our ill success with the Boers, our many defeats, and the humiliating settlement that crowned the entire business, has inculcated in their breasts a distrust and contempt of the Power from whose generosity they hold their separate kingdoms. The demoralising effect which our Transvaal disasters had on the natives of Zululand may be plainly seen in the audacious attempts of Sitimela to supplant the Chief Umlandela placed over the tribe by the English Government. It may be that the expedition to Inhlazatyé may prove a success and it may prove a failure; nevertheless it appears no less strange that so small a force should be sent into the heart of a country the inhabitants of which have watched impassively the insurrection of Sitimela, and are demoralised by our ill success in the Transvaal. It seems to be ever the case that sufficient precautions are never taken until disaster and death has proved the insufficiency of the organised plan.

Sir Evelyn Wood and General Buller left for Ladysmith this morning for the purpose of inspecting the 14th Hussars. They return to headquarters to-morrow. In a letter which I received from General Buller this morning of the chief of the staff informed me that he anticipated the departure for Zululand would take place about the end of this week. Ox waggon transport is to be used for the squadrons, whose march thereby I expect will prove tedious and slow. The extra transport that would be required for mules in order to carry their forage would bring the convoy to much greater proportions, and it is for this reason that oxen are preferred to their quicker and fleeter companions in trek duty. All troops from Pretoria are being quickly moved down to Standerton, where they will be concentrated until the Volksraad has sat and confirmed the Royal Commission settlement, after which the soldiers will evacuate the Transvaal and the different regiments be marched down country, with the exception of those selected to garrison Newcastle and different places in Natal. The following satirical article on the address of the Royal Commission to the chiefs and natives assembled in Pretoria appeared in the *Natal Mercury* of August 9. It runs as follows:

“It is not an uncommon cause of complaint of the white man against the Kaffir that he is an adept at lying, and that he continually is proving that he is an expert in the art of deceit and falsity, in season and out of season, with and without reason or necessity. After the recent public exhibition at Pretoria of the white man’s ability to torture the truth it will be becoming in Europeans to be merciful to the shortcomings of the natives in this matter. A more glaring instance of deliberate deceit, intermixed with cajolery, and what the Americans call ‘bunkum’ – a word

particularly applicable here – has never been recorded than in the words spoken to the chiefs and headmen at Pretoria. When will white men, who claim to be intelligent, discover that the fact of a man wearing a black skin does not make that man an irreclaimable idiot, who will believe any absurd and patent nonsense that it pleases the white man to utter? By this time one would imagine that it had dawned on ‘the Queen’s representatives’ that the age of manhood is as common to Kaffirs after the age of childhood as it is to white men, and that the mind and reasoning power of the Kaffir expands with the growth of his body just as much as does the white man’s mind. The Queen of England is truly unfortunate in her choice of representatives. We find them addressing Kaffir chiefs, and at the very outset of that address the representatives of her Majesty tell the Kaffirs what the Kaffirs as well know is untrue as do the royal representatives who utter the words. The Transvaal was not annexed to the Queen’s dominion little more than four years ago because it was believed that a majority of those of who had a voice in the government of the country preferred British rule to Dutch rule. Subsequent events have not proved that this belief was mistaken. It is positively and absolutely true that a large majority of the Dutch farmers and their representatives were anxious that the British rule should take the government of the country into their hands. That was at a time when the Zulus and Secocoeni’s tribe were menacing the Boers, who were at that time practically defenceless.⁷⁷ Her Majesty, even without that sense of justice which the representatives of that Government so plausibly claim for it, have not given back the country to the Boers because the Boers unwillingly allowed her Majesty to annex it and were averse to the annexation. The country has been given back simply and solely because in the first place her Majesty’s Government deluded the Boers with false pretences and hollow promises, because the same Government put as rulers over the Boers men who thought that the Boers were as stupid and imbecile as her Majesty’s present representatives apparently consider Kaffir chiefs to be; and, in the second place, because the Boers were successful in arms against us, and to put them down would cost more money than a Liberal Government bent on conciliating the taxpayer by financial retrenchment could conveniently spend on business. After starting well in the same old key, the falsetto note is dropped for the time, and the Queen’s representatives, as though their audience were composed of juveniles accustomed only to foreloop or herd cattle, talk to them in the ‘bless-you-my children’ strain. ‘Mr. Joubert, who is to be Secretary for Native Affairs; Mr. Kruger, who is away sick; and all the other nice gentlemen present, let us introduce you to.’ Little need was there for that part of the ceremony; however, it was in rigid harmony with the rest of the art. ‘You must be good children

and keep within bounds, because we are going to make everything very comfortable for you. We took the country from the Boers because we thought they wanted us to take it from them, not because you, dear children, were unruly, or to prevent you thrashing the Boers. We gave the country back to the Boers because they have changed their minds and want it back, and it belongs to them by right of conquest from you; but you understand clearly that it would be wrong of you to try and regain your own; and as we are afraid you might do that, we will, as becomes a great, magnanimous, and justice-loving nation, place ourselves between you and your old enemy. Although you are perfectly able to protect yourselves, we, out of our extreme love for our children, prefer to take you under our care.’ This was the substance of the speech made to our native chiefs. What will be its effect on their minds? No one can doubt the effect. Their reply is, and will be: ‘You may take us to be children; we do not think we are, and the best proof we can give of our mind on this subject is that we detect in your utterance a feeble and poor attempt to distort the truth and mislead us. We find you uttering promises which we are certain will never be fulfilled; but that is not of much moment to us now. We are as independent of the protection of the Queen of England, whom you call great and glorious and justice-loving, as we are of these Boers whom we have beaten. We propose to beat them again when a fitting opportunity occurs, because they have wronged us, and will, we believe, oppress us in time come.’ ‘We fear the Greeks when they bring gifts.’ Sir Evelyn Wood is a long-headed man, and recent military arrangements point to his belief that the natives have not been a consenting party to yesterday’s transaction.”

Such is the light in which the *Natal Mercury* regards the affair, and in such a light is it regarded by all English colonists and natives with whom I have conversed not only in Natal and the Transvaal, but in the Free State and many of the adjacent territories around through which I have recently travelled. Every separate opinion culminates towards the same end, and breathes more plainly than I can express the universal feeling, which includes that of many Boer representatives. Had the Government of England called a *plebiscite* or two distinct votive assemblages on the part of the white and black inhabitants of the Transvaal, the majority, I feel convinced, would have voted against the Republic. Never before have the acts of a Prime Minister so enshrouded as it were the man and held him up to universal detestation as the settlement of this Transvaal question, which has embittered the very name of Gladstone to the English colonists of Natal and the Transvaal. Many are the regrets expressed at the great loss of Lord Beaconsfield, though the colonists are hopeful and expectant in (as they hope) the future power of Lord Salisbury,⁷⁸ to whom the eye of all turns, especially since his interview with Mr. C. K

White and the powerful speech delivered by the noble lord on the occasion of the meeting of the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations at Willis's Rooms. Not long ago I visited for the last time the grave of Captain Maude, on the Majuba Mountain. I found both it and the larger one containing the bodies of the soldiers who fell in that disastrous attack in good order. I also visited the cemetery at Mount Prospect, wherein are interred in bodies of many gallant soldiers who fell in the same attack, as well as at Laing's Nek. I would here wish to pay a tribute of thanks on the part of the relations and friends of the fallen men, and call to their notice in England the fact that the graves of their far-away dead are neither neglected nor forgotten by many gentle, kindly, and noble hearts out here. For fear of omitting the names of many of the sympathising contributors towards this graceful act I forbear to give the list those I know, with the exception of that of the leading lady and originator of this sympathetic and kindly intention. In Miss Marie de Schmidt, a lady residing at Capetown, I would wish to intimate to those in England who may often longingly in thought revert to their cherished dead, was originated the kindly desire to place on the graves of the fallen floral tributes of exceeding beauty. In this act she was eagerly and promptly aided by many ladies in and around Capetown, to whose sympathetic exertion the thanks of many are due that each grave (not one forgotten from that lonely resting place on the Majuba heights, to those sleeping their last quiet sleep in the little cemetery at Mount Prospect) is graced by some lovely and appropriate tribute to the brave men whose lives have been sacrificed in vain. Mourned by their relatives and friends in England, the noble and beautiful sympathy of these floral offerings strike home powerfully to the heart; nor are the kindly hands that prepared them and the gentle hearts who deposited them there, likely to be forgotten by one who has witnessed the scene. To those mourning their loss at home these words may prove a comfort, and assure them that their far-away dead are not forgotten, nor will they deem it amiss if thus publicly, and in their name, I thank the kindly and gentle contributors for their act of touching and noble sympathy.

