A

# SURVEY OF SOUTH AFRICAN ENGLISH VERSE PRINTED IN CAPE PERIODICALS AND NEWSPAPERS FROM 1824-1851

by

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# C O N T E N T S

# INTRODUCTION

An interest in colonial literature is relatively new in the study of English. English-speaking South Africans especially, cut off as they are, a minority group in a new republic, have begun to re-assess their identity through a study of their existing literature.

When asked what South African verse there was beside his own, Kipling remarked, "As to South African verse, it's a case of there's Pringle, and there's Pringle, and after that one must hunt the local papers."[1]

This thesis is the result of such a hunt - the hunt being limited to the years 1824 to 1851 - and on occasion, the writer has been tempted to conclude rather unfairly, "And there is only Pringle." It cannot be claimed that every poem ever printed during the period under review has been collected and examined, for the reason that many volumes of old newspapers are no longer available. Nevertheless, it has been possible to make a representative selection, which could provide the raw material for several theses to come. A detailed study of critical criteria prevalent at the Cape during this period, or public taste and the influence especially of the lesser British poets are some of the topics which might repay study.

The year 1824 is an obvious starting point, as George Greig's South African Commercial Advertiser was first launched on 7 January, two months before the appearahce of Pringle and Fairbairn's South African Journal, the Cape's first literary periodical.[2] The year

1851 may be regarded by some as an entirely arbitrary limit. It is justified mainly on the grounds that one of the most interesting newspapers, Sam Sly's African Journal (from July 1849, The African Journal) ceased publication in December of that year. It also marks a watershed. The Settlers on the Eastern Frontier had reached a peak of indignation as a result of the Eighth Kaffir War, which had begun in 1850 and continued sporadically until 1853. For practical purposes a limit had to be imposed, and this seemed as convenient a time as any.

The first aspect of this study which strikes the researcher, and it is a very obvious one, is that conditions were not favourable to the emergence of truly African literature. It is essential to bear this constantly in mind if the student is to be fair to the early poetasters at the Cape. The colonists looked upon themselves as Englishmen maintaining their culture against the onslaught of barbarians at the periphery of the Empire. They were far too concerned about maintaining their imported identity for the new surroundings to penetrate too deeply. That the "Capers" identified themselves to a great extent with other colonials - people of British stock, in America or Australia for instance, who shared their peculiar task - is indicated by their interest in colonial affairs. Many ~~colonial~~ Cape newspapers printed articles on each colony in succession. That they had access to colonial papers is shown by the fact that poems from such papers as the Geelong Advertiser, the Sydney Gazette, the Mauritius Times, the

Calcutta Oriental Observer and American papers were printed. It is unlikely that editors would have taken the trouble had they not been assured of an interested audience. That there was justification for their assumption of a common culture and aim will be seen later.

The Cape was not unique in the derivative nature of its early literary activity. A study of Australian, New Zealand, Canadian and American literature reveals the same phenomena which characterise the early days of pioneering and settlement. There is a dependence on the forms and expression of the eighteenth century with Romantic ideas gradually gaining ground.

Of early American verse, Pearce writes:

> It represents all the proper modes - songs, satires, Miltonic imitations, and the like - in all the proper forms. It covers all the proper subject matters - the foibles of colonial society, love for the classically named maiden, worship of the sublime deity, and celebration of neo-classical contentment.[3]

Hadgraft, commenting on Australian verse, writes:

> The standard models were those of the eighteenth century and the orthodox ingredients corresponded - wit and courtly compliment and satire and address. Such were the themes and forms to be expected from poets transplanted physically and emotionally to a strange and unwelcoming land.[4]

Conventional poetic diction (and the iniquitous preference for rhymed rather than blank verse) increased the problem of describing an exotic environment in a language which had developed in a very different world. Innovations were looked upon with scorn by those versed in the glories of the English tradition or of the didactic and sentimental poetry of the popular reviews, magazines and newspapers. The Australian poet, Henry Clarence Kendall, was forced to send his work to the Athenaeum as "mistrusting their own judgement, the Australian critics and reading public were inclined to condemn any literature that had not won the approval of the mother-country."[5] Besides this prejudice, convention provided an escape mechanism. Louis B. Wright points out that "the romanticism and sentimentality of early nineteenth century English writers appealed to the frontier reader. He was too close to his own wild country to see the appeal of his forests, rivers, and savage Indians. That would come later when he began to interpret them through European eyes. But the wild country of Scotland, the land of the Crusaders, or Byron's romantic settings provided escape, entertainment...."[6]

Thomas Pringle was conscious of his role as a poet and of the opportunity offered him in a foreign environment. He attempted to describe his surroundings objectively, using indigenous expressions and names which sat uneasily in their traditional setting. He wrote mainly for an overseas audience (indeed there is evidence to show that his Cape audience was not uniformly sympathetic[7] while there was keen interest in the novelty of the colonies in Britain) and needed copious footnotes to explain the nature of local animals for instance, which

would be strange to a British reader. They fail to convince the modern reader.[8]

Writers of poetry printed in Cape periodicals tended on the whole to write the more conventionally, the more seriously they took themselves and, indeed, seem entirely oblivious of the disparity between their words and the actual scenes they describe. It is in the lighter poems of humorous or satirical intent where indigenous, often Afrikaans, words are used without footnotes or apology and consequently with no jarring effect. They were intended for a local audience which could not fail to understand.

Wright has pointed out that "on every frontier.... a group who sometimes described themselves as the 'better element' waged a persistant warfare against the disintegrating forces which the liberty of a wild country unloosed."[9] Hence, the long, hard struggle to preserve the English cultural tradition through the media of religion and education, in a country inimical to that tradition by virtue of its own peculiar demands, dangers, hardships and isolation. That many a Cape colonist may have found himself face to face with Africa and its strangeness, and fearfully withdrawn from the encounter is indicated by the case of Colonel Sutherland who

> ....sat down with my prayer-book close to the stream, under the shade of a very pretty mimosa tree; the geranium, and numerous wild flowers, bloomed around, but without any scent, - read my prayers, but was shocked and surprised to find that I could not turn my heart to its usual devotion - towards my God. In endeavouring to account for this to myself,

> I fear that it arises from the absence of anything civilizing - of any friend or associations, to cheer and soften the heart. Are these things then necessary to raise and soften the heart, and to turn the soul in gratitude towards God? I trust not, but fear they are!

An anonymous poetaster interprets this in rhyme (and that he should have taken the trouble suggests that Sutherland's words may have struck a responsive chord in other colonial breasts):

> Strange flowers grew round, and birds unknown,
> Glanced through the forest sunshine lone;
> The very face of Nature smiled
> With an expression strange and wild.
> No human work, no human care,
> The loneliness of death was there!
> And then came rushing o'er my soul
> Dark thoughts which prayer might not control.
> The Holy Book, in guise unmeet,
> With unclaspt leaves lay at my feet,
> As if the Genius of the place
> In that wild hour refused its grace,
> And bade my spirit own the spell
> It turned from, yet obeyed too well.[10]

It is only through thoughts of home that Sutherland regains his equanimity.

The heroes in American literature seemed finally to create the American character. Pearce, speaking of Daniel Boone, says that he "is not the real frontiersman, but rather the frontiersman whom Americans were creating so they might comprehend themselves and what they might become as they moved west to clear the way for their new

civilisation."[11] It is perhaps significant that the heroes in Cape verse up to 1851 are either English (Sir Harry), Xhosa (Makanna, Hintza) or frontier commando leaders like Bowker. There is no larger than life, full-blooded frontier hero of legendary exploit. The schism in loyalty which resulted from the conflicting purposes of the colonists - missionaries, farmers, merchants - was perhaps a stumbling block in English South African development. The Settler was in an ambiguous position, loyal to England, prevented from achieving a complete independence of spirit by a barrier in front and a curb behind. Not for him the lonely trek to escape jurisdiction.

The population of the Cape can be divided roughly into merchants, government officials, missionaries, professional men, settlers and visitors. The fashion for pseudonyms makes it difficult to discover without a great deal more research which group contributed most to the verse to be studied. It would be arbitrary simply to say that the uneducated wrote about South Africa, while the educated did not. It seems probable, however, that the Settlers, driven from "home" by economic conditions and unlikely ever to return would have the deepest commitment to Africa. These, like all other pioneers and settlers on a frontier, were very much occupied with the problems of survival. An examination of the Graham's Town Journal reveals that it is only in the mid-1840's that a regular stream of "original" verse pours in. From December, 1831 to December, 1845, a period of fourteen years, forty items of South African

interest are noted. From January, 1846 to December, 1851 - six years - there are a hundred. There is also a tendency for the flow to decrease as tension and conflict mounted. In 1850, there were thirty-three original poems printed. In 1851 after the outbreak of the war there were only fifteen and, of these, thirteen were printed after May, when reinforcements arrived. These figures, it must be stressed, are only approximate but they are surely not mere coincidence.

In the search through local newspapers and periodicals, the researcher cannot but be astonished at the tremendous interest in verse of every description, and the diversity of purposes for which it was used. Advertisements sometimes rhymed; favourite games were enigmas and acrostics. Rhyme was used in letters to editors, for obituaries, to mark special occasions, to voice indignation, humour or criticism. A favourite type of composition was the making of songs to a tune already in existence. Novelty was particularly attractive - unusual subjects, even unusual shapes. Numerous excerpts from Thomas Hood's Comic Annual show the status of rhymed nonsense. Sentiment and moral were represented by quotations from the writings of Felicia Hemans, Eliza Cook, Charles Swain, Moore and Campbell. Butler's "Hudibras" enjoyed great popularity at the Cape. It was quoted and referred to as if it were widely known. Writers at the Cape did their best to emulate these models, as can be seen by the titles of some of their verse. Happy the poetaster who wrote "The Dying Blind Girl's Confession" or "Lines on an old Lady found dead

in a Praying Attitude". The titles must have been the early equivalent of the sensational headline, even if the themes were disappointing. Many sentimental Cape ladies of melancholy temperament must have breathed vicarious sighs for days on the strength of those titles alone.

Prose would certainly have been preferable in some cases, yet there must be a sneaking admiration for anyone who could write in rhymed couplets and at such length, when the effort of reading them alone is exhausting. The reason for the preference for verse rather than prose seems to be that verse attracted more attention. There is little doubt that the poet was looked upon as an authority, on morals, right thinking, virtue, proper sensitivity to life's "slings and arrows" and philosophical acceptance of misfortune, usually through religious beliefs. "For what ought we to admire the poet?" asked Aristophanes; and his answer was "because the poet makes better men".[12]

Quotations, in editorials, articles and letters to the editor, abound, especially from poets like Shakespeare, whose work is adaptable to any situation. The words "as the poet says" are frequently seen and poetry was even quoted in scientific articles on subjects like physiology. Also, in moments of great emotion, a man would feel constrained to write poetry. Witness Jeremiah Goldswain's touching "poem" on the death of his friend.[13]

In this, once more, the Cape is not unique. Writing of New Zealand, McCormick says:

> ....the antipodean soil was to prove as congenial to the Victorian habit of poeticising as to those imported weeds which alarmed the settlers by their monstrous growth. Many of the newspapers made a regular and prominent feature of their 'Poet's Corner', while some employed or patronized an official versifier who turned out topical verses on suitable occasions and in the intervals supplied the colonial demand for sentiment on such themes as 'The Sister's Grave', 'The Missionary Infants Tomb', 'He never Smiled Again', 'The Rose in the Burial Ground', 'To Clarinda', 'Bonnie May', and so forth.
> The more official kinds of verse were generally concerned with social activities - anniversary celebrations, funerals, ceremonies at the opening of public buildings, and the less solemn gatherings that went under the generic name of 'social'. At a social a poet-entertainer would often sing his original verses, calling on the audience to join in the chorus, in the manner of the popular comedian of a past epoch.[14]

This might well be a description of poetic activity at the Cape.

All this was a far cry from indigenous verse growing out of the real life of real people in an environment that could not be ignored.

It is obvious that much of the more conventional poetry must be disregarded in these pages. Nevertheless an attempt will be made to evaluate Cape verse, often doggerel, in terms of social interest, for the light it sheds on the life and attitudes of the colonists.

The second part of the thesis will examine the work of individual poetasters in terms of their reaction to new surroundings and themes and the presence, or absence, of a budding national literature.

Notes

[1]Rudyard Kipling, quoted in The Cambridge History of English Literature, XIV, III, (Cambridge University Press, 1934), p. 373.

[2]For a detailed account of the conflict with Lord Charles Somerset, see A.M. Lewin Robinson, None Daring to Make us Afraid, (Maskew Miller, Cape Town, 1962), pp. 16-37.

[3]Colonial American Writing, ed. Roy Harvey Pearce, (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York), p. 501.

[4]Hadfraft, Cecil, Australian Literature: A Critical Account to 1955, (Heinemann, G.B., 1960), p. 9.

[5]The Cambridge History of English Literature, p. 364.

[6]Louis B. Wright, Culture on the Moving Frontier, (Harper Torchbooks / The Academy Library, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1961), p. 74.

[7]The Graham's Town Journal, 2 January, 1835, p. 4, col. 3. "....can this be tolerated among a nation of civilized men? Will the author be allowed to drag his slimy tail and spit his venom among us any more?"

[8]For a discussion of Thomas Pringle's poetry, see The Frontier in South African English Verse: 1820-1927, Avis Elizabeth Taylor (Thesis, R.U., 1960), Chapt. I. Also The Violent Arcadia by Sydney Clouts, (Thesis, R.U., 1971), Chapt. II.

[9]Wright, p. 12.

[10]Sam Sly's African Journal, 19 October, 1848, p. 4, Col. 1.

[11]Pearce, p. 546.

[12]Walter Jackson Bate, From Classic to Romantic: Premises of Taste in eighteenth century England, (Harper Torchbooks / The Academy Library, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1961). p. 4.

[13]The Chronicle of Jeremiah Goldswain, ed. Una Long, (The Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town, 1946), Vol. 1, p. 81.

[14]E.H. McCormick, New Zealand Literature, A SURVEY, (London O.U.P., 1959), pp. 32-33.

# PART I

Rhyming's a trick - There's no more art
In making sonnets than a tart.

Sam Sly.

# CHAPTER I

## THE ROLE OF THE NEWSPAPER AND EDITOR IN CAPE VERSE

The American War of Independence and the French Revolution placed political leaders on the defensive. Hence Colonial policy, in the early years of the second British occupation, was reactionary. The only newspaper in existence, when the Settlers arrived at the Cape, was the Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser.

W.W. Bird gave a gloomy account of the condition of the press at the Cape in 1822.

> The liberty of the press is a feeling so congenial to the heart of a British subject, that it is mortifying to describe such a degraded establishment as the government printing-office at the Cape of Good Hope. The annual circle of its duties consists in printing the Cape Calendar and Almanack, and a weekly newspaper called the Cape Gazette, which is in fact a mere list of proclamations, of civil and military appointments and promotions, marriages, births, christenings, deaths, the price of articles of produce, and advertisement of sales...all of which is extremely useful to buyers and sellers, but by no means amusing or instructive. The public is rarely indulged with a scrap of European intelligence; and when such a circumstance does take place, it consists of matter suited to the submissive state of a colony...[1]

The importance of the Ordinance of 1828 granting the freedom of the press to the colony cannot be stressed too greatly, for one of the most obvious ways of disseminating English tradition, taste and conventional sentiment was the newspaper. Not only was it a form of communication providing the solidarity and security which stems from contact with one's kind, and the means through which information of varying quality could reach even the lowly and poor; but, more important for this study, it provided a sounding board for versifiers of every description.

There are two important aspects to be noted in the periodical - and presumably the newspaper can be included as what was refused by the more pretentious "literary" journals was often accepted by the newspaper.[2]

> An aspiring author, in this way, might, and did, obtain a hearing without undergoing the risk and expense of publishing a book or a pamphlet. From the reception given to the new reviews, it is clear that, on the part of the general community, an intellectual thirst, once confined to the very few, was now keenly felt. Men wanted to know about books, and events, and to find them discussed.[3]

Add to a free press the peculiar advantages of the colonial writer - "an interested audience, a sense of direction, and, in a new country and a new people, an inexhaustible theme"[4] - and the literary prospects at the Cape begin to look hopeful. If the yield of

meritorious verse is negligible, there can be no doubting the activity. A.J. Jardine, editor of the Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette (June, 1830 to December, 1835) wrote: "We have to acknowledge very many communications on this head of the most varied kinds and qualities. We have as much on hand as would commence building a wall round Parnassus, or go far to make a hill towards the height of Pindus."[5]

A detailed analysis of editorial policy[6] is beyond the scope of this thesis. The speculations in this Chapter are based on observations made while collecting and arranging material and on the editorial comments affixed to some of the poems, especially by William Layton Sammons, editor of Sam Sly's African Journal (later The African Journal) from June, 1843 to December, 1851.

It is disappointing, though comprehensible, to find no editorial comment of this kind from Pringle, who (with A.J. Jardine and W.L. Sammons) must be mentioned as one of the most important editors. This writer was not able to examine the South African Journal but Dr Robinson has commented:

> The South African Journal of 1824 cannot be regarded as a spontaneous bursting into print of a colonial people seeking for cultural expression. It should be clear...that the English-speaking Kapenaar was not likely to aspire to such heights from his popular interests and educational level, apart

from the opposition of authority. It required a professional man of letters and an experienced amateur (as Fairbairn had hitherto been), both of whom had only recently settled at the Cape but had come with the avowed intent of using their talents for the improvement of the public mind, to bring it into being. It is significant that after the failure of their efforts in the periodical field it was only in 1830 and under another governor that further periodicals in English appeared.

These two, we shall not be surprised to learn, not only edited but also wrote the greater part of the two issues themselves. In fact of the forty-six items of verse and prose, sixteen are definitely by Pringle and thirteen by Fairbairn, while three or four more can probably be attributed to them.

We have no evidence of the number of contributions offered and of the number rejected, but the success of later Cape journals must suggest that, had the South African Journal continued, the English-speaking 'intelligentsia' would have become more articulate therein. They were indeed not slow to express themselves in the correspondence columns of the public press. On the other hand Pringle and Fairbairn set themselves a high standard and with the facility for writing that both possessed they were clearly very ready to write or select from their earlier works, as much as was needed to fill the required number of pages.[7]

These observations are no doubt applicable to the early issues of the South African Commercial Advertiser, of which Pringle and Fairbairn became editors after the second issue of 14 January, 1824. From 21 January to 5 May, when the newspaper was discontinued because the Fiscal had assumed censorship, only four 'original' poems were printed. Hence Pringle as an editor has no influence on the comments in this chapter.

It has been suggested that much of the doggerel found in Cape newspapers was printed for lack of copy;[8] but editors purloined articles from other papers quite freely and, besides, had access to the world's greatest poets - and minor ones. The South African Commercial Advertiser, for example, published poems by Wordsworth, Cowper, Suckling, Smollett, Burns, Grey, Alexander, Browne, Jane Taylor and William Warner in the period from 19 August, 1835 to 23 December, 1835. This would certainly depend to some extent on what the editor was reading at the time and felt should be passed on to his readers but there is also the probability that, during this period, he received nothing "original" from his correspondents.

Newspapers were "painfully dependent on support from the public"[9] and it is certainly true that some editors published poems of inferior quality for fear of losing a correspondent. They admitted it. Under "On a Celebrated Dumb Highlander in the Heerengracht"

by Tyro, (Sam Sly's African Journal, 20 July, 1843), Sammons commented:

> "We give insertion to the above lines because our communications, 'like angel's visits, are few and far between;' [sic] and because our correspondent seems anxious for their appearance, having sent them once before. But it is that style of composition that we can do nothing with in the shape of amendment or 'correction;'..."[10]

Under lines by Proteus, (Sam Sly's African Journal, 15 August, 1844), we find.

> We give Proteus's effusion because he says it is original, and because we cannot afford to lose a Correspondent...[11]

It also appears likely however that editors made it a policy to encourage local effort when they had space, apologising on occasion that the work had not been given a more prominent position.

Beneath "Midnight Music" and "To their Worships, The Municipal Corporation of Cape Town" (Sam Sly's African Journal, 1 March, 1849) is printed:

> The above (poetical trifles), by new correspondents, we insert in order to encourage them and others to metrical and mental efforts; but still they are far below the standard we seek, and we have had occasion to remedy the metre in several instances, in the latter piece which ran lame in many lines, and is yet far from perfect. Nor can we promise to mend for the future any broken stanzas, for, as Dean Swift once said of certain persons, "it would be easier to make a new one." -[12]

The poem, "My Mother's Sentiments", in the South African Advocate and Cape Town Spectator of 2 January, 1843, is prefixed with the following:

> The lines of "My Mother's Sentiments" - which come anonymously - if original, are deserving of a more conspicuous and important corner, which unfortunately is filled up this week; but to show that we appreciate their simplicity and delicacy, we shall not keep the authoress in suspense, but give them a place although, as it were, in parenthesis.[13]

Perhaps editors at the Cape wished to convince themselves and others that the "Capers", though far from their cultural home, were not altogether lacking in those qualities which compounded the literary scene of the day. They should be lauded, as they undoubtedly kept alive an interest in poetry - and creative effort. The bad qualities of a poem would sometimes make it more entertaining, besides arousing the critical faculty, however dormant. It seems to be a quality of the mind that, if it sees what it considers bad, it also considers seriously that it may do better and, on occasion, sets out to prove its superiority. A "nothing but the best..." attitude has unassailably good points but it can stifle creative urges by making the would-be poet afraid to try.

The desire to outdo one's neighbour may be the mechanism behind some at least of the poetic "correspondences" in much the same style as the "letter to the

editor" type of argument so familiar to a modern reader. Here is an example involving the army, printed in the Cape Frontier Times of 25 July, 1844.

LINES WRITTEN ON A FRONTIER OUTPOST

Stranger, you'll swear, if e'er thou dost
Visit gloomy Botha's Post. [sic]
If for our sins on earth we roast,
Our dwelling should be Botha's Post.
Of mundane evils there's a host
Always found at Botha's Post.
In winter freeze, in summer toast,
All who dwell at Botha's Post
Search thro' the earth, where'er thou goest,
You'll [sic] find no match for Botha's Post.
Job's patience sure the wretch may boast,
Who spends six months in [sic] Botha's Post, [sic]
Of earthly dungeons sure the most
Is that curs'd wolf-hole Botha's Post.
Compar'd with it the Stygian coast
Has far more charms than Botha's Post.
I'd sooner wander there a ghost
Than spend my life at Botha's Post.
I believe my rhymes are done almost,
So now goodnight to Botha's Post.
H[14]

This writer is voicing a grievance and, at the same time, inviting laughter at his plight. He is not seeking immortal fame, fortunately. The repetition of "Botha's Post" and its peculiarly uncompromising sound do suggest the monotony of a lonely, uncivilised spot. The hyperbole is a device much employed in Cape comic writing. The feeble ending is also rather

typical. The anonymous reply is printed a month later.

ANSWER TO LINES WRITTEN ON AN OUTPOST

Your poet with his woes engrost,
No charms can see at Botha's Post;
I've lived there now six months almost
And know no place like Botha's Post.
Like kings we live on boiled and roast,
Fish, flesh, and fowl, at Botha's Post, [sic]
Our tables spread with tea and toast,
Each morn you'll see at Botha's Post.
A farmer there, called Van der Nost,
Brings eggs and fruit to Botha's Post.
Fish from the stream, that by it flows(t),
Our banquets grace at Botha's Post.
Little it seems, good Sir, thou knowest,
Our merry nights at Botha's Post.
We sleep out till the cock it crows(t),
And tells it's morn, at Botha's Post, [sic]
Our mirth and song would scare a ghost,
If such could dwell at Botha's Post.
Three bottles are the very low'st
That we allow at Botha's Post.
In search of scenery if thou goest,
Sublimely grand is Botha's Post;
Salvator or Correggios
Alone could paint thee, Botha's Post.
Instead of Styx - Elysium's coast
Would more resemble Botha's Post.
Of maidens fair we have the boast,
Dwelling with us at Botha's Post.
Nelly transplanted, there thou grow'st
Sweet Erin's flower, in Botha's Post,
And Molly, of darlings sure the most,
Her sweetness adds to Botha's Post.
Such are the charms. "Sunt in que est;" [sic]
Makes thee delightful, Botha's Post.[15]

The writer's interests argue Irish nationality. The marks of education should be noticed - in ludicrous contrast to the device to obtain a rhyme. The writer

is saying, "Don't take me seriously." In the midst of its alleged splendours, Botha's Post remains as sternly uncompromising as ever.

At this point another soldier enters the fray in much more sophisticated style.

EPISTLE TO THE BARD OF BOTHA'S POST

Hail! hail to thee thou brilliant star!
Thou wandering ghost or man of war. -
Be thou what thou may'st, I greet thee,
Though I should not like to meet thee,
Lest perchance thou'dst make me swagger,
And my ravished senses stagger.
Surely thou art most uncommon
Clever - art thou man or woman?
Thou at least art Botha's boast )
(In gormandizing eggs and toast!) )
Don't raise our markets; if thou )
dost )
There's not a matron on this border,
Money expender, money hoarder,
There's not a White man nor a Fingoe,
That won't wage war with thee by jingo!
Then too, the goddly [sic] sons of Bacchus,
("Three precious bottles!") be they black as
The murky cloud above us soaring,
But what will soon be found deploring
Thy great wine-bibbing depredations;
And hopes forlorn, and queer sensations,
Will soon possess us if thy drinking
Be followed up with zeal unshrinking,
And grief must every breast pursue
If thy strong thirst we can't subdue.
The ladies in this far locatioe [sic],
Of every denomination,
Are longing for a sight of thee,
And asking of thy pedigree;
I really think a fairy host
Will soon in-span for Botha's post.

"Oh! tell it not in Gath, ye gods!"
That maidens quit their quiet abodes,
To go upon a pilgrimage
To Botha's fairy paradise,
And there before a poet sage
Kneel down with supplicating eyes.
But pilgrims they shall surely be
(If anxious mothers but agree)
Since here their brightest hopes are lost
In aërial dreams of Botha's post!
Ah! cruel must the poet be,
Such desolation could he see,
That would not buckle on his quiver,
And send some love-darts 'cross Kat River,
To calm the drooping hearts that feel
Such interest in Botha's weal,
(But better tunes his choicest lute,
And all his modest lies confute.)
Were I a poet, I would strive,
To keep the dàmsels still alive, [s.c]
But, "give the palm to whom 'tis due,"
For poet's wreaths I dare not sue,
My fondest dreams of fame are lost,
Through that confounded Botha's post!
BAHROO[16]

Bahroo was an inveterate poetaster and a chapter will be devoted to his work later. His facetious reply, besides saying "You lie, Sir!" reflects towards the end, a change of emphasis from Botha's post to poetic ability. His use of "Fingoe", "by jingo", "in-span" and "Kat River" show the reader that he is writing in lighter vein. Much of Bahroo's work is seriously conventional.

Another example of this is found in the correspondence involving "A Heart to be Let", a poetic advertisement for a wife, first printed in the Graham's Town Journal on 28 September, 1843, and in Sam Sly's African Journal on 12 October. The latter journal enthusiastically solicited replies from spinsters. ("A 'Letter Box' being opened at the Journal 'Office' for that especial purpose, in which they can deposit their hopes and wishes with security and secrecy.")[17]

This correspondence is interesting in that the first reply (Sam Sly's African Journal, 19 October, 1843) came allegedly from one Dolly Dubbs, who was on her way to India, her ship, the "Bentinck" Steamer, having put into port at Cape Town. Whether this was true or not, it does bring out a valid point, the role played by visitors in early Cape writing. In his introduction, the editor says:

> Our readers will be aware that this original effusion is a reply to - "A Heart to be Let," inserted in our last, which it appears has been to let for some time in other quarters, consequently [sic] loses its value as a novel announcement, but we are assured it is not so with the rejoinder, which is here given with all its faults.[18]

The battle of editors against plagiarism must have been long and bitter. Despite Sammon's comment, he received, a month later, another 'reply', to which he was forced to affix a firm but tactful reproof.

> At the request of a Fair correspondent we cannot refuse, Who seems anxious, at the ninth hour, to relieve the troubles of a sorrowful Bachelor at Graham's Town - if not already suited to his heart's content - we give insertion to the above lines, but we trust that "C.Z.A." is aware that her wishes and response did not first emanate from Bree-Street, but have appeared in type in various quarters, and amongst the rest, the 'Graham's Town Journal,' a short time ago. Original communications are most desirable, and it is also requisite in order to insure them, that the real names and localities of the writers be sent although under what titles they choose. But 'C.Z.A.' is thanked for her kindness. -[19]

To win kudos as a poet must have been a coveted honour. A promising literary career was nipped in the bud when John Birch was detected in plagiarism by Ethne, who found, and communicated, a remarkable resemblance between his third poem, "The Depths of the Sea"[20] and one entitled, "The Treasures of the Deep."[21] On this occasion, Sammons suggested sarcastically that perhaps he had not realised the extent of his indebtedness.[22] John Birch did not write again, as far as can be ascertained. The career of George Fletcher also testifies to the single-mindedness with which some sought, if not poetic honour, at least to see their work in print. He was so persistent that he drew upon himself the most cutting criticism accorded to any would-be poet at the Cape.[23]

Editors walked a tightrope between encouragement on the one hand, and the maintenance of some standard on the other. Manifestoes on poetry and its purpose are not frequent. Jardine, commenting on the contributions he had received, and the limited use he had made of them, continued:

> At the same time, we wish it to be distinctly understood, that we are desirous of cultivating a most friendly intercourse with the Poets, and do most earnestly request their constant aid and correspondence. Poetry is a magnificent and exalted art. It is a nobler result of the intellectual power of man, than the profoundest science, or most subtle and erudite research. It is the proud and peculiar privilege of the Poet to delight! Instruction he frequently aims at, (if he be of the right stamp,) but to excite refined and pleasurable sensations is particularly his object - failing in which, he fails completely. Poetry, it must not be forgotten, has in many countries been a chief instrument of civilisation. It has not only preceded science in the history of human progress, but it has in many countries preceded the knowledge of the mechanical arts. Even the mediocre effusions of the humbler poets, have been found highly beneficial in the promotion of national improvement. "Give to me," said the Patriot Fletcher, of Saltoun, "the making of the songs of a people, and I will give up to others the making of their laws."[24]

This is very well as far as it goes - our ideas have changed since then. It is interesting to note the usual bias towards didacticism. The student is a little shaken to read the bombastic lines which follow, entitled "Seaman Overboard".

> List, list, my love! to that heart-rending
> scream
> That scar'd me wildly from my broken sleep,
> Or have I started from some frightful dream
> Of drowning horror in the angry deep?
> Did ye not hear it? - No; 'twas but the
> shrill
> Sea bird that shrieks aloud at break of day:
> He hovers nigh, as 'twere foreboding ill,
> And, vulture like, he screams, expectant of
> his prey.
>
> Again! again! that piercing shriek once more -
> A strange - a wild - convulsive-dreadful cry!
> O God! it sounds more human than before, -
> Like "some strong swimmer in his agony."
> Ill-fated man! could none their succour lend,
> To rescue thee from out thy living grave?
> Or wert thou destined to so sad an end,
> Unpitied and unknown, to sink beneath the
> wave?...

Jardine's statements would have been far too abstract and would have set too high a standard to make much impression on the average rhymester. Sammons is the only editor of a newspaper who committed himself fairly frequently to a critical stance. Though he too was didactically and sentimentally orientated, his criticisms were good-natured[25] and to the point and were served up with an actual model for his correspondents to imitate or eschew. This sense of a greater intimacy with his readers

no doubt arose from the nature of his journal, which was "a compromise between the new journal...and the literary magazine"[26] and was "more of a family magazine than a newspaper and contained reading matter of interest to the whole family circle, children included".[27]

Sammon's commendation of "Liberty" by Mary Elizabeth (Sam Sly's African Journal, 16 May, 1844) is positively enthusiastic. It must be remembered that he was still fairly new to the Cape.

> Oh, stranger, if thou'st ever known
> What 'tis misfortune's friend to be,
> And o'er the wounded heart o'erthrown
> The balm of kindly sympathy;
>
> If thine has been a willing ear,
> To list the tale of doubt and dread;
> If thine the soothing voice to cheer,
> The hand to raise a drooping head;...
>
> Then stranger stay, nor heedless hear
> The warning voice that whispers thee, -
> Though Faith and Hope their reckoning bear
> "The pearl of price" is Charity.[28]

His comment: "We recognise in the above Impromptu, the fair authoress of the 'Outlaw'...[sic] leads us to the conclusion that after all there is some literature in the Cape"...

In 1848, an older - but apparently not wiser - man, he recommends the stanzas, "Memory", from Chamber's Edinburgh Journal "to the frequent perusal of our poetic Correspondents, as a model for their imitation

and adoption, and as a style that we could wish to see more frequently in this corner, and which we have been endeavouring to encourage and obtain for nearly five years. In some instances with great success, but in others more unfortunate and feeble. -"

One stanza should convey the quality of "Memory".

> I am an old man - very old;
> My hair is thin and gray;
> My hand shakes like an autumn leaf,
> That wild winds toss all day.
> Beneath the pent-house of my brows,
> My dim and watery eyes,
> Gleam like faint lights within a pile,
> Which half in ruin lies.[29]

Sammons is more realistic when he feels the urge to bring his contributors down to earth. Of the chronically homesick Fraingach:

> ...South Afric's hills may lofty rise,
> Her rivers proudly foam;
> Yet, my sick heart within me dies!
> Where is my own sweet home?

he comments:

> Fraingach, who weeps for the past, is not the only one who is "Home sick," or who longs for the scenes of youth and childhood. It is a feeling implanted by nature, and the further we retire from the cause of the sensation, the more inveterate and intense becomes the emotion. A new home, like a new shoe, does not fit at first, until use and wear and tear reconcile, and cause it to become habitual.[30]

He reminds the nostalgic Irishman who wrote the "Praties' Blue Bells" that pigs and potatoes are not fitting subjects for poetry.

> If it be so easy to render "an Irishman happy"as to throw his Praties into print, ... on this occasion[sic] we do not object, but although he follows NATURE in his picture, the subject is not the most poetical that might have been chosen.[31]

In reply to M.A.B's "beautiful and poetic lines"[32] on the wind, he writes a poem on the South Easter to "show how much sensations are governed by circumstances, and that the states of mind often depend on the state of the finances."

Sam Sly's influence must have been enormous, as he himself was one of the most prolific poetasters at the Cape.[33] However, "at the time of the Convict question, Sam Sly lost his popularity, and was so annoyed in printing his paper that his health was breaking up with constant labour and vexation".[34] He gave up the paper and became a bookseller,[35] his shop being located in Plein Street, at the corner of Spin Street.[36]

In 1855, he made a plea for local literature, (printed in the Graaff-Reinet Herald of 16 May, 1855), after he had heard an address by Governor Sir George Grey at the South African Public Library.[37] His ideas on the subject must have been influenced by his eight years experience as an editor.

"'The mass of every people must be barbarous where there is no printing' - [sic] Dr Johnson.

"So we learn thrice a week through an advertising medium, in the region of the Hottentot and the 'prickly pear.' But if it be barbarous where there is no printing, what must it be where there is no reading, and no book making? where they merely buy and sell this literary ware, and neither examine its quality, nor think of manufacturing for themselves, but are wholly dependent on the mother country and a foreign supply? How does this tally with those annual flourishes of the Literary trumpet, so grandiloquently sounded at the Cape Town Library? Verily those high toned efforts are indicative of matters as they <u>should</u> be, rather than as they actually are. And such was the candid confession of His Excellency Sir George Grey lately...His Excellency thought us no better than we should be, [sic] nay, rather that he considered us as barely coming up to that standard, from having been too frequently buttered and soft sawdered....[38]

"So long as it is considered a reflection, and appears idle for a merchant to be found seated at the Library, so long will it be only a serious farce to talk eloquently of Literature, and of the grand strides and advances it is making in Africa. Where is the proof when not a single pamphlet of a decided literary or political [sic] cast, unaccompanied by a mercantile announcement, can this day be found. Not one little flower indigenous to the soil can be raised, notwithstanding a learned and 'Literary Society' exists, with D.D.s and F.R.S.s and LL.D.s, and all the capitals of the alphabet, denoting honourable [sic] titles and pretensions to wisdom and intellect.