**'South Africa. In Zululand where the Prince Imperial Fell', by the
Insangeni River, 26 August 1881 (published in *The Morning Post*
on 15 October 1881, p. 5)**

It was on the 18th of this month that Sir Evelyn Wood's flying column left Newcastle for Zululand *en route* for the Inshlazaty, near Ulundi, and to-day's date finds it encamped some four or five miles distant from

the head-quarter camp of the general, from which place I write this letter. Heavy rains have for the moment stopped its progress and the Inshlazatye, though only distant some twenty miles, still looms ominously and tantalisingly far off. I left Newcastle on the 18th with the column and accompanied it in the first four days of its march. The troops that left Newcastle on this occasion consisted of a squadron of the 15th Hussars and another of the Inniskillings, the whole under the command of Colonel Luck, C. B., 15th Hussars. A long line of between ninety and hundred waggons, chiefly drawn by oxen, followed slowly in their wake, the poverty of the animals, and the snail-like pace at which they proceeded proving tedious and wearing to a degree. Two bad spruits had to be crossed that day, and the men came in for a good share of hard work in assisting the oxen to drag the waggons through the deep mud and treacherous holes into which the wheels stuck fast. Trekking with ox waggons is by no means the pleasantest of occupations, as the pace is extremely slow and uninteresting. That morning the reveille had sounded at five o'clock, at seven the troops and waggons started, and by two o'clock the column had reached its camping ground, covering a distance of only seven miles in seven hours, and it was not until darkness had completely set in that the last waggon of the convoy had crossed the Ingagane River and the wretched, weary oxen, half starved and famished, were let loose to obtain what subsistence they could find – their first meal that day! A few hours later they were collected together and tied to their waggons, into which at an early hour on the following morning they were again inspanned and kept to their work for over six hours before being released for the short space of two hours' outspan in the middle of the day. The second day's march to the Buffalo River proved very long, and it was found impossible to get the whole convoy across that night, many of the waggons being outspanned on the opposite side of the river. At this encampment the column was joined by a squadron of the 14th Hussars, as also by General Buller, who had preceded Sir Evelyn Wood by a couple of days.

On the 20th August the troops made a short march, and on the 21st, after passing Conference Hill, crossed the Blood River into Zululand, pitching their camp close to its bank and alongside of that of General Buller. That night Sir Evelyn Wood, accompanied by Captain Slide, aide-de-camp, Major Fraser, and Lieutenant Hamilton, overtook the column. The 22nd of August was given up as a day of rest to the oxen, and the camp was not struck in consequence. After breakfast I accompanied Sir Evelyn and his staff, together with a small party of officers, on a visit to the battlefield of Kambula,⁷⁹ distant from Bemba's Kop, near which the troops were encamped, some twenty miles. Kambula lies to the right of and not far away from the mountain called Irgaba Ka Hawane, which

means “the stronghold of Hawane,” and one is struck by the excellence of the position chosen on the occasion on which our present gallant general [Sir Evelyn Wood], then no less a gallant colonel, successfully repulsed the daring and magnificent onset of 26,000 Zulus, flushed with the triumph of their day before attack in the affair of the Inhlobane Mountain.⁸⁰ All around traces of the battle of two years are plentifully apparent, while the graves of Zulus show thickly in many places. Small heaps of empty cartridge cases, pieces of shell, and other missiles may be still seen, and traces of past occupation are by no means erased. The graveyard in which are interred the men and officers who fell that day is neatly kept. The flowers planted in seed the year before upon the graves by Captain Slade, on the occasion of the visit to the spot by the Empress Eugénie,⁸¹ have sprung up and flourished. One cannot help feeling proud of these soldiers who fought at the battle of Kambula when, standing on the spot, the eye wanders far away over the long distance their weary limbs must have traversed as they retreated from the Inhlobane the day before. Long and gallant had been the previous struggle, determined and enduring must have been that forced retreat, which was rewarded on the following day by a complete and decisive victory.⁸²

On our way to Kambula we passed through a small kraal, inhabited by the old chief, Tinta, who during the Zulu war had surrendered himself to General Wood. The officer in question had made over to him the kraal in which he now dwells, and, though no longer a chief the old man appeared happy and contented. Intense was his joy when Sir Evelyn rode up, and the recognition was instantaneous. He seemed to bear no malice for the loss of territory and power that had befallen him at Sir Evelyn’s hands – probably he entertained gratitude for the life which had been spared him, and which, when he surrendered, he no doubt considered forfeited. It had previously been Sir Evelyn’s intention to ride from Kambula to the place called Tinta’s Kraal, on the Umvolosi River, for the purpose of visiting the Inhlobane on the following day. The general, however, changed his plans, and we rode back and rejoined the troops that night on the Blood River. The following morning the column resumed its march, and pointed towards the Inyangeni Hill and Insangeni River, while Sir Evelyn Wood and staff made a start for Tinta’s Kraal, intending to pitch his camp on the banks of the White Umvolosi River that night, and proceed on the following day on a visit to the Inhlobane Mountain. I had the pleasure to accompany the general, and we encamped that night just beneath the remains of some forts overlooking a broad sandy drift in the Umvolosi near Tinta’s kraal. At an early hour the next morning we started to ride to the Inhlobane, distant from our camp some twenty or twenty-five miles. At a kraal we breakfasted, where some hospitable Zulus supplied us with fresh milk, and

appeared delighted to attend upon us. With them we left our first horses, and started off on fresh ones for the far end of the mountain, about five miles distant, and up which General Buller had led his small band of mounted men on the occasion and capture of the Inhlobane. Our first visit was to the grave of Ronald Campbell and Llewellyn Lloyd,⁸³ who fell that day while in attendance on Sir Evelyn, then Colonel, Wood. The spot where Captain Campbell fell should be seen for the daring and gallant self-sacrifice of his life to be fully appreciated. In order to reach the cave in which the Zulu had retreated who had already shot Mr. Lloyd and then Colonel Wood's horse, it is necessary to scramble for some fifty yards over huge jagged and disjointed rocks which ascend gradually upwards until the cave is reached. To charge that cave must have been, at least for the foremost men, almost certain death. The foremost man was Captain Campbell, and he fell, shot dead, as he strove to force an entrance. The cave in question is not what the term "cave" might lead the reader to suppose. Hole is a better term for the deep chasm into which you look downwards as though into a well, and while the memory of gallant actions last the heroic act of Captain Campbell should remain for ever remembered and unforgotten by his countrymen, and the grave in which he sleeps not far from the spot where he was killed be not allowed to grow rank and waste under the influence of forgetfulness and neglect. It was pleasing to find the grave in good order, and the plants flourishing around that lonely resting place.⁸⁴ From this spot we left our horses, sending them back to the kraal at which we had breakfasted, and proceeded to climb the face of the mountain up which Colonel Buller so successfully led his mounted men. It is a severe climb for man, much more so for beast, and it must ever be a matter for admiration and wonder when one sees the difficulty and danger that this gallant and determined man must have overcome. On reaching the summit a vast plateau stretches away for some miles, while on the other side the mountain falls away to the plains below in a sheer and perpendicular precipice. It was over this plateau that Colonel Buller led his men, and on to the various terraces which line the left hand side of the Inhlobane that he forced his horses in order to collect and drive down the cattle of the Zulus that had been placed there for safety. Further on the mountain is divided by a neck, and in order to cross this neck an almost perpendicular hill has to be descended. Nothing daunted, down this the Colonel led his men, losing sixty horses in the descent. It was close to this spot that Piet Uys⁸⁵ fell, and it will ever remain a marvel to those who saw him at this spot how Colonel Buller escaped alive. All have heard of this gallant conduct that day, it is needless to repeat it; never was [the] Victoria Cross more meritoriously gained.⁸⁶ All across the second plateau of the Inhlobane they fought

their way, retiring down the further face opposite the Zuinge [= Zungwini] Hill, where they were assailed as they came on, the last down the mountain being Captain Buller. That night they retired on Kambula; over that long and weary march they toiled, to be crowned on the morrow by a signal victory and a decisive blow levied at 26,000 warriors flushed with the success of their triumph on the Inhlobane.

We reached Tinta's Kraal that night, and the following morning struck camp and rejoined the column at the Insangeni River. We arrived just as its tail was disappearing over a neighbouring hill, so, pitching camp once more, we started on a ten miles' ride, to visit by the Ityotyotsi the spot where the Prince Imperial fell.⁸⁷ Ere actually reaching the place our line of march led us across a gradually-descending plain, which leads into the donga where the Prince was found lying. This rising piece of ground was that over which Lieutenant Carey made such a good haste as he headed the helter-skelter flight of his men. The mealie garden in which the party off-saddled lies some fifty or sixty yards distant from the donga, and beyond it again stretches the watercourse of the River Tombokala, along which the Zulus crept ere they surprised them. From the rising ground over which Lieutenant Carey and his men fled it would have been almost impossible, had they looked round, not to have seen the Prince fighting for his life, and there is little doubt, from what the men who killed him themselves say, that had the party rallied and returned to his aid his life would have been saved. Gun he had none, and his sword he had lost, yet with his revolver and assegai, which he picked up in the donga, (one of those thrown at him), he, to use the words of the Zulus themselves, "fought so desperately and savagely, he fought like a young lion, that until in stepping back-wards he fell we dared not go near him." If this boy, with his revolver and assegai, kept the Zulus so long at bay, surely the timely aid of a few friends would have saved him. After the first panic a rally and return would have availed; the Zulus say so themselves, and the cruel story of desertion unparalleled in the history of nations might never have been written. The Zulus speak of Lieutenant Carey with contempt and satire. When the men who slew the Prince were asked why they did not remove the gold chain and medalion round his neck after death, they replied, "Because he was brave; he fought like a young lion." When asked, "If they had succeeded in capturing the flying Captain Carey and his men, and they had chains round their necks, would they have respected them?" they replied, "No, for these men were cowards, and we would have torn them to pieces." To see the spot for oneself removes all doubt on the point of the headlong flight which must have taken place, and far better would it have been to have died a hundred times over than to have galloped over that rising ground from which, during its extent of over a mile or more, it would

have been simply impossible not to have seen the position in which the Prince was placed, a position from which the help of a few friends might have saved him, instead of being forsaken. If this is strong language let those who doubt my words visit the spot themselves; perhaps then their language may be a little more condemning than mine has been, and the regret for the loss of the gallant boy grow deeper and more bitter when, as they vie the spot, the painful truth will force itself upon the lookers on that of all that band there was but one brave heart amongst them, and that lies stiff and cold, a life lost and thrown away, through desertion.⁸⁸ The cross erected to the Prince's memory by the Queen is placed on the spot where he fell.⁸⁹ This portion of the donga is filled up, a wall built around, and young trees, ivy, and various plants are springing up the within the enclosure. The place is kept in good order by the same Zulus who killed him; they have never forgotten and never will forget the "brave young lion with whom they fought that day." With them his memory is respected, a respect which can only be equalled by the contempt and scorn felt by them towards those who fled and forsook him on that sad day.

We returned to the Insangeni river, the column being some five or six miles ahead. Cold drenching rain for the present prevents its progress, and our own is retarded by the same cause. We are living in a quagmire and sop, everything is damp and wet, the wretched horses and mules are very miserable, and it is feared that loss in oxen will be great. Until the weather clears further movement is impossible. Communication by heliograph with Newcastle is stopped, and the Inostazateje Mountain, hitherto visible, is now hidden from sight. How soon we shall arrive there it is hard to tell. In the meantime I shall despatch this letter by the post which leaves tomorrow, hoping ere long to be able to send further news of this expedition in Zululand.

'Zululand', Head Quarter Camp, Inshlazatye, 1 September 1881
(published in *The Morning Post* on 18 October 1881, p. 5)

Since despatching my last letter from the Insangeni River the troops have had a good deal of discomfort to undergo during a period of three days incessant and drenching rain, which, accompanied by extreme cold, carried off in the first night of its commencement over a hundred oxen, which number in the course of a couple more days became trebled. When the rain first set in I was at Sir Evelyn's encampment on the Insangeni River, and on the second day the General made up his mind, to rejoin the column. We accordingly struck camp and started with the

mule waggons in the pouring rain. On reaching the Umvolosi we found it greatly swollen, but nevertheless managed to get the waggons safely across, and a short trek soon brought us up with the column. General Buller came to meet us, and with him Sir Evelyn Wood moved on some five miles further, leaving instructions for the troops, with whom I remained, to follow as soon as the weather cleared. The scene all round the camp was not exactly pleasant. Hundreds of dead and dying oxen lying about presented a sad and painful aspect, while the misery depicted on the faces of man and beast appeared everywhere uniform. As soon as my tent was pitched and my horses tethered in the quagmire which everywhere surrounded us I turned my attention to the difficult task of obtaining some dry things, which proving unsuccessful, I was forced to make myself as comfortable as possible in wet ones. All that day it poured with rain, and continued until midday of the following, when it cleared up for a short time, and the commissariat seized the opportunity afforded them of getting their waggons up a steep slippery hill which lay before us on our future line of march. I, too, got my own waggon under weigh and started off for the two generals' camp, distant from the column some five or six miles. That night it rained again, but the following morning the rain changed to mist, and we were rejoined about nine o'clock by the troops, who, after outspanning to rest the oxen, continued to march for another seven or eight miles, when they pitched their last forward camp. Sir Evelyn Wood carried his own camp to the Inhslazatye, from which place I write this letter, and where, on the following day, he was joined by General Buller. It is situated some seven miles distant from that occupied by the column, and embraces a commanding position and magnificent view of the surrounding country. The Inhslazatye Mountain is extremely beautiful. It is also very imposing and striking, and to my mind one of the most beautiful hills I have ever seen. It is not peaked, but shaped in a long perpendicular mass of rock crowned by what appears a very regular plateau, the colouring, the lights and shades upon this great mass of rock lighting the whole mountain into many strange and fantastic shapes. Kraals are visible in every direction, and the herds of Zulu cattle dotted about over hill and valley lend life and animation to the scene. On the morning of the 30th of August a dense mist enveloped everything and not a Zulu was visible until it cleared away, when bands of tens, twenties, and thirties kept coming into the camp, squatting themselves down in every direction. Several men of importance held interviews with the general, at one of which I was present. Sir Evelyn found an old friend, who, before the battle of Kambula, sent to warn him of the approach of a large Zulu impi. This old man – once a chief, albeit stone deaf – appeared much pleased at seeing the general, and through his son, an intelligent young