"There is no Literature in Cape Town. If there be, it is locked up in the iron safe of the possessor, or in the brain of the author. It does not appear, and is neither printed nor published. We have an abundance of books but they are imported. We are satisfied with the thoughts of others, without caring to give vent to our own. A prophet has no honour in his own country, and so we send for one over the water - far fetched, but not always full of wisdom or worth the passage money. And we put him up by auction to the best bidder, sometimes without examining his credentials, or testing his quality; pleased rather with his button and his coat than with his internal excellence. We buy another, and sell him, or make an exchange, and put him on the shelf - and forget, or are too busy to take him down again. This is the state of Literature at Cape Town. We may lecture, we may preach, and we may write, and unless this Literature be a passion, a want, a mental and heartfelt desire (as great as any physical requirement) a positive happiness and delight without which the spirit droops and becomes sad - not merely for the sake of smoking over, or to kill time, to lob or to trifle with and to withdraw from every anxiety, and torment, and to turn our thoughts within, to prove, to examine, to compare - we have, but small hopes of its permanency, and legitimate intentions. But when we reflect upon the poverty that this Literature overcomes, the anguish that it subdues, and the lasting happiness that it affords - when rightly appreciated - it is worthy of an effort to add a mite to the blessing. It is right that each and all, however, [sic] humble their abilities should make some sacrifice for this general good...."[39]

## Notes

[1]Robinson, p. 4.

[2]"Mountains" by Umgola was first sent to the South African Church Magazine, which rejected it. It was published in Sam Sly's African Journal on 10 April, 1845, and Sammons commented that he could find no reason for its rejection in the style.

[3]A.R.D. Elliot, "Reviews and Magazines in the Early Years of the Nineteenth Century", The Cambridge History of English Literature XII, I (Cambridge, at the University Press, 1933), p. 141.

[4]McCormick, p. 22.

[5]C. of G. Hope Lit. Gazette, I (1830), 24.

[6]See bibliography for list of newspapers and periodicals examined for this thesis. [pp 294-295]

[7]Robinson, p. 41.

[8]Taylor, p. 43.

[9]Alan F. Hattersley, "Byways of South African Journalism in Early Victorian Days", Quarterly Bulletin of the S. African Library, XI (1956), 48. Hereafter Quarterly Bulletin.

[10]Sam Sly's African Journal, 20 July, 1843, p. 3. Hereafter S.S.A.J. See Appendix A.

[11]Ibid., 15 August, 1844, p. 3. See Appendix A

[12]Ibid., 1 March, 1849, p. 4. See Appendix A

[13]S.A. Advocate and C.T. Spectator, 2 January, 1843, p. 3. See Appendix A

[14]Cape Frontier Times, 25 July, 1844, p. 3.

[15]Ibid., 22 August, 1844, p. 3.

[16]Ibid., 12 September, 1844, p. 4.

[17]S.S.A.J., 12 October, 1843, p. 3. See Appendix A

[18]Ibid., 19 October, 1843, p. 2. See Appendix A

[19]Ibid., 23 November, 1843, p. 3. See Appendix A

[20]Ibid., 23 March, 1848, p. 4.

[21]Ibid., 30 March, 1848, p. 4.

[22]Ibid

[23]See Chapter IV of this thesis

[24]C. of G. Hope. Lit. Gazette, I (1830), 23.

[25]Alan F. Hattersley, "Sam Sly (William Layton Sammons)", Quarterly Bulletin IX (1955), 113.

[26]Ibid., p. 109

[27]Ibid., p. 113

[28]S.S.A.J., 16 May, 1844, p. 2.

[29]Ibid., 23 March, 1848, p. 4.

[30]Ibid., 22 August, 1844, p. 3.

[31]Ibid., 31 January, 1850, p. 4. See Appendix A

[32]Ibid., 15 August, 1844, p. 4. See Appendix A

[33]See Chapter III of this thesis

[34]J. Rabone, "Sam Sly - From the Diary of W.H. Rabone", Africana Notes & News, XII (1957), p. 288

[35]Ibid

[36]Hattersley, p. 115

[37]S.A. Rochlin, "W.L. Sammons' Plea for Local Literature", Africana Notes & News, XIII (1959), pp. 234-236

[38]Ibid., p. 234

[39]Ibid., p. 235

## CHAPTER II

### ASPECTS OF LIFE AND THOUGHT AT THE CAPE, AS REFLECTED IN ITS VERSE.

It has already been stated that much early Cape verse, although it is doggerel, is of great social and historical interest. This chapter will deal with some of the themes which engrossed the colonists, comments on their situation and the events of the day which often found expression in spirited though clumsy satire.

Robinson, discussing conditions at the Cape in 1823, comments:

> Apart from matters of mere day to day existence and diversion...there were inevitable questions which troubled the thinking man and would be the subject of argument in the Commercial Exchange and the coffee houses. These were: the Kaffirs on the eastern frontier, the settlers, slavery and the missionaries.[1]

Attitudes to three of these topics, the Kaffirs, the settlers and the missionaries, are strongly evident in the verse being discussed and it is hoped that their coalescence into a major conflict of opinion will be demonstrated. It is to the colonists' credit (or perhaps due to the editor's discretion) that no opposition to slave emancipation can be detected. The settlers could not have been much concerned, as they were not permitted to own slaves. Other British colonists must have been prepared for the final

emancipation, as the abolition of the slave trade had taken place in 1807. What poetic comment there is, came mainly from overseas magazines or was purely conventional and has little relevance to this chapter.

It is common knowledge that the 1820 settlers came to the Cape with high hopes of reasonable prosperity, from a country which could not have fitted them for the conditions they were to encounter. This disparity between expectation and fact is amusingly described by Selim (Miles Bowker) in his poem "The London Emigrant and Ostrich" printed in the Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette of 5 January, 1831.[2]

I left old England's chalky cliffs to
southern climes resorting,
Where albatross and flying fish and dolphins
gay were sporting;
I left old England's frost-bound streams
and snow white covered mountains.+ [sic]
To greet more kind congenial gleams, green
woods, and shady fountains.
I thought upon South Afric's plains that
are describ'd by Barrow,
And wish'd that I were safely there, behind
my plough and harrow.
My mind was fill'd with clustering grapes
and pretty wreaths of flowers,
And how I'd court the rural Muse in Great
Fish River's bowers;
For I had heard of shepherds' lives, of
Coridon and Flora,
And many a pretty tale had read of Damon
and Pastora,
With lambs and ewes, and country views,
and fields of golden grain,
My mind was fraught, and then I thought of
cities with disdain.

+Last day of December, 1819. - Great frost

He arrives at the Cape to find:

> The whales and monsters of the main along
> the coast were playing,
> The elephant and hugh [sic] sea-cow upon
> the strand were straying,
> The vulture and the pelican above our heads
> were soaring,
> The fiercer tyrants of the wild in the
> deep woods were roaring,
> The bustard and the eagle tribe,+ in search
> of snakes, were walking,
> The ostrich and the gentle crane along the
> plains were stalking,‡
> With birds of every form and hue each
> narrow kloof was ringing,
> Whose croaking sounds and hollow notes
> were any thing but singing.

He describes in some detail the journey to Kaffirland, accompanied by Dutchmen and Hottentots, and comments on the animals and plants encountered. His description of the settlers' woes must be typical.

> But now misfortune, bitter guest, who
> long my hopes had blasted,
> With rust and mildew, drought and blight,
> our last small means had wasted;
> In these fair plains and healthy climes,
> we strangers almost fasted,
> The porcupine our gardens robb'd of
> what the drought had left us, [sic]
> The tyger, [sic] wolf, or wild dog, still of
> sheep and kine bereft us,
> Whilst fiercer Caffres drove our plains
> of all that these had spar'd, [sic]
> And worse than Job, or Prodigal, we hungry
> settlers far'd.

+The secretary bird.
‡Some of the cranes are very large.

He now describes his adventure with the ostrich. Having come across a nest of ostrich eggs, he fetches a sack to carry them home, only to be interrupted by a female bird which pursues him:

> But not fight [sic] but run away, than
> stay here to be slain,
> For he that once can get safe home may
> live to run again.

He escapes from the ostrich and, humiliated, determines to hunt and kill her, with fellow settlers for support.

> Of brother cockneys [sic] brave and stout,
> a gallant squad I muster'd,
> Who talked big, as forth we march'd,
> and bragg'd, and swore, and bluster'd.

They arrive at the spot to find that the eggs and bag have disappeared and that the gun is broken.

> We quickly judg'd, without debate, 'twas
> best to hie away,
> For fear that she behind some bush might
> still in secret lay....
> So, picking up my broken gun, strait [sic]
> began to trudge,
> Looking behind us now and then, as we
> fast home did budge;
> Each boasting what he would have done
> had she been at the place,
> Though all were very glad at heart she
> had not shewn her face.

This is poetry of a rudimentary kind but it is nevertheless full of interest and wry humour. The helplessness of the new settler in the veld is corroborated by Bertram Bowker's diary, in which he describes several humorous episodes which evoked mirth from his brothers and himself.[3]

A similar incident is described in "The Hippopotamus Hunt", printed anonymously in the Port Elizabeth Mercury of 5 June, 1850.[4]

John McPherson and the Doctor set out, "with a Kafir before to follow the spoor," to hunt a hippopotamus:

> The news had come to Town, that a
> Monster great & [sic] strong,
> Dwelt in Keiskamma's stream, and was
> doing grievous wrong [sic]
> With his mighty tusks he had broken a
> boat all into little bits,
> And many a Fingo lady, he had frightened
> out of her wits,
> As she took a walk in the gloaming,
> Where the sea horse by chance was roaming.

They manage to shoot and stun the creature. While McPherson is examining it:

> "What's that!" cried the Doctor, without
> time for reflection [sic]
> There first came a rustling, then followed
> a rush;
> Mac only had just time [sic] to fall
> down in a bush,
> When the mighty sea-monster charged up
> the ravine,

Right over the spot where our hero had been.
'Twas as perfect as the Burn's-hill
affair,
The Kafir made off like a terrified hare,[sic]
The Doctor climbed up a young tree in
a stew,
And being heavy for one he made use of two.

An account of the settlers' trials is also given in A.G. Bain's, "The British Settler",[5] published in the Graham's Town Journal on 11 April, 1844,[6] in the Cape Town Mail on 20 April[7] and in Sam Sly's African Journal[8] on 25 April. This is so well known as to warrant a mention in The Cambridge History of English Literature, as bearing "the stamp of its era upon it" and being "very characteristic".[9] Prefaced to this song in Sam Sly's African Journal are the words: "The following, composed by him for the occasion, was sung with much humour by Mr A.G. Bain - after the routine toasts at the Commemoration, [sic] had been given - the author quaintly observing, that they had been laughed at so long, they could at length afford to laugh at themselves".

It is possible that lines printed in the Port Elizabeth Telegraph and Mercantile Gazette of 15 March, 1849 and signed "Cape Nightingale",[10] are also referring to a sale of the possessions of a ruined settler family. It is interesting for its mention of the Afrikaner, not a particularly flattering picture.

The theme we give's a Master's sale,
At Riet Fontein, or rather dale,
Where sheep and many a woollen bale,
With harrow, plough, and thrashing flail,

Strong hurdle pens of iron rail,
With saucepan, bucket, pot, and pail;
Hinges and screw, and rusty nail,
Musket, and sword, and coat of mail,
Steelyards and weights, with one odd scale,
And things too numerous for detail,
Usually sold by means retail,
But which will be put up wholesale,
And that tomorrow without fail.
   See burly farmers, stout and hale,
Some riding quick, some like a snail,
On horses which they scarce prevail
To trot, to samboks, [sic] stinging wale
   [sic].
Yet here they come, through sleet and hail,
Nought caring, if they chance regale,
When they arrive, on wine or ale;
For all agree in this same tale,
That advertising's no avail,
Unless from kitchen there exhale,
Rich smells of pea soup or ox tail,
Or snipe, like woodcock, dressed with
   trail,
Which some prefer when rather stale,
Together with some buck and quail,
Hair [sic], partridge, pheasant, or land-
   rail,
Dished up with carrots or sea-cale;
For every Africander male,
And we may add too the female,
Have appetites so far from frail!
That if they don't a luncheon hail,
They'd rather not attend a sale,
At least so says the Cape Town Mail.
But what is that which makes him quail,
The owner of this pleasant vale,
And all his witty jokes curtail,
And fills his breath with woe and wail?
It is that there is no entail,
No good security or bail,
By which they can at all prevail,
To make the Master stop the sale.

For this the family bewail,
And adds to griefs this other ail,
That they perhaps may go to jail,
Or that the girls must take the veil,
In Enon or Genadendale,
Where Totties revel in Wassail,
And drink potations Bacchanale!
Or that the boys should have to sail
To Cork, or rather to Kinsale,
Where Democrats shout out repale,
And broguish turn the eal to ale.
Or far away where storm and gale,
Force them the leaking craft to bail,
The lofty masts to climb and scale,
Or else - the running gear to brail,
Along the plunging ship's taffrail, [sic]
Or go where burns the hot "soleil",
Where naked savages impale
Their victims, whom they taunt and rail,
And whilst their reeking flesh inhale,
Tear it with cruel hand and nail -
Deeming the food quite "Nonpareil",
The thought of which quite turns one pale....

Despite the monotony of the rhyme scheme and the heavy-handedness of some of the humour, a certain bitterness pervades these lines, in the pathetic list of possessions, in the cupidity and greed of the farmers out to get goods at a cheap rate and in the distress and insecurity of the family.

The colonists turned their attention to their surroundings early, finding in the economic situation and environment much at which they could laugh. On 7 January, 1824, the South African Commercial Advertiser printed "The Cape of Good Hope, in 1814 and 1824. A familiar Epistle from Timothy Torrid, to his Cousin Peter, in Westminster".[11] This was also printed in

Sam Sly's African Journal of 9 November, 1843.[12] "Timothy Torrid" also signed himself "Robert" on occasion. He had been invalided to the Cape from Bengal.[13] In his rhymed letter, he describes the changes which have taken place in the ten years elapsed since his first visit.

> Lest here, you shou'd ask, if improvement appears,
> Co-equal with time in the same lapse of years?
> I slightly shall sketch, what appears to my view,
> As worthy of notice, or striking or new.
> I remember, at landing, my dear sister Letty,
> Was half dead with her fears, as she climb'd up the Jetty.
> But invalids, now, can dispense with their chairs,
> And quietly walk from the boat up the stairs - [sic]
> Thus landed in safety, I took to my rambles,
> And the first thing I saw was the new butcher's shambles,
> All rang'd in good order, quite cleanly and neat. [sic]
> With their backs to the sea, and their fronts to the street.
> Then I saunter'd along, and continued my range,
> Where the acqueduct stood, there now stands the Exchange.
> But, O monstrous! the scandal and jeer of town-talk;
> They've stuck a score shops in the Gentlemen's walk -
> Where the naked are cloth'd, and the hungry, if heedful,
> Can supply all their wants, by the help of the needful.
> What caus'd more surprise, as it will to my cousins,

The Bookseller's shops are now starting
by dozens.
Once a very few volumes was full quantum
suff,
And the buyers of books were the vendors
of snuff.
At the first that I enter'd, believe me
'tis true,
Was the Settlers' Report, and the Pamphlet
of Pugh -
But how can my pen its great wonders
express, [sic]
They were both dripping-wet, from a
Hottentot Press....

In Sam Sly's African Journal, of 20 July, 1843, "Hookem Snivvy" gives an ironic account of pollution in "Ode to the shores of Rogge Bay".[14]

Sweet spot so romantic, which gladdens
my view,
As I pass from the Tronk to that wharf
called the new,
I love thee - and e'en on a hot summer's
day,
On thy shores would I wander, my sweet
Rogge Bay!...

Tell me not, tell me not of the sumptuous
fare,
Of the boil'd fish and rice found in
Greenmarket-square,
Oh where shall we see such a goodly array [sic]
Of dainties as strew thy sweet shores,
Rogge Bay.

Here a plump deceased fowl, there a racy
Snoek's head,
Here some turnips are seen, there some
fragments of bread;
What luxuries rare (for which nothing's
to pay),
Deck thy shores in profusion, my own Rogge
Bay....

What ambrosial scents, when the summer
breeze blows,
From your fish-market greet my susceptible
nose.
But alas, yes alas! I must tear me away
From pleasures like these, of thy shores,
Rogge Bay....
...But when dimmed is this eye, and this
hair turn'd to grey,
Still this nose will remember thy shores,
Rogge Bay.

Another comment on disagreeable circumstance is contained in "Burghersdorp Fleas" by "Jos. Katchum" in the Cape of Good Hope Examiner of 21 April, 1848.[15] He complains bitterly of the choice of site for the town, saying of the fleas:

They're as large as a hack, and as strong
in the back,
And as wild as a fellow that's drunk;
Pray set them to work, to build up the Kirk,
Or else send them all to the Tronk.

'Twould have been a good thought, when
this farm was bought,
A saving of both flesh and bones;
To have yoked all the fleas, by two's
and by three's
And set them to carry the stones.

In his poem, "The Cape", printed in Sam Sly's African Journal of 22 and 29 February, 1844,[16] "Ante-Fleece Emigrant" complains of economic conditions in the Colony, and the desire for more money, which motivates the emigrant, to his loss.

The Cape! whose clime alone can cope,
With other Capes of better hope,
Whose staples are beyond a joke,
(A little wool, sour wine and smoke,)...

The "Rooms of Commerce," here, 'tis
strange,
Furnish the ladies with a "change;"
They make their fortunes, get a beau,
From Eastward - Cash - mere is the go,
With our Cape "fair" it is the rage,
To wed one of the gold-en age;
And in their haste to be a bride,
Some sixty years o'erlook beside,
To Desolation or Ascension,
They'd agree to live to get a pension;
What wonder then that to the Indies,
Where more by far of sun than wind is,
Our ladies South do thither hurry,
To take to love-making and curry;
With our Cape gents, 't would be audacity,
To touch upon their great Cape-ass-i-ty.
The orators we soon may count,
(They are beneath the Table mount).
From all their acts and deeds we draw,
A code of universal law,
They'd want for nothing, as the case is,
Were purses half as long as faces....

We daily see throughout dominions,
How pockets vary the opinions,
And though, at first against the crew,
It pays - and so I'll humbug too."
And thus decoyed, their Country Britons fly,
To "buy a bargain" - lose their all, and
die.

A scheme to turn the Kowie into a port and thus improve economic conditions in the East, was hailed thus by a blithe spirit, "Puck", in Sam Sly's African Journal of 20 March, 1845.[17]

What with sand-hills by land, and with
sand-bars at sea,
It's as plain as dame nature [sic] can
make it to me,
She determines no port in this quarter
shall be.
One glance at the river, one glance at
the wreck,
And it strikes you at once "what a
shocking bad spec!"
It is true, he has stuck loads of faggots
about,
To make the stream follow a different
route:
But could he imagine the current so strong,
As to clear off the bar? My dear sir
you are wrong! [sic]
Do you think to daunt Neptune by bundles
of sticks?
He'll off with your pier, holus bolus,
like bricks,
And make it a jetty for shades in the
Styx....

Now I'll tell you, there is but one
feasible plan,
Which I name, well aware you're a resolute
man:
When in difficult matters you wish to
prevail,
You must set out at once on a very grand
scale;
A canal must be made from the broad Orange
River,
O'er whose glassy bosom the willow-boughs
quiver,
Whose waters in solemn magnificence steal
To the far western ocean, unplough'd by
a keel.
You must curb that wild river, and make
him obey,
Seek his path to the sea by a different
way;...

An agitation for more pay for civil servants is marked by a parody on "The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner", "forwarded for the Mail Bag from one of the country districts, we presume by some unhappy 'Civil Servant'" - and printed in The Cape Town Mail of 25 March, 1848.[18]

## The Rhyme of the Seedy Clerk

It is a seedy looking clerk,
And he stoppeth one of three; -
"By thy queer, lank phiz, and
lantern jaws,
"How wherefore stopp'st thou me?"

An old, seedy-looking functionary meeteth 3 of the fraternity and stoppeth the youngest.

"The office-doors are opened
wide,
"And I should have long been in,
"The clerks are met, the papers
spread,
"You'd better, too, begin."

"He holds him with his skinny
hand;
"There was a time," quoth he. -
"Hold off! unhand me, spindle-
shanks!"
Eftsoons his hand dropped he.

He gave him such a suppliant
look -
The other standeth still (sic)
He turns him round, attention
all -
The old man hath his will.

The young clerk in pity to the seedy functionary, listeneth to his tale.

The clerk describes his happy bachelor life, on eighty pounds a year, his marriage, the birth of "interesting twins", the arrival of ten more children, and his attempts to earn more by opening an "Agency", which is stopped by the Government. After hearing the sad story, the young man resigns from the service.

An increase in salaries was celebrated on 22 February, 1849 in Sam Sly's African Journal,[19] by the following, rather feeble:

> Lines
> Written on hearing that the "Lady Flora" would bring the despatch granting an increase to the Salaries of Civil Servants:-
>
> Sweet "Flora" thou Goddess of Flowers,
> Our love for thee cannot be told;
> Oh! hasten with thy golden showers,
> To fertilize our dry mould!
>
> Propitious to thee be the wind,
> Your snowy white wings to unfold; -
> Oh! bring with thee sweets of all kind,
> But forget not the bright Mary-Gold.

Politics, local and national, did not escape the efforts of would-be satirists. In 1837, the right to elect municipalities was granted to those towns which wanted them. Cape Town's municipality was formed in 1840 by special ordinance.[20] The establishment of a local governing body in Port Elizabeth must have been the subject of controversy. "Tim. Twig" in his "A warning to Munipals [sic]" printed in the Eastern Province Herald of 25 June, 1845,[21] waxes sarcastic at the expense of a letter writer:

You see the huge stones in the streets,
And you think of your shins in the night;
But he tells you it's all a mistake,
For the roads are in excellent plight.

Pigs and poultry devour your corn,
And perpetrate other offences,
While offal and stinks from the shambles
Salute your olfactory senses....

'Tis true, that a whip now and then
Seems likely to cut a man's eye out,
And who but a "Cockney-reared gent," [sic]
At such a mere trifle would cry out?

Though Fingoes display their proportions,
Unhid by the trammels of stitches;
The "Mobite" would vote it a shame
To make a man patronize breeches....

As for water - say nothing about it -
He's got a nice well of his own,
And each one who hasn't one also,
May dig one, or borrow, or bone.

The controversy continued to rage, apparently hinging on the money municipal privileges would cost. "Quidnunc" sent to the Eastern Province Herald some lines which he said had fallen out of an old scrap-book, and which might amuse readers with ~~its~~ their absurdities, "notwithstanding the doggerel in which they are related". These were printed on 15 October.[22]

In a nice little city, far off in the south,
In a very large bay with a very large mouth,
Some people determined they'd find out a way
Of ruling themselves - and have nothing to
pay.

So they held many meetings and made many
speeches,
On "water" and "highways," and "men without
breech," [sic]
"Perambulant pigs," and things highly
improper,
On which they resolved that they must
put a stopper.

A resolve, so entitled to praise, you'd
suppose,
No man in his senses would dare to oppose:
But somehow this sweet little city
contains,
Remarkable men with remarkable brains.

Some relished bad water, lik'd stones in
the street,
Thought the odour of pigs quite a delicate
treat,
And stoutly maintained, that a race of
black skins
Didn't need any breeches to cover their
shins.

Of course very little reliance was placed,
On the judgements of men of such horrible
taste:
The schemers derided their puny attacks,
Till one of them hinted at "hating a tax."

At that magical word half the city exclaimed;
The scheme was denounced and the schemers
were shamed;
Till some one proposed, just by way of a
trial,
(And really he didn't expect a denial),

To write to the king, and politely request,
He'd hand part of their revenues out of
his chest;
And to hint, if he'd grant the demand that
they made,

They'd make their own laws and not
ask for his aid.

How ended this scheme then? alas in a
smash!
His Majesty didn't like parting with cash;
He plainly declared he'd not give up a
copper -
And thus on their scheme and themselves
put a stopper.

From that day, not a patriot has dared
to suggest,
That men who loved freedom are bound to
protest
'Gainst his majesty's answer, and tell him,
full plump, he
Wont [sic] reign at his ease, till he hands out
"the stumpy."

For want of this rational, needful resis- [sic]
tance,
Pigs, stinks, and the "breechless" still
boast their existance:
They bow to the rod, they submit to the
yoke -
A mighty commencement - and ending in smoke!

The convict crisis of 1849, as might be expected, did not escape the notice of Cape versifiers. The order in council of 4 September, 1848, which declared the Cape a penal station, came as a surprise, for though a case could be made out for the usefulness of convicts in alleviating the labour shortage, no-one had expected ticket-of-leave convicts, who would be entitled to live freely at the Cape after their term of imprisonment had expired.

> ...in a country of wide spaces, with a small settler population and no more than a rudimentary system of police, men could foresee disaster from what David Dale Buchanan [in the Natal Witness, 20 July, 1849] described as 'a diabolical inroad attempted on life, character and property'. 'We see', he wrote, 'strife and bloodshed, plunder and crime, and slavery in all its horrors...in regions where the bushranger and his gang might bid defiance to a thousand heroes of Aliwal![23]

News that the Neptune had set sail for the Cape with convicts on board, reached the colony in early March. On 12 April, 1849, Sam Sly's African Journal printed "A New Song" to the tune of "The Campbell's are Coming",[24] written by "Popkins".

> 1
>
> The Convicts are coming - oho! oho!
> What a curse to the Cape! What a terrible blow!
> "No - devil a bit - don't fear, my old bricks,
> How much we may learn, if they'll teach us their tricks?"
>
> 2
>
> The Convicts are coming! oh dear, oh dear!
> Don't button your pockets - there's nothing to fear;
> For surely no Exile would venture to thieve,
> When away from the hulks, on a Ticket of leave.

3

The Convicts are coming! Hurrah, Hurrah!
How it gladdens the heart of each
anxious papa,
For how quickly his children may now
learn a trade,
From that best of preceptors - a thief
ready-made.

4

The Convicts are coming! Huzza, huzza!
If we want to pick locks, they will
tell us the way,
Do we think to cut throats, or to blow
out men's brains,
They'll shew us the mode, if we'll only
take pains.

5

The Convicts are coming - what capital
sport!
The road to the gallows made easy and
short,
And long will the Capcites remember the
day,
When the convicts were sent to their
shores by Earl Grey.

6

The Convicts are coming! the Neptune's
in sight!
Then throw up your hats, boys, illumine
the night!
Yes, throw up your hats, be as merry as
grigs,
For I warrant they'll soon put us up to
their rigs.

7

The Convicts are coming! Huzza, huzza!
Three cheers for the Convicts, and three
for Earl Grey!
Three cheers for the Cockney's, and three
to each man,
Who devised and perfected this glorious
plan!

The Neptune crisis, ending successfully for the agitators, was the first sign that the colonists could present a united front against authority. This greater regard of Afrikaner and English for each other is suggested in "A Vision" by Pasquin A Marforio, a protest printed in Sam Sly's African Journal on 26 April, 1849.[25]

1

While calmly in slumber this form lay
reposing
In a bright verdant kloof that o'er-
looked the blue sea,
Methought that a vision a grave form
disclosing,
Came fraught with a warning prophetic to
me.

2

Then it spoke with an accent and language
quite foreign
Which I still understood if you'll
credit so much,
And between you and I, did I must own to my
hearing
It sounded to nothing so like as High
Dutch.

3

"Oh why will you English still torture
my spirit
And inflict such dire ills on the place,
which of yore
I so happily founded, ne'er dreaming to
hear it, [sic]
Should groan 'neath your edictswhen I
was no more.

4

"Say was't not enough that our paper
Rixdollars
+You sneered at and flouted and brought
down so low?
And then most unfairly knocked off the
slave collars,
And when asked for payment declared 'twas
no go.

5

*"Or at least for Rix-dollars one hundred -
paid fifty,
Is that the way Englishmen pay a just
debt?
If so, it behoves all our Boers to be
thrifty
Or they'll quickly, all slickly adorn the
Gazette!

6

"And look at the North Eastern Frontier
where Kafirs
Were allowed just to plunder and do as
they chose,
While Stockenstrom's mawkish Philanthropic
party
Led silly John Bull like an Ass by the
nose!

+The depreciation of the Rixdollar. [Ed.]

*Inadequate or half compensation paid for the manumission of the slaves.

7

"Oh it just served him right and rejoiced me sincerely
To look on his phiz and to witness his looks,
When at last he'd "to pay for his whistle" so dearly
And shake just three millions from out his old books!

8

"Have you ne'er read the lesson the ten thousand gave ye
Who threw off your Government in such disgust,
Preferring far rather the wilderness dreary
Than your vile crooked policy longer to trust?

9

"Oh who has not heard poor Retief's mournful story,
Or who has not sighed o'er the fall of the brave,
Or who can forget their dire ending so gory,
Whom Dingaan's foul treachery lured to the grave?

10

"But enough when that sole good was left, "Reputation' [sic]
Would you now seek to mar it and taint its fair name?
Would you now see this land constituted a Station
For exiles, or felons, - for both seem the same?

11

"Even so let it be - If, [sic] Britannia so
foolish
Will disgust her own sons with a leaven
so vile
Let them come 'twill be easy to number
the ages
Which after, will own the weak sway of
her isle!

12

"Let them come!" - but just then a fly
tickled my nostril
And a sneeze most portentous rang loud
from my nose
And the phantom of Riebeek [sic] straight
vanished like winking
Before any mortal could shout, [sic] "There
he goes."

Van Riebeeck makes a rather dreary shade and the poem is the reverse of inspiring. Nevertheless it indicates that the Afrikaner's grievances had made an impression on at least one colonist.

In the Cape Town Mail of 12 May, 1849, "E", in "A Patriot Song for the Cape" exhorted the colonists to defend the Cape from Earl Grey's "knavery".[26]

Up rouse ye, Patriots, raise the cry
O'er hill and dale and mountains high!
Up rouse ye then, and prove ye men,
And freedom will return again.

"A Colonist" took up the cry for unity in the same newspaper, on 23 June, 1849. He begs his fellow colonists to use "every lawful means" of protest.[27]

Are you then grieved without a cause?
Judge not too quickly, reader! - Pause
Ere you decide; view now the case:
See shame imposed on all our race;
See moral deadly degradation
Inflicted by the British Nation!

See crimes of blackest hue disgrace
Our once-loved land and 'biding place. [sic]
While future years - ah yes! too true,
Lend no enchantment to the view;...

But hush - once more we'll try to gain
Our righteous cause, and stay the shame
That threatens to pollute our name.
Then let our strength in this consist -
In union close, - Resist! Resist!

The Anti-Convict Association's measure - to starve the convicts, the Governor and all those who supported him - inspired one poetaster (B.C.) to a parody of Hamlet's soliloquy. Entitled "The Soliloquy of a Cape Town Cit", it was first published in the Graham's Town Journal on 13 October, 1849[28] and then in The African Journal on 22 November, 1849.[29]

To starve, or not to starve, that is the
question:... [said]
Whether 'tis nobler that the stomach
suffer
The gripes and twinges of unwholesome food,
Or to take arms against the starving
clique,
And, by a feast, to beard them....

How could he bear the thirst-inciting snoek,
The smackless rice, the gradual decline,
The pangs of griping hunger, the visage
lank,
The conglomerated brain, and the sneers
Of sleek recusant men as they pass by,
When he himself might his quietus make,
With a bare beefsteak?...

> Thus bullying makes cowards of us all;
> And thus the frank expression of opinion
> Is shun'd, as being with unknown danger
> fraught;
> And measures of the greatest pith and
> moment,
> By despots, have their currents turn'd
> awry,
> And lose the name of upright.

"B.C.", besides displaying a sense of humour, also represents those who disagreed with the extreme measures adopted by the Association.

Another who disagreed actively with the ideas of the Anti-Convict Association was William Cock of the Kowie, member of the Legislative Council since 1847. He courted unpopularity by his actions in the debates of the Association, his gesture with the leg of mutton being a clear indication of his intention to victual the convict ship.

> Only Cock, who as an Easterner disliked Fairbairn and his politics, showed a defiant front. When it was decided to starve out those who supported Sir Harry Smith, he sailed his schooner British Settler round Table Bay with a leg of mutton dangling from the yard-arm. Nonetheless he found things difficult. No privately owned boat would go out to the schooner, and, when the government ordered the post office launch to go alongside, the crew went on strike....[30]
>
> Since no hotel or boarding house would give him lodging, he had to be accommodated

> with a room in Government House, where
> he was obliged to borrow undergarments
> 'as no washerwoman could be found to do
> the needful'.[31]

Cock was duly mocked in ribald verse, his name being unfortunate, as it lent itself to certain humiliating associations. His saga found its way into the P.E. Telegraph and Mercantile Gazette of 26 July, 1849, in lines entitled "Ode to the Albany Constituents".[32]

> Ye Gentleman of Albany,
> Who sit at home at ease,
> How could you trust your Bantam Cock,
> Upon the briny seas.
>
> At Cape Town safe your Cock's arriv'd
> In spite of wind and weather,
> He cocks his nib as heretofore,
> And looks in highest feather.
>
> But soon alas! [sic] your small Cock's crow,
> Must alter quite its tones,
> When he to Graham's Town returns,
> And you with him pick bones.
>
> Good widow W.... turns him out,
> With her he must not rest,
> A pious Governor takes him in,
> So bad turns out for best.
>
> Fain by the steamer home he'd go,
> No longer would he rove,
> The owners cannot find a berth,
> To give your Kowie cove.
>
> They won't take him before the mast,
> Nor let him strut the poop,
> They'll not allow your dunghill Cock
> A seat on their hen-coop.

Please send for back your scabby sheep,
And drive him from the flock,
Oh nothing further let us hear,
Of Honorable Cock.

My friends of Albany adieu,
Seek ye a better friend, [sic]
Lord speed safe home your Bantam Cock,
Oh Lord his manners mend.

This unpopularity continued into the new year and long after the "Neptune" affair. The P.E. Telegraph for 18 July, 1850, printed "Address - to the Hon'ble member for the Kowie", a song to the tune of "Calder Fair".[33]

Chorus

Todle but, and todle ben, [sic]
Hey, Cockie bendie!
To Cape Town never gang again,
My Cockie Bendie....

Oh, Willie, ye have seen the day
Ye did na craw sae crously,
Ye mind when plucks and sheep-heads ayes
Ye show it off sae nicely.
Todle but, &c....

Then think gin ye hae ony shame,
Can ye set right the nation?
It's well ye now can write yer name,
And scrieve a calculation, [sic]
Todle but, &c....

Fairbairn too became the target for a poetaster calling himself the "Laureate of the Municipality". The malicious poem entitled 'The New "Jeannette and Jeannot"' was printed in the Cape Monitor on 21 March, 1851[34] and refers to his trip to London to present the

rival constitution to Grey. The latter refused to treat him as a representative and he had to return home to "face financial worries and waning popularity".[35]

Oh! Johnny, when you went away, we
thought you went for us!
If we hadn't, we should ne'er have made
a quarter of the fuss -
With the cannons and the coloured boys,
and the marching and the din,
And all the inconvenience, too, of raking
up the tin!

You remember what you promised us! - you
said you'd rattle home -
Go bang up to the Parliament, and tell 'em
you were come;
And don't you recollect too, how you
promised us they'd stare,
When they found they'd got the famous
"Anti-convict" fellow there?

And you said that you were certain - in
a year, or thereabout,
You'd be back again in Cape Town, with the
"Constitution" out,
And make the Cape like England, with a real
House of Lords,
To walk about on levee-days with wigs, and
lace, and swords!

It seemed to come so natural to you to talk
of kings,
And parliaments, and council-boards, and
cabinets and things!
You always seemed to know so much; - it
always did us good;
You could always keep our spirits up so
splendidly - you could!

But ah, alas! at home they say that
things are going wrong,
The Pope has told the Queen, they say,
she shan't [sic] be Queen for long;
And perhaps they'll want to keep you
there to tell them what to do,
To settle all their grievances, and pull
the nation through.

And perhaps within a month or two we'll
hear that you've been seen,
Perhaps, speaking to Prince Albert, or
perhaps dining with the Queen;
And talking politics with Lords, just like
a Lord yourself: -
We're certain if you come to this, [sic] you'll
lay us on the shelf.

Dear Johnny, it's all nuts to you! - it's
anything but that
For those you've left behind you here! -
we find it precious flat!
With all the people quizzing us; it isn't
what we wished!
And asking when you're coming back, and
telling us we're dished.

They say you've great abilities; you've
often said so too!
That there's not a single thing on earth
you think you couldn't do!
WE WANT OUR CONSTITUTION, THEN; for sure
enough it seems
A century at least since first you told
us of your schemes.