man, held a long discourse. Wishing to prove that he had not forgotten the service which this man had endeavoured to render him, Sir Evelyn presented the youth with a cheque for £25, which filled the old man with delight and gratitude. During the halt I on several occasions strolled about amongst the Zulus bartering for shillings their neatly made bracelets, leg rings, and the finely-polished knobkerries which they fashion and invariably carry. Some sixty or seventy Zulus entertained me by a war dance, which was striking and impressive; others mimicked the manner in which they advanced to the attack with the bullets whistling round them, while the rest looked on and applauded. So many magnificent men I have seldom seen assembled together. Tall, lithe, and athletic, they carry their figures with a grace and agility which is probably unequalled anywhere. With the Zulu vanishes the thick coarse lip and flat nose of the ordinary Kaffir, and we have instead the well formed head, fine eye, and well-chiselled nose, mouth and lip, which with teeth of surpassing whiteness, transforms the ugly Kaffir into a black Adonis. I found in them an intelligence and quickness of perception which was truly surprising, and their good nature and high spirits never for a moment flagged. It is a vast pity that civilisation and the wiles of traders have introduced into the country the desire to become possessed of clothing, for the Zulu habited in the skins of animals is a grand picturesque object, which becomes ridiculous when disguised in coat and trousers, with a large wide-awake crowning the whole. Through an interpreter I conversed with several headmen, or indunas,⁹⁰ and, in reply to my question whether they would be glad to see Cetewayo back again, they one and all replied in the affirmative. One man spoke to me with a wisdom and sagacity which appeared surprising in one who had never left his own country. He said, "Why will not the Queen give us back our King? We would fight for her, but never against her again. We require one great head to serve; not many, whom we neither like, respect, or care to obey. If the Queen would give us back our King we would live in peace with her; but if he does not return can it be so for long? The Queen is great, and she rules over a large people, but she puts over us small men whom we care not to obey. We wish to live under our King, and we do not understand why, if the Queen does not kill him, she should keep him away from us." There was decidedly too much truth in this argument to permit of a reply save one of dissimulation, and from what I have seen of the Zulu I admire him too much to deceive him. I could therefore only remain silent, but it struck me at the time, as it doubtless strikes many others, that England has not behaved fairly to the Zulu nation. If Secocoeni has been released,⁹¹ why should not also Cetewayo? Put it to the voice of the nation at large if they desire his return, and I am convinced that the greater portion would vote for it. The great

mass of Zulus do not like the men placed over them. They have said so, but they are not listened to, and the consequence will not be long before it shows itself. Nowadays a Zulu will give you almost anything for a knife, and if he has an assegai nothing will induce him to part with it. There are many other indications which people choose to ignore that tend to prove that the Zulus are discontented. They think they have been badly treated, they are not content, and I am sure they will not rest quiet long. Our humiliations in the Transvaal have served to shake their belief in our power; they cannot understand how it is that we have been beaten by a people whom they themselves despise and confidently believe they could annihilate. Is it justice that Cetewayo should be kept in captivity? It may have been necessary at first to show our power, but is it justice that this King should now be kept from a people who wish him back, and that a lot of men who have no right to reign be placed in power, governing a people who neither love, respect, nor obey them? Had Sir Evelyn Wood summoned the Zulu nation instead of its chiefs to meet him for the purpose of giving them back their king, I am convinced that thousands would have flocked to the Inhslatzaye instead of the five chiefs and 300 or 400 followers that appeared, and they I do not think understood very well what the meeting was about.⁹² Be that as it may, however, on the 31st of August the three squadrons of cavalry marched into the general's camp at nine o'clock that morning, parading in front of his tent. At 9.30 the following territorial chiefs made their appearance, viz.: Usibebu, Umgojana, Siqungusa, Hlubi, Chingwayo, and John Dunn, while representatives appeared for the chiefs Seketwayo, Oham, and Faku. Umgitwa, Somkeli, Umlandela, and Umfanawanlela⁹³ were neither present nor represented, while the following personages of influence in the country were assembled amongst the headmen, viz.: Umiseja Mana, late Prime Minister; Umdabuko, Umsiwetu, and Untonga, brothers of Cetewayo; Chief Deligund, Somhlolo, Unsingulu, of Umquetuas country; Umquandi, Simoyi, etc.⁹⁴ The chiefs were accommodated with Kaffir mats laid on the ground, on their right a chair was placed for John Dunn, while behind them in horse-shoe rings were crowded their followers who had accompanied them. At ten o'clock the band of the Inniskillings struck up "God save the Queen." Sir Evelyn Wood and his staff mounted their horses, and we rode down to where the chiefs were seated. Dismounting Sir Evelyn occupied a chair placed for him. I sat on his left, the British Resident and interpreters occupied seats to his right, while the general's staff and a large party of officers were clustered around him. The troops were withdrawn and business commenced. A long address was then read aloud by Major Fraser, which was translated to the chiefs by the interpreters. The first part contained an explanation of our policy and late proceedings in the Transvaal, which I candidly

believe did not strike their comprehension very readily, and, if it did, their expressions of countenance belied them, as they seemed to take very little interest in the matter with the exception of Usibebu, who had a nice intelligent face, and appeared attentive throughout. The next portion of the address, graphically translated by Mr. Rudolph,⁹⁵ evidently interested them somewhat more. It contained a series of suggestions as to taxation and other matters which were submitted for their consideration, and approval or disapproval. Most of them were accepted by the chiefs, though I am inclined to think that they will never very readily carry them out. They however declined to establish industrial schools, opining that they did not as yet consider the country sufficiently advanced, while Hlubi remarked that he had already a school and a bishop, which he considered to be as much as he could manage for the present. Sir Evelyn next proceeded to decide disputes, and awarded judgment, after which, wishing them peace and prosperity, the general arose, the band struck up the National Anthem, and the squadron marched away. So ended this meeting on the Inhslatzye slopes, a meeting that may for a time postpone, but will not avert, the rising that must ere long take place. As I have previously I said, had Sir Evelyn assembled the Zulu nation for the purpose of hearing their wishes and giving them back their king, such a sight would have been witnessed as probably it may never be one's lot to see, but it would have been magnificent. Instead of which we found but five out of thirteen chiefs assembled to meet us, a few sending representatives, others sending none at all. Those who did come were not imposing, and truly Sir Garnet Wolseley's kings were a very ragged lot to look at. It is a pity that such a magnificent nation should be ruled by such an ill-assorted body of men, nor is it surprising that rebellion smoulders in the breasts of a people who feel towards their rulers neither love, fear, nor respect. The Transvaal has been ceded to the Boers; why should Zululand not be returned to the Zulus? It is painful to think of Cetewayo, once the sovereign of so splendid a nation and so fair a country, a captive in the ungainly and dreary place in which he is located, a spot whose very dreariness must make him all the more longingly recall the grand country from which he has been taken away. England, who pretends to love justice, would do well to accord some of its mercy to a man who has appealed to the country for justice, and who, if he were reinstated, would, I am convinced, become her firmest ally and friend, in whose cause so few voices have been raised. Today Sir Evelyn and staff leave the Inhslatzye *en route* for the Swazi country. He will visit the King and return to Maritzburg *via* Delagoa Bay and Durban. *A propos* of the Swazi king I may as well mention that he has issued an order commanding all Boers to leave his country by a certain date, accompanied by a threat that if they do not do

so he will force them to obedience. Apparently his Majesty of Swaziland is eager to show the Boers that though the English Government has yielded to their dictation he at least is master in his own country, and has no intention to submit to their presence. To those who have suffered from the insolence of the Boers in the Transvaal this blow dealt at the latter by the Swazi King will be welcome, and it is not improbable but that this Monarch will invite English colonists to occupy the lands from which the ejected Boers are about to be banished. I am just about to leave camp to accompany General Buller and a small party of officers on a visit to Ulundi, returning the same day to rejoin the column which marches to-morrow. As I write this Sir Evelyn is himself just preparing to start; day is dawning, but a heavy mist hangs over the Inhslatzatye valleys and the evergreen Mountain remains hidden from sight. Ere it is disclosed to view we shall both be many miles on our various roads; it is the breaking-up of what has been a very pleasant expedition, and in closing this I can only wish the gallant and courteous general a successful, pleasant, and safe journey through Swaziland.