Nowhere was the colonial poetic pen so exercised as in the conflict which involved settlers, missionaries and Kafirs. No one was against spreading the Gospel, as the civilisation of savages held out hope of ultimate peace. Nor were the settlers against those missionaries, like Moffat, who kept to their own appointed task. It

was men like Phillip, whom they resented so bitterly; for, emotionally involved as they were in the cattle thieving, reprisals and quest for land, they could hardly be expected to appreciate that:

> Inasmuch as he, at least, more nearly than either Government or Trekkers, saw the problem as a whole, John Philip was yet the best South African of them all.[36]

and:

> ...willy-nilly, many missionaries became negotiators between chiefs and the Colonial Government, for it was often they that had the closest links with both sides.[37]

Many have criticised missionaries on the grounds that their work was an instrument of colonial policy and expansion. It is true that the making of the Empire and the preaching of the Gospel are inextricably linked, but their motivation did not spring from the same source:

> But the force compelling the Christians to action was religious conviction, not cultural chauvinism. The lives of men like Van der Kemp, Robert Moffat, Eugene Casalis, or James Stewart are not intelligible on any other hypothesis.[38]

It is not the purpose of this thesis to establish the extent of right and wrong in the conflict between settler and missionary but to give their sentiments as

expressed in poetry. It is through the eye of the settler and other British colonists that the poetry reflects the situation - but there is evidence of the sincerity of purpose of missionaries and other Christians in the poetry printed in the South African Church Magazine, first published in January, 1850. In this first issue is printed "The Church Bell", a tranquil and well written poem, in which an anonymous poetaster describes his surroundings and thoughts, as he sits in Table Valley, listening to a church bell and its echoes one May evening.[39]

All seemed in dreamlike silence to repose, -
The mount, the vale, the trees, the
scene around,
When softly through the list'ning stillness
rose,
Calling to prayers, the Church-bell's
hallow'd sound;
Sweetly it rose like notes from angels
caught,
Charming the soul away from earthly thought.

And then, anon, you heard another note,
Whether of earth or heaven you scarce could
tell;
With such faint, mystic sound it seemed to
float,
An echoed cadence of that distant bell; -
It caught the ravish'd soul and sense afar,
As if it were the music from some star.

To North, to East, 'twas wafted far away,
Soft and yet softer like a spirit strain; -
O'er the bright waters of the peaceful Bay,
Then to the answering mountain back again.
And, as the words some heavenly herald brings,
My spirit caught its prophet utterings.

"As my soft sounds now far and farther
swell,
And spread to East to North their echo wide,
So shall the joy-sound of the Church's bell
Be heard, this land throughout, on every
side;
Till each far spot by human footstep trod,
Shall hear the Holy call to worship God.

Church of our Fathers, welcome be the day,
Which here shall see thee, in thy beauty
shine;
Within thy walls shall thousand converts
pray, -
And tens of thousands, born to Christ,
be thine.
Hail! Soldiers of the Cross, - arise,
be strong;
Salvation's Heralds, bear the sound along!

In February, appeared "The First Landing at the Cape of Good Hope", also anonymously, which describes the planting by Diaz of a cross on Santa Cruz in Algoa Bay.[40]

They brought not gems nor gold,
They brought not India's store,
They brought not gums and fragrant spice,
From Persia's balmy shore; -
They brought that Cross where Jesu's
blood
Made peace for evermore....

Men of the Faith! shall we
That good example slight?
Shall Heathen feet still tread the land
In more than Heathen night,
And we not watch, and pray, and strive,
To spread God's holy light?

Oh, no! let Enterprize
Still stem our Afric's tide;
And Commerce bring its distant stores -
But bring us more beside; -
Oh, let it bring God's living Word,
And the Cross where Jesu died!

Hail! glitt'ring Southern Cross;
Hail! land of bright blue skies;
God send thee peace, and fair Good Hope,
And holy embassies!
And here, where one rude Cross first rose,
May thousand altars rise!

Both of these poetasters strike a visionary and prophetic note, as they look into the future with faith and see the winning of the heathen to Christ and the development of a peaceful and prosperous community.

Admiration for the missionary as a pioneer in a heathen land, facing danger and death, is also found. An early example is printed in the Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette of November, 1835.[41] It is entitled "Impromptu Thoughts" and was written "on hearing that a Missionary from Scotland, who went alone into the Interior to convert the Heathen, is supposed to have been lost in the Orange River". The poet preferred to remain anonymous.

"FANATICISM'S last fool!" - the world
exclaims, -
Not so, the acclaim of Reason or the Skies, -[sic]
The world's first spirits had no loftier
aims -
You ventured nobly, for the highest prize....

Where many gather to the house of God; [sic]
Your kindred sleep within their kinsman's [sic]
grave;
Your goal was solitude's own waters broad,
Your mausoleum, her Gariepine wave....

'Tis vulgar glory on embattled ground,
Before admiring hosts to yield one's breath -
Of you no tales are told - nor body found, -
Your's was the deeply dark, sublime of death!

Similar sentiments are expressed in "The Missionary's Grave" printed in the South African Church Magazine in December, 1850.[42] Here the poet makes an attempt to visualise the actual surroundings and sufferings of his hero. The result is rather sentimental. He describes the missionary wandering through the cruel heat of the Karŏo, in a delirium of thirst, misled by mirages of water, which fade as he approaches; until he sits down exhausted:

> The wild Karroo was burnt and brown -
> A rocky, sandy sea;
> Each green thing, shrivell'd by the drought,
> Droop'd dead and drearily;
> No bush, no leaf of life was near
> Save one low quiver-tree.
>
> Against its trunk a wasted form
> In weary faintness bent, [sic]
> His scrip of maize, and water cruise
> By length of way were spent;
> His feet were chapp'd, - his limbs were
> brown'd,
> His way-worn garb was rent.
>
> High-soul'd with an Apostles zeal
> On holy mission bound,
> Far had he trod, 'mong heathen tribes,
> O'er Afric's scorching ground;
> Christ's herald in the wilderness,
> To bear the Gospel's sound. . . .

The poet imagines the longing for home which besets the missionary, dying when "...no dear form was nigh at hand/To catch his parting sigh". He prays and looks up to the "glorious sky", while angels tend on him. He is found dead by two Bushmen, who "...scoop'd a grave/Beneath that lone tree's shade".

Far in the inland desert's heart
Still swells that sacred mound, [sic]
And many a savage of the wild
Bends there in awe profound, [sic]
For, well-known as the Christian's grave,
They deem it holy ground....

The poetry of the settlers does echo similar sentiments; but their conviction that their troubles went unheeded while the missionaries and officials propitiated the chiefs embittered them. It is natural that each of the three main wars during our period should evoke poetic responses from those concerned; and perhaps natural that there should be a progression from simple pathos and a spirit of sweet reasonableness to the near hysteria which accompanied the 1850 to 1853 disruption. This emotionalism is evident not only in the Graham's Town Journal and The British Settler but also in the Cape papers.

On 31 March, 1836, the Graham's Town Journal printed "The Colonist's Grave" and its accompanying letter.[43]

March 18th, 1836. [sic]

TO THE EDITOR: Sir, - This statement is true to the letter; if you think it worth publishing you are welcome. The place described is the kloof where Goodwin, &c. fell at the commencement of the war.
I am, &c.

ANONYMOUS

THE COLONIST'S GRAVE

I yesterday followed, through kloof and
wild,
A sorrow-struck aged father,
Who eagerly sought the bones of his child,
Which he was intent to gather;
Deep in the thicket had fallen his son,
Where the Kafirs (by numbers) the strife
had won.

They had scoop'd for him a cold shallow
bed,
Near the place where he fighting fell;
And by the old man we were quickly led
To the grave he had mark'd so well;
Deep sorrow had printed the spot on his
mind
So plainly, it took no trouble to find.

The wolf had not broken his narrow cell,
For many had fallen around;
He could gorge on others equally well,
Who uncoffin'd lay on the ground;
With tattered garments the place was spread,
And crunched bones of the tombless dead.

And other signs of the strife were nigh,
For the flattened ball lay there,
And shattered shaft of the light assegai,
Which told of no thought to spare;
And the hair, it was matted among the
grass,
On the spot where the skull no longer was.

They quick removed the rubbish and stones
From the grave where the youth was laid,
And soon, very soon, did his damp cold bones
Grate harsh 'gainst the edge of the spade;
Dost thou shrink? those bones had ceased
to smart,
Since the assegai found its way to his
heart.

They carefully gathered with sorrow of
heart,
Those reliques, so clammy and foul,
And from the lone glen we hastened to part, -
Fit abode for the gloomy owl;
Where the bones lay commingled of friend
and foe,
In that dreary valley, so dismal and low.

The year that is gone, was a year of strife,
To hundreds, a year of sorrow;
A year with death and destruction rife;
Deep in the cheek is the furrow
Of many, who lived in peace and content,
Up to the time of this direful event.

And yet there are those who, with fiendish grin,
Can mock at their country's ruin,
And mangle each statement through thick and thin,
The further to work its undoing;
The spirit of evil must dwell in them, when
They scoff at the woes of their countrymen.

The poem is full of closely observed and unromantic detail - the wolf's feeding on the dead, the torn clothes, the hair visible on the grass, the rasping of the spade against the bones of the boy and the foulness of the remains - all of which must have made a profound impact on the readers of the day.

This naive but obviously sincere description of the sorrows and horrors of war was followed by "The Kafir War, Canto 1st - The Levee" on 18 May of the following year.[44] One of the main grievances caused by the 1834 to 1835 war was that the Province of Queen Adelaide, having been established and having promised more land, was abandoned again as a result of evidence laid before the Aborigines Committee by Stockenstroom, Philip, James Read and his half breed son, Stoffles, a Hottentot from Kat River and Jan Tsatsoe, a young Kaffrarian chief.[45] In "The Kafir War" (sent in by "Peter Shingles" who said he had picked it up in the "streetes of Port Lizbeth last wik"[sic]), the poetaster

congratulates Sir Benjamin D'urban and Sir Harry Smith on their soldiership but denounces the missionaries.

Oh! pow'r of priestcraft! first born
child of hell!
Let Satan, Loyola, or Leo tell
How short the distance, and how quickly
lost,
'Twixt thy false priests and that deluded
host
Who dar'd their maker's [sic] voice to disobey,
And sought to rule, whose duty 'twas to
pray!

Lord of the silver voice and suasive
tongue!
Thou first the host of London's saints
among!
With pow'r to sway each weak and feeble
mind,
With eloquence o'erwhelm, [sic] - with art to
blind.
What pity 'tis that thou should'st
wanting be
In God's own noblest gift of honesty!+
Repent thee, P-ll-p, turn thee to the Lord,
Or live a miscreant, but to die abhorr'd!

Next thou who should'st the holy gospel [sic]
preach,
Instruct the natives, and their children
teach;
Thou who should'st with them simply watch
and pray,
"Allure to brighter worlds, and lead the
way!"
Thou man of sin, who usest His great name
To serve thyself and spread thy guilty
fame;
Who mak'st thy ministry the step and tool
To gain thy purpose and the nation's rule;
Turn thee, vain man! thy flock's direction
heed,
For lo! they're leaning on a broken Reed!

+"An honest man's the noblest work of God." - Pope

See yon pale shade* his warning arm
uprear!
(Shade of thy chief, whose mem'ry all
revere)
With sorrow in his glance he points to
heav'n,
And prays that men like thee may be
forgiv'n,
Like him who once Sinai's verdure trod,
The men of Belial in the Courts of God!
Or like the plund'rer (who) on Calv'ry's side
Saw and believ'd, repented, wept and died!

To thee, Jan Tzatzoe! next that spirit
turns,
His earliest pupil's sad backsliding
mourns;
Sighs o'er his Kosa convert, yet unwon,
And weeps to see his heav'nly work undone!
"His work undone?" I hear some sneerer ask,
"When men like Br-wn-ee have assumed the
task?
When S--m the border sword doth wield,
And priests by hundreds arm them for the
field?
When Amatola's hills and Debe's plains
Re-echo nought but Christian converts'
strains?"

Not such the fact! - O'er Amakosa land
Still reigns the former law of pow'rful
hand.
Though stations multiply and priests
increase,
Doth plunder lessen, or doth rapine cease?
Have Kosa chiefs forgot their Slogan cry; [sic]
Learn'd how to peaceful live, or meekly die?
Forget the combats of their earlier days,
And sunk their war-cry in the songs of
praise?
Go! ask the few who truly act their parts,
The men of cleanly hands and pious hearts;
To men of true religious feelings go,
Like saintly Moffat, or like meek Munro....

*Dr. Van der Kemp

This is a superior piece of verse invective. The competent use of heroic couplets and the confident and authoritive manipulation of rhetorical devices, obviously cultivated, suggest a poet of some sophistication.

The bitterness felt against these men is still evident in the mocking little song sent to The Meditator in Cape Town by "Peter Boom" and printed on 31 July, 1838.[46] It is presumably directed at Stockenstroom who had been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Eastern Province in February, 1836,[47] had upheld the unpopular treaty system and who went to England in September, 1838, after he had lost a libel case against one of his critics.[48]

I came from the Frontier a long time ago,
Where I first learnt to wheel about and
jump Jim Crow,
[Chorus of Caffers and Missionaries, led
by His Honor:] [sic]
Wheel about, and turn about, and do just
so, [sic]
Every time I wheel about I jump Jim Crow.

I shot a Caffer youth once, - so very brave
was I, -
Upon my soul it's true Sir, [sic] - I never tell
a lie;
Chorus - Wheel about, &c.

And then I sailed to England, and went to
Parliament', [sic]
'Twas one thing that I said Sir, [sic] another
that I meant;
Chorus - Wheel about, &c.

But that was by mistake, as you'll of course
believe,
I'd never be so naughty as another to
deceive;
Chorus - Wheel about, &c.

And all the knowing chaps there, I guess I
took them in, [illegible]
That was also by mistake, Sir, for I'd ne'er
commit such sin;
Chorus - Wheel about, &c.

And now the people here, Sir, say I take in
General George,
Nay! the libellous wretches say Sir, that
lies I sometimes forge;
Chorus - Wheel about, &c.

Now soon again in England, where shortly I
shall go,
I'll wheel about and turn about, and jump
Jim Crow;
Chorus - Wheel about, &c.

The War of the Axe (1846 to 1847) evoked an even greater outburst, beginning on 6 June, 1846, when the Graham's Town Journal printed a letter and poem submitted by "A Burgher of Last Kaffir War".[49] It was signed "A Private Soldier of the 75th Regt." and was in effect a call to arms:

Arise, sons of Britain, to vengeance arise!
The savage no longer must breathe on
our shores;
The blood of our brothers ascends to the
skies,
The wailing of orphans is heard at our
doors.

To vengeance arise, ye brave sons of the
ocean!
Assert with barbarians your birthright
divine!
Though a ----- conspires in the fearful
commotion.
Be Britons, superior to traitorous design....

"The attack on the 'Leger'", printed in the Journal of 4 July, 1846,[50] describes an onslaught of Kaffirs at night. The sentiments are similar, an appeal to courage against a merciless foe, but the description renders it more effective.

> Nought is heard save the bark
> Of the faithful watch-dog,
> Or the howl of the wolf
> In the distance expire;
> Nought is seen save the gleams
> (Through the darkness and fog)
> Of our once peaceful homes,
> And our hay-stacks on fire.
>
> "The Kaffirs are coming!"
> Hark! Hark! their fierce yelling,
> Resembling the cries
> Of doomed spirits below;
> Away to your stations,
> 'Tis no time for flinching,
> Nor e'er think of yielding
> To the merciless foe....
>
> Despite our endeavours,
> They've captured our cattle,[sic]
> Their dearly-bought booty
> Is secur'd in the kloof;
> But mount ye brave Burghers,
> Again give them battle -
> What need we but courage
> To retake every hoof?

The first stanza especially is effective in its emphasis on sound - the bark of the dog, the howl of the wolf - and its description of darkness punctuated by the blaze of burning homes and haystacks. The sentry's keen awareness of his surroundings is simply but vividly evoked.

On 25 July,[51] two poems making sport of Macomo's drunkenness appeared, bolstering morale by the time worn method of belittling the enemy. The first, "Macomo's Lament", describes the chief's depression now that his supplies of liquor and tobacco are no longer forthcoming. Eventually, after killing a warrior or two, and beating his wife and children, he succumbs to the Briton with renewed promises of virtue.

So now he begs that Colonel Hare
Will to his sad complaint give ear,
And poor Macomo's feelings spare
From henceforth.
From Chumie peak he'll then come down,
And back he'll march to Beaufort town,
And there his sorrows he'll soon drown,
From thenceforth.
No cows or oxen will he steal
He'll give exceeding solvent bail,
And be right honest without fail,
For evermore.
He'll drink the gallant Col's health,
And wish him every kind of wealth,
And will to keep all hands from stealth
Endeavour more.

The second poem appears under the heading, "Intercepted Despatches" and purports to be a letter from Macomo to Messrs. Bell and Rennie, Wine Merchants, Edinburgh, in which the chief congratulates them on the quality of the sherry he has recently stolen from the Dragoons and begs that they send him a consignment.

These poems suggest that even yet the settlers had not lost heart nor humour.

One of the most interesting poems emerging from this conflict is "The March from Fort Beaufort", which took place on 26 July, 1846.[52] The poet describes the scene with some vividness and with a bold use of indigenous terms:

> Betimes the mighty gathering comes:
> The farmers leave their distant homes;
> The townsmen now forsake their stores,
> And onward ride the stalwart 'Boers,'
> With 'crackers,' 'wide-a wakes' and 'roers.'
> To wear a blanket some are glad,
> And some in rude kaross are clad,
> Others in green of darkest hue,
> In lace of gold, or red, or blue.
> And some are armed with sword or gun,
> All glittering in the rising sun;
> With assegai and ox-hide shield,
> And song and dance, some take the field;
> By 'Imam' led, their voice some raise
> To 'Allah' and the 'Prophet's' praise;
> Others to Him, in sacred strain,
> Without whose aid all hosts are vain.
>
> Now soon across the lower plain
> Was lengthened out the wagon-train:
> And English, Scotch, and Irish there,
> And Afric's corps, assembled were;
> Both horse and foot, in martial mood,
> Together there brigaded stood;
> The Fingoe stout, and dark Malay,
> And "Totties", eager for the fray;
> With those long tubes of deadly war
> Projecting shot and shells afar,
> And those which rockets send on high,
> Or at an angle through the sky,
> To mar the human form divine,
> Or in the night a signal shine....

The ending is of particular importance in that it bears out the hypothesis that, at this stage, there was still an impulse among the settlers to see the

problem rationally and admit that wrong might lie on their side as well. The poet says:

> Teach us to follow virtue more,
> And each besetting sin deplore,
> That fruitful source of every ill,
> Doing our own, and not Thy will!
> Convert our hearts; and thy good laws
> Henceforth to keep thy servants cause....
>
> And oh! forgive our heathen foe,
> For what they do, they do not know,
> Since dimly yet from gospel mines
> O'er Kaffirland the rich gem shines!...
>
> May we and they like brethren be,
> Provoking each to charity,
> And grant Thy people grace to sing,
> That thou from evil good dost bring!

The most important poem to emerge from the conflict of 1846 and 1847, is "The Kafir War", a satire printed in five parts (part one appeared in the Graham's Town Journal of 12 September, 1846, part two on 26 September, part three on 19 December, part three continued on 26 December and a supplement on 27 February, 1847). This poem is formidable not only by virtue of its extreme length and its comparative excellence (which may reveal the same hand as "The Kafir War" of 1837 and "The March from Fort Beaufort"); but also by virtue of its analysis of almost every aspect of the war, including the lack of preparation and efficiency on the part of the authorities and the foolhardiness of the red uniforms worn by the soldiers. The latter aspect is especially interesting, as it shows how much more knowledgeable the settler had become with regard to frontier conditions and reminds

us that red coats were still being worn during the Boer War. This poem cannot be discussed in detail but the poetaster's remarks concerning the relationships of settler and Kaffir, and the missionaries, are relevant enough to this argument to be quoted.

> Ten years of rest the land had now enjoyed
> From open war, though oft by theft alloyed,
> Fell murder too had reared its bloody head,
> And rapine everywhere the savage spread,
> Driven off the flocks and herds, the herdsmen killed,
> And now and then the farmers' best blood spilled.
> Yet to the colonist attached no blame;
> He could with truth all hostile acts disclaim;
> He never sought the robber in his lair,
> And e'en the murderer was inclined to spare,
> Nor e'er refused the wanderer to relieve,
> If food and shelter he required at eve,
> Although he knew not but he came to spy
> How best he might his kraals to plunder try.
> Moreover, men of God were sent to teach
> In their own land the ignorant, and preach
> To all the Word of life; and men of trade
> At their own homes their various traffic made.
> With gospel-light that land might thus have been
> Illumined; and throughout Kaffraria seen
> Domestic comfort, and each social art
> Rude nature's sons have learned, at least in part.
>
> But all these overtures of kindness spurned
> Our neighbour, and with hate and rancour burned,
> Most cruel to himself and us; for love
> By both displayed would mutual blessing prove.

In darkness sitting, he preferred the
creed
Of Devi[l]s, and blind superstition's deed
Enacts; essaying by sorcery to gain
From the closed heavens fertilizing rain;
Or using magic's art to cure disease,
By witchcraft caused, and failing to give
ease,
He seeks some wealthy one, on whom to vent
For fancied crime the direst punishment;
With fiery torture fills th' enchanter's
cup,
His wealth confiscates, and the wretch
"eats up" [sic]
Behold his mystic rites, the dance obscene,
Disgusting orgies of the Cyprian Queen!
No love with him attends the marriage rite,
He buys his wife, or makes her his by might;
Divorces next, and then another takes,
Or keeps them all, while slaves of all
he makes;
A foot he cuts off should they run away,
And with the samboc [sic] teaches to obey!
See how another Chief - doomed [sic] culprit
[misprint]
pants,
In mid day [sic] sun lashed down, a prey for
ants,
And shivers in night's damp, unwholesome
dew!
Be grateful, Christian, that it is not you!
And as his agonizing screams you hear,
O'er such brute customs drop the pitying
tear!...

In this description, we have the horror of an alien and primitive culture, as seen through civilised eyes. The anonymous poetaster now waxes indignant over the fatuous behaviour of the missionaries and philanthropists.

Now some, to answer their own selfish
ends,
These Kaffirs speak of, as our dear, good
friends;

They call them "Scotchmen," though in
Afric bred
Of sable skin, and with a woolly head;
And, though they ought to know the rogues
of old,
Yet our "relations" with them, we are told,
"Most comfortable are;" [sic] or rather were,
For now to say so none can scarcely dare.
Surely from fair Utopia's lofty range
Descend these must, and their opinion
change;
Nor ever were, unless those harrowing tales,
Which cost the colony her deepest wails,
Be false [sic] the robber and murderer too
Belied - those brutal acts turn out untrue -
Macomo sober - Tola not a thief -
Sandilli docile - veracious each Chief, -
Scholtz, Harding, Odendaal, be found alive;
Unburnt our homesteads, and our stock
to thrive;
Our farms in safety, and ourselves at peace,
Our wives and little ones from fear to
cease;
And that we have no proper cause to dread
Th' assassin's firebrand, or his stealthy
tread.

Thou art, Philanthropy, the fairest grace
Of our fallen nature! yet would thy face
Were partly painted white, and not all
black!
Since such it seems; for thou too oft
dost lack
A mind unprejudiced, and feeling heart
For white men's woes, preferring to take
part
With black men's ills, or fancied ills, -
thy paint,
Each white a sinner, and each black a
saint,
Making to thy distempered eye appear. - [sic]
Soon may thy vision, lovely grace, be
clear!
Pull out thy mote, and thou wilt plainly
see
Blacks are not angels, neither yet are we;

Nor are we demons, though we can[n]t deny
The beam sometimes is heavy in our eye.
The truth, as in most other cases, lies
Half-way between the two extremities....[53]

The verse written on the subject of the 1850 to 1853 war reveals a new determination. Extreme irritation and a desire for harsh measures are expressed. There emerges a new reliance on the courage of the Burgher Commandoes in the face of a barbarous foe. Descriptions of the devastation of settler homes and a profound feeling of persecution are also present.

In The British Settler of 2 September, 1851, "An Observer" criticises English administrators.[54]

Ye men of the East-towns, cities and all -
Have you heard what is doing at Exeter Hall?
Did you catch the wild echo, which rang o'er the sea -
Denouncing Sir Harry - to cush [sic] you and me?...

How long shall old England thus blindly be led,
And her ill-fated sons a derision be made -
Be murdered [sic] be butchered by heathenish hands,
So long fed, and clothed, and petted, like lambs.
All praise to Lord John, who acts like a Briton,
For pleading the cause of the poor and the smitten, [sic]
Sends succour to rid us, and shield us from harm,
And gives a fresh impulse to Sir [sic] Harry's arm.
Cheer up! ye desponding, - let fortitude nerve
Your noble exertions; from your rights never swerve,

Till your foes shall be conquered;
for justice demands
Complete subjugation and forfeited lands.

In the Port Elizabeth Telegraph of 30 October, 1851, a poetaster, signing himself "A New-comer", urges the burghers to strong measures.[55]

To Messrs. Pringle, Bowker, and Heugh, and the Burghers collected by them.

Colonial patriots! leaders of brave bands,
Armed in defence of country, wife, and child, -
Scour the bush, and earn with bloody hands
The praise we waft ye "o'er the desert wild."...

Spare him not, patriots, let him feel the blow; -
Think of the widow, orphan, childless mother.
Let not false kindness in your bosoms glow,
Spare him not, patriots, strike him down together;...

The editor's note is of interest.

Some of our readers may perhaps be shocked at the sentiment here expressed. We grant there is something revolting in it. Yet, we think, on looking a little deeper into the effect such a course would produce, it is the most merciful. Which is best adapted for the social system - extermination, or a continual recurrence to such scenes as we at present behold? Humanity is now violated by the outrages committed. Are the Kafirs capable of being civilized? Have not missionaries and others attempted this for years? The results of their combined labours is

> refinement in cruelty, - 'tis this they are adepts in. How will a propensity more or less natural, be counteracted? Only by crippling their strength. They must have no stronghold. They must be made to feel they can move neither hand nor foot without our knowledge and consent, - that they must possess nothing dishonestly obtained, - our laws require it of us, why not of them? Again, if amongst a community one man is a murderer, the remnant of lex taliensis is immediately put in force. He, too, is killed. If this law is founded in justice (and we believe it is), why, we demand, should it not extend to a nation of murderers?...[56]

In "The Burgher Commando", printed in The British Settler of 25 October, 1851, "A.S." urges the colonists to rally to the aid of the Burghers.[57]

> The brave Burgher's banner will soon be unfurl'd, -
> No longer inactive, to battle they'll go;
> Prolong'd the war may be to the end of the world,
> Unless they come forth and destroy the the black foe.
>
> Onward's the word! Let base traitors tremble!
> Brave Bowker bears onward the standard of truth;
> At Retief, around him you'll doubtless assemble,
> Assistance he pleads, both from age and from youth....
>
> Shame to the traitors who would leagu [sic] with the foe,
> Their brothers, their country their aid would deny, -
> Who with Totty and Kafir the cause would oerthrow,[sic]
> Foa [sic] which Bowker and friends refuse not to die;...

Three "Burgher Songs" by Slickwitz,[58] printed in The African Journal on 17 April, 1 May and 5 June, 1851, give a touching account of a young volunteer's experiences from the time he sets off with high courage to join Sir Harry Smith, until his friends are killed beside him on Keiskamma's banks.[59]

The plight of the missing is the subject of a poem printed in The Cape Monitor on 1 October, 1851. The cruelty of barbarians makes death the better fate.[60]

Oh, weep not for those whom the battle
laid low,
With their weapon in hand, and their
face to the foe,
Tho' sad was their end, and their funeral
knell
Was the murderous gun, and the savage's
yell....

But alas! for those destin'd still
living to lie
In the clutch of the Kafir, by torture
to die!
Who, gash'd by the assegai, scorch'd by
the flame,
Pray'd hard for the death that too
tardily came;

Who, enclos'd by a gibing and merciless
throng,
Still languish'd and linger'd in agony
long,
While grinn'd the black savage, and
shrieked with delight
At each writhing of anguish, or look of
affright....

The style of the poem is not admirable but the terrors described must have been very real.

First printed in the South African Church Magazine of June, 1851,[61] and then in The African Journal on 12 June, 1851,[62] "The Desolated Homestead" gives an effective, though sentimental, account of Kafir depredations, perhaps because the style is simple and the images clearly evoked.

That homestead and its garden-plot
Lay cheerful to the view;
And near it, fields of rustling maize
And golden melons grew;
And kine and goats around its kraal,
At stilly evening, drew.

The sun went down with tranquil beam; -
The eve's repast was spread;
The household sire had led the prayer
And Bible-chapter read;
And soon that peaceful family
Was quiet and abed.

Oh! hallow'd should their sweet rest be,
Their gentle sleep unscared!
But ah! they little knew what deeds
For midnight were prepared;
That soon their happy home should be
In flames and blood ensnared!...

The morning dawn'd, - what ruins black
Were smould'ring on the ground;
The threshold near, a mangled corse
In weltering gore was found;
And for the peace of yester-eve
Was desolation round.

The broken kraal was empty all,
Wounded the herd-dog lay;
The fields, (sic) of maize were trodden down
By flight and bloody fray;
Ah me! how sad and dark a sight
Broke with the breaking day!

In piteous plight, in wild affright,
The houseless father fled;
The mother with her half-clad babes,
And girls with timid tread;
And many a wild and weary mile
With way-worn feet they sped!...

In "The Settler's Wrongs", which appeared in the P.E. Telegraph of 27 November, 1851,[63] a settler describes the peaceful way of life in Albany until the machinations of the missionaries and philanthropists led to war and shattered the settlers' peace.

Why weeps the mournful muse for Albany?
Why hangs her harp upon the willow bough?...
...ever and anon a rough Borean blast,
With rude discordance strikes her slacken'd chords,
And deeds of blood and death, and savage yell,
Rise from her valleys, desolate her plains,
And echo from her hills and mountain rocks.
'Tis thrice ten years since first a hardy band
Of Pilgrim Fathers left their native shores,
To find a home on Afric's sunny hills.
And thrice the murd'rous Kafirs swept their land
And laid their smiling hearths and homesteads waste;
Withering their hopes of fair prosperity -
Reward of patient industry and toil....

The wilderness and solitary nook
There sang for joy, and blossomed as the rose;
The cattle roamed upon a thousand hills,
And bleating flocks repaid the shepherd's care;...

The hopes of Pilgrim Fathers seemed secure,
And lusty sons, and daughters blooming fair,
Owned their birth, and knew no other land.

A healthy wildness and a fearless mien
Their bearing marked, and showed from
whence they sprang,
As worthy of the land their fathers left;
No convict band tainted their honest blood,
But samples fair of their adventurous
sires....

Such was young Albany - till in evil
hour,
Fanatic dreamers fixed on Africa
To try their crude experiments on men,
All unprepared or curbed by civil laws;
And with unnatural bias on their minds....

If you have true philanthropy, go search
For heathens in your native land; (there's
quite
Enough of wretchedness and woe t' employ
Your largest purse, your energy, and
zeal;)...

Here all your labour is but lost;
But 'tis your trade - your bread - and
you must live,
But oh, remember it is death to us.[64]

This identification with the Pilgrim Fathers, who left England to seek freedom of thought and worship in America, is significant. It suggests a groping of the settler mind towards an identity separate from their land of origin. There is a strong sense of locality in the descriptions of Albany, and in the assumption of a common African past in which the colonists had fought for their ideals on issues like the convict crisis. Here were a people torn between the vacillations of policy and the obvious and practical measures they could not always resort to. Here were a people at last finding their individual voice and using the most available means to express their frustrations and their determination to survive. Motivating their verse is a profound sense of

injustice.

The passionate protests of the settlers and colonists, sometimes ill-phrased but usually sincere, cannot fail to move those who read their verse to some degree of sympathy.

## Notes

[1]Robinson, p. 6.

[2]Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette, I (1830-1831), 97.

[3]Ivan and Raymond Mitford-Barberton, The Bowkers of Tharfield, (O.U.P., 1952), pp. 214-215.

[4]P.E. Mercury, 5 June, 1850, pp. 2-3

[5]See Appendix B

[6]Graham's Town Journal, II April, 1844, p. 4.

[7]Cape Town Mail, 20 April, 1844, p. 3.

[8]S.S.A.J., 25 April, 1844, p. 3.

[9]The Cambridge History of English Literature, ed. Sir A.W. Ward and A.R. Waller, (C.U.P., 1934), XIV, III, 377.

[10]P.E. Telegraph and Mercantile Gazette, 15 March, 1849, p. 2.

[11]S.A. Commercial Advertiser, 7 January, 1824, p. 4

[12]S.S.A.J., 9 November, 1843, p. 3.

[13]Taylor, p. 42

[14]S.S.A.J., 20 July, 1843, p. 3

[15] C. of G.H. Examiner, 21 April, 1848, p. 4

[16] S.S.A.J., 22 February and 29 February, 1844, pp. 3 and 2

[17] Ibid., 20 March, 1845, p. 4

[18] The Cape Town Mail, 25 March, 1848, p. 4

[19] S.S.A.J., 22 February, 1849, p. 3

[20] Walker, p. 237

[21] E.P. Herald, 25 June, 1845, p. 2

[22] Ibid., 15 October, 1845, p. 2

[23] Alan F. Hattersley, The Convict Crisis and the Growth of Unity, (University of Natal Press, Pietermaritzburg, 1965), p. 41

[24] S.S. A.J., 12 April, 1849

[25] Ibid., 26 April, 1849

[26] C.T. Mail, 5 May, 1849, p. 3

[27] Ibid., 23 June, 1849, p. 2

[28] Graham's Town Journal, 13 October, 1849, p. 2

[29] The African Journal, 22 November, 1849, p. 4

[30] Hattersley, p. 53

[31] Ibid., p. 55

[32] P.E. Telegraph, 26 July, 1849, p. 4

[33] Ibid., 18 July, 1850, p. 2

[34] The Cape Monitor, 21 March, 1851, p. 2

[35] Walker, p. 242

[36] W.M. MacMillan, Bantu, Boer and Briton, quoted in The Making of South Africa by M.S. Geon (Maskew Miller Ltd., C.T., 1958), p. 58

[37] The Oxford History of South Africa, ed. Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson, (Oxford Claredon Press, 1969), I, 267

[38] Ibid

[39] S.A. Church Magazine, I (1850), 24-25

[40] Ibid., 57-59

[41] C. of G.H. Literary Gazette, V (1935) 167

[42] S.A. Church Magazine, I (1850), 369-371

[43] Graham's Town Journal, 31 March, 1836, p. 3

[44] Ibid., 18 May, 1837

[45] Walker, p. 191

[46] The Meditator, 31 July, 1838, p. 2

[47] Walker, p. 191

[48] Ibid., p. 207

[49] Graham's Town Journal, 6 June, 1846, p. 4

[50] Ibid., 4 July, 1846, p. 3

[51] Ibid., 25 July, 1846, p. 3

[52] Ibid., 22 August, 1846, p. 2

[53] Graham's Town Journal, 12 September, 1846, p. 2, See Appendix B.

[54] The British Settler, 2 September, 1851, p. 3

[55] P.E. Telegraph, 30 October, 1851

[56] Ibid.

[57] The British Settler, 25 October, 1851, p. 4

[58] See Appendix B

[59] The African Journal, 17 April, 1 May and 5 June, 1851

[60] The Cape Monitor, 1 October, 1851, p. 2

[61] S.A. Church Magazine, II (1851), 185

[62] The African Journal, 12 June, 1851, p. 4

[63] P.E. Telegraph, 27 November, 1851, p. 3

[64] See Appendix B.

## PART II

Truth wants no mask, nor cloak to keep it warm.
I want, dear friends, to be a poet,
At least to be considered so;
But if I want the wit to show it,
The want of wits's a want (you know).

From "The New Rig"

# CHAPTER III

## THE EDITOR - WILLIAM LAYTON SAMMONS (SAM SLY)

William Layton Sammons was the son of Robert Sammons, a cooper, who was a freeholder with property in the parish of St. Paul, Bedford, and was thus entitled to the parliamentary franchise.[1]

William Layton settled in Bath, where he became the literary and dramatic critic for Keene's Bath Journal,[2] and was on intimate terms with men like Cruikshank, Hood and James Keene.[3]

His coming to the Cape followed a decline in fortune, when an expected legacy was not forthcoming and he found himself with no reserves.[4] Sam Sly's African Journal proved a success, clearing a profit of £1,500 in eight years.[5] However, he was distinguished for his literary skill rather than for his abilities as a publisher and printer.[6] Hattersley comments that his ambitions were literary, he had an engaging wit and could write with refreshing originality on a wide variety of topics.[7] He longed to be a professional man of letters but did not take his verse very seriously, since much of it was imitative and none of it very profound. It had wit and ease of expression but little depth of feeling.[8]

Despite this assessment, it is necessary to make some comment on Sammon's poetry in this survey, as, writing under the pseudonym of Sam Sly, he was probably the most prolific versifier at the Cape.

He must have done much towards propagating the comic tradition in the Colony.

It is interesting to note here a possible connection between Sam Sly and "that strange compound of shrewdness, wit, vulgarity and sheer dishonest cunning - Sam Slick, the Yankee clockmaker",[9] created by the Canadian humourist, Haliburton, and first published in book form in Halifax and London in 1837. Since Sammons came to the Cape only in 1841, it is possible that he had read these sketches and adopted a similar name, for there is no doubt that he saw himself as a satirical poet and that others concurred. He gives a "tongue-in-the-cheek" account of himself in "To Louis Phillippe" (Sam Sly's African Journal, 1 June, 1848):[10]

> Now S.S. keeps good faith with all
> It matters not whoe'er may call [sic]
> Yet still their confidence is shewn
> In City - Village - District - Town, [sic]
> Amidst the small, amidst the great,
> Still S.S. acts with truth complete.
> He says "I write in merry mood" [sic]
> Now this by all is understood, [sic]
> He says "My humour none can touch," [sic]
> You think of course, that's saying much,
> But call at number Fifty-nine,
> And learn where wit and wisdom shine,
> [a-hem!]

Toby Slim in a rhymed letter to Sam Sly in the Journal of 22 February, 1849, congratulated him on exposing humbug in all spheres of life.

> For though, I see, you can be serious,
> When the right subject comes beneath your pen,
> There are some matters,
> Showing the deleterious,
> Fitted alone for ridicule and satires,
> Where Folly reigns 'mongst men -
> Moments for snubbing, vapours,
> And cutting capers, -
> And then you laugh! - I like an honest laughter,
> (As Johnson said of haters),
> And all bold commentators,
> Upon the notions,
> Acts, whims, devotions,
> Whether they be of Christian or of Kafir....
>
> And thus it is that neither you nor I,
> Though we expose
> The tell-tales of the mind, instead of nose,
> Must flinch from telling truisms, Mister Sly.[11]

Sam Sly's undoubted facility in producing comparatively polished verse on any subject, drew its share of, perhaps envious, criticism. Notus, writing in the Cape Town Mail of 18 May, 1844, and apparently in answer to some criticism, said:

> Samuel Sly has been playing truant. While the bells are ringing and all good folks going to church, he is crawling on all fours from the heights of "Literature" to play a game of marbles. A very pretty occupation for an editor, no doubt, and a proof that there is no great gulf between his ideas of the sublime and the ridiculous. There is, however, an excuse for him. The temptation he has

to encounter is of no ordinary character, seeing that a number of little fellows often enjoy themselves at the corner of his stoop, when he has probably been so far overcome as to "knuckle down;" and then, elated, with having won a "blood alley," he leaps to his desk, and writes the history of his adventure for the benefit of whom it may concern. Samuel, we sincerely hope another time you won't lose your "ring taw"...

A "S.S."

In days that now have fled, alas,
There was a gentlemanly ass,
With ear erect and shaggy cheek,
Who'd pass a joke as soon as speak.
But when one claimed the licence free,
To crack a joke as well as he,
The teeth were shown, and hoof let fly,
To prove that he alone was Sly.
In verse or prose, 'twas all the same,
He never could forget his name.
"S.S." or "Samuel Sly," he'd say,
Wrote this, or that, the other day;
And, to convince the critic crew
He'd go to Bath to prove it true.
No theme too high, - such was his might,
He'd soar beyond the realms of light.
No theme too low, - he could declaim
On marbles, - that transcendent game!
Descend ye Nine! and deign to say,
If genius such can longer stay
Absent from arms that long t'enclose,
Or hands that long to wring his nose,
For daring thus, so void of shame,
To filch a poet's sacred name?
The gods resent the Muses' wrong,
And Notus interrupts his song,
Swift let Obivion's genius come,
And bear the blessed author home.

Toby Tickle (if indeed he was not Sammons himself) sprang to Sly's defence in rhymed couplets (Sam Sly's African Journal, 23 May, 1844).

> Troubles come not alone, but have their riders
> As flies when trapp'd, are pounced upon by spiders.
> "Great fleas have less upon their backs, to bite 'em
> And these have less on theirs, ad infinitum.'
> You'll always find, where'er the Fancy lingers,
> They talk of blows, and using fists and "fingers."
> Such are the modes of Weakness and of Spite,
> They roughly maul, where they should smoothly write.
> For he who's much accustom'd to the trade,
> Will use a polish'd and good-tempered blade.
> Great wits you know, should ever have great hearts,
> To tickle also where their victim smarts....[12]

Although Sam Sly was responsible for at least forty poems, it is difficult to take him seriously as a contender for the title of Cape Laureate. Good humour, shrewdness and a facility with words do not make a poet. His work often reveals a serious purpose, as does the tragi-comic verse of Hood, but much of the poetry is topical and ephemeral - written for the moment, having relevence to daily events - and much of the wit is no longer as pointed, since the modern reader does not have the same associations. His province was manners and morals and human folly and the student will look in vain for the impact of Africa.

There are occasional insights into social life at the colony and, rarely, a revelation of the man himself.

Sly's ingenuity in the use of words is shown in exercises like his "Alphabets" and "A Bunch of Bitters".

> Bitter is a lawyer's bill, without the means to pay,
> And bitter is necessity, that makes you run away;
> Bitter is a dirty walk when shoes let in the clay;
> Bitter is the comfort that arrives a day too late;
> Bitter Entertainments where there's nothing on the plate;
> Bitter to the back-bone is the cat with many tails;
> Bitter is the prospect when a ship has lost her sails;
> Bitter to the infant is a 'Wet-nurse' that is dry,
> And bitter are the drops that fall when Anger makes you cry;
> Bitter is Dependence, when Attendance is the price,
> And bitter is the pudding when you cannot get a slice;
> Bitter is the sermon that extends beyond the hour,
> And bitter is exertion when the blood has lost its power;
> Bitter is the marriage where the couple's not a pair,
> Bitter are reflections when they seem to want an heir;
> Bitter are the torments that the conscience can inflict,
> And bitters bite the nerveless more than language can depict;
> Bitter is the satire that will cause your friend a tear;
> Bitter is a bullock's gall, and bitter Wynberg beer.[13]

Some of his lines are genuinely funny, though not completely successful. In "Life Preservers", printed in the Journal of 3 August, 1843, he ironically adopts the tone of the slick salesman of patent medicine, laughing at the gullibility of the public.[14]

> Listen! Master, Miss, and Madam, -
> Every chick of Eve and Adam;
> For the style in which we dash on
> Is the latest, newest fashion.
> Listen! gouty and rheumatic,
> Billious, Pillious and Asthmatic;
> Listen! dropsical and lazy,
> Mopish, Melancholy, crazy:
> Listen bloated and dyspeptic,
> Pale, consumptive, apoplectic;...
>
> Listen! all who may desire
> To keep alive this mortal fire
> Never think of dying - never,
> With such means to last for ever.

There is virtuosity of a kind here, and the reader is carried along at a great pace, suggesting the breathless excitement surrounding a new discovery. Then follows a list of patent medicines, rather boring to us, as the only familiar name is "Fryer's Balsam". He ends with:

> And last, there's 'Morisons and Moat's,'
> Which now in every kingdom floats;
> Beside 'Old Parr's' - (but we are told
> He took no pill, and thus was old.)
> And other things that all come in,
> For nose, mouth, cheeks, lips, teeth, and
> chin.
> With such a list before your eye,
> Pray are you not ashamed to die?

An enlightened interest in political affairs must have given rise to "The Queen's Speech, freely done into Rhyme" (Sam Sly's African Journal, 17 April, 1845):

> I learn, with equal satisfaction,
> That Ireland now is none the worse for
> learning Vulgar Fraction.
> The political excitement, and the dreadful
> agitation
> That seemed to shake the very heart and
> centre of the nation,
> Appear to have abated, and such confidence
> restored,
> That repentance and quiessence, too, most
> naturally afford.
> To all useful undertakings, now, the cash
> has been applied,
> And to every public enterprise no help has
> been denied.
> In the spirit which at first conceived,
> I've brought in operation
> The Act for more effectual and special
> application
> Of charitable gifts, that rank terms
> "Bequest," "Donation."
> I also now would recommend to your consider-
> ation
> The policy of spreading an enlightened
> education,
> To dispel the present ignorance, and stop
> all "Agitation."
> I do not say a word about the freaks of
> "Mister Daniel;"
> Although he licks the blarney-stone, he's
> meek as a whipp'd spaniel;
> The ends of justice have been served, he
> now may take his pleasure(sic)
> In what he did with so much haste, repenting
> at his leisure.[15]

Sam Sly's Victorian capacity for exploring all the possibilities of the novel subject and circumstance are revealed in "Hints to a Great Phrenologist",[16] "An Odd Ode to a Great Hypnologist" (Hypnology being "the art of inducing sound and refreshing sleep at will without the aid of animal magnetism, or any medicine whatever")[17] and "A Friendly Epistle to the Siamese Brothers". The latter, printed in the Journal of 19 October, 1843, also reveals the prevalent delight in punning and the love of a moral.[18]

'Tis hoped you're not for roguery,
For we have heard that ever
In cases of emergency
You've laid your heads together....

Some people who make promises
That cannot well be done,
"Shuffle and cut," as gamblers do;
But you can't cut and run.

The skeleton, we know, got fat,
And gave his friends the slip;
But you, dear sirs, will ne'er get rich
"Dissolving partnership."

Oh! thou unseperable friends!
Indissoluble band!
What freakish motive Nature had
We cannot understand, [sic]

Unless she meant to hold you up,
That all the world might see
An emblem of true fellowship
Of Love and Unity.

Poems relevant to life in Cape Town are Sly's "Valentines" to Sir Peregrine Maitland, his wife and "every-body"[19] and "Robbery at the Post Office";[20] but the most interesting examples are: "Odes to High Folks" and "Odes to Low Folks" and "A Farewell to the Old Governor and a Welcome to the New".

As early as 1824, Cowper Rose in his narrative, "Four Years in Southern Africa", had this to say:

> "But, even in the most sketchy description of Cape Town, I must not omit the signal station; for, without that and the table-cloth on the Table Mountain, and the south-east wind that it denotes, I know not what we should have to talk about. From the first announcement of an approaching vessel, by the appearance of a black ball on the signal hill, all is anxiety."
> "Is it English?" becomes the general enquiry. The next signal says, "English"; then, "Is it from England?" "Yes." Then, "Has it a mail?" and the signal tells that it brings a mail.[21]

This ritual must have captured Sam Sly's imagination too, for, in the first number of his Journal (1 June, 1843), he wrote "Odes to High Folks", addressing the "man at the flag-staff, on the Lion Mountain".

Hail! Prince of Peepers. Whilst my
mind is soaring,
I herewith elevate my thoughts to thee;
Say - thou who art so quizzical and poring -
What dost thou spy upon the sea
For me. [sic]
What news? What ship? 'Come, brother,
quickly tell;'
I have a notion
Just now the ocean
Is in commotion.
- No pleasant potion
For those who sail. - Say, is it well?
Or canst thou trace
Upon its face,
"A Swell?"
Thou little thinkest
As now thou blinkest,
Through thy long tube, what joy and sadness,
What hope and madness,
What grief and gladness
May be imparted when thy flag's unfurl'd:
Thou art the centre of a little world.
To thee all eyes are turn'd, as to an
oracle;
Thou art the Cape Gazette, the book
Historical
In which we trace who comes, who goes,
How the wind blows,...[22]

At the end of this poem, we get a glimpse of Sammon's longing for his family, for his wife and children had not yet joined him.

"Then tell me quickly, quickly tell me true. [sic]
When my long-absent are among the crew," [sic]
Hoist your bright signals (let me know
my joys),
And say, "Here comes your 'Lizzy and your
boys." [sic]

A year later in "Odes to Low Folks", addressed to "the man at the Lower Flag Staff", we learn that Sammons and his family have been re-united.

> Ten weeks I hung upon thy glass for
> "Susan,"
> And ten weeks more thou feddest me with
> Hope.
> But thou wert not a Prophet to be chosen,
> Yet kept me from the bullet and the rope:
> But hoist your signals now and tell my
> joys,
> For I "have got my 'Lizzy and my boys".[23]

There is a reference to the "Susan" and his family in "A Farewell to the Old Governor and a Welcome to the New" (Sam Sly's African Journal, 4 April, 1844) but this poem is notable for its irony, its description of Sir George Napier's sailing and for one of the rare references to the Afrikaner found in Cape verse at this time (the apparent insult is caused by the exigencies of rhyme).[24]

> What is it made us weep when you wert
> leaving,
> Was it the senses, or the nerves deceiving?
> Thoughts of the morrow,
> Compassion or sorrow?
> Old tenderness, false gratitude, or habit...
>
> We saw the Jetty crowded with the curious,[sic]
> In some perhaps the sorrow might be spurious.
> Soldiers and sailors,
> With "drunken dogs" and tailors;
> And laughing Africanders,
> With heads like Salamanders;...

There stood two lines of soldiers on the
Jetty;
Likewise the Band that played those airs
so pretty.
There stood the King
Who formed, the ring,
Or kept back bold intruders from the place,
Where, [sic] never more we may behold thy face.
Sweet was the melody "God save the Queen,"
And sweet the cannons that were heard
between;
But sweeter far, just as you left the shore,
"Should auld acquaintance ne'er be
thought of more."

In welcoming Sir Peregrine Maitland, Sam Sly gives a list of the Cape's disadvantages.

The winds are gone that used to shake
our bones,
And fill rheumatic souls with tears and
groans.
Your Excellency doubtless will have read,
The floods will soon come tumbling over
head;
And then the weather proves a little
shivery,
And coals must first be paid for ere
delivery....

We much regret, your Excellency will find,
Of all the marches, there's no "march of
mind."
The richest are the poorest in this trade,
And yet they don't stand still, but
retrograde -
They want both wit and wisdom "ready made."
A Sale's a thing that no one thinks a
task;
All flock like flies around a sugar cask.
Just put up Locke and Milton by the pound,
And lots of customers will then be found.
No greater trouble - could you force
confession -
Compelled to read them when they take
possession. [sic]

Sam Sly's work would repay more attention than it has been given here, but from a social and historical rather than a literary point of view.

By the close of the 'fifties Sam Sly's career as a writer had virtually come to an end. He died on 1 September, 1882.[25]

## Notes

[1]Alan F. Hattersley, "Sam Sly (William Layton Sammons)", Quarterly Bulletin, IX (1955), 109.

[2]Ibid., p. 110

[3]J. Rabone, "Sam Sly - From the Diary of W.H. Rabone", Africana Notes & News, XII (1957), 287

[4]Ibid

[5]Ibid., p. 287-288

[6]Hattersley, p. 109

[7]Ibid., p. 110

[8]Ibid., p. 111

[9]Pelham Edgar, "English Canadian Literature", The Cambridge History of English Literature, XIV, III (C.U.P., 1934), p. 346

[10]S.S.A.J., 1 June, 1848, p. 1

[11]Ibid., 22 February, 1849, p. 4. See Appendix C

[12]Ibid., 23 May, 1844, p. 4. See Appendix C

[13]Ibid., 22 June, 1843, p. 4.

[14]Ibid., 3 August, 1843, p. 3.

[15]Ibid., 17 April, 1845, p. 4. See Appendix C

[16]Ibid., 13 July, 1843, p. 4. See Appendix C

[17]Ibid., 14 March, 1844, p. 4. See Appendix C

[18]Ibid., 19 October, 1843, p. 4.

[19]Ibid., 13 February, 1845, p. 4. See Appendix C

[20]Ibid., 10 August, 1843, p. 4. See Appendix C

[21]Cowper Rose, "Four Years in Southern Africa", (Henry Colburn & Richard Bentley, London, 1829), p. 4.

[22]S.S.A.J., 1 June, 1843, p. 4.

[23]Ibid., 11 July, 1844, p. 4. See Appendix C

[24]Ibid., 4 April, 1844, p. 4. See Appendix C

[25]Hattersley, p. 115.

# CHAPTER IV

## THE WHEELWRIGHT - GEORGE GORDON FLETCHER

George Gordon Fletcher was the son of William Fletcher, Lord Byron's valet for twenty years.[1] It is not quite certain under what circumstances he came to the Cape, nor is his exact date of arrival known. There is one clue. In October, 1834, he submitted a poem entitled "Lines at Sea" to the Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette and stated in the accompanying letter, dated 1 August, 1834, that he had "just arrived".[2] His name first appears in the Cape Calendar and Directory for the year 1835, in which he is described as a "coatchbuilder [sic] and wheelwright".[3] In the Cape of Good Hope Almanac and Annual Register of 1842, he is noted as a "poet".[4] Nothing more is heard of him after 1851.[5] Perhaps he "joined the command". "Slickwitz" in "Burgher Song No. 4", printed in The African Journal of 5 June, 1851, mentions that:[6]

> Down, down, we charged - but out! alas!
> into the jaws of death!!!
> Upsprung the Kaffirs in a cloud or ere
> we drew a breath [sic]
> 'Twas then we saw poor Fletcher fall and
> Morris wounded sore [sic]
> The first with assegais pierced through
> and mangled o'er and o'er.

Fletcher arrived at the Cape in possession of several articles of clothing worn by the late Lord Byron. There is evidence that he sold most of these. William Sammons in Sam Sly's African Journal of 24 October, 1844[7] writes:

> And some of the wardrobe of his Lordship, we also are given to understand, fell into the hands of our author, that his necessities - not his will, compelled [sic] to part with, at less than ordinary prices.

Charles Aken Fairbridge, in a letter to his parents, mentions seeing a jacket of Lord Byron's in the possession of one of his acquaintances.[8]

Jardine, in his article on Fletcher printed in the Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette for December, 1835, gives an amusing account of Fletcher's pride in the possession of Lord Byron's 'mantle'.[9]

> When Lord Byron died, his mantle was laid on his grave, and none ventured to take it up except Mr. Fletcher. And he is a lucky dog, for not only did he possess himself of the mantle of the late Lord Byron, but he actually wears it on high-days and holidays. It is made of darkish green cloth, single-breasted, with three rows of knob buttons, richly braided, a standing-up collar, supported by a rich ermine of the darkest colour. This identical mantle of Lord Byron, has been sported by Mr Fletcher in the Meeting house of St. George's, [sic] it appeared on the Great FIRST of the present month [anniversary of the Emancipation of Slavery]; and as Mr Fletcher is a most loyal subject, he clad himself in the self-same mantle, and went out in obedience to the printed placard, to greet Sir Benjamin on his return from the "long wars"....

D.H. Varley says that William Fletcher "seems to have passed on to his son little beyond the famous Byronic shirt, which George combined with an aptitude for doggerel

and a taste for strong liquor - in which indeed he was not unique".[10] There is no doubt that he was a prolific versifier, for Jardine commences his article with these comments:[11]

> We are twelve months in arrear with Mr. Fletcher, and are now anxious to close the debt with the close of the year. And yet we can only afford a dividend, and therefore Mr. Fletcher must forgive us in presenting to the public the partial effusions of his muse. Indeed, we could not act otherwise. Mr. Fletcher's MS. poetry would occupy a decent octavo volume.

Jardine, (with good humoured but ironic comment), then quotes from "Lines on Cape Town", "A Patriotic Invocation on the Caffir Irruption", "Sorrow", "The Cape Library", "Walk to the Salt River", and some patriotic lines.

In the introduction to this thesis, Fletcher was mentioned as a poetaster so determined to win prestige among his fellows, that he brought upon himself some of the severest criticism accorded to any versifier of the day. It is evident that Fletcher's passion sprang first from his connection with Lord Byron (the name, George Gordon, his father's intimacy with Byron, the relics). It is also evident, from the frequent repetition of the story of the shirt in editorial comments, that Fletcher must have mentioned his connections very frequently, thus making himself the subject of much mirth (and possibly some envy). His position is made the more ludicrous by the disparity between his verse and that of his hero. Nobody could

take Fletcher seriously as a poet - but there is an engaging naivity in his belief in himself and, as Dr Robinson remarks, "his sincerity must be revered".[12]

His work is interesting for another reason too. Though he must have written a fair share of conventional didactic and sentimental verse, a considerable amount of his poetry dealt with his environment and events at the Cape. It will be seen that much of the critical comment evoked from Sam Sly in particular dealt with the "unpoetic" subjects he described. One might be tempted by the illiteracy of some of Fletcher's work to agree with Hadgraft who, writing of Australia, says, : "The educated poet .... wrote about England, the less educated about Australia";[13] but Fletcher's letters are well written and Rochlin in his notes on Fletcher ascribes to him a translation from Béranger's French poem, "Monsieur Judas", which appeared in The Meditator of 22 August, 1837.[14] +

Jardine in his criticism implies disapproval of Cape Town as a subject for verse.[15]

> First of all, a specimen or two, complimentary to Cape Town. Little did we poor prosers imagine that our town could illicit one spark from the temple of the muses. We had always supposed that the purity and benignity of the air, the beauty and number of the rivers, the waving woods, the dasied [sic] meads, the flowing fountains were some of the grand essentials for the musings of a vivid imagination. But Mr. Fletcher smashes with a single spoke all our home-bred theories. In spite of all our broken bridges, dangerous foot-ways, impregnated canals, unwashed streets, decaying public buildings, and hurricanes of dust, he can discover the sublime and beautiful-find "sermons in stones, and good in every thing." [sic]

+ Rochlin is mistaken. The initials beneath this poem are "C. F."

LINES ON CAPE TOWN

Thou charming sweet Town, the home of content,
I'm destined to live in awhile,
For to leave thee at present, I feel not so
bent,
While at rest, and none me beguile. [sic]

The above is an extract from a poem of fourteen verses, partly descriptive of Cape Town. But the author, with an eye to business, very properly introduces in one of the stanzas his own Card. Ex gra.

I'm a wheelwright by trade, and I know very
well
In the beautiful Strand-street I live;
So here in this note I candidly tell
That for works done no credit I'll give.

Jardine hints at Fletcher's weakness in his comment on the Cape library. "Never mind that the poet insinuates that the Library is a House of Call, - he had no doubt the Wheelwright's Arms in view."[16]

The next poem by Fletcher to appear in print, is to be found in The Meditator of 11 July, 1837. The newspaper had recently changed its name from "The Moderator" and the poet expresses his regret (it would be mock regret in anyone but Fletcher). On this slight subject he produces eleven stanzas and, as is his custom wherever possible, he mentions Byron.[17]

Were Byron living, sure his tears
Would mingle with our own [sic]
For many days - ah! say for years,
Regret would still be shown.

Tho' lingering troubles pain the heart,
And mortify the breast,
Kind Providence provides in part
A plan to give us rest.

And let us praise his won'drous power,
Who sent a son and heir
To dwell with us and comfort show'r,
His father's course to steer.

A little diff'rence in the name, [sic]
The father's name was Moderator, [sic]
Tho' sound [sic] and meaning much the same,
The son is christen'd Meditator.

Our tears we'll dry to ease the nation,
As 'tis our bounden obligation,
We must give way to meditation,
And bid farewell to moderation....

It is endearing in Fletcher to find in his next poem for The Meditator, "Improvements at the Cape", printed on 8 August, 1837, an echo of his "purple patch".[18]

From these few lines don't turn your eyes
away,
For be assured 'tis truth you hear them say;
Read o'er the whole, also with feeling read,
Nor think it strange why I thus intercede;
For I'll interpret plainly unto you,
And show you, if I can, my meaning too;
If you while reading read with meditation,
What'ere I write with humble moderation,
A short brief sketch, and chiefly on Cape
Town,
I am determined now to pen you down,
And shew what alterations may be made
With chisel, hatchet, adze, saw, pick, and
spade;
Also a little with the tongue as well,
May p'raps keep pace if not the rest excel.

He then describes, at considerable length, the damage caused by recent rain and the badly built houses, his last comments on the latter being:

> One thing I'll add before I pass it by, [sic]
> To see so many houses like a stye,
> Little low places built upon the ground,
> And hundreds such are easily to be found;
> With cold stone floors for their decoration,
> For Blacks and Whites, and folks of every
> nation.
> How bad also to women giving birth, [sic]
> This plan I think the worst upon the earth.
> Have boarded floors, and let them also lay
> Some rough stones under, that would be the way
> To keep them dry, likewise last much longer,
> And keep their children's constitutions
> stronger.
> Build rooms above as well as rooms below,
> And rest in love, and always kindness show.

He goes on to a suggestion that the roads be macadamized, to prevent, among other things, dust during the South-easter; and finally discusses the fertilizing of land.

> The dung that's thrown each day into the sea,
> If put on land it would much better be.
> Each cart at gunfire, with a little bell
> Would 'wake the people, and the tub-tale tell.
> Now to Green-point, how thick there lay the
> bones -
> Which if broke up, would better be than stones
> Upon your land, [sic] yes, either large or small,
> So take them, brake them, or else grind them
> all.
> Next see the beach, and view the lots of iron,
> Enough, if cast, to make a bust of Byron.
> Now for my bed, [sic] the clock has just struck ten,
> I p'raps some future day may write again.

As these lines testify, Fletcher combined idealism with sturdy common sense and had a fine disregard for what were considered "proper" subjects for poetry.

Fletcher's play on the words, "meditation" and "moderation", suggests a mild desire on his part to flatter or please - after all, the would-be poet wishes above all else to be published. A similar tactic did not work with the S.A. Advocate and Cape Town Spectator, which on 9 January, 1843, published his poem, "A New Year's Gift" with these comments:[19]

> ....[the] second [stanza] imperfect in metre and wordy; the third unintelligible; the fourth too complimentary and unlikely; the fifth silly; the sixth amounts to nothing; the seventh ungrammatical and unintelligible; the eighth and last, the best, but bad. And thus we shall always show the naked deformity of any similar doggerel that may be forced upon us.

NEW YEAR'S GIFT

Now truly I've got, [sic] a subject to write on
Which I hope will not, [sic] so soon be lost sight on, [sic]
In praise of the paper, I'll venture to write
Eight, or ten verses, to give you delight.

Magnanimity leading and guiding the mind,
Portraying each subject with manners refin'd,
Adorning each column, with news from afar;
Shewing the cause of distress, and cause of the war.

Simplicity holding a handicraft sway,
Imparting at once the news of each day,
So noted a paper has ne'er before been
At the Cape of Good Hope either printed or seen.

In fact the Spectator will open the gate
Of trade, and of trafic [sic] in every state,
And shew the best way how to get thro' the world,
With the greatest respect, till out of it hurl'd, [sic]

> A compendious account of the price of each thing
> That we wear, eat or drink without,[sic] or with wing,[sic]
> A recital becoming the paper contains,
> So I must praise the paper, or somebody's brains.
>
> A notification of things as they pass,
> In every place from a man, to an ass,
> Reviewing transactions that's passing around,
> From a whale in the sea, to all on the ground.
>
> Regardless of scandal. [sic] the truth may come out,
> And shew to the world what all classes [sic] about,
> Advocate well [illegible] (each case ?), respecting of crime,
> With impartial judgement time after time.
>
> Then success crown the people in union combin'd
> And success to friend Ockley who is always so kind,
> Success crown the paper - and when room to spare,
> Inform poet Fletcher, and soon he'll be there.

Nothing daunted by this ungrateful reception, Fletcher turned his attention to Sam Sly's African Journal and was finally rewarded when, on 24 October, 1844, Sammons printed his poem, "Lines on Salt River, Near Cape Town" (partially reviewed by Jardine in 1835), with accompanying remarks, in an article entitled "African Poetry, or Byron Eclipsed".[20]

> We would not willingly be the death of any one,[sic] either by excess of joy or sorrow, [sic] we deem it therefore necessary to prepare our readers for the great shock that might otherwise be produced on their nervous system or risible muscles, by the sudden perusal of the following exquisite lines from an anxious Correspondent, unless softened and gradually introduced into the spirit of the author.

Sam Sly then (rather facetiously) congratulates Fletcher on his courage in giving his name "boldly and unequivocally". He speculates on the "Fletcher's"he has heard of and on the poet's connection with them. Then follows a brief allusion to the story of Lord Byron's notorious wardrobe.

[Original - Very.]

LINES ON SALT RIVER, NEAR CAPE TOWN

1.

'Twas May, and the sun was retiring to rest,
I wander'd with William, a dearly lov'd friend,
Calm contentment was ours, serene was each breast,
As slowly our footsteps we ventur'd to bend
By the side of the Salt River stream.

2.

We talked of the days, and pleasures long fled,
Of old England and friends, we've left there behind,
Gave a sigh for the absent, a tear for the dead,
As onward we sought the mouth soon to find,
Of the Salt Rivers, [sic] long-winding stream.

3.

From thence we remov'd close by the sea side,
With basket and spade, and bottle in hand,
Some muscles [sic] to get, but took not a guide,
So went close to Blueberg, to a great strand. [sic]
Then, far from the Salt River stream.

4.

The sun was just set, and night coming on,
High time to be travelling home,
Besides our victuals and drink was all gone,
So we ventur'd no longer to roam.
We turned round quickly, and to our surprise,
Was [sic] soon cover'd over with a darkish disguise,
And saw not the Salt River stream.

5.

Then darker and darker, each moment it got,
It thundered, and soon it did rain,
And the sea made a noise, like a large
boiling pot,
Which a little distracted my brain, [sic]
We saw not each other, and hardly could hear,
For the sound of the surf, rain, thunder or
fear,
While seeking the Salt River stream.

6.

For a long time we walk'd, wet through to the
skin, [sic]
No muscles, no brandy, or wine. [sic]
And I fell o'er a whale-bone that scraped
my shin,
Which made me a little repine.
I got up, we walk'd on, and dreadful the sound
Of the surf and the sea, and thunder around,
When we got to the Salt River stream.

7.

Our baskets and spade, we then threw away
On the beach, that some one might find,
And heartily wish'd, [sic] we had somewhere to stay,
To shelter us both from the wind -
But in spite of the weather, slap in I did go,
I call'd out Bill! follow! [sic] but Bill answer'd
no [sic]
To me, in the Salt River stream.

8.

I then could not see, what was water or land,
But over head in it I went,
I never could swim, and could not feel the
sand,
So my life and my breath was [sic] near spent.
The surf in Salt River, and waves of the sea,
Like a wreck on the rocks, they well washed me,
While floating in the Salt River stream.

9.

I never expected again to get out
While washing about in the sea,
By the strength of the waves, tost [sic] and tumbled about,
But little hope then left for me.
I ne'er did expect to see home any more,
When a mighty wave came, and wash'd me on shore,
Clean out of the Salt River stream.

10.

Then homeward I hie'd, my wife at the door,
Said she ne'er saw me in such a pickle before;
I off with my clothes, and jump'd into bed,
Poor William the same, who was more than half dead,
Drank a glass of French brandy, and then to me said,
I shall dream of the Salt River stream.

Sam Sly then sets out "to point out those beauties and excellencies that might otherwise be overlooked by a careless and indifferent reader". He uses Fletcher's poem unashamedly as a vehicle for his own wit, but it is interesting to note some of the aspects to which he objects.

> It will be observed in Stanza 1, that the "merrie month of May" is the season chosen for the commencement of the journey, a period rather rougher in Africa than in England, and not quite so flowery, [sic] the contented calmness though, exhibited by William and George, is truly pleasing and grateful, as hand in hand they sojourned together, whilst Sol was retiring behind the old mountain....
> Always fond of "going a shelling," we are rather pleased with the unpoetical implements in No.3, of "basket, spade, and bottle," because even "muscles," [sic] are better than nothing - but how they dare venture without a guide seems miraculous. Stanza 4 is somewhat ambiguous, and the reader will be apt

to suspect, that the good things in the basket, or the muscles,[sic] and some unmentionable contents in the aforesaid bottle, were the cause of that "darkish disguise"[sic] rather than the atmospheric changes [sic] in fact that they were not Tee-totallers and so got fuddled, and

"Saw not the Salt River stream."

Nor is this idea changed in Stanza 5, for what with the thunder, the sea, and the hubbub, the hissing of the waters like "a large boiling pot" - oh, beautiful simile - and the world [sic] and distraction of their own brains, they at last could not positively see or hear each other - the awful effects of "one bottle more,"[sic] at all times.

Compassion will naturally arise for the forlorn condition of the wanderers in No.6. "No muscles, no brandy, no wine" - (ah! ah! here the secret comes out, that they had been too busy with the "Private Still") - with "scraped shins", and wet skins, and the heavens still in commotion.

In Stanza 7, the plot thickens, and it looks like U.P. with the travellers, where George goes "slap bang" into the sea, and calls, but calls in vain, for the foolish "Bill to follow;' [sic] but Bill looking before he leaped, shrewdly answered 'No'." One of the finest morals in Christendom might be drawn from this obstinacy of Bill, but time and space press us onward, and it is sufficient to add that "Bill was no fool upon the march!"[sic] Who likes to go into the sea, not being certain of coming out again? Bill was right, George was wrong, and we will maintain it in any court....

Sam Sly, perhaps feeling the pangs of contrition, ends on a kindly note.

> Our comments are concluded, and we think the reader will agree with us, that the poem has its beauties and its blemishes - that had more pains been taken, the result would have been more perfect, and had another subject been chosen, it might have altered the characters and the style, but Immaculate cannot be inscribed on the productions of any one, so the name of George Fletcher will still live, and may possibly be again inserted on these pages - but he really must not fall into the sea again, for we have no drags to fetch him out.

Whatever the shortcomings of "Lines on Salt River..." Fletcher came nearer to an individual style than many of the poetasters whose work Sammons praised extravagantly.

On 6 December, 1845, Sam Sly once more had the opportunity to make merry with the poetry of George Fletcher but he contented himself with commenting that shirts had become a common subject for poets (referring to T. Hood's "Song of the Shirt") and that Fletcher[21]

> ....has in his possession A Shirt of his Lordship's wearing, on which he soliloquizes, after his own fashion,....
> It will be perceived that the Shirt is torn a little here and there, and perhaps mangled too much by the laundress; but the fact is, the Cape is not a good place to "get up small linen" and like the players in Hamlet, they "tear these matters to rags".
>
> ON A SHIRT OF LORD BYRON'S
> In the Possession of the Author.
>
> 1.
>
> Old shirt, I do preserve thee still,
> And part with thee I never will,
> Though thou art much decayed,
> Moth, age, or time, may steal or take,
> I'll keep thee for the wearer's sake,
> Till in the grave I'm laid.

2.

Oh could the mighty bard who wore
This in that land of classic lore,
To me his genius impart;
Old shirt, I then would sing of thee,
And all the wearer was to me,
In strains that would melt the heart.

3.

Alas! the vital spark has fled,
And he is numbered with the dead,
Yet thee I will revere,
And shall do till my latest breath,
And when my voice is hushed in death,
I'll lay thee on my bier....

Fletcher then relates the story of his father's position, Byron's death and a squabble for the possession of his heart. The second stanza, though it does credit to Fletcher's modesty, is hardly complimentary to his intellect.

The last poem of Fletcher's to appear in print seems to be "Lines on the Wreck of the 'Waterloo' and 'Francis Spaight' in Table Bay". It is to be found in Sam Sly's African Journal, of 22 January, 1846. The poem consists of 103 lines and is followed by a postscript of thirty-four lines. In it Fletcher is incoherent with indignation (and probably lack of talent as well). After his fashion, he showed as much concern for practical matters like safer shipping as Thomas Pringle and the philanthropists showed for the slaves and noble savages. Sam Sly had a field day, putting into italics the most excruciating of Fletcher's phrases and mistakes (a goodly proportion of the poem).[22]

> ...."The Golden Age" is said to have passed - except it be presumed that the age of Guano has again produced it - as also the age of the Poets; and the elements have resolved themselves at present into the age of Iron and Steam. But as if to put the times and such an age to the blush, as well as to negative the general opinion of the neglect of Poesy, and the death of the Muses, a new star has arisen amongst us, that seems determined to eclipse all past refulgence, and give the lie to history, and the African chronicles.
>
> Nevertheless, there may be such hypercritical and acid ones, who,....may feel disposed to set up "a horse laugh," [sic] and even turn up their cynical noses at the choice morceau now placed for the first time before them. To such fastidious ones we can only say - in a critical point of view - that we have seen better, and received worse; and if not satisfied, they have nothing more to do than immediately to write an improved version....

This poem is far too long to quote in full. Here is Fletcher's touching description of the struggles of crew and passengers:

> Many jump'd overboard and try'd to gain
> The land - yet all their efforts were in vain [sic]
> Many for long, did long the billows brave,
> And many met a most untimely grave.
> A few there were by efforts truly great,
> Did reach the shore and mis'd the awful fate [sic]
> For many sank, I know to rise no more,
> In lives respective sphere to reach the shore [sic]
> Husbands, wives, children, from each other torn
> Without a ray of hope, lost and forlorn [sic]
> The scene that day was dreadful to behold
> To hear their cries and shiv'ring in the cold....

and his impassioned plea for a life-boat:

A wreck more awful ne'er was seen before
And may none like it e'er be any more.
This to prevent a life boat has been made
And place to put it in ready to aid
And give assistance to a wrecked crew (sic)
Which has been made both long and strong and new
And cost a deal of cash but few will doubt
All which is paid by gen'rous men, about
The exact sum I really cannot say
Or number of subscribers that did pay (sic)
Frustrated now their hopes of good intent
Another wreck has been, no life boat sent (sic)
An awfull [sic] wreck that's named Francis
Spaight
And like the Waterloo met the same fate...