**‘South Africa’, Government House, Pietermaritzburg, 11 September
1881 (published in *The Morning Post* on 20 October 1881, p. 5)**

As I finished my last letter from the Inhslatzatye Camp I was on the point of starting off for Ulundi for the purpose of visiting, at the request of Cetewayo, the scene of his former place of residence and capital of Zululand. Hill and valley were enveloped in dense mist as I rode across from the Headquarter Camp to that of General Buller, distant not far off. I found the general ready to mount, and our party lost no time in following his example. Punctually at six o’clock we set out on our long ride, the chief of the staff leading the way at a smart canter, and following the waggon track, which was only just discernible through the thick atmosphere. One of our party lagging somewhat behind was speedily lost sight of, nor did he rejoin us that day, and only in the late evening managed to find his way back to the camp. It was several hours before the mist lifted, and as it rolled away we found ourselves riding through a hilly country of wild and rugged beauty, but which neither General Buller nor any of his staff were able to recognise as having seen before. Eventually we came upon a large winding river which we had not expected to meet, and the question naturally forced itself upon us, “Had we missed our way?” A very possible contingency, inasmuch as no one was acquainted with the road they were pursuing. Crossing the river, which eventually turned out to be the White Umvolosi, we ascended a

hill and came upon some waggons and tents, round which a large following of Kaffirs were clustered. These proved to be the property of Chief John Dunn, whose arrival the camp in question were awaiting, and as the general's interpreter inquired the way there peeped and peered at us through one of the tents two of the chief's black wives, young girls who could not have exceeded 16 or 17 years of age. Inquiry served to show that we had come a good way out of the straight road to Ulundi, but one of the Kaffirs conducting us through some thick bush pointed out a mountain path which he assured us, in somewhat vague fashion, would eventually lead to the place in question. So struggling over the rough, rocky ground we held our way until a kraal hove in sight, when General Buller gave the order to off-saddle and rest the horses for half an hour. At this kraal we secured a young Zulu, who undertook to put us on a Kaffir path that led up over some high hills, thick bush, and a steep nek to Ulundi. Following the track he pointed out, we gradually ascended higher and higher until we found ourselves overlooking a magnificent scene which embraced far-stretching valleys and hills, while a grand glimpse of the White Umvolosi's winding, rocky course, here burst upon our view. High above us towered steep frowning crags and perpendicular masses of precipitous mountain heights, crowned by mass of luxuriant vegetation; indeed, so thick were the trees and shrubs all around us that in some places we found the greatest difficulty in forcing our horses along. It was of this White Umvolosi valley that the gallant Piet Uys warned General Buller⁹⁶ to beware, and the general on this occasion fully appreciated the friendly advice which he who is now gone thought it not ill advised to give. Helpless would be force who, however efficiently mounted, should find itself attacked in this portion of the country by natives, who, knowing every turn and track through that dense bush, could catch them at all angles towards which they might turn their horses' heads. But though it is no country through which to lead an army it is nevertheless a very lovely part of Zululand, and, looking across that great sweep of hill and valley, so beautiful in its wild untamed grandeur, one commiserates more than ever the fate of the unfortunate captive who once reigned over this glorious scene. How often must he sigh for the fair land from which he is separated as he looks from his present gloomy abode on the bare, desolate plain that surrounds it, and recalls the country over which he once reigned a king. Truly we are a just and generous nation!

Crossing the high nek already mentioned, a further ride of an hour's duration brought us in sight of Ulundi. We rode down to the Umvolosi, and off-saddled for an hour to feed the horses, not by any means forgetting ourselves. Then when the hour had expired the order was once more given to mount, and, losing no time in so doing, we crossed the

bridge and cantered along a broad plain, that portion of the battlefield across which the Lancers charged.⁹⁷ We were not long before we reached the great Nodwengu Kraal, of which no vestige remains⁹⁸ beyond the large dark circle, apparently about 500 yards in diameter, showing where it once stood. Numerous skeletons of man and beast lie scattered around this spot, grinning and ghastly skulls meeting the eye wherever it turns. Some of our party were very keen to carry off various specimens of these sad relics, and busied themselves in collecting many objects of interest. In all directions large circles showed where once big kraals, now no longer, had stood; that of Ulundi itself being, curiously enough, so thickly overgrown that trees some four or five feet in height had sprung up in all directions, and on the spot where, intermixed with dense masses of brushwood and long grass, Cetewayo's capital once existed, the visitor can find no trace to show that but two short years ago this place was inhabited by hundreds, nay thousands, of human beings. The grass whereon stands the sites of all the other big kraals which were destroyed has been burnt and the young green grass shooting up in every direction brings into bold relief the large dark circles whereon the towns of the Zulus once stood. The great circular basin in which lies the battlefield of Ulundi is surrounded by high hills all clothed in their young verdant coat, while the basin itself shines brightly forth in emerald greenness, the first budding of early spring showing everything in the newest and freshest guise. In sad contrast to all this gladness of nature the grim spectacle of death and decay which shows itself so plentifully around is painfully felt. In every direction the eye rests upon skeletons and death's heads which in some places lie piled up on the top of one another in simple profusion, showing where a brave nation in the struggle to eject the invader from their home and country, and believing in the King for whom they fought, fell down one by one and died. In this last defeat, the subsequent capture of Cetewayo, and the division of his country amongst a lot of incompetent men whom we have called chiefs, we may have silenced for a time, but not extinguished within the Zulu breast, the desire for freedom and the return of his King. This is his one great desire, and he had hoped to express in the meeting at Inhslatzatye. The disgust and disapprobation excited by the prohibition to speak will ere long make itself felt, and when the crisis comes people will ask each other, wonderingly, "Who'd have thought it; we imagined that the Zulus were subdued, peaceful, and contented?" Let their future actions be their own reply.

From Ulundi we turned our horses' heads homewards; we had yet many hours ride before us, and it was not until past nine o'clock that night that we rejoined the column at the camp it had all along occupied, our good horses that day having covered a distance of between 75 and

80 miles. The following morning the troops marched to the Umvolosi, General Buller preceding them to the Insangeni River. I remained with the column until it reached Conference Hill, when, separating myself from its hospitalities, I struck across country by the Koppie Allein, reaching Isandula⁹⁹ by Sirayo's kraal that afternoon, distant some 40 or 50 miles from the place I had quitted in the morning. Of this battlefield there is very little to say beyond the unfortunate state of waste-grown untidiness in which I found all the graves. Skulls and bones are beginning to show through the soil which barely covers them, while my horses stumbled over many graves which I could not discern on account of the rank grass and weeds that hide them from sight. One fit monument remains to mark the spot where our unfortunate soldiers fell. On the Isandula Hill (pronounced Sandtlewane) towers a crag of remarkable shape and formation, whose rugged grandeur will overlook this lovely scene long after the monuments and memory of generations have crumbled to decay. Though under the shadow of this crag the scene of the disaster is itself pitched on the summit and face of a good high hill, and on the nek extending to a high position on the Isandula, cairns are raised to mark the spot where many of our men, making their last desperate stand, fought and fell. At the Memorial Mission station close by I was hospitably entertained by the Rev. Mr. Sweenie,¹⁰⁰ and on the following morning rode on by Rorke's Drift¹⁰¹ to Helpmakaar,¹⁰² thence through the beautiful Umainga country to Mooi River, reaching Maritzburg the following day, and covering a distance of about 135 miles. This evening Sir Evelyn Wood and staff arrived at Government House from Durban, having landed from the Firebrand this morning. They experienced very heavy weather from Delagoa Bay, but were all looking none of the worse for their journey through Swaziland. It is with regret that I shall quit this to-morrow morning in order to catch the homeward-bound steamer for Capetown after a sojourn of over six months in a country where from every one I have received so much courtesy, kindness, and hospitality, which I must ever remember with pleasure and gratitude, and from none more so than from the gallant general whose duties out here have been fraught with so much difficulty in the delicate and thankless task which he undertook. All who know Sir Evelyn Wood will be glad to see him back in England, wishing him a better fate and pleasanter duties in store than that of being Governor of Natal¹⁰³ and patcher-up of Boer quarrels and English breaches of promise. He came out to do better things, to retrieve English honour and prestige, which, if he had been permitted, none would have more successfully accomplished than the general to whom I refer. In General Buller, chief of the staff, Sir Evelyn has shown how fitly he can choose and appropriately dispose of his officers in command. General Buller is a man of firm purpose and indomitable will. In