Fletcher's Muse, unreliable at any time, could not sustain so ambitious a poem. In vain does the researcher protest his social conscience - and his refreshing freedom from conventional poetic diction.

Besides poetry printed in periodicals and newspapers, Fletcher was responsible for three pamphlets. These are: "A poem on the lamented death and interment of the late Lord Byron", sixteen pages long, printed in London, probably before the author came to the Cape: "Lines on the arrival of the New Governor, Sir Harry Smith" and also "Lines" (in praise of Queen Victoria) printed in 1847: "A New Song" composed by George Fletcher and printed in Cape Town in 1850.[23]

The last official report on Fletcher is to be found in the Cape Town Mail of 10 May, 1851:

> The Poet Fletcher - on Friday (May 9, 1851), the "Poet Laureate of the Cape", charged with being drunk and disturbing the peace in Plein Street. This individual who is a son of Fletcher, the confidential valet of Lord Byron, and who rejoices in the possession of sundry articles once belonging to his Lordship's wardrobe, but more especially in the poetic mantle, which he conceives has fallen upon his shoulders, - had, it appears, been employed by an innkeeper in that neighbourhood to write a string of verses in praise of his house, and the result was so much to the satisfaction of Boniface, that he made the thirsty Muse gloriously drunk. Fletcher, in extenuation, produced his poem, and was to inflict it at length upon the court, but Mr Auret declined to adjudicate on its merits, and ordered the unfortunate poet to pay a fine of £1, or suffer eight days confinement on rice-water.[24]

## Notes

[1] S.A. Rochlin, "George Gordon Fletcher", Quarterly Bulletin of the S.A. Library, VII, (1952), 9. Hereafter referred to as Quarterly Bulletin.

[2] Robinson, p. 229.

[3] Rochlin, p. 10.

[4] Ibid

[5] Ibid

[6] The African Journal, 5 June, 1851.

[7] S.S.A.J., 24 Oct., 1844, p. 4.

[8] Quarterly Bulletin, IX, (1954), 35.

[9] A. Hardine, "'Samples of Poetry', by G. Fletcher, Wheelwright, Strand Street, Cape Town", Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette, V, (1835), 191-192. Hereafter C. of G.H. Lit. Gazette.

[10]D.H. Varley, "More Notes on George Gordon Fletcher", Quarterly Bulletin, X, (1955), 4.

[11]C. of G.H. Lit. Gazette, V, (1835), 191.

[12]Robinson, p. 243.

[13]Hadgraft, p. 34.

[14]Rochlin, p. 12.

[15]C. of G.H. Lit. Gazette, V, (1835), 192.

[16]Ibid.

[17]The Meditator, 11 July, 1837, p. 2.

[18]Ibid, 8 Aug., 1837, p. 2.

[19]S.A. Advocate and C.T. Spectator, 9 Jan., 1843, p. 4.

[20]S.S.A.J., 24 Oct., 1844, p. 4.

[21]Ibid, 6 Dec., 1845, p. 4.

[22]Ibid, 22 Jan., 1846, p. 4.

[23]G.M. Miller, "A Calender of South African English Verse publications to 1855". Quarterly Bulletin, V, (1950), 52.

[24]Rochlin, p. 10.

## CHAPTER V

## THE ARTIST - GEORGE DUFF

Most of what is known about George Duff concerns his art. A pencil and wash drawing in the Africana Museum has, inscribed on the back: "Hottentot's Hut built of flags and reeds etc./G. Duff/Nephew of Duff/ Duff and Hodgson."[1] The two coloured plates in Merriman's "Kaffir, Hottentot and frontier farmer, 1852" are copies of Duff's work.[2] He could not have been very successful as an artist:

> Duff's native studies are very poor both from the artistic and ethnographic point of view. To Duff, the main difference between a Fingo and a Hottentot was the kind of hat he wore.[3]

Recorded in the Cape Archives is the following petition:

> Cape Town. Dec. 15th, 1856
>
> The Memorial of George Duff, artist.
> This petition showeth
> That your Petitioner is an artist but that during the winter months when few ships with passengers arrived, his business became so bad that he fell into difficulties, and has been obliged to quit his lodgings in considerable debt, - that he has in the last three weeks had no home but has been obliged to sleep under the trees on the mountain - that he is consequently in great distress both bodily and mental and humbly prays for assistance until by the arrival of fresh ships the demand for drawings of natives, &c., &c., which he is in the habit of executing for the shops may increase....

On the back is written: "Enquiries about unsatisfactory." [4]

Examples of Duff's water colour and pencil sketches are in the Africana Museum and in the private collection of Hugh Solomons and Maurice Green.[5]

Duff wrote "A South African Miscellany of History, Narration and Descriptive Sketches, Tales, Poetry, et.", Part 1 of which was published in Cape Town in 1852. This contained: "The South African Exhibition in London",[6] first printed in Sam Sly's African Journal for 12 October, 1848; an article on Wolraad Woltemade, first printed in the Cape Town Mirror for January 9th, 1849;[7] a description of a tramp from Port Elizabeth to Cape Town: and some "trifling" verse.[8] The fact that at least two of these are known to have been printed before suggests that he collected all his work to form the volume. In the search for poetry for this thesis, several stories and articles by Duff were noticed in passing.

A little information about Duff's movements can be deduced from his poetry. In a preface to his song, "Oh, early fade the Beautiful!", printed in Sam Sly's African Journal for 30 March, 1848, he says:

> The following lines were suggested on looking around at my Drawing Class, at Mrs. Ede's School for Young Ladies, Algoa Bay, some 3 years ago. The school is now removed to Graham's Town. -[9]

His "Lines addressed to Miss M.A. Watson", printed in Sam Sly's African Journal for 3 August, 1848, were written in Graham's Town in 1845.[10] He was in Natal in 1847 as his poem, "Lines written in the Natal Country, 1847", informs us.[11]

Of the twenty poems by Duff so far collected, seventeen appear in 1848 and one in each of the years 1849, 1850 and 1851. Of these, fourteen are printed in Sam Sly's African Journal (The African Journal from July, 1849) and six in the Cape Town Mirror. Only nine poems have any specifically African interest, in some cases very slight. The rest are very conventional, often in melancholy mood and showing concern for the ephemeral nature of beauty and the coming of death. A fair example is "The Deserted", which appeared in The African Journal for 17 July, 1851.[13]

Afar in some murk cavern's gloomy shade
Which lofty forests wild and deep surround [sic]
Oh let this failing form in death be laid
And strew with withered leaves the danksome
ground [sic]
Then where my name can never more be spoken [sic]
Let me unreck'd of and unknown repose [sic]
There would I slumber in a rest unbroken
And never more awake to earthly woes!
New Stanza
But as the voice of winter moaning fighteth
And gustful mourn the winds all drearily
Or the lone ocean's hollow surge replieth
Their tones a fitting requiem will be
For one whom peace and joy had left for ever
For ah! no hope the future hath for me [sic]
Then welcome Death come thou my life to sever
And still this heart that aches so wearily!

The first poem of South African interest ( and it is interesting by virtue of what it lacks) has a title which in this context resembles a mixed metaphor. This is "Song of the Sea Mymph / Written during a walk by the Mouth of the Zwartkop's River", printed in Sam Sly's African Journal for 18 May, 1848.[14] The first reaction on reading

the title is interest to see what sort of "sea change" the nymph undergoes to be relevant to the Cape - but disappointment is in store. Duff might just as well have been walking by the mouth of any of a hundred rivers. The poem concerns the legend that, if a man once forms an association with a sea nymph, he can never break it, "For such but once breaking, or earth again seeking,/ Where'er he first lights on shall yield him a grave!" In stanzas two and three the nymph describes the luxuries and pleasures she and her earthling will enjoy together. This complete disregard for environment is typical of many Cape poetasters.

In "I wandered on for many a mile", printed in Sam Sly's African Journal for 17 August, 1848,[15] the poet appears to be suffering from home-sickness:

I wandered on for many a mile
O'er Afric's barren plain,
While 'neath a burning sun, my brow
Throbb'd quick with fev'rish pain;
Till worn and faint at length I gained
The spot I sought to find,
And threw me down all gratefully,
And 'neath the shade reclined.

2

There was an open casement near,
And thence harmonious fell
The music of the Island home
For aye I love so well.
My native isle - sweet melody!
My heart swells high to thee,
And tears for auld lang syne gush forth
All uncontrolledly!

3

And, aye, a pray'r rose to my lips
Again to see that home,
Oh, never more so wearily,
So distantly, I'd roam,
But stray among the grassy meads
Or by the green burnside,
And dwell mid peaceful English scenes
Until the day I died!

This nostalgia for home was a favourite subject at the Cape. Duff fails to move the reader to sympathy. The trite lines suggest sentimental posturing and rightly, for in the Cape Town Mirror for 19 September, 1848, he has changed his mind.[16] The poem is entitled "Lines" (a favourite with Duff, as were songs). This poem is more interesting, though certainly not unique, for Thomas Pringle had voiced very similar sentiments in "Afar in the Desert".

The desert dun hath charms for me,
For there I feel I'm wildly free;
My blood careers through every vein
As if my youth were back again;
And there more fresh my spirits glow,
As far around my glance I throw,
Where nothing ever meets mine eye,
But silent wilds and bright blue sky.

Long years my fate hath bid me roam,
Since first I left my island home;
And sometimes yearns my heart, in truth,
To view the scenes where passed my youth;
Some few more months with friends to dwell, -
Of days lang syne once more to tell, -
If but again to say farewell!

But not for years I'd wish to stay,
And trace the same unvaried way,
In cities pent, from morn till night,
Where scarce the sun shows half his light.
For thence would memory unconfined
To other scenes transport my mind,
And bear me from a duller time
To where pass'd years of earlier prime
'Mid Afric's unsung hills sublime!

My heart is hers - my home is there;
I wish not for a clime more fair.
Amid her plains there's many a scene
Would not be quickly match'd, I ween;
And dull indeed that soul must be
That could not feel their witchery.
In some such spot, when coming death
Shall close my eye and still my breath,
'Twould please me to repose at last,
The world's harsh strife escaped and past.
Meseems, in truth, my spirit best
(The earth thrown lightly on my breast)
And safest there for aye could rest.

If Duff has indeed succumbed to the fascination of Africa, "witchery" is a very weak description of it. The poem shows the preoccupation with age and death which is almost always present in Duff's verse; if it is not overtly expressed, in a cheerful poem like this one, it is implied, ("As if my youth were back again"). The poet's fondness for seeing himself as a homeless wanderer or exile is also apparent in these lines. The idea that man is happier in the country is very old, but the joy in action, expressed by Pringle in "Afar in the Desert" and eventually personified in Roy Campbell, seems to have its origins in the Romantic movement. Duff's description of the African veld is without vitality - "desert dun", "silent wilds" and "bright blue sky".

"The South African Exhibition in London" (Sam Sly's African Journal, 12 October, 1848)[17] reveals Duff at his best - in lighter vein. It consists of some lines and some very lively dialogue, which reveals a sense of humour too little exploited. P.R. Kirby has pointed out the similarity between the opening lines and those of Charles Dickens' "The Wig Gallery": "Walk in, walk in, each beau and belle; / Here wisdom, virtue, truth we sell."[18]

> Walk in, walk in, we've Lions here!
> And crested Serpent shapes of fear, [sic]
> The Hartebeest and Buffalo,
> And Camel-leopard we can shew!
> The Elephant and Tiger too,
> The lordly Eland and the Gnu,
> The Wild Dog and Hyaena fell,
> And more than there is room to tell!
> [Spoken.] - "Walk in, walk in, ladies and gentlemen! - the opportunity may never occur again." "This way mam, if you please." "Lawks ma! look at that horrible looking whats o' name in the glass case?" [sic] "Oh dear! sir, pray what's that?" "That, mam, is the vunderful pisonus and pestiferous Puff Adder, that springs twenty feet backwards at one spring, and always lights on the tip of his tail, just as you see him there!" "Hilloa! Sammy, what's all that row about in the other room?" "Vy, master, its only the Hottentot Wenus [sic] a singing one of her out-landish songs all about catch me caccleback!"...."My eye, feyther! be that a sheep! wounds [sic], what a tail?" [sic] "Oh that, sir, yes, that's the real Cape sheep - some on 'em have tails that weigh 50 pounds and upwards, [sic] the Boers of South Afrikey melts 'em down, as they're nothin [sic] but fat, and prefers it to butter."...

Here you see the Kaffir Crane,
And here the Zebra, none can tame[sic]
The spotted Leopard and wild Cat,
And Cangos'[sic] caverns' Giant bat!
Just enter here, you'll set your eyes on
The Bushman's Arrow dipt in pison,
Sword-fishes and great Allegators,
That strike with terror all spectators,
And big Baboons, so wondrous hairy,
Who'll bellow quite enough to scare ye!
Walk in, walk in, you're just in time,
To see these wonders quite sublime!...

Animals play a large part in an engaging song, with a pleasant lilting rhythmn, which reflects the joyful mood, printed in Sam Sly's African Journal for 21 June, 1849.[19] Once more one is reminded of "Afar in the Desert". The picture is rather idealised and the animals are seen subjectively through the eyes of the poet, as partaking of the spirit of lighthearted adventure. They do not come to life at all but are simply names arranged to fit the exigencies of rhyme and metre. Nevertheless this is one of Duff's most attractive poems.

Come to our hunting
In African glades, [sic]
Blythe are our meetings
That sorrow ne'er shades, [sic]
Gaily we follow
The stately koodoo,
Eland or Cauna
O'er wild and karroo.
Springboks are leaping
In herds on the plain, [sic]
Boschbok and Panther
Will shun us in vain, [sic]
Lordly Rhinoster
Shall bow to our sight,
And e'en the gaunt Lion
Succumb in the fight!

Come to our hunting
By African hills, [sic]
Health cheering spirit
The bosom there fills, [sic]
Morning's fresh breezes
Lend speed to the race,
And game swiftly bounding
Invites to the chase.

Ourebis playful
And klipspringers there,
Steenbok and Grysbok
Shall furnish our fare, [sic]
Gemsboks so warlike
And Buffalos too
Shall yield us rare sport
With the dark brindled gnu!

Come to our hunting
In African glades, [sic]
Sickness will vanish
For care ne'er invades, [sic]
Who like the rover
Is happy and free?
Earth his sole pillow
Or some fallen tree.
Canopied only
Throughout the long night,
By o'erarching heavens,
With stars tapered bright, [sic]
Shielded in safety
But by his lone fire, [sic]
Lull'd into slumber
By nature's sweet choir,
Troubled [sic] nor envied
Nor dreaming of grief,
Safe in a desert
And fearing no thief....

It is interesting to note the change that has come over the wanderer in this poem. No longer self-pitying (feeling as the convention of the day expected of him), he rejoices in his freedom. Alone, and close to nature, man is truly contented.

In "To Africa", (Cape Town Mirror, 14 November, 1848),[20] Duff reveals the typical attitude of the time - that the land of mystery, ages old, full of contrasts and strange practices, must yield to civilisation. On no other terms is she acceptable to the European mind.

> Land of the wild, the wondrous, and sublime,
> That still hast secrets unrevealed by time, -
> Thou who still holdest kingdoms unexplored,
> Where darkness reigns and pagan rites
> abhorred, -
> Oh, may thy regions soon admit the light,
> And knowledge smile, to exile thy long night.
> Soon may thy hills re-echo other sounds,
> Than cries of woe, as crime or war abounds, -
> Thy wilds rejoice, by peaceful races trod,
> And happy nations hymn the praise of God.

This poem, probably because it is supported by argument, has greater definition than the earlier poems about Africa. The difference between England and Africa is no longer simply that one is cool with grassy meads and the other hot with "deserts dun".

Duff makes an attempt to describe nature in "Lines written in the Natal Country, 1847" (Sam Sly's African Journal, 21 December, 1848).[21] As in the Romantic Tradition, God and nature are inextricably linked, though the poet does not go so far as to say with Pringle that man is nearer to God the closer he is to nature. His observations do give him greater faith.

In many a tree form'd chapel wreathed with
flowers,
Where yet the foot of man hath never been;
There nature's voice, through still
succeeding hours,
Sends up glad anthems to the God unseen.
In pathless wilds where yet no human dwelling
Breaks the wide loneliness of all around,
God's happy creatures his high glory telling,
In daily thanksgiving his praises sound!

E'en [sic] the brown wilderness not all is
lifeless,
For many wondrous living things are there,
And some which but for man might still live
strifeless,
And all the blessings of existence share.
For me, a wanderer, oft-times I linger,
To marvel at the beauty of the plain,
And seeing everywhere th' Almighty finger,
Joy inwardly that naught is made in vain!

The inadequacies of conventional diction are apparent in clichés like "the brown wilderness", "glad anthems", "pathless wilds", "wondrous" and "blessings of existence".

In "To the Orange River" (Cape Town Mirror, 12th December, 1848),[22] Duff speculates on the precious stones which are hidden beneath the "lucid waters". This sounds mildly prophetic - but the gems he chooses are of the "fabulous" kind found in exotic stories, the opal, agate, onyx and the conventional "priceless gem", the equivalent of "etc.". Moreover, whereas he found a sea nymph at the mouth of the Swartkops, he discovers river sprites in the Gariep (he does not use this name). In the second and last stanza, he reveals (at revelation's lowest level) a knowledge of human nature and also a conviction of man's conquest of Africa and its mysteries.

But man, who ransacks all below, some day
will search thy store,
And each succeeding treasure reft shall
whet his thirst for more.
Not e'en thy waters' swiftest flow thy
deepest depths shall hide,
When from their ancient bed his hand shall
turn thy flood aside.

Duff's final "African" poem in the period under discussion is "A Farewell Description of Algoa Bay" (The African Journal, 27 June, 1850).[23] This can hardly be taken very seriously but it does bear the stamp of truth. The writer's disgruntled mood is comic, as are his comments.

From Algoa Bay,
I'll soon away
And from its sand hills dreary;
I love it not
For well I wot
The people are uncheery.
Here, in the streets
One nothing meets
But Hottentots -
Such nasty sots,[sic]
And broken pans,
And Iron pots,
And every filth
That foully rots.
And great sharp stones,
And bits of bones;
And sand that flies
All in one's eyes
And up one's nose
And o'er one's clothes.
Merchants snuffle
Winklers shuffle
Dutchman fret
Totties sweat
Such a bubble
Toil and trouble.
Now tell me pray d'ye like it eh?[sic]
Lawks! how can you ask one such a question[sic]
Mr Caudle?

If Port Elizabeth had finally obtained its municipality, it does not appear to have improved matters.

The work of George Duff is very slight in comparison with the achievement of Pringle. Some of his themes are of interest, but they are not original. There is little attempt to adapt English to the environment. Rather, Africa is filtered through the screen of language and habitual thought and distorted in the process. His poems do however support the impression that a degree of vitality appears, when high seriousness is abandoned.

## Notes

[1] Africana Notes and News, XVI (1965), 339.

[2] Capt. Maurice J. Green, "Early South African pictures and their painters", Africana Notes and News, VII (1950), 92.

[3] R.F. Kennedy, "Native and Malay Studies by J.W. Bell, Duff and others", Africana Notes and News, XV (1963), 313

[4] Green, p. 92.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Percival R. Kirby, "More about the Hottentot Venus", Africana Notes and News, X (1953), 128.

[7] "Wolraad Woltemade and the Wreck of the 'Jonge Thomas'", Africana Notes and News, VIII (1949), 20.

[8]G.M. Miller, "A Calendar of South African English Verse", Quarterly Bulletin, V (1950), 53.

[9]S.S.A.J., 30 March, 1848, p. 4.

[10]Ibid., 3 Aug., 1848, p. 4.

[11]Ibid., 21 Dec., 1848, p. 4.

[12]Miller, p. 53.

[13]The African Journal, 17 July, 1851, p. 4. Hereafter T.A.J.

[14]S.S.A.J., 18 May, 1848, p. 4.

[15]Ibid., 17 August, 1848, p. 4.

[16]Cape Town Mirror, 19 September, 1848, p. 23.

[17]S.S.A.J., 12th October, 1848, p. 4.

[18]Kirby, p. 128.

[19]S.S.A.J., 21 June, 1849, p. 4.

[20]C.T. Mirror, 14 November, 1848, p. 87.

[21]S.S.A.J., 21 December, 1848, p. 4.

[22]C.T. Mirror, 12 December, 1848, p. 119.

[23]T.A.J., 27 June, 1850, p. 4.

# CHAPTER VI

## THE SOLDIER - BAHROO

The only clue to the identity of "Bahroo" is a prefatory note to his poem, "Hintza", signed W.B. This poem was published as a fifteen page pamphlet by Godlonton, Graham's Town, in 1846[1]: and was also printed in two parts in Sam Sly's African Journal of 13[2] and 20 July.[3]

It is known besides that he was a private in the 91st Regiment. That he was probably a Scot is indicated by his reference to "my friends on Scotia's shores"[4] and by his use of the word, "kelpies", for water sprites in his poem "Echo Stream - S.A."[5]

There are clues to "Bahroo's" movements while at the Cape, as most of his poems have the place and date of writing appended. He was in Cape Town in January, 1843;[6] but he had moved to Fort England by June of the same year.[7] At least four of the six poems printed in 1844 were written at Mancazana.[8] In 1845 he moved to Botha's Post;[9] but in November of the same year he was in Cape Town,[10] presumably on leave, for by January, 1846, he was at Post Victoria.[11] October, 1847 saw him at Fort Beaufort.[12] There is no clue to his whereabouts in 1848, except that "Echo Stream - S.A."[13] was written in that year. He was still on the Frontier as he submitted a poem to the Graham's Town Journal.[14] From January to April, 1850 he was

at Brack-Fontein.[15] By August he had moved to the Klein Zoekoe River[16] and a poem, printed in September, was written at Zoekoe River, Uitenhage.[17] There are no poems in 1851. Presumably, "Bahroo" was too busy fighting the Xhosa.

"Bahroo" wrote at least thirty poems, two-thirds of which are to be found in the Graham's Town Journal. The others are printed in the South African Advocate and Cape Town Spectator, the Cape Frontier Times and Sam Sly's African Journal.

It is disappointing to find that all but eight are conventional in subject, revealing a love of children and regret for the past. Of the remainder, two have promising titles but are, in content, quite irrelevant to this study. The first, entitled "Three Years Ago! Shipwreck of the Waterloo",[18] tells (at considerable length, it may be added) of the passenger's feelings when he is being shipwrecked; the second, "The Old Fontein, - A Domestic Scene",[19] describes the activities of children playing around a fountain, and, rather fatuously, the exploit of little "H—" in escaping her mother's wrath. His "Epistle to the Bard of Botha's Post" has already been discussed.

Of the remaining five poems, two are of interest for their descriptions of nature, in which one would suppose the poet would be objective. Africa is conspicuous by its absence. The first of these bears the title, "The Nests of the Loxia, or Weaver Bird, A Scene on Kat River, South Africa".[20] In the introductory stanza of this "effusion", the poet describes a

summer scene, as he wanders preoccupied, shamelessly indulging in the beauty of nature and the subjective delight of spurious melancholy. Note that poetic prop, the "lonely grave".

> The summer buds were blooming gay,
> The lambkins too did frisk and play,
> And nature in her brightest vest
> With beauty did each scene invest,
> As on the margin of a stream
> I wandered in a waking dream;
> The willow wept above the wave.
> The morning breeze stole softly by,
> When, seated near a lonely grave,
> With lime-trees for a canopy,
> Methought I heard the willow sigh,
> Methought I saw the willow weep
> Big tear-drops, falling from on high
> Upon the surface of the deep [sic]
> O, 'twas a pleasing thought, I ween,
> To fancy that bright tears were seen
> Falling from nature's weeping trees,
> Dislodged by morning's gentle breeze.

The poet now pauses to look about him and notices a little island in the middle of the river. He exercises his capacity for pretty thoughts on the old tree on the island, and its colony of nests.

> There was a little verdant isle,
> Rose from the bosom of the river,
> Whereon young summer buds did smile,
> And sweetest odours did deliver
> To nature, as she smiled above them,
> And well did wild young nature love them.
> One tree - it was an aged tree [sic]
> Was monarch of the tiny spot,
> And looking upwards I did see
> A most enchanting sight, I wot;
> It was a village in the air;

Methought the 'Home of Love' [sic] was there;
Methought (and now it makes me smile,
When thinking of that little isle,
Yet still the imagery comes,)
They might be river-spirits' homes,
Or dwelling [sic] of the aerial sprites,
Or bowers of [sic] little angel loves [sic]
To shelter in, when moon-lit nights
Might lure them to our earthly groves;
And as I saw the fairy birds
Leaving their homes in glittering herds,
And soaring listlessly away
In mid-air, 'neath the mellowed ray
Of morning's sun, in rapid flight,
I deemed my fancy augured right;
For, heaven-bound, they seemed to be
Bright visitants from Eden's bowers
In plumed guise, young, fair, and free,
They came to view this land of ours.
I scarce may tell
The witching spell
They wrought within my wondering mind:
But from my view
Away they flew
Upon the wings of summer wind.
Their homes are there,
Dangling in air:
The wizard tree upholds [sic] them well;
But whence their flight,
Through bloom or blight,
My muse, oft coax'd, hath failed to tell.

The poet seems half aware, when he says with wry humour "and now it makes me smile....yet still the imagery comes", that he lacks appropriate associations for a truer description of what he sees.

Similarly, the poem, "Echo Stream - S.A." (in the Graham's Town Journal for 23 February, 1850), describes the stream in such terms that it could be one of many streams.

> There is a wild romantic fall,
> High, mantling like a crystal pall,
> Comes stealing oe'r a giant stone,
> Beneath an ever-dropping cave.
> Where, musing oft for hours alone,
> I've listen'd to the murmuring wave,
> And thought I heard the Kelpies scream,
> Shrill, clear, and faint in Echo stream....

In an earlier poem printed without a title in the Cape Frontier Times for 17 October, 1844,[21] "Bahroo" had with some success come to grips with his African environment. The lines purport to be a letter in reply to the queries of friends and, in the first stanza, he resists the temptation to let his imagination run riot on the vague vastnesses of Africa and sets himself the discipline of describing his immediate surroundings.

> You ask me of the land where now I dwell;
> Ah! would my muse could roam the deserts o'er,
> And then such tales of each fair scene I'd
> tell,
> As might amuse my friends on Scotia's shore:
> But let me try, I shall my forces rally,
> And lead you through the sweets of this
> lone valley.

In the second stanza, "Bahroo" adopts a conversational tone with rather clumsy result. The reader gathers that he regrets leaving his home - and also, perhaps, that the "romantic Clyde" would be easier to write about.

Where Mancazana, gurgling, joins Koonap -
They roll (in consort) to the Fish Rivier,
[sic]
(The latter river's laid down in the map),
Their banks are shady, and their waters
clear:
But ah! their beauty would look tame beside
The stream in childhood loved - romantic
Clyde!!

The next three stanzas give the contrast, which the poet cannot well deny. While it is possible to maintain a sense of beauty and gentle pastoral life during the day, night brings a side of Africa which, though it has to be mentioned, is best forgotten. A jackal is after all a jackal. It would be difficult to turn it into a fairy. Perhaps "Bahroo" relished the vicarious shudder his description would produce in his readers. The description is mild enough but poetry does not often contain these horrors.

Close by the margin of Koonap I live;
My dwelling is substantial, clean and neat;
A lovely pasturage our vale doth give
To neighbouring flocks, who nip it fresh
and sweet.
When dews of morning shine with crystal
sheen,
The valley seems a peaceful, rural scene.

But must I tell that when night's curtain
falls,
And weary Fingoes homeward slowly hie
To leave their flocks within their snug-
made kraals,
The ear is greeted by the jackall's [sic]
cry:
The wolf's abroad! hark to his dismal howl -
More wild and irksome than your Northern
Owl.

> And through the vale he takes his wily
> course
> To where some hapless kid or buck has
> strayed -
> Or wandering ewe bewails above the corse
> Of her new-born. His howling then is staid.
> He takes his gorge-blood glutted moves away,
> And sneaks into the bush at peep of day.

The poet changes the subject abruptly to a description of the fort, much idealised, as though he cannot bear too much reality. Just as his safety from danger depends on the fort, so does his mental and emotional comfort lie in the well-tried expressions and modes of thought provided by literature.

> Our Fort when viewed from off the hills
> around,
> (The sun upon it's walls) seems to the eye
> A fairy palace built on fairy ground,
> With the blue sky for its bright canopy. - [sic]
> And sweet tranquility pervades it o'er -
> You gaze around and turn to love it more.

But, despite this haven, there is that strange life which abounds and obtrudes.

> And perched upon the rocks above the stream,
> Behold the chattering monkeys in the trees;
> The yellow-wood a living mass doth seem,
> And lovely willows tremble in the breeze.
> Above, the screeching parrots wing their way,
> All, all is life, and mimic revelry.

The poem ends disappointingly with an allusion to romance and a gallant tribute to the lady in question. The description of night in the second last stanza is

perhaps revealing in its contrast with stanzas four and five. A man is protected from the unfriendly elements about him by engaging in the traditional pursuits of a soldier and a gentleman.

> But dearer than the glare of day to me,
> The moonlight ramble o'er the glassy space,
> Where haply, too, the stranger's eye may see
> Some fairy form - some young entrancing face,
> Linked with her favoured one - oh! happy pair. -
> (Here wizard memory whispers "Such things were!" [sic]
>
> And now sweet vale, I bid thy charms adieu!
> I'll think of thee in many a coming year,
> Though brighter scenes my wondering eye may view,
> I'll treasure thee as something still held dear
> When retrospection leads me back to —
> The blue-eyed maiden of the Mancazana!

In "The Boer's Farewell to Fatherland" (Sam Sly's African Journal, 1 January, 1846), "Bahroo" attempts sympathetically to empathise into the emotions of the Afrikaner.[22] In a note he explains that "these lines were suggested on reading the remarks of Mr D'L—, at a meeting of Duth Farmers, on the Koonap, during the Kafir disturbances in '44."[23] The language is unpretentious, the result a trifle sentimental but not too much so. The repetition of "Fatherland" suggests the Afrikaner's intense love of Africa, his greater commitment. The emotions of the "Boer" reflect the disillusionment and conflict with the regime, which led to the Great Trek. Much has been written about the reactions of the British settlers to Kaffir depredations. This is

~~This is~~ the only example thus far of sympathy for the Afrikaner as a separate race. "Bahroo" does not idealise the "Boer's" life. Commitment to Africa means for him a somewhat cheerless existence.

Away! away! I must away!
The vessel rides in yonder bay,
To bear me from my native soil,
A man of wo [sic] , a son of toil.
Then ask not, why these tears are shed?
Why this poor heart is cold and dead?
I now must leave this cheerless strand,
And say "Farewell to Fatherland!"

I had some manly sons and brave;
But one sleeps in his mountain grave,
In him I lost all hope, - all joy.
He was from youth my fav'rite boy.
The heathen laid him cold in death;
And with his slow, declining breath,
There came an unseen, withering hand,
That left a blight o'er Fatherland.

And I must cross the angry main,
Nor seek my early home again,
Nor call the summer flowers, that wave
Above my offspring's lonely grave.
The savage now may warn [sic] the wild
Where sleeps my fond, lamented child.
And desolation wave her wand,
With blasting spell o'er Fatherland.

The wand'ring exile hath his joy,
Some little hope his mind to buoy.
But here there is no hope for me. [sic]
No prospect but of misery.
Adieu, lost home! I'll think of thee
When bounding o'er the Southern Sea.
Now in the world alone I stand,
Debarr'd a grave in <u>Fatherland!</u>

The long poem, "Hintza",[24] is memorable for its picture of the death of a Xhosa chief, one of the few narratives dealing with an African incident. On May 10, 1835,

> Smith obliged Hintza to promise a large indemnity in cattle, proclaimed the land between the Keiskamma and the Kei as Queen Adelaide Province, and announced that hostile tribes would be driven beyond the Kei into Hintza's country 'for ever'. Next day, Hintza, while trying to escape, was shot by George Southey in self-defence.[25]

W.B. in his note, admits to some poetic licence. This is his account.

> Hintza was a Kaffir Chief, of the blood-royal of that race, whose end, although not quite so tragical as described in the following lines, was in accordance with his daring and reckless actions through life. He was shot dead in the crevice of a rock by one of the Corps of Guides, a body of men whose services were most valuable during the former Kaffir war. Hintza had been held as an hostage by the officer commanding a body of troops sent against the robber hordes then infesting the Colonial boundary, and under pretence of conducting the troops to where large herds of stolen cattle lay concealed, he attempted to outride the escort, and only succeeded to meet a well-deserved death. The locality of this scene in the Kaffir war is not correct; but answers the purpose of a romance well enough.[26]

The attempt to make Hintza a central figure in the drama is one of a series. Thomas Pringle in "Makanna's Gathering" attempted to project himself into the way of thought of a different culture: W.S. in "Makanna" (Sam Sly's African Journal, July, 1844)[27] did the same. "Bahroo's" attempt is of a different kind, less impassioned, dealing with action rather than emotion. While his "Hintza" is somewhat idealised - it is startling to hear him called an "audacious Thane" - the account of rebel activities in the first stanza dispels all ideas of a sentimentalised "noble savage".

> The bravest, he who plunder'd most;
> The most renown'd in future fame,
> Who had in war the deadliest aim;
> Who best could play the murderous part,
> Who threw the surest killing dart;
> Whose heart was proof to woman's [sic] tears;
> Who least regarded aged years;
> Who best could wing a flaming match
> Into a homely roof of thatch;
> But truce to similes so trite,
> The <u>bloodiest</u> was the <u>bravest</u> wight.

Hintza rides into an ambush set by Sir Harry Smith.

> The camp in consternation stood:
> Each trooper gazed with wond'ring eyes
> Upon this chief of regal blood,
> And long they felt the glad surprise.
> A lion, rousing from his lair,
> Had sprung into a willing snare,
> And shrunk abash'd and in dismay,
> As well the hunted rebel may. [sic]
> Who holds the tenure of his life
> In murder and perpetual strife.

Smith insists that Hintza return the stolen cattle, threatening hanging if he is disobeyed. His pompous speeches leave the reader in no doubt as to where "Bahroo's" allegiance lies.

> The wily rebel did essay
> To sue for a remoter day,
> When all demands and tribute sought
> In safety should be surely brought.
> But mark the soldier's redd'ning brow:
> "Hintza, thy choice is left thee now;
> Choose as ye list, but by my word,
> That never swerv'd from honor's path,
> Tempt me no more, my chary bird,
> Nor tamper with the lion's wrath!....[28]

As Hintza rides along with the escort, his heroic qualities are stressed. The account of his childhood activities is rather idealised but "Bahroo" never loses his awareness that Hintza is one of the enemy, although an adversary to be respected.

> The Corps of Guides to saddle sprang;
> With clatt'ring hoofs the mountain rang;
> Hintza, upon his jet-black pride,
> In seeming calmness now did ride,
> And strove to counterfeit good will,
> Although his eye was restless still;
> He knew each bush, each winding path
> They rode; he knew the flowery strath,+
> Which stretch'd as far as eye could gaze;
> He'd known it from his boyish days,
> And oft had backed his favorite steed
> Gainst wildebeest and dekar's speed;
> And often had the tiger's cry,
> As tow'rds the mountains brow he fled,
> Been silenc'd by the assegai,
> Which from his sinewy arm had sped.

+ Valley

He knew the mettle of his horse
Would bear him on, if he could clear
The ranks of his conducting force;
But then he had no succour near....

Slowly the cavalcade moved on;
The light of hope on Hintza shone,[sic]
When suddenly, with one wild bound,
He clear'd the strongly guarded ground;
Away on fury's wings he flew,
And thirty followers pursue,
And thirty bullets seek his heart;
But Hintza had a sudden start,
And nobly did that charger bear
His freight across the flowery plain;
Nor did the rebel Chief despair
To reach his fastnesses again.

Hintza is shot and his followers, when they see this, scatter "far and fast". The conclusion emphasises that it is the Xhosa's exploit which "Bahroo" is celebrating in verse. It is the action of the desperate escape which has attracted him, not the character and emotions of the central character. The opening questions sound ludicrous to the ear.

And where is that revolting corse?
And where is Hintza's noble horse?
The margin of a stream he sought,
His flame-devouring thirst to slake;
His writhing body over-wrought,
Its well deserved rest doth take.
That fatal draught
The charger quaff'd
Hath stretch'd him by his master's side.
A cairn of stones
Conceals their bones.
Thus ended Hintza's deadly ride.[29]

"Bahroo" is in many ways a more competent versifier than Fletcher or Duff. There is little evidence that he was aware of any challenge to his poetic powers in his confrontation with Africa. Those poems which deal with African themes come by chance rather than a conscious seeking, his imagination caught by a touching speech or an exciting event. The other twenty-two poems he wrote testify to his preference for the sentimental and didactic subject, rather than the new theme. When his theme is new, he adapts it to his own technique.

## Notes

[1] G.M. Miller, "A Calendar of South African English Verse publications to 1855", Quarterly Bulletin, V (1950), 52.

[2] S.S.A.J., 13 July, 1848, p. 4

[3] Ibid., 20 July, 1848, p. 4

[4] Cape Frontier Times, 17 October, 1844, p. 3.

[5] Graham's Town Journal, 23 February, 1850, p. 2.

[6] S.A. Advocate and C.T. Spectator, 16 January, 1843, p. 4.

[7] Graham's Town Journal, 22 June, 1843, p. 3.

[8] Ibid., 20 June, 1844. Cape Frontier Times, 18 July, 1844; 1 August, 1844; 17 October, 1844.

[9] Graham's Town Journal, 11 September, 1845; 9 October, 1845; 23 October, 1845; 6 November, 1845; 27 November, 1845; 18 December, 1845.

[10] S.S.A.J., 20 July, 1848, p. 4.

[11] Graham's Town Journal, 17 January, 1846, p. 3.

[12] Ibid., 23 October, 1847, p. 3.

[13] Ibid., 23 February, 1850, p. 2.

[14] Ibid., 12 August, 1848, p. 3.

[15] Ibid., 19 January, 1850; 2 March, 1850; 23 March, 1850; 27 April, 1850; 4 May, 1850.

[16] Ibid., 17 August, 1850, p. 3.

[17] Ibid., 14 September, 1850, p. 3.

[18] Ibid., 9 October, 1845, p. 3.

[19] Ibid., 27 April, 1850, p. 2.

[20] Ibid., 17 January, 1846, p. 3.

[21] Cape Frontier Times, 17 October, 1844, p. 3.

[22] S.S.A.J., 1 January, 1846, p. 2.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid., 13 July, 1848; 20 July, 1848.

[25] Walker., p. 185.

[26] S.S.A.J., 13 July, 1848, p. 4.

[27] Ibid., July, 1844, p. 2.

[28] Ibid., 20 July, 1848, p. 4.

[29] See Appendix C, p. 274 for complete poem.

# CHAPTER VII

## THE AFRICAN MUSE

William Charles Wentworth, apostrophising "celestial poesy" in his poem, "Australasia", published in England in 1823,[1] made the following plea on behalf of his country:

> Descend thou also on my native land,
> And on some mountain-summit take thy stand;
> Thence issuing soon a purer font be seen
> Than charmed Castalia or famed Hippocrene;
> And there a richer, nobler fane arise,
> Than on Parnassus met the adoring eyes.
> And tho', bright goddess, on the far blue hills,
> That pour their thousand swift pellucid rills
> Where Warragamba's rage has rent in twain
> Opposing mountains, thundering to the plain,
> No child of song has yet invoked thy aid
> 'Neath their primeval solitary shade, -
> Still, gracious Pow'r, some kindling soul inspire,
> To wake to life my country's unknown lyre,
> That from creation's date has slumbering lain,
> Or only breathed some savage uncouth strain;
> And grant that yet an Austral Milton's song
> Pactolus-like flow deep and rich along, -
> An Austral Shakespeare rise, whose living page
> To nature true may charm in ev'ry age; -
> And that an Austral Pindar daring soar,
> Where not the Theban eagle reach'd before.[2]

This invocation of the Australian muse, couched though it is in the most conventional eighteenth century poetic diction, is impressive for its tentative recognition that the muse of Australia might well be different from the muse of any other country. It has no equivalent in poetry printed in Cape periodicals during the period under discussion. The poem, "Lines on the Above Heerengracht River", printed in The Moderator of 17 January, 1837, comes closest.[3] Its assertion that the Heerengracht could become famous in its own right cannot be taken seriously, however, for the tone of the introduction is facetious and there is no evidence that it was written by the editor and not the poet. The poem is perhaps indicative of the dilemma in which the colonists found themselves.

> It has been strongly recommended, on account of various good and particular reasons, that the omnium gatherum river in Africa, called the Heerengracht, should be exchanged in name, to that of the Po.
>
> Lines on the Above River
>
> Let Italy boast of its clear flowing Po,
> And Frenchmen be proud of the spreading Garrone,
> The Rhone may run rapid, the Rhine struggle slow,
> But blue-bosomed Heerengracht, thou art our own.
>
> 'Tis true, as the giant-like streams of the West,
> It spreads not an ocean of mud-coloured [sic] waves;
> But then o'er it rides not the death-spreading pest,
> And no crocodiles yawn in it - ready-made graves.

But stainless as infancy, limpid as
truth,
From the green hills it springs, and
flows on to the sea,
With the boldness of boyhood, the vigour
of youth,
And at length the calm might of a man
that is free.

O spread ever thus as I see thee, dear
stream,
And bear health in thy current, and
wealth in thy tide;
Be the patriot's boast, and the poet's
fond theme,
And paradise sweets on thy bank ever bide.

It is obvious that one of the first confrontations with the African muse, in a society which had had little opportunity to develop a traditional way of life and thought, would come through the individual poetasters' reactions to nature, to the strange landscape with its even stranger and endlessly varied denizens. In this chapter, some of these poetic reactions will be examined to isolate those aspects of the new country which fired the imagination, and to observe the interpretation of their environment by the poets concerned.

One of the most interesting of these poems is "Ode to December in South Africa" by "Umgola", printed in Sam Sly's African Journal of 5 December, 1844.[4] The poet is not so much concerned with his description of December in the colony, as with the associations

this month has for him. The poem reveals the emotional disorientation of the settler newly come to the Southern Hemisphere and also the longing for home so intensely felt, and often expressed in poems of varying quality. December in England is dull but this is offset by the companionship and affection of the festive reunion. At the Cape, nature is bright, but the man is cold and alone.

> What! grey-haired December in mantle of green,
> With footsteps so light, and in summer-day sheen,
> With a smile on his cheek of such laughing delight,
> And a sun-cinctured brow all so glaring and bright?
> Say, say, arrant masker, oh, what do'st thou here?
> I know thee of old - thou art storm-girt and sere.
>
> Yes, I know thee of old, when thou cam'st o'er the wave,
> On the hurricane blast, from thine ice-belted cave,
> With thy holly-crowned brow and thy carolling lip,
> That whistled and hummed o'er the wassail-bowl flip,
> When the clang of thy merry bells greeted my ear,
> And the horn of the hunter I tarried to hear.

But thou, too, art altered, time hath
woven anew
A sunnier vest for thine old dusky hue,
And thy mantle of mist and thy sceptre
of storm
Have vanished for ensigns all radiant
and warm;
Yet dearer by far are the gleamings that
fall
Through the frost-feathered panes of the
log-lighted hall.

And where is the welcome, so wild and so
deep,
That gave to thy winds in their desolate
sweep,
Those heart-easing tones to affection so
dear,
A smile for our smile and a tear for our
tear;
Oh, where are the true hearts, or fettered,
or free,
That poured out their choiciest libations
to thee?

I miss thee, I miss thee, - thy winter's
long night,
The tale of wild fancy, the legend of
fright,
The circles of joy, where, with rapturous
zest,
Were mingled the loving, the loved, and
the blest,
All earth-bound. - Perchance 'tis the
wisdom of Heaven,
That ties of devotion to earth should be
riven.

Old friend with new face, don thy fairest
array, [sic]
Here's a bosom will mask it as nobly as
they,
And whate'er be the semblance the surface
may wear
Here's a spirit that's often as gloomy
and sere.

I am changed - thou art changed -
all is altered to me,
Since, grey-haired December, I'm
banished from thee.

For this poet, nature in Africa, here embodied in the month and its weather, is a mockery of his inner desolation. It will be noted that his description of an English December is far more vivid than that of the Cape counterpart.

A.L. McD. in his poem, "Evening" (The African Journal, 11 October, 1849),[5] also sets his environment at nought, not from any psychological necessity but because he is writing in the tradition of Gray. His is the conventional literary approach. Except for his mention of the castle and the report of its cannon, the locale could well be England. His ending is didactic.

Why peals the gun from yonder castle
wall,
Filling th' expansive heavens with solemn
sound;
While on the startled ear do thickly fall
Long echoes, that from neighbouring [illegible]
heights rebound?

'Tis the same thundering signal breath,
that broke
The twilight silence, when the eastern sky,
To deck herself in crimson robes awoke,
And spread around a gorgeous canopy. -

And now, the sound that told the birth
of day,
As loudly speaks that day's funereal knell: -
And gliding, softly as an elfin fay,
Comes sober Evening from his light-bound
cell....

Oft hath the muse inspired the noble lay,
To praise in measured line the darling
hour,
That lives in poet's dreams, - the twilight
grey, -[sic]
When faint rays whisper eve's subduing
power. -...

On fragrant wings the cooling breezes rise,
And shed a charm to sooth the troubled
breast;
And with soft sound, - as love-lorn
maiden's sighs -
Invite the care-worn heart to blissful rest.

The rustic swain the softening influence
knows,
That woos his soul to tenderness and love,
When the young moon in silvery whiteness
glows,
And fills with lambent light the trysted
grove....

Calm and serene, like thee, may be life's
close.[sic]
When sultry noontide shall have passed away:
And numbered years foretell a sweet repose
From every ill, through an eternal day.

From total disregard for external reality, we move to a description of nature, stylized and sentimental. In "A Flower in the Wild, suggested in a Desert in Africa", printed in the South African Church Magazine

for November, 1851,[6] an anonymous poetaster describes the refreshing effect of rain in the desert and draws the inevitable moral comparison with life - a comforting word can revive the spirit, and so forth.

> Noon on the desert glow'd, -
> Each green thing wither'd there; -
> No stream, no fresh'ning murmur flow'd
> Of life or air.
> Like a gem in the dark rock's side
> Or life in the wilds of death, -
> One flow'r had lived when all had died; -
> But now its hidden life was dried,
> And it swoon'd 'neath the noon's hot breath.
>
> At eve, a cloud pass'd o'er, -
> A speck on the blue sky,
> A thin Magellan cloud, - no more, -
> It seem'd on high.
> It paused o'er that wild so drear,
> And as it wept its show'r,
> One little drop, like Heav'n's soft tear
> Fell in that drooping blossom sere
> And revived the life of the flow'r.
>
> You scarce could see the rain, -
> So soft, so slight its pow'r; -
> Nor did the desert's sands retain
> Its trace one hour.
> But that flowret's heart so drear
> Was drooping for its dew; -
> It treasur'd deep the cooling tear
> And lived on its sympathies so dear,
> Till the cool rains gather'd anew....

This subjection of desert vegetation to cliché and sentiment is the least attractive of all approaches to nature to the modern reader, though it must certainly have found favour with many in its day.

Dr Samuel Gower in two sonnets, "Port Natal at a Distance" and "The Shores and Bay of Natal", (The African Journal, 12 December, 1850)[7] expresses an eagerness to embrace the African continent and hope for a great future in his new home. It is not a feeling confined to himself but shared by other colonists, or so he assumes. His descriptions are coloured by his idealism.

PORT NATAL AT A DISTANCE.

Ye new woods, and far off hills! all hail!
Patches of greener verdure here and there
Between thick copses, into which the air -
Save as it through the green leaves, and the trail
Of flowering shrubs, its sweet way finds, - was ne'er
Admitted since creation dawned, appear; [sic]
Which, perchance, never human footfall frail
Indented; with a softened eye how dwell
All looks upon your wood-crowned inlets, where
Peace and love seem to make their hermit-homes
And ours, who long have gazed but on the waste
Wide ocean, on them such a vision comes
He even sent express to charm them and to cheer!
And charmed and cheered we to our new homes haste.

THE SHORES AND BAY OF NATAL.

Thou dawning Eldorado! unto whom
All Europe turns her fascinated gaze -
And whose colossal form, unformed, betrays
Thy future greatness! we to thee have come,
As came the earliest denizins [sic] of Rome,
In thy uncultured wilds to pass our days!
Ye shores, with menace fraught, accept our lays!
Thou bold Bluff! hail! whereon the check'd waves foam!

> Welcome - rock - sand - shore - breakers! welcome more
> Thy lovely bay, its perilous bar o'er-passed,
> And the great forest amphitheatre,
> Thy calm, safe waves, and deeply sanded shore
> Encircling! Our long wished for port at last
> We greet[sic] on Afric's beauteous bosom cast!

Gower was conscious of his part in the making of history. Africa must have trembled before his all-encompassing enthusiasm and vigour.

The romantic idea of nature as a balm for the harassed soul is not without its adherents. William Selwyn, "Master of the Government School at Bathurst",[8] idealises his surroundings in his poem "Farewell to Bathurst", printed in Sam Sly's African Journal for 6 January, 1848.[9] He regards Bathurst as a haven of peace, a little startling for someone who must have experienced the War of the Axe and sensed the tension on the frontier.

> Sweet Bathurst! I leave thee to mingle again
> In the turmoil and cares that surround busy men;
> Yet the pleasing remembrance of thee, lovely spot,
> Shall fondly be cherish'd whate'er be my lot.
> Thy evergreen forests, thy verdure clad hills;
> Thy kloofs and thy valleys, their torrents and rills;
> Thy luxuriant pastures o'er studded with herds,
> 'Mong fragrant mimosa all vocal with birds;
> You chaste lowly temple; whose Sabbath-day toll

Melodiously echoes from each grassy
knoll;
Where the glorious salvation on Calvary
brought
Is freely proclaimed, and the narrow way
taught;
Old ocean, whose billows loud dashing
on shore
Soothe the listening ear with their far
distant roar;
Each neat, cheerful cottage, where health-
ful delight,
Where plenty, and peace, and contentment
unite;
These gardens and fields, whose munificent
soil
Rewards with exub'rance the labourer's
toil;...

The poet has succeeded in creating an idyllic pastoral scene. His own subjective responses are of a type already noted in Duff.

How oft - when the toils of the day were
gone by,
And the sun-beams were gilding the calm
evening sky;
When all nature exulting, with gaiety
dress'd,
Whisper'd peace to the soul that by care
was oppress'd -
Have I, 'mong thy magical scenery stray'd,
Wander'd o'er the green plain, or descended
the glade,
Or leisurely roam'd in shady wood's maze,
While the swelling heart gush'd adoration
and praise;
Or from yonder hill top I have gazed on
the view,
The azure robed mountains, the ocean's
deep blue,
Till entranced by the splendour that round
me was pour'd,

My thoughts on the pinions of fancy
have soar'd
To those regions of bliss iron war
never trod,
The viewless abode of fair nature's
GREAT GOD.

The purifying of one's soul, which comes from being close to nature, is suggested in Selwyn's concluding line to the above poem, "sweet Eden-like Bathurst - FAREWELL".

In "The Paarl" by A.C.L., printed in the Cape of Good Hope Literary Magazine for April, 1848,[10] the poet records similar sentiments. This poem is more interesting. Over two hundred lines long, it describes the valley and surrounding mountains, the animals and plants, day and evening, in considerable detail. In the first stanza, the poet recommends the country as a place in which to find peace of mind.

Lives there the man, whose soul, with
passion torn,
Looks round for peace, and finds itself
forlorn?
Or breathes there one by fierce ambition
fired
To spurn at rest, by others most desired?
If such there be, oh! place them here
awhile,
Where all things wear their softest,
loveliest smile,
And they may learn from this still,
tranquil spot,
What nature teaches, and what books can not.
Yea! both may learn that true content
abides
Near the deep vale and lonely mountain-
sides;

Far from the world and noisy town
she flies
To flowery solitudes and open skies;
Where hills and meadows breathe a holy
calm,
Peace to the restless, to the sorrowing
balm;
And morn and eve alike have power to
please
With sweet vicissitude of toil and ease.[11]

The poet imagines that he is back at Paarl, where he once stayed for three days. His appeal to imagination for help in expressing his thoughts is interesting for its suggestion that nature sometimes hides her "loveliness" and that the poet must sift his impressions to record her beauty. Nature is only admissible to poetry in this form.

Stay, lovely vision! sweet illusion, stay!
And thou, fair fancy, moralise my lay;
Give me the artist's touch, the poet's eye,
To fix each fleeting beauty ere it fly;
Purge my gross view of all that would
obstruct
Its clearer vision, purge me and instruct;
Aid me to pierce through nature's outer
dress,
And comprehend her hidden loveliness;
To read the ocean's signs, the stars on
high,
To penetrate the depths of earth and sky;
And in each leaf and humble flower to
trace
Art more than human, more than earthly
grace.[12]

His description of the baboons is a well observed report of their activity. Their defiance is the most violent aspect of the poem.

Now from some low-roofed cave the
grim baboon
Leads up his flock beneath the eye of
noon;
Around his steps the frolic young-ones
play,
Now follow close, now turning frisk away,
Pausing awhile to dig some juicy root,
Or strip the woodland olive of its fruit,
By slow degrees they reach the mountains
brow;
There sit and chatter in a fearless row,
And perched where never human footsteps
came,
Howl back defiance to the gunner's aim....[13]

When the poet continues to describe the animals he sees while lying under a tree, he is rather less convincing. Would a man regard a snake with such composure, unless it were a denizen of a region more idyllic than the veld?

Thus while around all living creatures
keep,
A cheerful vigil, or a peaceful sleep,
Stretched on the ground, beneath some
shady tree
I lie, and gaze on heaven's blue vacancy;
Or trace with curious eye the crooked
scrawl,
Where the slow crab and slower tortoise
crawl;
Or mark the new-piled heap, the new-sunk
hole,
Work of the porcupine or miner mole;
Or watch the soaring kite, the lazy flock,
And the shy lizard basking on the rock;
Or note the snake, late sleeping in the
grass,
Uncoil his speckled folds and slowly
pass:...[14]

The poet experiences some difficulty, when he describes the flowers. Without the footnotes, some would puzzle even South Africans. He is, as he admits, a pioneer.

> Geraniums too of odorous leaf are there,
> With those whose blossom scents the evening air;
> And many a bloom by poets yet untold,
> Shy hesperanth and flaunting mari-gold;
> Fair bells with snowy fringe and purple eye,
> And mallow moist, and amaranthus+ dry;
> And that self-watered plant,* whose leaves at noon,
> From the hot air distil a dewy boon;
> Lilies beside - not such, indeed, as claim
> An English birthright with their English name;
> Unlike that native lily of the vale,
> So sweetly scented and so pearly pale;
> Or that which in our cultured walks we rear,
> The rose's rival and perhaps her peer;
> But mingling either's charms, the snow-white bloom,
> The queenly stature, and the rose perfume.
> Heaths of all sorts at every step abound,
> "That proudly rise or humbly court the ground;" (sic)
> Various in colour as in shape unlike,
> Their's the white bell, and their's the crimson spike.[12]

To make his descriptions more meaningful to his readers, the poet uses associations which will be familiar to the Englishman.

+The everlasting flower
*The ice-plant (mesembryanthemum)

He finds no cause for fear in the sounds of approaching night. The "beetle" and the "owl", it must be remembered, are already familiar to him in reality and in literature.

> But these I leave, for now the sun is low,
> And the long shadows lengthen as I go;
> From peak to peak the hues of sunset spread,
> And opening flowers a sweeter incense shed;
> Forth darts the beetle with his droning hum;
> The wakeful owl is now no longer dumb;
> The fire-fly glancing through the bushes dark,
> Lights and relights her momentary spark.
> Fast and more fast the evening shades descend,
> And evening sounds in sweet confusion blend;
> The herd-dog's bark that tells of danger near,
> The bat's shrill shriek, the cricket's noisy cheer,
> And louder frog, that from the rush-girt home
> Gives to his watery mate an answering boom -...[16]

This poem is one of the most convincing of its kind, for its leisurely accumulation of detail lends it an authenticity not often achieved.[17] The poet errs perhaps in creating a pastoral idyll - but surely his intention is in part to communicate the peace and passive participation he experienced during his stay.

One of the most interesting responses to Africa is recorded in "The Bushman's Cave at Glenthorne",[18] the second poem in a series, entitled "South African Scenery". These were printed in the Graham's Town Journal, the first poem, "The Winterberg. - A Sonnet", appearing on 29 December, 1849. An examination of the series suggests that the author was either a minister or a missionary, for his associations are often Biblical.

In his description of the Bushman's cave, the writer is aware of an African pre-history, a series of events completely dissociated from the British saga. Yet, the reader feels that he rejects his perceptions as merely curious and possibly enigmatic, rather than of tremendous importance. A heathen culture is worthy only of idle speculation. His conjectures about the meaning of the paintings are significant, for he has to use the images of his own culture, lacking knowledge of the African one.

> Queer relic of a bygone race. [s.c]
> It's almost sole surviving trace,
> "THE BUSHMAN'S CAVE" in craggy kloof,
> That once it was, remains a proof;
> Where numerous tribes extinct of man,
> Dwelling in distant times we scan,
> And of their customs, and their age,
> Obscurely read a doubtful page,
> Imprinted on that scarp of rock,
> Which each conjecture seems to mock;
> For what these signs grotesque display,
> It's hard in modern times to say,
> Or what their purpose, or design,
> With semblance e'en of truth define.

Adorned, perhaps, these figures odd
Some painted temple of their god,
Chiseled by Nature's graving hand,
Devices rude of barbarous land;
Perhaps a monumental grave,
Of some departed warrior brave;
Or other worthy of that race
Was honored [sic] here with burial-place;
As sculptured marbles long remain,
At home in old and hallowed fane,
Wherein the records of the dead,
Can by posterity be read,
Although they may contain, forsooth,
For all we know, but little truth.
Or was this Cave a banquet-hall,
Cooled by the neighbouring water-fall,
Or shaded by thick, leafy screen,
A Council-hall from noontide sheen,
Where, sitting on the verdant ground,
Thronged counsellors [sic], or guests,
around [sic]
Did witches there at midnight hour,
Weave spells, as in enchanted bower,
Decoct plumbago, or the bag
From fang of venomed serpent drag,
And deadly influence impart
To slightest touch of spear and dart?
Or did through that entangled grove
In mystic rites magicians rove?

His objective description of the painting is not ineffective.

Whatever once the mystery,
A pictured group we plainly see,
In yellow, red, black, white; on foot,
On horseback; a mixed, motley rout,
With quiver, arrow, bow, and blade;
A hunting scene is sure portrayed,
For unclad hunters seem the foes
Of Antelopes and Buffaloes;
Advancing some, a few retreat,
And others in the bushes beat,
While many drive, with scaring shout,
The game into the toils about,
And Quaggas in the medley swarm,
With various beasts of curious form.

And then came the Scots - including Pringle - and their civilisation obliterated the disquieting African influences.

> Here Southern Afric's Scottish bard
> Roamed, musing; struck his sweetest chord,
> And waked to life and feeling spots,
> Which erst were deemed in nature blots;
> When prophecy could scarce fortell
> Rich corn fields in that fertile dell,
> How Glenthorn House and Pringle's name
> Would the rough wilderness reclaim,
> The flocks and herds, that bleat and low,
> The golden oranges that grow,
> The vines, and figs, and luscious fruits,
> Along the Mancazana Spruits,
> The School, the Chapel, and the Manse,
> Which now the wondrous change enhance.

The poet reveals indirectly the tremendous conviction of the Victorians that their culture was vastly superior to any that might have existed in a conquered territory.

The coastline of Africa inspired two poetasters to poems of considerable length and comparative merit. In a body of verse which contains so much that is trivial, poems with sustained argument are of considerable interest. The first of these is "The Cape of Storms", printed in the Cape of Good Hope Literary Gazette for 15 September, 1830.[19] Dr Robinson attributes this to John Wheatley, author of several works on political economy and a pamphlet on the corn laws, published anonymously at the Cape in 1828. He died on a voyage to England towards the end of 1830.[20] Both Dr Robinson[21] and Mrs Taylor[22] comment on the influence of Milton and

Byron in this poem, the latter asserting that in images like that of the sea-boy "whose sleep was cradled in the dashing spray", there is an affinity with Campbell. "The Cape of Storms" is indeed a robust description of a storm at sea.

> Spirit of Gama! round the stormy Cape,
> Bestriding the rude whirlwind as thy steed;
> The thunder cloud, thy car, - thy spectre shape
> Gigantic; who upon the gale dost feed
> And drink the water spout; - thy shroud, the skies; -
> Thy sport, the South and vast Atlantic sea; -
> Thine eye, the light'ning's flash! - Awake! arise
> From out the deep, in dread and awful scv'reignty!
>
> Now hast thou risen! By heaven it is a sight
> Most God-like, grand, and glorious to behold;
> Three elements contend, and fierce in fight
> As those who warr'd with mighty Jove of old.+
> Oh, God! if any doubt thy being, or rate
> With vain and impious mind, at nought thy pow'r,
> So may it be such daring sceptic's fate
> To pass the Cape of Storms, when angry tempests lower....
>
> Oh God! it is a fearful sight! and all around
> Is dismal, drear, and dark, both near and far, -
> Save, when to make the darkness more profound
> And visible, some pale and twinkling star
> Peeps for an instant forth, and then, as 'twere,
> In fear recedes, - or the phosphoric dash
> Of wild long sweeping waves, with horrid glare,
> Lights up the dread abyss, and shines along the splash,

+The Titans

> And waste of waters, like to the pale
> horse
> Whom death shall ride upon that awful day,
> When sun, and moon, and stars have run
> their course, [sic]
> The world and time itself be swept away! -
> And now the waning moon would fain forth
> shine,
> And thro' the heav'ns pursue her wonted
> track;
> But three wild warring elements combine
> At once in unison, and drive her rudely
> back!...

Wheatley's perception of the man of action warring with the elements is reminiscent of Campbell's images in "The Flaming Terrapin".[24]

> Perchance the grandest boon to be be-
> [s]tow'd
> By heav'n on man - the shortest, best
> relief
> From all his mortal sufferings, and load
> Which life entails of misery, and grief -
> The termination of his woes, might be
> As now he braves the billows of the Cape,
> To grapple with grim Death upon the sea,
> The whirlwind for its courser, and the
> storm its shape, [sic]
>
> So might the bark become his coffin's shell,
> The murky cloud enshroud him as his pall,
> The roar of distant thunder ring his knell,
> The lightning's flash illume his funeral!
> His winding sheet the wild white curling
> wave,
> The rolling billow as his bier, be lent,
> The rain his tears! the ocean for his
> grave,
> The Cape of Storms itself his mighty
> Monument!

In contrast to "The Cape of Storms", "Green Point" is quietly contemplative. Written by the Rev. James Adamson, the poem was printed in the Southern Witness, and as a pamphlet at the Cape.[26] It was also printed in the Cape Town Mail of 20 March, 1847.[27] Surrounded by the grandeur of the Cape coastline, alone under the nightly pageant of the stars, the poet is led, by the contemplation of a comet, which appeared in the sky about that time,[28] to speculate on the origins of the universe and the spread of civilisation.

Stars in the sky, - eve's shadow on the hill, -
And, save the voice of ocean, all is still!
The light leaves scarcely with a tremor play; [sic]
And dewy blossoms droop along the spray.
But the white surge comes bounding to the shore; [sic]
And the cliff answers to its angry roar [sic]
For, where the Cape of Storms heaves high its steep; [sic]
The clear South Easter foams along the deep, -
Whirls the wild spray in gusts of driving snow,
And sweeps with its salt shower the reeling prow. [sic]
While round each winding bay and jutting rock
The glassy swell rolls with its thunder shock, -
Or, deepening, vast and sullen, heaves away
To the lone isles beneath descending day.
Here - vaulting like a giant steed, - his mane
Tossed in white splendour back along the plain; [sic]
Of the streaked sea, - it booms against the feet

Of the rude granite in a snowy sheet;
While the tall vessel idly spreads its
sail
That listless flaps to chide the
lingering gale, -
And the hull rolls, with slow and heavy
sweep,
Heav'd on the bosom of the panting
deep....

But yet bursts forth the flash of Sirius
wildly; [sic]
And the still Centaur's radiance beaming
mildly.
And Thou - of equal splendour - Nameless
One
Whose reddening glory, to our sires unknown,-
Dawns in the secret of a boundless home
The youngest mystery of heaven! hast come
To wondering eyes. What tidings are in
thee,
Spoke from the depths of dread infinity?
Was it for judgment that thy fires awoke
When round fair systems glowing whirl-
winds broke:
And awful Justice, in red vengeance
hurl'd
Into thy fire-struck waste a peopled
world?...

Where wast thou? Brightest one! in the
old time
When Europe woke, and claim'd the hope
sublime
That other lands might be, in the lone
waste
Of ocean, whose chill mystery embraced
Her narrow bound of shore, and found -
no track
Of death - no waste of fire - no black
And withering region of eternal storms -
No dim and deathlike end of space, where
forms
Of cold and ghastly desolation lead
To the drear mansions of the shadowy
dead; -

But the glad sea spread wide its azure
plain,
And gave the laughing sky its hues again,
As beauty's youthful glance, in years
gone by,
Smiled to her image in a sister's eye....

Here, where I stand,
The dark-brow'd children of a sunny land
In bright day basking, - like the startled
snake,
Shrank in wild wonder, till amid the
brake
Glowed the still terror of each widening
eye, -
As first the white-sail'd bark swept
proudly by.
No more they cluster round the weeping
rill,
No more their wild cry echoes from the
hill.
All traceless as that wild cry's vanish'd
tone,
Forgotten is their life,—their graves are
gone....[29]

The philosophical response elicited by nature from this poet, attains a degree of universality unusual during the period under review. It may, however, be argued that the sea and sky are after all universally available.

The final poem to be discussed in this chapter is not strictly speaking a response to nature, but it is interesting for its use of the legendary Adermastor. Written by John Centlivres Chase, then Civil Commissioner of the district of Albert, it celebrates the foundation of Aliwal North (12th May, 1849).[30]

The argument of the poem is summarised thus:

> LOUIS DE CAMOENS, the Warrior-Bard of ungrateful Portugal, in his splendid Work - which has not inaptly been designated "The Epic Poem of Commerce," - THE LUSIAD, describing the voyage of the great VASCO DE GAMA round the Cape to India, introduces a Phantom spirit, the tutelary Genius [sic] of the Cape of Storms, hostile to all intruders upon his 'Solitary Reign,' until then unvisited by mortals. The writer of the following lines has, however feebly, attempted to take up the Poet's beautiful conception. He supposes the spirit 'De los tormentos' to have been scared away from his ancient abode by the Lusitanian adventurers, taking refuge in the depths of the undiscovered interior until at length he is disturbed and driven forth by the advancing tide of migration and the establishment of the first Town on the Great River.

Unfortunately, the craven shade emerges as a comic figure, despite the vocal pyrotechnics attributed to him. The poet describes the wild environs of the Gariep in the first three stanzas. Then:

> Ages past, - on Garieps River as I lay
> reclined at ease,
> Struck a sound which made me shiver as
> it boom'd along the breeze,
> Fitful came a voice of moaning down the
> everlasting stream,
> Sob-like, passion-like - oft failing as
> the wind came us between.

With one ruthless stroke, the poet emasculates "De los tormentos": "Is't illusion? am I dreaming? Do I list a Fairy weep?" The poet looks about him

and locates the source of the lamentation. It is unfortunate that he remains undecided as to whether the spirit is unhappy or angry, supplicating or aggressive. The reader declines confusion and settles down to being amused.

> See [sic] upon the waters sailing comes a
> shadow dire and dark,
> And I felt my heart a-qualing [sic] as it
> near'd me in its barque, [sic]
> 'T was THE SPIRIT, then I knew it by
> its gesture, garb and frame
> Sung by that immortal Poet, Lusitania's
> pride and shame.
>
> Lo! he comes as Gama saw him on the
> southern Calpes steep,
> When the hero dar'd his awing and his
> ban upon the deep.
> On the winds his hair is streaming and
> his mien is full of woe,
> His red eyes are madly beaming and his
> cheeks with anger glow.
> New Stanza Spoke the Spirit - "What delusion brought
> thee to my secret reign?
> Knowest thou not for this intrusion I
> can punish thee with pain?
> DIAZ, half-immortal, brav'd me when he
> scaned [sic] my awful shape,
> But below the Southern wave he sunk [sic] my
> victim at the Cape.
>
> "Clay-created mortal! listen to my tale
> replete with grief,
> I once mighty, sorrow-stricken, now
> implore thee for relief,
> Drove [sic] by Gama's mad ambition from my
> ancient lofty Throne,
> Wander sad with deep contrition, searching
> vainly for a home.

The spirit describes how he fell with Satan and became the keeper of the "deep" until he was dislodged by the navigators. His age-long sulk was finally disturbed by the "human multitude" filling the land. After prophesying a great future for Aliwal North, and the conquest of the wilderness by civilisation, the spirit takes his leave, his evil propensity daunted by the Cross.

> "Close the vision - more I dare not
> (said the awful Spirit) view,"
> Sorrowing look'd he, yet he curs'd not,
> but an anguish [sic] sigh he drew,
> Turn'd his eyes to where the Cross rose
> 'mong the starry gems of night,
> Shriek'd and shudder'd as with death-throes
> while he vanished from my sight.

Thus summarily does the confident Victorian despatch the embodiment of Africa's mysteries.

## Notes

[1]Hadgraft, p. 7

[2]An Anthology of Australian Verse, ed. Bertram Stevins, (Macmillan and Co. Limited, London, 1906), pp. 1-2

[3]The Moderator, 17 January, 1837, p. 2

[4]S.S.A.J., 5 December, 1844, p. 4

[5]T.A.J., 11 October, 1849, p. 4

[6]S.A. Church Magazine, November, 1851, pp. 349-350

[7]T.A.J., 12 December, 1850, p. 3

[8]S.S.A.J., 6 January, 1848, p. 4

[9]Ibid

[10]C. of G.H. Lit. Magazine, 1 April, 1848, pp.119-124

[11]Ibid., p. 119

[12]Ibid., p. 120

[13]Ibid., p. 121

[14]Ibid

[15]Ibid., p. 122

[16]Ibid

[17]See Appendix E

[18]Graham's Town Journal, 19 January, 1850, p. 2

[19]C. of G.H. Lit. Gazette, I (1830), 48-49

[20]Robinson, p. 158

[21]Ibid., pp.158-160

[22]Taylor, p. 251

[23]C. of G.H. Lit. Gazette, I (1830), 48

[24]Roy Campbell, The Flaming Terrapin, (Jonathan Cape, London, 1935), pp.29 and 45-46.

> And the old Captain, with a grip of steel,
> Laid his brown hands once more upon the wheel,
> Bidding his joyous pilot haul him free
> From the dead earth to dare the living sea!...
>
> But when their stormy pilot, through the spray,
> Like a great ship churning a great screw,
> Rose tilting o'er the waves and thrashed his way
> Across the grumbling sea, the weary crew
> Forgot their pain and through that night of fear
> Sang as they followed in his swift career,
> Purged by their agonies of all their dross
> Of fear and sloth, their spirits shed their gross
> Rags of despair, and as in spangled pride

A python ripples from his shrivelled hide
To ride propelled on wheels of rolling fire,
Their souls emerging from their old attire
Glittered new-sheathed, as if in shining mail,
Steadfast through all the terrors of the gale....

Fit men they seemed in vigour, brain and blood,
To mend the swamping havoc of the Flood,
To breed great races and in pride to reign
Throned in the flowering cities of the plain.

[25] C. of G.H. Lit. Gazette, I (1830), 49. See also Appendix D

[26] Miller, Quarterly Bulletin, V (1950), 52

[27] C.T. Mail, 20 March, 1847, p. 3

[28] S.S.A.J., 26 December, 1844, p. 4

[29] See Appendix E

[30] T.A.J., 18 July, 1850, p. 4.

# CHAPTER VIII

## CONCLUSION

Most of the poems discussed or quoted in the preceding chapters have been chosen for their specifically African content. Many people may disagree with this criterion, for a self-conscious seeking for local colour and content is one of the most criticised aspects of South African writing. Edwin Cady, writing of the development of a national literary culture in America, asks some pertinent questions, applicable to South Africans and other peoples of colonial origin.

> What do we mean when we demand originality in literature? Do we mean that there shall be no major debts to other men's writings and thought? If so, are we talking sense - are the works generally admired as "great" free from debts of this sort? Is the literature of any nation in the pattern of Western civilisation unique, original, exotic, really different in kind from the rest? Is special subject-matter what counts? And should Americans then confine themselves to writing about Indians, bison, the frontier, Niagara Falls, or other special American phenomena? Is American writing to be judged in terms of its Americanism or in terms of its artistry?[1]

The honest answer to Cady's final question is surely that artistry is more important than local colour, for individual literary artists are the pillars upon which literature rests. Yet these pillars are supported by a foundation of the more mundane activities of lesser writers, who have propagated conventions, techniques and

themes in which their audience is interested and for which it is prepared.[2] It is only from this humble material that imagination can create a poem, play or novel of genius.