commanding he can give examples of what he requires done, while with a confidence in himself without which success is never certain, all know that what he undertakes to do he is pretty sure to accomplish. Under a rough, hard exterior men knew him to carry a kindly heart, and there are few more born to lead and to be implicitly followed with a confidence which he knows how to inspire and retain, than Sir Evelyn Wood's chief of the staff.

I was this morning honoured by a visit from Bishop Colenso.¹⁰⁴ His lordship informed me that a deputation despatched from Zululand immediately after the meeting at Inhlazatye had yesterday arrived at Maritzburg to signify their disapprobation and disappointment at not having been allowed to make known at the meeting their wishes and grievances. Why will not England listen to their request and ascertain from them their requirements? The present chiefs have neither influence nor power over the people whom it is imagined they rule, neither have they power to check the growing discontent and daily increasing desire for Cetewayo's return. Perhaps some day England will find out that it would be more noble and more to her interests to reinstate this unfortunate captive, whose return would fill the Zulus with delight, and who to England would prove a firm and faithful ally. Even John Dunn, whose interest it behoves to prevent such a thing taking place, could not deny the fact when asked his opinion as to the almost universal desire on the part of the Zulu nation for the King's restoration.

**'The Boers and the Convention', Government House, Capetown,
26 September 1881 (published in *The Morning Post* on
25 October 1881, p. 5)**

News was brought me this morning fresh from the Transvaal of the position and attitude assumed by the Boers in regard to the Convention which we are daily expecting the Volksraad to ratify and approve.¹⁰⁵ The information I have received comes from so great and reliable a quarter that I can vouch for its truth and accuracy though I were relating what I had myself personally overheard and beheld. The information which I have received appears to me of the greatest possible importance, inasmuch as it foreshadows future difficulty and disturbance in the Transvaal. My informant is a well-known Boer, whose name at his own request shall be withheld, and he assures me that there exists among his countrymen a decided desire to oppose the ratification of the Convention. There are, he affirms, three distinct factions struggling for mastery, each with a somewhat different aim in view, and which be summed up in

the following divisions, parties, or sects. The first consists of Dutchmen, who, elated by their recent success on the battle-field and the many disputed points conceded to them in the peace negotiations by our Government, imagine that they have only to tender fresh demands for those demands to be immediately granted, even though they be contrary to the terms of the Convention signed by their leaders. This party is strongly advocating a decided resistance on the part of the Volksraad to ratify the Convention, urging upon it to reject every clause of importance, and adjuring it to show a bold front, on the ground that the opposition of the Home Government, fearful of being plunged again into another war, will fade away and the demands of the victorious Boers be acceded to. The second party is formed of men wiser in judgement, slower to act, yet diplomatic enough to perceive the method by which their aim is to be easily obtained. These men are less simple than their more fiery brethren of the first party, they are craftier and less honourable, but the aim they have in view partakes much of the same ultimate conclusion, i.e., complete independence and the banishment from the Transvaal of any Power save their own, which in native affairs must be paramount. This party advocates for the present complete submission of the Convention, and advises that the Volksraad should without demur ratify the agreement into which the Boer leaders and the members of the royal commission have entered. Their policy is to clear the coast for further operations. With the departure of the British troops from South Africa the articles which they have agreed to observe in the Convention can easily by degrees be overlooked and disregarded. Their great object is time, during which the country shall have leisure to rest itself and collect its scattered forces in the event of England's again endeavouring by force of arms to insist on the observance of the clauses of the ratified Convention, which it is their intention, as soon as a convenient opportunity shows itself, to disregard and evade. The third party is made up of Boers who, growing alarmed at the chaos and confusion that is already beginning to show itself amongst the Boer nation, while desiring their independence, confess their inability to preserve order and unity, whereby alone a true Government can remain great, lasting, and stable. This party, though they dare not openly avow their opinions, regret the course they have pursued, and desire the return of the Transvaal Government to that of England. But their desires can only be expressed in secret; and it lies between the first and second party to secure the Volksraad to its own separate course of action. My informant that it is not improbable but that the fiery enthusiasm of the first party will prevail with the Volksraad, who will commence its opposition by calling upon England to modify or withdraw several of the most obnoxious stipulations of the Convention, the most notable being the

restrictions on native affairs and the payment of a sum which they feel it will be utterly impossible to accomplish. Should England, however, remain firm in its present demands the Volksraad may probably be prevailed upon to adopt the tactics of the second party, and, finding menace of no avail, calmly subscribe to the present object of gaining time by ratifying the Convention. How soon these terms will be defied and disregarded remains to be seen; for all I am at present writing about is to me but a matter of surmise, though I am assured of their positive truth by my informant, who is himself straight from Pretoria. Up to this date no news has been received from that town as to the action or decision of the Volksraad, which assembled to sit not long ago, and I am therefore quite in the dark as to what that sitting will decide. My informant, who belongs to the third party, considers the state of feeling in the Transvaal to be of the very gravest, and it was for this reason that he travelled from Pretoria to Capetown for the purpose of giving me a clear and unbiased account of the conclusion to which he has arrived from personal and close observation. He returns to the Transvaal to-morrow, where his presence as one of the leaders of the third party is indispensable. In reviewing the information which he has given me, as well as several other points which I am unable to make public, it appears to me that there is the gravest cause for future consideration. Though it may appear ungracious to doubt the intentions of the Volksraad, and regard its fiat with bad faith, attributing to it the intentions of the second party in the event of the Convention being ratified, there is, nevertheless, one fact which should not be overlooked by a great country like England, this fact being the simple question, "Are we allowing a small and insignificant body of men to dupe our credulity and confidence?" In the event of the Convention being ratified by the Volksraad, with the aims and intentions of the second party in mind, we must remember that the men of the first party, finding instant war impossible, will unite themselves with that of the second, forcing into their crafty schemes the smaller and weaker fraction of the third party, who will find itself unable to tender any resistance. If the information which I have received be strictly true – and I have every cause to regard it as such – it appears to me that with the withdrawal of our troops from South Africa the Boers will consider themselves free to disregard and evade the imposed clauses of the Convention, and no convenient opportunity will be passed over to prove that they intend openly to violate the Convention. Of course this will mean a return of our troops to the country, a renewal of hostilities, which this time will not be confined to the Transvaal Boers alone, or else it will mean fresh concessions and unworthy negotiations ending in a peace disgraceful to ourselves. Should we be forced into another Boer war our position in South Africa will not be enviable. Our treatment of

the Zulus has not been such as to endear England to them, and the opportunity to rise amongst themselves for the purpose of banishing their present chiefs and recalling the king to whom the nation is ever loyal would not be thrown away. In the opposite direction we have Basutoland, which, likewise, is only watching its opportunity to rise afresh. In their desire for independence the Basutos remain unconquered, whilst in Zululand we uphold a system which is weakening our own power in its inability to maintain order and to govern. In reinstating Cetewayo we should gain a friend and ally, for Zululand, ruled by this King, would never fight against the British again, whereas in the position it is now placed there is every prospect of its so doing. In forwarding to England the information in question I feel that further comment is useless. The English public can draw their own conclusions as to the importance or non-importance of the matter; the governing portion will doubtless adhere to its present lenient attitude in the conduct which it has always assumed to the aggressors. Time alone will prove the wisdom of a policy whose very humanity becomes its own dupe. In the letters which at various periods I have had the pleasure of sending home to England I have endeavoured to place every fact and matter as they really existed. The love of the wonderful too often is employed in the relation of passing events, and much misconception and false representation is thereby conveyed to the public mind. On this point I have been most particular, and my object throughout has been to relate truthfully what I have seen and heard such as it existed, conveying to my countrymen so far away a true and unvarnished account of what actually and really occurred and occurs. As this is my final letter, so I trust that the cloud of war and chaos which has so long hung over South Africa will clear away, and that this grand country may enjoy a peace which will enable it, still in its infancy, to open up the resources of its vast and rich interior, so long the scene of destructive and devastating war.

‘King Cetewayo’, Government House, Capetown, 27 September 1881
 (published in *The Morning Post* on 1 November 1881, pp. 5–6)

A few days ago, by the kind permission of the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, I drove over to Oude Molen to visit Cetawayo. The King had previously been made aware of my desire to see him, and through his interpreter wrote me a letter signifying the pleasure it would give him to receive once more the visit of “his friend.” The letter was signed in the King’s own hand, a facsimile of which I append. On arriving at Oude Molen, Cetewayo came to the front door of the house to welcome

me, and shook hands long and cordially, after which he conducted me into the bare and desolate room which serves to him the purpose of a sitting-room. There possibly may be rooms more cramped, more desolate, and more bare than that in which Cetewayo lives, but I hardly think it possible, and it is all the more painfully felt, I should say, by the captive himself, who is well able to both feel and distinguish between comfort and discomfort. Seating himself in a wooden chair placed almost in the centre of the room, the King motioned to me to occupy another which was placed near him, his interpreter standing close by. It pained me to observe the anxious and troubled look which seemed to have settled down on his features as soon as the smile with which he had greeted me on my arrival had died away, and a visible alteration was distinctly discernible in the man since I had last seen him six months ago. In repose his features assume a sad, careworn expression, the forehead is more wrinkled, and the face looks older than when I last saw it. I remarked to the interpreter that he was much changed. "Yes," he replied, "he is fretting a good deal, and is often subject to long fits of depression." The King sat silent in his chair waiting for me to open the conversation. His eyes were fixed on the ground, but he raised them and looked at me as soon as I began to speak. "I am come, Cetewayo," said I, "to tell you that I have just returned from Zululand. I thought it might please you to receive news of your country, and I am here to-day to answer any questions I can which you may desire to ask me." Through the interpreter I then proceeded to relate to him all I had seen and heard in the country. When I came to the meeting of chiefs at the Inhlazatyhe he became very much interested, frequently interrupting me to ask questions. "Tell me," he said, "the names of the chiefs who were present." I complied with his request, and he was much struck by the absence of so many from the meeting. I told him of my conversation with some of the Indunas and chief men, and how they had expressed such earnest wishes to have their King back. "I am sure," said he, "that it is the wish of the Zulu nation that I should return; it is only those who are frightened and held in check by John Dunn that oppose my restoration." "I conversed," I said, "at the Inhlazatyhe with Mogojana, one of the chiefs who were present, and he is greatly anxious for your return, as are also, he tells me, Liwungasa, Faku, Somkeli, Mlandela, Sekehowayo, Mjitahwa, and Ntshingwayo." "Yes, yes," he replied, "they wish me back, and so do the Zulu people. All I love is in Zululand; my heart is there, where lays my father's grave. I am heart-sick and weary with waiting. When will England be just and let me return? Do you think that because I am a black man I cannot feel or suffer the less by this long, long, and weary captivity? England has given the Transvaal back to the Boers, Basutoland to the Basutos, Sekukuni is restored to his people, all free but I. How is it

so? What have I done that I should be so treated? When I fought against you it was to defend my country. I was taken prisoner, and I felt that one stronger than I had beaten me, and that power I acknowledged. But now you keep me here, where I am weary and sick at heart. I have appealed to England, whom they tell me is great and just – to her Queen, whom they say is merciful – but my prayer is unheeded, and I am still lonely here.”

I have repeated as faithfully as possible Cetewayo’s words as they were interpreted to me by the interpreter. The King spoke slowly and distinctly, but in a lower tone than he had originally used, and until his voice ceased he kept his eyes fixed upon my face. His whole bearing was dignified and majestic; he was neither flurried nor excited, but there was a pleading sadness in his voice which was very touching. I replied “that England would undoubtedly, ere long, do justice to him, but that he must be patient, and wait a little while longer.” I told him “that public feeling was gradually rising in his favour.” I begged him “not to be downhearted, to keep up his spirits, that justice would ere long restore him to the country he yearned for, and to the nation who longed for his return, and I pointed out to him that he had many friends abroad who were working hard in his cause.” I spoke to him of his future visit to England, and told him that on his return from that country it might be as a restored King of Zululand. “I am waiting,” he said, “for a reply to my prayer addressed to England to allow me to proceed there immediately. I am growing weary and impatient that I do not receive a reply.” I had that morning been informed by his Excellency that a telegram from Lord Kimberley¹⁰⁶ had arrived signifying it the intention of the Government that Cetewayo would not be allowed to visit England before the coming summer,¹⁰⁷ the Governor telling me that he intended to send for the King the next day in order to acquaint him with this decision. Knowing, therefore, the substance of this disappointing news, I endeavoured to prepare him for its reception, and I strongly advised him not to think of visiting England during the winter time, but to endeavour to make up his mind to await the arrival of the summer, when so many people of influence would be gathered together in London, and all the sights most worthy of seeing would be available. “I am too impatient to return to my country to willingly wait,” he replied “You, who are not a prisoner, cannot understand how weary and miserable I am; how heart sick and lonely. You tell me to be patient, but have I not been so until I can be so no longer? If I am to live they must let me go; a little longer of this and shall die.” “Tell Cetewayo,” I said to the interpreter, “that he is a brave man, and brave men should never give in. As his friend I ask him to be patient yet awhile; if it is for his future good that he should not visit England before the summer time, will he not try to remember this, and

await that time in patience?" In two words the King answered this question of mine. "What does he say?" I asked the interpreter. "He says," replied the man, "that he will try, but his heart is sad."

In trying to convey all the nobility and courage which those few words laid bare of what this unfortunate captive is capable of I but feebly represent the case. In those few words – "I will try, but my heart is sad" – can be traced a reply at once noble and dignified. It shows a courage that rises to bear misfortune with nothing but sadness to make the pain less hard, and it shows that Cetewayo, who has been represented as a cruel, blood-thirsty despot and tyrant, possesses that which many white men with civilisation and education around them entirely lack, and which they may well enjoy – i.e., a nobility of soul, dignity and courage in misfortune – which makes him in all he says so "every inch a king."