Yet, this writer feels justified in choosing poems so strongly relevant to the local scene, for at a time when the Cape's English-speaking inhabitants could hardly be called South Africans, when contributors to periodicals and newspapers might well be visitors or officials, it would seem that the only poetry South Africans may justly lay claim to are precisely those which record local events and describe local scenes.

That the period under review was a transition period, a time of transplantation, cannot be denied. That it is devoid of poets of genius is obvious. Yet there can be no denying of the corporate activity which began the foundations of English-speaking South Africa's literary consciousness. And if there is not yet a virile national literary tradition such as America possesses, it is not because the Cape lacked elements which were present in other colonial countries. Within narrow limits, the similarities between South Africa's literary genesis and those of America and Australia for example, have been noted. Lack of numbers, lack of time and political conflict have all played their part in South African literature's slow growth to maturity.

The greatest vitality would seem to be present in those poems emerging from social and political agitation, for it is here that the unselfconscious use of indigenous

terms and themes is most in evidence. It is interesting to speculate on the future of Cape verse, had Grey's policies and the suicidal behaviour of the Xhosa not put an end to frontier strife. Perhaps a folk literature, singing the praises of frontier heroes, might have emerged. There would also seem to be truth in A.C. Partridge's statement that in "a pioneering country, fitter for rugged activity than sensitive contemplation...a writer like Thomas Pringle, who had an engaging literary purpose, could exercise considerably more influence on a developing culture than an artist with unmixed aesthetic motives".[3]

When studying and assessing the value of South African poetry in English and contemplating its future, it is well to bear in mind a statement by A.J. Jardine, which is basically as relevant now as it was in June, 1830.

> In such an age of the Colony, it is pleasing to live, and think, and write, - none daring to make us afraid; to endeavour to be one of the contributors to its information, profit, or amusement. The attempt may often fail, but it is gratifying to make the individual effort, and never can it be wholly useless, whatever may be the imperfections with which it is accompanied.[4]

## Notes

[1] Literature of the Early Republic, ed. Edwin H. Cady, (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, N.Y.), p. 299.

[2] Ibid., p. 300.

[3] A.C. Partridge, "Poets and Humanitarians in the Wilderness", English Studies in Africa, II (1959), 203.

[4] Quoted by Robinson, p. xiv

## APPENDIX A

### ON A CELEBRATED DUMB HIGHLANDER IN THE HEEREGRACHT [sic]

Art thou one of Scotland's warriors?
Hast thou bled on fields of fame?
Hast thou seen, in beds of furrows,
Youthful heroes lying slain?

Did you spill rich blood in Egypt,
Where the flower and pride of France
Fell before the plaided soldiers,
By their weighty sword and lance?

Did you scale the Spanish ramparts,
When the rocks were wet with blood,
When the tops were crown'd with thousands
Shatter'd by their ambuscade. [sic]

Did you stand on Brussel's plain
When the assembled armies met?
When the shock of hostile nations
Center'd where the clansmen sat. [sic]

Hast thou to these shores been borne,
After all these deeds are done,
To stand at Bam's, with Sniskin's horn,
And kindly welcome strangers in. [sic]

TYRO

Sam Sly's African Journal
20 July, 1843.

### SOMETHING THAT MAY DO FOR SAM SLY'S AFRICAN JOURNAL

"Bob Short's too long"; so can't appear;
Then what may be my fate,
I do not know, and don't much care,
Nor will I deprecate

Your Editorial censure, sir,
Your satire's pungent lash ; -
My song, - you may pronounce it fair,
Or you may swear it's trash.

I shall not crow, I shall not weep,
Whatever you may think;
I write because I cannot sleep,
And have no grog to drink.

(Not that I like it, - if too strong
Of water,-mind you that;
To drink such must be werry wrong -
I'm sure it's werry "flat." )[sic]

So I shall sing about the Wind,
That's singing pretty loud;
If I so well could only sing,
I should be pretty proud.

And so like it - I'll change my tone, -
And turn from gay to grave;
Transitions quick - (bad taste I own) -
I like - for time they save. -

I love to hear its wailing moan; -
I love to hear its sigh; -
There's something in that prolonged tone,
Now, distant, - now, more nigh, -

That seems to bring the far off, near;
To breathe of cherished ties;
To tell of friends and kindred dear;
Or Loves fond extacies. [sic]

Which often strong, but oft'ner soft,
(Like Heaven's own breath - the wind;)
Convulse the heart, or seem to waft
Refreshment o'er the mind.

I grieve to hear it's [sic] wailing moan;
I grieve to hear it's sigh;
There's something in that prolonged tone,
Now, distant, - now, more nigh, -

That seems to sing a sorrowing dirge
O'er friends and kindred, - dead; -
O'er hopes long plunged beneath the surge;
O'er joys and pleasures, - fled.

Which promised fair - which proving vain -
Like the uncertain gale;
Just warmed the heart, - then chill'd with pain -
And left it to bewail.

PROTEUS

Sam Sly's African Journal
15 August, 1844.

MIDNIGHT MUSIC

Oh! lady, cease thy syren strains;
Oh! cease, and let me sleep!
Nor, like thy sister nymphs, entrance
A wight, not half so deep

As he the wise Ulysses called;
For, tired with toil all day,
Can I through walls as he through waves
Pursue my recreant way?

And if I could, a softer tie
Than his my limbs restrain,
That even sounds so sweet as thine
Will pour their charms in vain.

Then let me sleep - oh! let me sleep
One nap, if not a snorer!
And in my dreams at least I'll be,
Dear lady, thy adorer.

J.R.

Sam Sly's African Journal
1 March, 1849.

## MY MOTHER'S SENTIMENTS

A little stream that's never dry
When summer suns are glowing;
That, when the wintry storm sweeps by,
Is never overflowing;
Such is the wealth that I implore,
And God has given me such, and more.

Daughters more excellent than fair:
A son not great but good;
Servants with whom I've learned to bear,
Whatever be their mood;
In peace with these, in love with those,
I calmly live, and have no foes.

A house for comfort, not too small,
Not large enough for pride;
A garden, and a garden wall,
A little lake beside;
In these I find so sweet a home,
That not a wish have I to roam.

A little land to graze my cow,
Whose milk supplies my table;
A warm sty for my good old sow;
And for my nags a stable:
All have their space for food and play,
And all are glad - both I, and they.

I feed the poor man in his cot,
The beggar at my gate;
And, thankful for my quiet lot,
I envy not the great:
But rather praise my God on high,
Happy to live, prepared to die.

ANONYMOUS

The S.A. Advocate and Cape Town Spectator
2 January, 1843.

A HEART TO BE LET

To be let, at a very desirable rate,
A snug little house in a healthy state;
'Tis a Bachelor's heart, and the agent is Chance,
Affection the rent, to be paid in advance.

The owner, as yet, has lived in it alone,
So the fixtures are not of much value, but soon
'Twill be furnished by Cupid himself, if a wife
Take a lease for the term of her natural life.

Then ladies, dear ladies, pray do not forget,
An excellent Bachelor's heart's to be let.
The Tenant will have a few taxes to pay,
Love, honour, and (heaviest item) OBEY.

As for the good will, the Subscriber's inclined
To have that, if agreeable, settled in kind;
Indeed, if he could such a matter arrange,
He'd be highly delighted to take in exchange,

Provided true title by produce be shown,
Any heart unincumbered and free as his own.
So ladies, dear ladies, pray do not forget,
An excellent Bachelor's heart's to be let.

A BACHELOR

Sam Sly's African Journal
12 October, 1843.

A REPLY TO THE "HEART TO BE LET."

My charming Captain, whom no hearts have sighed on,
(I'm quite enraptured with your manly speeches,)
For so I guess, by finding that you're nigh done,
And feel disposed this hour to "wear the breeches,"
So that on such a man I could be tied on,
Until I'd worn them out, or cracked the stitches, [sic]

Be pleased to drop a line, if you're no
dreamer,
To Dolly Dubbs on board the Bentinck Steamer.

I am, myself, a lass of high descent,
My pedigree are traced above the 'Flood',
My father is on chimney-sweeping bent;
My grandpa was a Tar of noble blood;
(With such professions and such bold intent,
Men most 'aspiring' must be understood;)
Besides all this, my native charms you'll
spy,
Are such as fail not to attract the eye.

Since you're not nice, you'll surely overlook,
Nor mind a slight protuberance on the back;
Or eyes - I warrant you none ever took
For green, or blue, but of decided black;
Altho' I've tried to wash them - and the
cook -
From the foul dyeings of the sooty sack, [sic]
But I've got that which changes all its
wrapp'd in,
I've got the "Dibbs" - the "Dibbs" - my
worthy Captain.

DOLLY DUBBS

Sam Sly's African Journal
19 October, 1843.

ANSWER TO "A HEART TO BE LET"

A lady inform'd that a heart's to be let
By a bachelor, anxious a tenant to get,
Begs to apply for the same - herself being
free,
If the lessee and her on the terms can agree.
The rent she objects not to pay in advance
If secured by himself, not his blind agent
Chance,
For affection would lose half its value and
more,
Should it lack the regard that sustained it
before.

But the house must be viewed - if the
fixtures are few
'Tis hoped that the furniture's not scanty
too,
The taxes would seem to appear very small,
"Love, Honour, Obey;" and is that really all?
Are no rates to be paid, no repairs to be
done?
Can a heart that is true be thus easily won?

Or may it not be, when the lease shall appear
That more tenants than one are inhabitants
there?
And for the good-will she would rather
compound,
As a mutual exchange, best for both will be
found.
But one query more, the fair writer would
know,
Is a garden attached? which the owner must
show,
Well stocked with good sense, good temper,
and worth,
Not blasted by mildew, nor stinted by dearth.
If so, and he's able and willing to bring
His credentials drawn up and secured by a
ring,
At the altar of Hymen the lady he'll meet,
Attended by Prudence, her handmaid discreet.
If then no defect in the title be shown,
His heart she will take in exchange for her
own.

'C.Z.A.'

Sam Sly's African Journal
23 November, 1843.

SONG - "THE PRATIES' BLUE BELLS"

AIR - "The Scottish Blue Bells"

Let the proud English boast
Of their rosy built bowers,
Their pastures for grazing,
And deep shady dells,
While bouldly I sing
Of those nate little flowers,
The Blue Bells of Ireland,
The Praties' Blue Bells.

Och; what's in the Thistle,
That waves o'er the mountain?
Sure, good mate it can't be
For man, horse, or pig;
While the sweet little pratie
With a drop from the fountain
Makes an illigant meal[sic]
For both little and big.

CHORUS: So roar out my boys,
Your breath don't be sparing
In so worthy a chorus
You know this right well
That the oulder a thing is
'Tis the worse for the wearing
Like the ould pratie crop
With its purty Blue Bell.

Now of all the glad sights
In this world worth a farden
Sure none equals this one -
Och! sure I'll be bound -
As, of a fine summer's eve
In an Irishman's garden
A full basket of praties
Spread out on the ground.

While they, the sly rogues,
Peep out of their jackets,
All twinkling with fun
Is their fine purple eyes
As watching the childher
Kick the divil's own rackets
While the pig, call'd the rint - man,
Stales the praties his prize.

CHORUS: So roar out my boys, &c, &c.

T.W.

[If it be so easy to render "an Irishman happy" as to throw his Praties into print, - on this occasion we do not object, but although he follows NATURE in his picture, the subject is not the most poetical, that might have been chosen.

For who cares a fig
For the praties or pig?]

The African Journal
31 January, 1850

## THE WIND

I love the sound of the gathering wind,
Portending tempests near;
It fills with solemn awe the mind,
And breathes a hallowed fear.

I love to hear its clear shrill pipe -
It makes my light heart dance;
It seems of hidden things a type,
And cannot blow by chance.

I love to hear it shriek and whine,
Then pettishly complain;
And then, in pensive mood, to pine
Like some sad love-lorn swain.

I love to hear its various notes,
From bursting thunders loud,
To zephyr's breath that lightly floats
O'er flowers with dew-drops bowed.

I love to hear it blustering
And swelling in its rage,
And all its fierce strength mustering,
As if a war to wage.

I love to hear it marching on,
And rushing through the skies; -
A moment here, and then 'tis gone,
As swift as lightning flies.

I love to hear it softly come,
Stealing with timid tread,
And murmuring with solemn hum
A requiem for the dead.

I love to see the cypress shade
Rocked by it to and fro,
Then pause to listen, as afraid
Of sounds so full of woe.

I love to see it take a leaf,
And childlike with it play;
As if it sought to find relief
After a toilsome day.

I love to watch its gambols strange,
With aught of texture fair;
And mark how unconfined its range,
How far from thought or care.

I love, I love its very mood,
Its blithe or plaintive tone;
I love it, since it is sweet food
For thought, when I'm alone.

It tells me of the "mighty rush,"
Of solemn "Pentecost,"
The "still small voice" whose power can hush
The spirit tempest tost.

It tells me of the land above,
Where no more it is heard,
The peaceful homes of light and love,
For faithful ones prepared.

M.A.B.

Sam Sly's African Journal
15 August, 1844

SAM SLY TO "M.A.B." ON THE WIND

"Though little fire grows great with
little wind, yet extreme gusts will
blow out fire and all." - TAMING OF THE
SHREW

We love thy lines, sweet Mary Ann,
Because therein we trace,
That only which a Delta can
Express with equal grace.

But still we do not love the wind
"Portending tempests near,
It fills with solemn awe the mind,"
And agitates our beer.

We dread "to hear its clear shrill pipe,"
   It makes our faint heart beat,
And seems of fallen roofs the type [sic]
   Close scatter'd at our feet.

We dread "to hear it shriek and whine
   Then pettishly complain,
And then in pensive mood to pine,"
   It's sure to cause a pane.

We dread "to hear its varied notes,
   From bursting thunders loud,"
To wheezing puffs that cause sore throats,
   And through the key-holes crowd.

We dread "to hear it blustering,
   And swelling in its rage,"
Our slates and pantiles mustering
   To whisk! them off the stage. [sic]

We dread "to hear it marching on,
   And rushing through the skies," -
One moment! and our pot is gone!
   Or "swift as lightning flies."

We dread "to hear it softly come,
   Or steal with timid tread,"
We'd quite as leave it beat a drum,
   If it's to move the lead.

We dread "to see the Cypress shade,
   Rock'd by it to and fro" -
Because our couch we are afraid
   May rock our gouty toe.

We dread "to see it take a twig,
   And child-like with it play,"
Lest it should take another rig,
   And blow our trees away.

We dread "to watch its gambols strange,"
   (A burnt child dreads the fire)
Through sky-lights it may chance to range,
   Which no one can desire.

We dread, we dread "its every mood,
Its blithe or plaintive tone,"
Because it proves such acid food
For thoughts when we're alone.

"It tells us of the mighty rush".
Of Duns and Masons' bills, [sic]
The loud rude voice no power can hush,
Except your Banker wills.

It tells us how it runs away,
With that good Christian's cake,
Which might have done another day
For "duck and darling's" sake.

Perhaps thou hast a kind Papa
Who settles leetle bills;
Or else when sick, a good Mamma
To pay for Kunhardt's pills?

If so - why then 'tis sweet to hear
Old Boreas blow his pipes,
There's nothing then for girls to fear,
Such flatus never gripes. [sic]

So if you wish to have a treat
Of softest, purest tone;
Perhaps its best to take a seat,
In mansions not your own.

SAM SLY

Sam Sly's African Journal
22 August, 1844.

## APPENDIX B

### THE BRITISH SETTLER

TUNE - "Oh what a row," or, "The humours of a Steam-boat."

Oh! what a gay, what a rambling life a Settler's leading!
Spooring cattle, doing battle, quite jocose;
Winning, losing; Whigs abusing; shopping now, then mutton breeding;
Never fearing, persevering, on he goes!

When to the Cape I first came out, in days of Charlie Somerset,
My lands were neatly measured off, and reg'larly my number set;
I strutted round on my own ground, lord of a hundred acres, sir,
And said I'd plough, I'd buy a cow, the butchers cut and bakers, sir.
Oh! what a gay, &c.

On Kowie's banks I built a house, and made a snug location there;
I fenc'd my lands with my own hands to keep all tight;
The river rose, and fore my nose made awful desolation there;
The Kafirs stole my only cow away that night!
I made a trip to Kafirland, in hopes to find my cow again,
And tried to act the dentist then, which no one can do now again;
I drew the Kafir's ivory teeth, at risk of hempen collar, sir. [sic]
Which at Graham's Town on the market brought me full 300 dollars, sir!

My second go was but so so, although the trade was brisk enough;
The patrols nearly boned me in a secret maze;
I hid my load out of the road, and, faith, I just had risk enough,

For this trade was hanging matter in those
good old days!
My stock-in-trade on pack-ox laid, I tried
my luck at smouching then,
But found the Boers were wide awake as
Yorkshiremen at chousing them;
They swapt me some rock chrystals - gems,
they swore, of purest water, sir;
And for breeding stock, a scurvy lot of
hamels and kapaters, sir!
Oh! what a gay, &c.

Of fortune's frowns, smiles, ups, and downs,
I had a great variety;
I smouching drop, I open shop, then buy a
farm;
Doing charming with my farming, blest with
friends' society,
When all at once the Amakosa break the
charm!
Assegaing, yelling, crying - murder! fire!
and revelry!
Stealing cattle, bloody battle, every kind of
devilry, -
Helter-skelter, seeking shelter, wives and
children rustling in!
Husbands wounded, - lost, confounded, tender
friends are justling in! [sic]
Oh! what a gay, &c.

Hopes are blasted, pale and fasted, now
reduced to beggary;
Burnt locations, public rations all we've left;
Names abused, of crimes accused by agents
vile of whiggery,
And sympathy withheld, when of our all bereft.
Compensation for spol'ation, after such
representation,
Seemed so futile and inutile, that 'twas
scouted by the nation!
And that we've still a dollar left, our thanks
be to no stingy-man,
Whose name's a charm our souls to warm, - THE
GOOD, THE BRAVE SIR BENJAMIN!
Oh! what a gay, &c.

Kafirs lauded and rewarded for their savage,
fierce irruption, &c.
By the folks of Downing-street and Ex'ter
Hall!
Then no checking Boers from trekking, fleeing,
seeing such corruption;
Hottentots and Fingoes, saucy vagrants all!
Such delusion and confusion seldom are exhibited,
When for convenience of the blacks the whites
are stabbed and gibbeted!
Yet, persevering through those ills, the storm
again I've weathered, sir;
My children married happy, and my nest again
well feathered, sir!
Oh! what a gay, &c.

'Tis four and twenty years, my friends, since
first on Afric's shore we landed!
And retrospections crowd my mind of that great
day;
Fear and doubt shut hope all out, for on a
desert we seemed stranded,
And dreary was our prospect then in Algoa Bay!
View contrasted, while they lasted, times of
which I'm now relating,
And our happy meeting here, this great event
commemorating!
Then may our hearts be grateful still, that
Heaven has so guarded us
Through all our toilsome pilgrimage, and now
so well rewarded us!
Oh! what a gay, what a rambling life a
Settler's leading!
Spooring cattle, doing battle, quite jocose;
Winning, losing; Whigs abusing; shopping
now, then cattle breeding;
Never fearing, persevering, on he goes!
A.G. BAIN

Sam Sly's African Journal
25 April, 1844

## THE KAFFIR WAR

### A SATIRE - PART FIRST

What dire events from little causes spring,
Do thou, O Southern Afric's Goddess, sing!
A paltry axe, by Kaffir thief purloined,
In hostile fray two mighty nations joined;
The one from Ham derived its swarthy race;
From Japhet had the other its pale face;
From two grand stocks the latter race arose,
The former several kindred tribes compose; -
That from unknown, or sultry Asia's climes;
This from cold Europe's came at different times,
Between them long a deadly feud had raged,
But now the war with fiercer wrath was waged;
For now the white man could refrain no more,
Though long in mercy he refrained before;
And dreadful retribution's day at hand
At length impended o'er the black man's land.
No longer now could justice be denied,
Nor suffered still the Kaffir to deride
That wrath he long so recklessly provoked;
And so the Mars of Afric was invoked.

Ten years of rest the land had now enjoyed
From open war, though oft by theft alloyed,
Fell murder too had reared its bloody head,
And rapine everywhere the savage spread,
Driven off the flocks and herds, the herdsmen killed,
And now and then the farmers' best blood spilled.
Yet to the colonist attached no blame;
He could with truth all hostile acts disclaim;
He never sought the robber in his lair,
And e'en the murderer was inclined to spare,
Nor e'er refused the wanderer to relieve,
If food and shelter he required at eve,
Although he knew not but he came to spy
How best he might his kraals to plunder try.
Moreover, men of God were sent to teach
In their own land the ignorant, and preach
To all the Word of life; and men of trade
At their own homes their various traffic made.
With gospel-light that land might thus have been

Illumined; and throughout Kaffraria seen
Domestic comfort, and each social art
Rude nature's sons have learned, at least in
part.

But all these overtures of kindness spurned
Our neighbour, and with hate and rancour burned,
Most cruel to himself and us; for love
By both displayed would mutual blessing prove,
In darkness sitting, he preferred the creed
Of Devils, and blind superstition's deed
Enacts; essaying by sorcery to gain
From the closed heavens fertilizing rain;
Or using magic's art to cure disease,
By witchcraft caused, and failing to give ease,
He seeks some wealthy one, on whom to vent
For fancied crime the direst punishment;
With fiery torture fills th' enchanter's cup,
His wealth confiscates, and the wretch "eats up"[sic]
Behold his mystic rites, the dance obscene,
Disgusting orgies of the Cyprian Queen!
No love with him attends the marriage rite,
He buys his wife, or makes her his by might;
Divorces next, and then another takes,
Or keeps them all, while slaves of all he makes;
A foot he cuts off should they run away,
And with the samboc[sic] teaches to obey!
See how another Chief-doomed culprit pants,
In mid day sun[sic] lashed down, a prey for ants,
And shivers in night's damp, unwholesome dew!
Be grateful, Christian, that it is not you!
And as his agonizing screams you hear,
O'er such brute customs drop the pitying tear!

Now some, to answer their own selfish ends,
These Kaffirs speak of, as our dear, good friends;
They call them "Scotchmen,"[sic] though in Afric bred
Of sable skin, and with a woolly head;
And, though they ought to know the rogues of old,
Yet our "relations" with them, we are told,
"Most comfortable are,"[sic] or rather were,
For now to say so none can scarcely dare.
Surely from fair Utopia's lofty range
Descend these must, and their opinion change;

Nor ever were, unless those harrowing tales,
Which cost the colony her deepest wails,
Be false - the robber and the murderer too
Belied - those brutal acts turn out untrue -
Macomo sober - Tola not a thief -
Sandilli docile - veracious each Chief, -
Scholtz, Harding, Odendaal, be found alive;
Unburnt our homesteads, and our stock to thrive;
Our farms in safety, and ourselves at peace,
Our wives and little ones from fear to cease;
And that we had no proper cause to dread
Th' assassin's firebrand, or his stealthy tread.

Thou art, Philanthropy, the fairest grace
Of our fallen nature! yet would thy face
Were partly painted white, and not all black!
Since such it seems; for thou too oft dost lack
A mind unprejudiced, and feeling heart
For white men's woes, preferring to take part
With black men's ills, or fancied ills, - thy
paint,
Each white a sinner, and each black a saint,
Making to thy distempered eye appear. - [sic]
Soon may thy vision, lovely grace, be clear!
Pull out thy mote, and thou wilt plainly see
Blacks are not angels, neither yet are we;
Nor are we demons, though we can't deny
The beam sometimes is heavy in our eye.
The truth, as in most other cases, lies
Half-way between the two extremities.

But all connected with them fully know. [sic]
Societies like to have their "quid pro quo;" [sic]
Old men will grumble, and old women prate,
And those who cannot talk subscribers hate;
Nor send home written folio to "the Hall," [sic]
They think them idle, and perhaps recall,
And men in office will a theory form,
From which you can't dislodge them but by storm.
They like their masters have been taught to judge,
Unbiassed judgement is with them all fudge.
Hence sweet Philanthropy runs mad at times,
And in with popular opinion chimes,

The mischief does she gladly would avert,
And makes her votaries the truth pervert.
Hence too temptations frequently arise
T' enlarge and mystify, if not tell lies;
Deceived herself, she would the world deceive,
And any wondrous story will believe;
To various stratagems resort to aid
Her failing funds; e'en make a Kaffir maid
(Oh! rarest sample of her native land!)
A hymn repeat, and on the platform stand.
Hence, worst of all, disgraceful squabbles come,
Of sorrow source to most, of joy to some;
The imps of discord laugh to see good men
Bemoil each other with sharp tongue and pen,
Their mutual foibles and mistakes expose,
And friends stand forth each other's bitterest
foes;
While pious minds are grieved such fruits to see,
Matured of spurious Philanthropy: [s.]

PART SECOND

If these just glanced at grievances were all,
Our causes of complaint would be but small.
Their hobby ride let those who like to pay,
Until it throws them, or is thrown away;
Pitying folly, or despising guile,
Whiche'er it be, if harmless, we can smile;
But when such conduct leads to results dire,
It cannot but provoke indignant ire.
Some, it is feared, most wilfully were blind,
Others by nature had an erring mind,
While honest men of common sense foresaw
The scale would turn the balance of a straw,
And that one latent spark, however fine,
Was quite sufficient to explode the mine;
And many, croakers called, almost with tears,
Foretold the issue for the last few years;
Though, like Cassandra, they were not believed,
Delayed was fate's decree, but not reprieved.

The spark ignited, and th' explosion came!
To what, or whom, shall we impute the blame?
Perhaps to that weak force once sent to guard
Old Botman's subject to the distant ward,
(The thief who impudently stole the axe;)

Although combined were many glaring facts
To light and feed the slow, sure match; beside
That barbarous murder, and the law defied,
The rescued prisoner, and the severed hand,
Deeds tempted by the smallness of the band.
To sing of all would tedious make this strain:
The ruinous robberies, and lamented slain,
A captured mail, the letters strew'd around,
His H---r boarded on the neutral ground,
Insulting messages, the plundered store,
With broken treaties, now observed no more.
All these portended war, and signals were
Against the coming struggle to prepare;
Neglected omens, which shewed long before
That future havoc, which we now deplore.
Most unprepared it found us when it came;
Dread warning, war not rashly to proclaim,
But first to sit down, and to count the cost,
See if the gain will make up what is lost,
And if the object of contention be
Worth the inevitable misery.

Costly defence against the frontier powers,
Erected were Posts, Telegraphs, and Towers,
Most useless found in this our time of need;
(The loop holed guard rooms serve for stores
indeed;)
How to supply them was a point forgotten
With grog and powder - system rather rotten! [sic]
With most in keeping on the frontier line, [sic]
Where wise provision does not often shine;
But all seems misty, from mount Lion's head
down,
And from Cape, even to King William's Town.
Had all this cash in bridges been expended,
Or roads, the matter had been somewhat mended;
Or if our villages defended were,
And refuge-places set apart with care.
Some posts, untenable now found to be,
(Why built at all is perfect mystery,)
Dismantled were, and levelled with the ground,
Orders to the sufferers that harshly sound;
Others abandoned, yet on high still stand,
Signals of folly o'er the distant land;
While those still occupied do little good;
They're always wanting cartridges and food.

[New Orleans]
Thus, the destruction of the last built post,
Lamented one of the departing host: -

"Victoria, no more! alas! no more!
That soon he'd have it Prince Sandilli swore,
By force or fraud, it mattered not I ween:
Ah! name disgraced of our most noble Queen!
How sly Macomo chuckled when he know'd it!
Huge Botman with a sneer cried out, "post obit,"[sic]
And thievish Tola laughed to think John Bull
To burn his own was such an arrant fool!
The C---l's hobby, and the G----l's pet,
Though worse than lumber it had been as yet;
And so went forth the stern decree of fate,
That handy-work of man to devastate,
And not to leave one solitary shed,
Where e'en a cat might hide her humble head.
And there was one of beauteous feline race,
Like Mariás, brooding o'er the ruined place,
Unknowing where to go, or where to stay,
When all her biped friends had sneaked away,
Or where her youthful progeny to screen,
For such a flare-up she had never seen;
No wagon ope'd for her its sheltering tent,
O'er their distress no eye of pity bent;
Her much-lov'd mate was murder'd long before,)
Caught pilfering in some cruel trader's store)
But this of all her trials was most sore, )
Bereft to be of that tried hunting-ground,
Where always she a mouse had surely found,
And the warm hearth on which she used to pur,[sic]
And lick her paws, and smooth her silken fur.
Those pleasant haunts were now no longer her's,
But she was left a prey to Kaffir curs;
Like those sweet cottages, which, now forlorn,
The sky illumined on that fated morn,
And ere the sun had set, to ashes burned,
Were to a smouldering heap of ruins turned;
And they who built and loved them too forsook
The work of months, with one last lingering[sic] look,
Stables and stores, redoubts[sic] and mess-rooms lost,[sic]
With all the cash and all the pains they cost!

But most they sorrowed for that sacred spot,
Though all their sorrow now availed them not,
Where they full oft had spent a sabbath hour
Together seated in that verdant bower,
A spacious canopy of boughs o'erspread,
While each in adoration bowed the head,
Or heard from hallowed lips the word of life )
Grateful interlude of surrounding strife! )
The high born matron, and the soldier's wife,)
The fair-hair'd girl the moustach'd chief beside,
The swarthy son of Afric's martial pride,
The C.M.R., who glorious name have won,
With Corps that came from Britain's northern sun,
All colors and all ranks together met,
In equal harmony the psalm to set.
Thither her infant charge the mother brought;
And Christian rites the veteran father sought
For one, who was the fight of faith to fight,
And quit himself like man in heaven's sight.
In vain they now those peaceful scenes deplore,
For Post Victoria is, alas! no more!"

That troubled Cat, whose history is true,
Apt emblem is, O Colonist, of you!
Her burning haunt, your house by fire destroyed,
Your own, her progeny of home devoid;
Her mate, your valued relative or friend,
By Kaffirs brought to an untimely end;
That peaceful scene is your own quiet farm,
That Post in ruins the inflicted harm.
Like her you view, with consternation great,
The past and present horrors of your fate,
But with far greater what is yet to come,
Now deeply hid in time's mysterious womb;
Her end we knew not, as we know not your's,
For that in vain intensest thought explores;
But this we know, that all things for our good
Together work, if rightly understood.
The third and last part shall be finished when,
Reader, the war shall be; how long till then
No signs discover yet to mortal eye; -
Wait both with patient curiosity.

## PART THIRD

The war not ended, to resume its theme,
"The third and last part," premature might seem,
Unless the fighting plainly was all done;
For neither side dare fire another gun.
Both sides the war now think a silly trick,
And of it each most heartily is sick;
For while they fight the seed-time passes by,
Whether for time or for eternity;
Nor is there one but hankers after home,
His bee-hive hut, or more commodious dome.
All long for peace, though what that peace shall be,
Or how maintained, is still a mystery.
We hope indeed that under British rule
The Kaffirs will be held, and sent to school,
But fear, as usual, all will end in smoke,
Like oft before the threatened vengeance stroke,
The Kei abandoned, and the firm demand
Of arms and cattle and the culprits' land,
One decade more, as past experience shows,
When up another generation grows,
And Gaika's youth, the rod forgot, want wives,
Will bring again the peril of our lives:
For steal they must, if spouses they would buy,
Because the dowry their own funds deny,
And every Kaffir is a rogue in grain,
Whom to teach honesty is quite in vain;
They will not learn; of character the worst trait
Is that their teachers they have driven away,
Burned Mission stations, and for balls used types,
And sacred books for wadding and their pipes.
Then, or before, our toil will go for nought,
Because we did not spend it as we ought, [sic]
While yet such peace, whene'er we please,
proclaim. [sic]
We can, and keep as in past years the same;
But what is the pledge, what the guarantee,
That we from theft and murder shall be free?

The Russians did not beat Napoleon,
But flaming Moscow, and a frozen sun;
Thus war begun is awkward to pursue,
As clearly seen is on a slight review
Of doubtless well meant movements, but mistaken: [sic]

A hundred wagons burnt, the spans all taken,
At least so stated; some were found entire,
But Hunky pays for total loss, and hire;
(Of every movement such a cumbrous train
In bush and defile is the greatest bane;
But men their belts and boots must clean and shine,
And officers drink brandy, ale, and wine, [3.c]
In one, it is most scandalously said,
A monkey travelled with a baggage maid;
Better such baggages were left behind,
Though, were they needful, why we should not
mind;)
The forces, after three days' fight, not beat,
But forced for want of rations to retreat;
Three days' starvation too is sorry fun,
And soldiers, aught but British, would have run,
Though luckily for them the Kaffirs high
At the garret-windows fired, or the sky.
The broad white cross belts are unseemly gear
In those dense bushes for the Foot to wear;
See yon tall corporal in mimosa tree
Suspended till his comrade set him free;
Red coats and chacos[5] are a garment vile;
The rifle scarce can miss them at a mile.
Without their kettle-kops, the poor Dragoons
Made splendid targets for the naked loons;
Their horses fresh could catch the nimble foe,
But want of forage made them soon too slow;
Their bullets next were found too tight a fit
For men to ram down who on horseback sit;
And the struck terror by their gleaming swords [3.c]
Existed nowhere, but in Fairbairn's words.
A hundred years ago these valiant men
Won fame and kettle-drums at Dettingen,
And what, we ask, in battle has been done,
Or what in honor[13,3] or advantage won?
The long reports of skirmishes we read
Would make us think them grand affairs indeed;
We marvel too how fifty thousand rounds
Could be so innocent of death and wounds!
Except at Peddie, Gwanga, and Burn's Hill,
Our real exploits would scarce one column fill.

We want a hero - no uncommon want,
Though Byron says it is; for rather scant
Run heroes in South Africa [sic] a bead, [sic]
That is, to action and to counsel bred;
And not such heroes as a love of pelf
Alone presents from sticking on the shelf,
Like any other antiquated tome,
Such heads (much better had they staid [sic] at home)
Had never come here but to pocket half
Their wages, or a son upon the staff
Or nephew put, or other of their race
Provide for snugly in some idle place;
Boys epauletted, sashed, bespurred, moustached,
But brainless, thus to office are attached;
While all they care for is with ease to spend
Their reign, until the sinecure shall end,
And stave off trouble and the evil day. [sic]
Though come it must, until they get away;
For us they care not, it is very plain,
If favor they in Downing-street can gain,
Abuse escaping in the public prints,
And take, pretending to despise, their hints.
"You grumbling farmers wanted war," they say.
"Now war you have!" If so, not such as they
Inflicted have on this unhappy soil,
Supinely left for savages to spoil
While they marched into Kaffirland; its hordes
Revelling in all the Colony affords.
Yet much in so-called peace it was the same,
When peace for war was but another name,
Since cattle-lifting in Kaffrarian code
Of making war is the accustomed mode.
They need not taunt us with their own misdeeds,
In war and peace of ill those fruitful seeds,
From which in both amongst the border tribes
Against us spring dishonorable gibes [sic]
Our changeful policy, like children's play,
Drives all respect and influence away;
Throughout the world here only from contempt
The British name and arms are not exempt;
The cunning rogues our diplomacy foil,
Nor can we by our arms retake the spoil;
Like angels' visits, ah! how rarely seen!
We make reprisals few and far between;

We keep bad watch, while they perpetual keep;
We slumber, while they seldom fall asleep;
Inertness, apathy, have marked our course,
And of our troubles been an ample source;
Had our first movements been a little faster,
Procrastination had not caused disaster.
We have indeed some active, prudent men,
Who could and would the past redeem; but then
Their hands are tied, their energies are cramped,
Their ardent spirit is by coldness damped.
The best laid scheme for want of concert fails;
A few at rail-road speed - most move like snails;
Willingly some, others because they saw
Gazetted and placarded 'Martial Law;' [sic]
While these are sitting still, the rest will
fight,
All doing what is in their own eyes right.

Thus shameful blunders wisest plans retard;
"Confusion worse confounded!" sings our Bard;
"Quiquid delirant," in another's lays,
"Reges" (means "blockheads," an uncourteous
phrase) [sic]
"Plectuntur achivi!" Though neither Greeks
We are, nor kings, this proverb truly speaks,
As in past ages, so of us who live.
Politeness will not a translation give
In words; stern facts translate it beyond doubt. -
See the artillery of Church called out
In frantic haste; the marchings up and down
From this to that post, and from town to town,
As Fourteenth Louis, valiant King of France,
Used on the hill side with his men to prance;
Expresses galloping in breathless haste,
Another starting ere arrives the last,
A third or fourth despatched perhaps to try
What with the former ones does quite away;
Unreplenished the Commissariat Store,
Which should have been replenished long before,
In specie bankrupt, (one, no specious jest,
Was counted five rix-dollars in the chest!)
Each post unvictualled, ammunition scarce;
And humbug, folly, madness, or a farce,
Barbarians treated both in peace and war,

As if they civilized, converted are,
Karosses wore not, to their words were true,
Could read and write, and gentle manners knew,
Their names could sign, and not a witnessed mark,
To treaties of interpretation dark,
T' enforce impossible, so never kept,
While even-handed justice soundly slept.
The eighth commandment should have been the law, [sic]
With force to back up what was right we saw;
They never can by pipeclay and parade,
Or potent red-tape be obedient made.