I inquired of him whether in the event of his being restored to his country he would consent to allow John Dunn to remain in Zululand. "Why should I do so?" he replied. "When I reigned in that country I treated John Dunn as my friend; his return was to act as spy between me and the English Government. He told them much that was false, he harmed me in all the ways he could; he never could be my friend again; how can I then forgive him and live in peace with a man who treated me so badly after I had treated him so well?"¹⁰⁸ In all Cetewayo says he reasons with a truth and good sense which it is impossible not to perceive. Naturally he wonders how it is that a man like John Dunn should be placed as chief in power. Here is a man who ignores in many ways the laws of civilisation. In the late struggle with Sitimela, when he advanced against him to restore Mlandela, women and children who belonged to the rebellious side found no quarter at his hands. All who fell in his way were massacred without mercy; it is a fact which cannot be contradicted, for all who know anything about the matter are aware that this is the truth. When Cetewayo killed women and children he was called a merciless despot, but when John Dunn does likewise the affair is hushed up, the matter is not even reported, and no blame is attached to this white usurper of black rights. We have endeavoured to instil into the native mind that it is wrong to take to their home more than one wife, yet John Dunn, this white chieftain, who is supposed to set them a good example, lives surrounded by a large harem, setting at defiance the white man's law, which we pretend we are desirous the black should follow.

I remained some time with Cetewayo talking to him about his people and Zululand. He clung to the subject as though it had a peculiar charm for him. His interpreter assured me that he had not seemed so interested in anything for a long time, and it was quite refreshing to see the King so cheerful. On one point he was very anxious, and that to obtain news of

three of his chiefs whom he hoped would be allowed to join him in his captivity and proceed with him to England. "Had I seen them?" he asked. I replied that the men in question had journeyed a long distance on foot, and had endeavoured to catch Sir Evelyn Wood at the Mahlazatyo meeting, but were unfortunate enough not to succeed. The last I had heard of them was that they were on their way from that place to Pietermaritzburg, hoping there to obtain an interview with the general, and lay before him their prayer, which begged permission to be granted them to join Cetewayo at Capetown and share with him his captivity. Anxiously the King inquired whether this permission would be granted by the Government, to which I replied that I could not say, but that doubtless it would, as there could be hardly any reason for refusing. After this I told him that it was time I should leave, as my visit had been somewhat prolonged. He asked me how soon I intended leaving for England, and when I told him he exclaimed, "Oh, why cannot I go too?" "Have you any message to send to the English people which I can transmit for you?" I asked. "Yes," replied Cetewayo with grave dignity; "tell them that I am a King and a captive; that I am alone and helpless; that I am very sad and almost heartbroken; that they should not believe all the ill they hear of me; ask them to be my friend and to help me. I have no more to say." As I was saying good-bye to the interpreter Cetewayo held out his hand again, and I shook hands once more. As I did so he said a few words. "He is thanking you for being his friend," said the interpreter; "he says he will not forget your kindness, and will always be your friend. Perhaps he may be able some day to prove his gratitude when he becomes king again."

On leaving Oude Molen I drove to the farmhouse occupied by Langa-balele,¹⁰⁹ close by. My interview with this old chief was very short; he appeared very anxious to know if Cetewayo was going to England. He frequently walks across to Oude Molen on a visit to the King, but Cetewayo has only once condescended to return the call; it appears that it is an act of the greatest condescension for a king to visit his subject, however great the chief may be. In this narrative I have faithfully reported what occurred on the occasion of my visit to the King. In the last simple words with which he begged me to transmit to the English public his prayer that they should help one "who was a king, who was lonely and helpless, sad, and almost heartbroken," he did not speak with a grasping eagerness or excitement, but with a grave, intense sadness, which showed and forced the listener to realise how much he felt all that he was saying. His words, eloquent, in themselves, should appeal and strike home to the heart of a nation whose desire is that of justice. Is it not something more than cruel that this unfortunate man should be kept captive when the nation of whom he is the rightful king so universally

desire his return? Circumstances and the march of events demand that the policy which at one time was necessary and right should change. Time alters all things, and that time has brought the moment when the peace and tranquillity of Zululand is at stake, for the reason that there is no one to rule it, no one whom its people will respect and obey. Cetewayo has seen our power, and were he restored he would fight against the English no more. He says himself, and his people say so too, that they do not wish to fight with England, but desire to live in peace with her for ever. We have given the Transvaal to the Boers, Sekukuni is restored to his people, Basutoland has been given back to the Basutos; in Afghanistan the same policy has been pursued. Cetewayo alone remains a prisoner. Is this a fair or just policy; is this treatment such as it should be? Let the sense of fair play and generosity answer for itself; in the breasts of the English public. The letters addressed by the captive from his dreary solitude at Oude Molen to Lord Kimberley, in his ease and comfort at home, are not those of an ignorant or cruel despot, but in every line they show nobility of soul, a greatness and sagacity, a sense of wisdom, and reasoning, which the heart of a savage could not conceive. Let England do justice to a man who is kept in a cruel and unfair captivity, who has appealed to a nation, whose might and sense of justice he acknowledges, to help and protect him. His very loneliness and utter helplessness should appeal more forcibly than anything to every heart which is not poisoned by the gross misrepresentation of interested parties as to the state of affairs in Zululand and the wishes of the Zulu people. There is little doubt that our military prestige is much weakened the eyes of the Zulu people. In their wish to get back their King they may reason to themselves that if the Boers can defeat us they can likewise do so. The result of this reasoning will show itself before long in anarchy and rebellion. The chiefs placed over them they neither respect nor obey, and it is in a moment like this that Cetewayo as our ally would be most acceptable. In the *Times* of the 23rd of August a letter appeared from a member of the Legislative Council of Natal in which the following remark appears: "No colonist wishes ill to Cetewayo. None grudge him the surroundings of a comfortable and luxurious exile." Is this meant to imply that he lives in comfort or ease? If this is the opinion of the British public I can assure them they are greatly mistaken. I have seldom seen a more dreary place of abode than that awarded to Cetewayo; the rooms inhabited by himself and his girls of the kraal are totally devoid of furniture of any kind; little or no amusement is provided for him; if he wishes for any extra comfort his wants have to be made known through so many channels that it is long before he obtains what he requires. Repeatedly he has asked leave to have a little pocket money allowed to him, but this wish has not been granted, and this is classed "a

luxurious and comfortable exile.” I saw Cetewayo yesterday when he came to Government House to learn from Sir Hercules Robinson the contents of Lord Kimberley’s telegram with regard to his visit to England. I was not present when the bad news was communicated to him, but I am assured by one present that the only sign this brave man showed of his great disappointment was in a slight contraction of the face and a nervous movement of the hands, beyond which he made no remark. In the few words with which he had the day before promised me to be patient, this promise was faithfully kept. Only those who knew Cetewayo’s wishes could guess the hopes that telegram dashed to the ground or the acute pain its words must have caused. Later on, in trying to cheer him up, I conducted the King through the different rooms of Government House. The bed-rooms up stairs, the electric bells, and beds themselves greatly interested him. Many were the long-drawn exclamations of surprise which he gave vent to as some new object astonished and delighted him. The interpreter told me that Cetewayo liked to look at the house; he would like to build some similar to it in his own country, if he was ever King again, in order that he might lodge his white friends therein when they came to see him. Some hours after the King’s departure I received a letter written by the interpreter and signed by Cetewayo himself. It contained but a few words, and ran thus:

“Oude Molen, September 26, 1881.

“I am writing to you, my great friend, ... (here follows my name inserted) to remind you of your kind promise to help me to the best of your power. I am sorry you are going away so soon.

“Cetewayo,

“Ra Mpandi¹¹⁰ [= kaMpande] (meaning Pande’s son).”

In writing this letter the object I have had in view is to truthfully and faithfully represent what really is and what really takes place. Let England do an act of justice in liberating this unfortunate captive. Another year’s exile from his country may bring both sad and fatal results which it will then be too late to regret.

**‘Cetewayo: An Inquiry and Defence’, to the Editor of the Morning Post
by Florence Dixie (published as a supplement to *The Morning Post*
on 23 November 1881)**

SIR, Messengers at the Lower Tugela delivered on November 7, 1878, the following inquiry or message from Cetawayo: “What have I done or said to the great house of England, which placed my father Panda, over the Zulu nation, and after his death put me in power? What have I done