PART THIRD [continued]

E'en now, pretending earnestly to sue
For peace, [sic] the wily rascals laugh at you;
You make conditions - "From your country go,
Ye Gaika tribes;" [sic] Sandilli answers, "No!"
"Your arms give up and booty;" says, "Come O, [sic]
And take them; resist we'll not!" Macomo;
And, like the famed one of Corioli,
Craves of our hearth the hospitality;
And then a few old guns and cattle lean
Are sent; the flimsy artifice is seen -
The drunken sot is hungry for a drink;
And to retain their lands the people think;
Wisely employing the allotted space
To drive their herds off from before our face.
Like Fabius, thus they conquer by delay,
From hostile contact keeping well away;
We're men enough, indeed, to eat them up,
If caught, and on them breakfast, dine, and sup;
But catch them first! See that profound receipt
For cooking hares, which cookery-books repeat,
With our Fifth Henry might be wished at home
All the Colonels and Majors that have come;
We also could without alarm decline
The aid of those new regiments of the line;
No more we want of high or low degree;
Let those we have be handled skilfully. [sic]
But not alone by folly are we vexed;
Dishonest counsels honest ones perplexed;
Nor yet by those fierce enemies of old,
Whom guns and habit render now more bold;
Though how they got their guns is somewhat odd,
And habit should have made them dread our nod.

As once against the Syrian Captain's might,
The stars against us in their courses fight,
The self-same causes which obstruct our way,
Side with the enemy in strong array;
The very elements, the winter fine,
Them to assist and us oppose, combine.
The niggard heavens timely rains deny:
Our sheep, our horses, and our oxen die;
Nor flocks nor herds survive to bear the yoke,
Or yield us mutton, beef or wool. No joke
It is to go without these things! Mere drought
Much of our suffering would have brought about,
High prices caused above our pockets far,
And famine threatened, without the loss by war;
Though "Boards" were formed to dole out, it is
true,
A scanty pittance to a clamorous few,
While modest want, or that by pride restrained,
Is still with nakedness and hunger pained,
And lazy idleness is clothed and fed
Better than industry to labour bred.
Does it not melt the heart of stone to see
Beggared affluence descend to charity?
All comforts now perhaps for ever flown
From those who once had every comfort known!
As by the besom of destruction swept,
How many families their all have wept!
Beseiged the leger, (sic) and the kraal attacked,
The farm invaded, and the homestead sacked,
By fire destroyed the stacks and household stuff, (sic)
The dwellings too!
But this is not enough!
Of ill impends the climax! Not far hence
Prophetic vision sees the pestilence!
For plague of want oft follows in the wake,
What leaves one scourge, the other comes to take!
Starved beasts expiring crowd the roads and plains,
Each putrid carcase where it fell remains,
Drop in our streets, or when they go to drink,
(The fates of thousands) in the rivers sink;
And thus polluted air we breathe, and fill
Our pails and pitchers from the tainted rill.
The jaded ass by Costermonger beat,
However burdened, has enough to eat;

The slave we care for, since he brings us pelf,
Although our love is not for him, but self;
The patient span to see, Dick Martin's shade
Sure it must rouse, without one drop or blade,
Toiling all day along the arid plain,
And thirsty, hungry, to the loaded wain
Tied fast at night; their sides with bleeding gash
Scored thickly over by the heavy lash,
The lolling tongue, parched mouth, and plaintive eye,
Or torture telling the extremity!
The soldier burnt upon the tumbril-wheel
Alive, could scarce acuter anguish feel,
Or the fallen burgher, stabbed without remorse [sic]
Where hangs transfixed his mutilated corpse!
Is man a brute that he sould thus behave,
A fiend, a fool, a madman, or a knave,
Or all combined, that he should neither see
Nor feel his fellow-creatures' misery,
Nor even his own interest regard?
Impressing wagons too is rather hard!
It makes our tea and sugar scarce and dear,
Rice, coffee, and tobacco; though we hear
These things could be abundantly procured,
If wagons were from pressing but insured;
The same holds good too with regard to meal,
Which we can neither borrow, buy, nor steal;
They starve us, while they feign to save our lives,
And take with one hand what the other gives;
While one hand squanders largesses away,
Withholds the other necessary pay.
Throughout the system parsimonious, rules
Are formed by stingy and short-sighted fools;
Is the Contractor or the Queen the thief,
When men buy rations, though they catch their beef?
By pennies wisdom out to every grade, [sic]
But foolishness by pounds, alas! is weighed;
In nick of time a sum, who does not see,
With judgment spent had saved a moiety?
Rejected at five dollars, the same hay
For ten was purchased at an early day!

How the old Paymaster at home will stare,
And grumble too at burdens he must bear!
Has he not cause? Our lavishness astounds,
When each day's parley costs three thousand
pounds!
Not all Kaffraria would be worth the cash,
Which we in some things but esteem as trash.
At these mistakes, no wonder that men vent,
If not disloyalty, loud discontent. [sic]
They cannot always blindly shut their eyes,
And will to sophistry make sharp replies,
Some mock, some murmur, and some mutiny!
To quell these last the Parsons went to try
How "cedunt arma togae," [sic] and proved well
Black coats can lead where red cannot compel,
And how the voice of reason will prevail,
If kindly urged, where force will naught avail.
Nor let our rulers falsely think that they
Who tell the boldest truths will least obey;
We repudiate the foul calumny,
And hurl with indignation back the lie.
Oh, No! [sic] We speak them in most honest love,
If haply they a humble guide may prove
Some past lamented failures to repair,
Or of some future ones the pain to spare.
In truest loyalty, we will not yield
To those who smoother arguments may wield;
That they who merit may incur the shame
We only wish, and pity while we blame.
Surely some tardy rays of wisdom break
Through the thick gloom, and brighter scenes
bespeak!
We've learned our errors, and amended some,
And trust the time when all shall be will come. [sic]
At length, reduced to our extremest shifts,
We guard the frontier line, and watch the drifts;
Though stolen the steed, we shut the stable door,
Rejoiced 'tis done, though late, if not before;
And some advise that we should build a wall
Like it in China, long, and wide, and tall,
That is, a chain of posts well manned, to be
Along the border our security.
E'en now from evil certain good appears,
And our sad hearts with consolation cheers;
Well worth the trouble and the treasure too,
All but the blood, is Bay of Waterloo;
And when the mourning land with peace is blest,
The Colony, enjoying lasting rest,

Favored [sic] with fertile sod and genial skies,
Shall from her ashes like the Phoenix rise!
Then Ham's and Japhet's sons shall re-unite
To bury deep the axe that caused the fight.

SUPPLEMENT TO "THE KAFFIR WAR."

To peace attuned too soon his martial song,
With best intent, your satirist was wrong;
For far appears pacification off,
Unless on terms at which we all should scoff;
So, if he has unwittingly told lies,
He now is ready to apologize,
The chord of hope, more than of fact, he strung,
What ought to be, than was, he rather sung,
He shares the blame too, for the same he said,
With that great man who from the contest fled,
And left to others to untie, or cut,
Of Kaffir politics th' entangled knot,
On which the sword, too hard to be untied,
Must, like the Gordian, again be tried.
From that long order to the troops addressed,
The question seemed for ever set at rest,
Our farms re-occupied, our fallows tilled,
Our vats with wine, with corn our granaries filled,
The Kaffirs conquered, in our kraals our kine,
And peace established on the frontier line,
For how could else promiscuous thanks be dealt
(By some indeed ironically felt)
To all who had a finger in the pie,
Who could or not say, "A good boy am I?" [sic]
And how else could levies be disbanded:
Regulars dismissed, towns lightly handed; [sic]
The note of warlike preparation mute,
And turn the CHIEF deserters and his suite? [sic]

Scarce had that order issued from the press,
When came another, confidently less
Anticipating peace; on the "qui vive"
Bidding us all to be, and so retrieve
(Sounder advice) the former grand mistake.
Of this two recent sad examples take:
The dreadful struggle of the three who, slain,
Disfigured lay upon the well-fought plain,
And the limbs mangled of the native vrouw!
Say, how did these things happen, [sic] Maitland, how?

We cannot think you wilfully told lies;
Strange blindness, therefore, must have closed
your eyes.
Surely your lauded name, Sir Peregrine,
Can never with its ancient lustre shine!
As when resigned the lacks of gold rupee,
Rather than countenance idolatry;
Or, when enlisted in the fighting trade,
Led was at Waterloo the Guards Brigade.
Nor to cripple your successor's resource,
Can we suppose adopted was this course.
Although recalled, you need not in a huff
Have left the camp and carbonaces tough.
These were the errors of the "good" [sic] old man:
He creeped at first, and afterwards he ran.
What business had he in the field? There were
Far abler men to do the duty there.
But then what field-allowances we call,
And savings in housekeeping were not small;
Or he might think to curry favor yet
By toil and hardship with a certain set,
And so he left his own appropriate sphere,
Us, as we might, ourselves to care for here.
The Kaffirs say that he was too severe,
And hence recalled; the contrary is clear [sic]
For had he been in office three months more,
A thousand mischiefs had increased his score.

He had, 'tis true, an inefficient staff,
A swearing noodle, [sic] and a smattering half
Of all professions, and meddler in all,
So that you might him "Jack-of-all-trades" call;
Part scribe, part parson, this family scion,
Compound military and civilian,
Now public, now private, as need required,
Seemed like a "maid-of-all-work" to be hired;
But of which he was master few could guess,
Or what was the Q-M-G's usefulness,
Except in writing an unfeeling note,
When at his hands redress the widow sought
For cruel injury to her only son,
The single fight the star-fort hero won; [sic]

Like the star-chamber's [sic] was that felon deed,
At which the hearts of all true Britons bleed.

We will a tribute of respect now pay
To him who perished on his homeward way;
Goaded to his end, like the o'er-driven ox,
His fate does not surprise us, while it shocks;
Upon him was his situation thrust;
In vain he tendered to resign his trust;
Worked in the yoke to the last dregs of life,
He fell, another victim to this strife,
In which like him, lamented ones will fall,
Besides the [sic] killed by assegai and ball.
He stood, when living, in abuse's van,
Although the soldier and the gentleman,
Deserved or not we will not argue here;
Unwelcome truths will soon perhaps appear,
When shall the venom of the blunted foil
On duller heads and harder hearts recoil,
And then the gallant Colonel's memory
From ignorant aspersion shall be free.
Nor will we here of some few failings speak;
On points at times the best [sic] of us are weak,
And that he was, remember too must we,
Under as well as in authority.
Untarnished would all Honor was, and fair
As His, promote to be General Hare! [sic]
We pity more the pattern of her sex; [sic]
How must her loss his faithful partner vex, [sic]
Left alone mourner on the watery waste!
Hope for the future, sorrow for the past!
Failed the devotion of her life to save [sic]
Him, whom she leaves in isolated grave!

We notice next the Registration scheme,
On which strict criticism may trifling seem;
For failure signal, such as it has been,
Has rarely, even at the Cape, been seen,
Where dunces legislate, and sluggards vie
Ordinances with rogues to nullify.
We might as well enregister hyaenas,
To wolves and jackals tickets give, I ween, as
To roving savages, who cannot read 'em;
A number and a name will never feed 'em;

They only are indulgences [sic] to steal,
As we already have begun to feel;
A sort of licence to possess that land,
Which for their forrays [sic] is so nigh at hand:
Found to be worth no more than paper waste,
Consummation of legislation past!
Far from our province is it to dispute
Th' appointment made this scheme to carry out;
And farther still his conscientious mind,
Which to accept the Commissioner inclined,
Or how compatible with holier work,
Which, for a time at least, he seems to shirk;
We wish him well; perhaps he is the man
To work this measure out, if any can.
The large herd, filched under our very noses,
The folly of the system well exposes;
That beast Macomo in the canteen drunk,
And with a wife committed to the trunk!

How dare we the untutored savage blame,
When those more highly favored [sic] do the same?
Alas! our people quaff the deadly cup,
Till body, life and soul are yielded up [sic]
A prey to devils, and the grave and hell!
Let this rife cause of wrath eternal tell!
That wrath which visits now our rampant crime,
Most happy for us if confined to time!
Though to himself a man must stand or fall,
We will not bear the burden of it all;
Much of the fault lies in th' unhallowed source
Of revenue from this murderous course.
Hard as may be the drunkard's heart to win,
The law now gives a premium for sin,
Incites to drunkenness, and break the day [sic]
For man made holy! Can the drunken pray,
Or turn out quickly in the night's alarm,
If from his bed roused suddenly to arm?
Which higher tax can legislators think
Will pay - the sober, or the slave of drink?
Yet Christian rulers license dens to kill,
As butchers blood upon the shambles spill!

[New stanza]

But now the muse beginning is to ramble,
Else she might sing of that disgraceful scramble
For those few cattle, which recaptured were,
Each claimant eager to possess a share,
And all he could catch grasping without shame,
Whether or not he had a rightful claim;
Or of the 'Thunderbolt's' [sic] unhappy wreck,
Where she lies stranded with her shatter[d]d deck;
Or how, portending a continued storm,
Our cattle still Kaffrarian pastures swarm,
As furious tempests needful are to clear
From noxious air the o'ercharged atmosphere.
But such effects of blunder or mischance
"A sequel" to this satire may enhance.
Whate'er is wrong, we confidently hope,
Will soon be right; yet difficult to cope
It always must be with our slippery foe,
Because, like Proteus, he evades the blow,
And seldom can he within range of shot,
Or [o]n a fair and open field [sic] be caught;
And then the English have a qualmish feeling
To be extreme to mark a little stealing.

Graham's Town Journal
12 September, 1846; 26 September, 1846; 19 December, 1846; 26 December, 1846 and 27 February, 1847.

/ "I'm for the Command"

Burgher Volunteer Song.

I took a thought the other day 'twas just to volunteer. [sic]
So soon began to furbish up my arms and other gear;
My father frown'd and said [sic] "Hey day! what is it Carl you'll do?"
He'er heed their proclamations son - if so you'll dearly rue" [sic]
A bullet in the leg or arm wont mend your case [sic] at all [sic]
And here my mother sighing said "and what if you [sic] should fall!"

Says I dont fancy such bad things - for six [sic]
months out of hand
I'll go and join Sir Harry Smith - then hey
for the command!

With roer slung at saddle bow as from the
farm I rode
(A better steed is owned by none than that which
I bestrode)
A maiden that I know cried "Carl, oh whither [sic]
would you ride?
Where danger from a savage foe and many ills
beside
Unite to harm the silly men who join this horrid
war
And leave their sweethearts here to mourn and
never see them more [sic]
Go - cast aside that nasty gun" - but to the [sic]
vain demand
The answer that I made was this, "Sweet I'm [sic]
for the command".

When I had pass'd - as through Cape Town I
stroll'd with a few more
Just looking round at this, or that, or talking
of the war,
The men stood still to look at us, in belt and
horn arrayed
And many a pretty girl her teeth of pearly
white displayed
And some cried "here's the mounted men that're
to the frontier bound, [sic]
"Ha! hah! the Amakosa soon will make some
bite the ground." [sic]
But to such like Job's comforters, but coldly
smiled our band
Or jeering answered, "Stay behind, while we're
for the command" [sic]

Then one of us his flint and steel a moment
plying well
Each lit cigar or pipe, and "Ho! for Donaldson's
Hotel!"
There we in Cogniac [sic] so fine, or Spanish wines
so rare

Soon drowned all thought of evil and aye
put to flight dull care
While Billiards' pleasant game we tried, or [sic]
gaily supped anon
And kept it up right merrily until the night
was gone [sic]
So ever live the mounted men, the Patriots of
the land
Who risk their lives for others' good, by
joining the command!

SLICKWITZ.

The African Journal
17 April, 1851

## BURGHER SONG NO. 2.

Parodied from a song in Bulwer's Rienzi. [sic]

Ho dark one of the golden South! ho fair
one from the North! [sic]
Ho Briton, Boer and African! ho wherefore
come ye forth?
We come from mount, we come from plain, we
come across the sea
In long array, in strong array to join Smith's
companie! [sic]
Oh the pleasures of your life! oh the terrors
of your strife
Bold marksmen of the free!

Ho Kafirs of the hill and vale! ho chieftains
of renown
Be sure your sun is sinking fast - 'twill
very soon be down [sic]
Why rail ye so? why quail ye so? what
portents do ye see?
The flaunting flag and trampling march of
Smith's brave companie!
Oh the horror of the sight! oh the thunders
of your might!
Bold Boer and Briton free!

Ho bloody shade of Hintza! ho shadow of
drown'd Lynx
Why quake ye so [sic] why shake ye so? what
fear your phantom shrinks?
We grieve Joubert's commando and the Zulus
fierce to see
And shake to view the lengthening files of
Smith's brave companie [sic]
Oh the terrors of thy name shall revive soon
once again [sic]
Bold chief renownd and free!
SLICKWITZ.

The African Journal
1 May, 1851

BURGHER SONG NO. 4.

"'Twas by the dark Keiskamma's tide!'"

'Twas by the dark Keiskamma's tide our party
sought the foe
In hopes for England and our cause to strike
a sudden blow [sic]
The coward, slinking, Kafir thieves, in
numbers only, great [sic]
Crouch'd down in bushy, deep ravines, unseen
lay hidden straight. [sic]

Anon we crown'd a lofty hill and looking
round the scene
The lowing of some kine rose up, - a pleasant
sound I ween [sic]
Down in a kloof our mounted men a herd at
once descried
And started off in gallant trim extended far
and wide!

We thought the Cape Town Levy soon would aid
us from the rear [sic]
Our troop was small but not a man that had a
thought of fear
For Robertson and Fletcher then with Morris
led our band
And Captain Foulkes with ten men more were
by us close at hand.

Down, down, we charged - but out! alas!!
into the jaws of death!!!
Upsprung the Kafirs in a cloud or ere we
drew a breath [sic]
'Twas then we saw poor Fletcher fall and Morris
wounded sore
The first with assegais pierced through and
mangled o'er and o'er!

Then assegais came showering in and loud the
din uprose
From dying steeds and musketry and shouts of
charging foes,
Bold Robertson brought Morris off in sadly
wounded plight
And all but two fought safely through and
scaped th' unequal fight.

Next day beside Fort White we laid poor
Fletcher in the ground [sic]
Ah me! it was a mournful sight as all stood
silent round [sic]
His comrades tears and vain regrets go with
him to the grave [sic]
But oh that our regards had been with him in
time to save!

SLICKWITZ

The African Journal
5 June, 1851

## THE FRONTIER MASSACRES

I

After each storm a calm, after each crash
A pause ensues; Destruction holds her breath,
Deliberating ruin still and death,
But not inflicting; and upraised the lash
Is seen, not falling. Fix this torrent rash,
Into ice massed ere it shall plunge beneath!
Freeze into marble all this fierceness! Wreathe
Eternal nightshade round it! nor let dash

On us its gathering tide again set free!
It seems less dreadful to succumb ourselves
Than to see others crushed and drooping; we
Envy almost the stripped and prostrate tree,
Though at our own rich roots the worm not delves,
Heavy with leaves though our own branches be!

II

But that the Eternal will commands it so,
And dictates patience, why should we live on! [sic]
To the last Kaffir war, short while ago,
On a commando sent; the only son
Of an old friend, (a fate how fraught with woe,!) [sic]
Went, and returned not, falling deathstruck down
By felon hands. Ye fair with laurels crown
His urn, in your defence laid cold and low!
Yet less the slain in battle fields who die
Mourn than the unoffending settlers spread
On their own hearthstones gushed and stark and dead,
Unwarned, unarmed, in slaughtered groups who lie,
So mocked and mangled after death their dust,
We with the scene the pencil shrink to trust.

III

Exeter Hall! which rul'st us o'er the deep,
O'er such of their destroyers as fell too
Lament! not him, not those we weep for, weep!
O'er those more dark of heart, than dusk in hue,
Their hands even now in innocent blood who steep,
Let, annual fall Compassion's pearly dew! [sic]
And, while all cheeks the wonted tears embrue,
Send round the plate to make the accustomed sweep!
Thy multitudes assemble! make it seem
That persecuted Kaffirs but like worms
Upon their torturers turn their tortured forms!
Of colored Shakespeares, Lockes, and Newtons dream,
For you will nowhere see them but in dreams,
And treat them such great persons as beseems!

IV

Pharaoh's born serfs, then wanderers desert bred,
The race of Israel from the promised land
Were long withheld, so heaven to school them
planned.
But with the earlier oracles divine
Familiar, when the later were outspread [sic]
Before them, they, prepared by many a sign
And prophecy, of the glad news took heed,
And not a few were to the true faith led.
The Gentile world an aspect more benign
Already wore, and hailed the new shewn shrine,
When first a wooden cross was willed to change
The destinies of nations. But alas!
How wide the gulf that Afric's sons must pass
Before they can be brought within its range!

DR GOWER

The African Journal
7 August, 1851

THE FRONTIER MASSACRES

V

More than the love which they themselves possess
Can none impart: the much that is mistraught,
The much before them which when rightly brought,
Misunderstood, is taught without success,
These facts we needs must own, nor should
suppress.
It is not that their weal should not be sought,
Nor that Religion is a thing of nought,
That they have lapsed from grace beyond redress, -
It is that generations must go by
Before the heights that we have reached they
reach;
That low-toned minds to raise the standard high
Will fail, and what they know not cannot teach;
And that we must not let them drive us down,
Nor force our just position to disown.

VI

Hall! where the goddess Dulness [sic] reigns supreme,
With a most ill grace aping the profound,
Her low and sallow brows with fox-glove crowned,
Her eyes averted from the ascending stream
Of massacre, her ears closed to the scream
Which from our butchered countrymen around
The welkin ring, - thine idol fling discrowned
Of all her garlands into Lethe's stream!
Expect from her and from her votaries nought
Beyond the narrow range of their small minds;
Than Afric's sons trust rather waves and winds;
Admit who will the philanthropic thought
That we may aid their way to worlds of bliss
To come: but treat them as they act in this!

VII

Hero of Aliwal! against this horde
Of black banditti bare the vengeful sword,
Nor let it find its scabbard, till beneath
The unshared mastery of the British Crown,
All rebel chieftancies, [...] and chiefs put down,
Order and lasting peace our arms, enwreathe!
Pause not till in their vens its thirst it
slakes!
All misplaced mercy is but childish play!
Deal with these perjurers as ye would with snakes!
Till as on night the light of morning breaks,
The blaze of British arms like that of day
The noontide heralds onwards of their sway!
Already lo! the roused up lion wakes!
And whispering wolves begin to skulk away!

VIII

Health to Sir Harry! health and strength to
bide
The brunt until these wrongs the sword adjust
And to its pristine height his name exalt!
If too romantically he relied
On chiefs (so titled) who deceived his trust
It was an English and a generous fault!
Let hence the long indulged delusions cease
Which place their race and ours upon a par,
Their minds from error's chains by force release:

What are ourselves? to look not backwards far,
Saxons with Normans blent beyond redress:
And these mere children in the arts of peace
Half apes half demons in the arts of war [sic]
To crush will be to raise from what they are!

IX

Yes! not untuned to sweetness must the strain
In notes harsh-blown of vengeful tenor close:
Past - present - future - links of the same
chain
Each follows each. To well dealt battle-blows
And crushed hostility succeeds repose,
With thousand blessings following in its train.
Nor evermore as now we needs must own
In lays not pitched in scorn's but sorrow's tone
Shall missionary toils a mockery be.
All must have a beginning. Alison!
Accept this tribute due to truth and thee!
Not useless lives of moonstruck reverie,
But active habits of thy converts shewn
Attest the soundness of the seeds thou hast
sown.

DR GOWER

The African Journal
14 August, 1851

THE SETTLERS' WRONGS

Why weeps the mournful muse for Albany?
Why hangs her harp upon the willow bough?
No rural theme now wakes her joyous strings,
No soft Eolian strain thrills from her wires,
Whisp'ring of joy and peaceful toil;

But ever and anon a rough Borean blast,
With rude discordance strikes her slacken'd
chords,
And deeds of blood and death, and savage yells,
Rise from her valleys, desolate her plains,
And echo from her hills and mountain rocks.
'Tis thrice ten years since first a hardy
band
Of Pilgrim Fathers left their native shores,
To find a home on Afric's sunny hills.
And thrice the murd'rous Kafirs swept their land
And laid their smiling hearths and homesteads
waste;
Withering their hopes of fair prosperity -
Reward of patient industry and toil.
There many a happy home was cleared;
The verdant valleys waved with corn; and plenty
And success their honest labour crowned.
The wilderness and solitary nook
There sang for joy, and blossomed as the rose;
The cattle roamed upon a thousand hills,
And bleating flocks repaid the shepherd's care;
In every hamlet scattered here and there,
The modest chapel raised its sacred fane,
And the sabbath-bell called her swains to prayer,
Where faithful pastors suited to their taste,
Their weekly visits paid, and preached the Word;
And on the sacred day were seen the young,
Pacing their way o'er hill and dale to school,
Where youthful minds in homely precepts trained,
Just learned enough to read the holy word,
Their Saviour know, and his commands obey.
The hopes of Pilgrim Fathers seemed secure,
And lusty sons, and daughters blooming fair,
Owned their birth, and knew no other land.
A healthy wildness and a fearless mien
Their bearing marked, and showed from whence they
sprang,
As worthy of the land their fathers left;
No convict band tainted their honest blood,
But samples fair of their adventurous sires.
The lily and the rose in healthful bloom,
Successful vied against an Afric' sun;
And proved their pure untainted Saxon race.

Here children's children played around the knee
Of white-haired grandsires, whose aged partners
Had ceased to mourn their own dear fatherland,
And in their children's cherished offspring,
And the cottage home of peace and love,
Beheld the days of eighty years ago;
And all their cares and toils full well repaid.
Here all the kind relationships of life,
In primitive simplicity were known;
The sister's husband, and the brother's wife,
Father and mother on both sides were loved;
And Uncle William and Aunt Margaret lived
With Cousin John and Mary just hard by,
On other side the hill, a summer evening's walk;
And kindly intercourse was constant kept
Of all the offices which mellow life,
Softening the ills that "flesh is heir to."
Such was young Albany - till in evil hour,
Fanatic dreamers fixed on Africa
To try their crude experiments on men,
All unprepared or curbed by civil laws;
And with unnatural bias on their minds.
They sowed the seeds of discontent and hatte
Between the industrious White man and the Black.
———wild theories and exciting tales
Of injured Africa and "Kafir wrongs," [sic]
As baseless as inverted pyramids -
Mere coinages of enthusiast's brains;
For we defy and challenge to the proof. [sic]
The unnatural slanders of degraded ——— ! [sic]
Who fallen from his caste himself, would raise
His swarthy brethren on the White man's fall;
Or like sly Renard, who had lost his tail,
Would coax his fellows to the same disgrace.
And ——missionary mountebank!
Gulling his hearers with his "nigger" tales,
To coax the pennies from the widow's mite,
To pay his voyage of pleasure round the world.
And last, though not the least, Rentonian lies
Support the impious fraud with pious zeal;
Received by England's sons as gospel truth.
These are the sources of young Afric's "wrongs";
This is the influence that withholds and checks
The sympathy of England's generous sons,
And from Britannia's daughters fair, forbid
The feeling tear to flow for all her woes.

* Dash indicating name omitted

Oh tell it not in Gath that England weeps not!
Let not the daughters of Philistia know
The savage tramples on the White man's home;
That Christian ministers approve the deed,
Aiding rebellion in their Heathen flocks;
By falsehood's glare leading the world astray,
And glorying in the slanders they have told.
'Tis easier far than honest labor,
Or to follow some useful handicraft,
To speechify on platforms, and receive
The bland plaudits of the admiring crowd;
To see your portrait in a magazine;
Be dubbed the Rev. Mr. ——, from the Cape;
And then a missionary's or a martyr's crown,
To crown the whole; who can withstand the charm?
Mistaken men, authors of all our woes,
'Tis not the province of frail man to curse;
But may the ghosts of murdered settlers,
Clothed in your beloved children's forms,
All gory in their wounds by savage hands,
Scare you with midnight dreams; and when you wake
May groans of the dying, and the widow's sigh,
And the poor orphan's wail, sound in your ears
Till ye repent your folly and your lies.
And cease your worse than useless labor;
If ye have true philanthropy, go search
For heathens in your native land; (there's quite
Enough of wretchedness and woe t'employ
Your largest purse, your energy, and zeal;)
Nor try your fond experiments on minds,
Not yet prepared by even civil life,
To drink at fountains of religious truth.
Here all your labour is but lost;
But 'tis your trade - your bread - and you must live,
But oh, remember it is death to us.

A SETTLER

Port Elizabeth Telegraph and Mercantile Gazette
27 November, 1851

## APPENDIX C

Toby Slim, to Sam Sly.

### EPISTLE 1st

Good morrow, Mister Sly;
I think that you and I
Should make acquaintance with each other:
I like your jokes
Of things and folks, -
Each happy turn
When you discern
Events - to make you serious or jocose;
In short, you are exactly one of those
I fancy as a literary brother.
Although I will not call you "Sam"
In my first letter,
But make you a profound salam,
Hoping to know you better;
And then we'll have a fling in any shape,
Aye, even at the CAPE!
For though, I see, you can be serious,
When the right subject comes beneath your pen,
There are some matters,
Showing the deleterious,
Fitted alone for ridicule and satires,
Where Folly reigns 'mongst men -
Moments for snubbing, vapours,
And cutting capers, -
And then you laugh! - I like an honest laughter,
(As Johnson said of haters),
And all bold commentators
Upon the notions,
Acts, whims, devotions,
Whether they be of Christian or of Kafir.

Now, first, then, to be plain, 'twixt you and me,
I like those persons who speak out the truth,
No matter if they be
What the world calls uncouth.
'Tis true they may be likened to the proctors,
Who come to eke out what makes people smart;
Or rather that their art
Vies with the Doctor's,
Who comes to draw an unsound tooth,
Kept, like some favorite vice, within the head,
Despite of all that's known or said,
'Till truth at last the Leech's skill enacts,
When out pop - FACTS!
Although mankind oft at the means revolts,

Not wishing the unsoundness to behold,
But rather choose to screen their faults,
Like bad teeth stuff'd with gold!
I'll tell you, Mister Sly, a story,
Which shall be prefatory
To what I hope hereafter to indite.
One winter's night,
A namesake of your own,
One Samuel Floote, -
A shrewd blythe wit, whose talents will be known
Till time is mute, -
Went to a tavern in great London town,
And sat him down
Where many sat, all pent together,
To hear the news, of course, or to escape the
weather.
The bell rings; waiter comes,
When one, who rubb'd his hands
As if his fingers ach'd, and thumbs,
"Brandy and water, hot!" demands,
Adding, "I'm deuced cold; a glass of toddy
Will soon remove this chilliness of body."
He scarce had done,
On which another, seated near the spot,
Cried, "Waiter, bring me one,
But cold, because I'm hot!"
When, lo! a third drawls out "I'll have one, too."
"Pray, Sir," says waiter, smiling, "hot or cold
for you?"

"I like the two betweens,
You well know what that means;
I've fasted over long.
And feel, too, somehow, sick;"
Then in an under tone
This wish made known,
"Let it be, waiter, rather strong;
And pray be quick."

Now, Foote, who was a very jester, -
That sort of jovial wit
Who lov'd to make a dexterous hit,
And of all false pretences a detester, -
Saw by the ruby nose
Of every one of those
Whose countenances bore them,
(The cold man, hot, or sicker),

That in the brimming glasses placed before
them
'Twas love alone of liquor
Which mov'd, but made them search for some
excuse,
And that each pretext was a ruse;
So, without any comment,
But waiting for a moment
Of silence, which soon follow'd,
He loudly hollo'd,
With jeering speech,
While staring round at each
To make his meaning strike it -
"Pray, waiter, bring me one, because I like it!"

These words had scarcely been pronounc'd
When, lo, a general titter
Ran round the room;
Sam car'd not if his joke were sweet or bitter,
For he had pounc'd
On those who had endeavour'd to assume
A mask, their worst indulgences to blind;
And is not this the case with all mankind?

The tipplers doubtless thought his wit uncouth;
But Sam had spoken truth.
And thus it is that neither you nor I,
Though we expose
The tell-tales of the mind, instead of nose,
Must flinch from telling truisms, Mister Sly.

TOBY SLIM.

Sam Sly's African Journal
22 February, 1849.

## THE SLY CORNER

To "DOUBLE-D," alias "NOTUS," alias the GUARD of the "GRAVE'S ENDER."

This query seems to strike at once,
Does "Double-D" mean double dunce?

DEAR D,

We feel not anxious to indite,
To every shadow that may chance to write,
Much less to answer every invitation,
By open praises for the obligation.
The mind 'tis said can not be always wooing -

Nor can we "find a Black at every brewing;"
Besides you know - the Muse (a fickle jade)
Turns sick when she's compell'd to shew her
trade.
Think - you're indebted to yourself alone,
For having first thrown out the little "stone".
No joke applies where grief has taken root,
It is at error that our Wit must shoot.
Sorrow's too sacred for the public grin,
And shuts the heart when register'd within.
Troubles come not alone, but have their riders
As flies when trapp'd, are pounc'd upon by
spiders.
"Great fleas have less upon their backs, to
bite 'em,
And these have less on theirs, ad infinitum."
You'll always find, where'er the Fancy lingers,
They talk of blows, and using fists and
"fingers!"
Such are the modes of Weakness and of Spite,
They roughly maul, where they should smoothly
write.
For he who's much accustom'd to the trade,
Will use a polish'd and good-tempered blade.
Great wits you know, should ever have great
hearts,
To tickle also where the victim smarts.
For above all things 'tis the vilest prose,
To talk of tweaking Satire by the nose,
Thoughts! Words! and Quips! are all that can
be done,
To make this nimble rascal "cut and run"
No arm of flesh, no tomahawk, or stick,
Were ever capable to "do the trick"
Your Mother's milk - and Nature where she's
partial,
Will "floor" the foe - e'en though he should
look martial.
You can't expect such honors to be paid,
As though you were a Poet "ready made".
Learn then this truth - 'tis not a mighty crime,
You're but a Tyro in the art to rhyme.
Turn then my "D.D." to the right about.

"Pray, does your anxious Brother know you're
out?"
"Cheer up," and try again, and don't be vex'd,
We've got a rod in pickle for your next.
No doubt, my boy, you'll think it rather simple,
We bear the pain of Sorrow's "angry pimple,"
Which seems more tender than a corn or bunion,
And far more pungent than a Spanish onion.
We were in hopes this grief might prove a shield -
That none would bring their pop-guns in the
field,
And felt a secret itching to be witty,
Without an opposition in the City.
But just as we were certain, sure, and steady.
Down fall our wishes, and up starts 'a Neddy."[sic]
To draw a nail from melancholy's coffin,
Throw up the lid, and set the dead a laughing! [sic]
Create new images in morbid matter,
And make a living skeleton the fatter!
But notwithstanding all the jokes and gibes,
To mark the limits Modesty prescribes!
Give mirth a moral - make e'en Dutchmen quaint,
And draw a smile from Sorrow and from Saint,
To clip the wings of Folly "as it flies,"
And fan the spark of Merit, ere it dies;
To give to Hope a stronger, brighter ray,
And puff the clouds of Misery away.
Are these your objects? - We the plan commend,
Will lend a quill, and back you as a friend.
But in return, (if but from sheer respect,)
The laugh at GRIEF from all your Odes reject.
For in the Mail, if we by chance should find
A sneaking insult "hanging on behind,"
Whene'er we see the cloven-foot appears,
We'll Slyly take the "Neddy" by the ears!"

TOBY TICKLE.

Sam Sly's African Journal
23 May, 1844.

## THE QUEEN'S SPEECH

(Freely done into Rhyme.)

By Sam Sly

My Lords and Gents.,
Who rule the rents, accept congratulation,
Whilst I record the pleasing signs and prospects
of the nation.
In every branch and factory, activity pervades,
And Trade and Commerce brighten up, like sun-
beams through the shades;
All classes of my people are obedient to the laws,
Like hungry dogs they're satisfied with
something in their maws,
And loyal as true Britons when there's warmth
within the doors.
I continue to receive, my Lords, from Foreign
Powers and States
Assurances of friendship, (he who fears us rarely
hates,
And 'tis policy to love the cook when empty are
the plates.)
It is with equal pleasure that I'm able to report,
The visit of two Sovereigns together in my
court.
The journey of the Emperor, commencing at a time
Of private inconvenience, I deem an act sublime,
As also most acceptable and grateful to my
feelings,
So now I trust his praises may be echoed to the
ceilings.
Besides, the opportunity it gave for consulta-
tion,
The whispering in private, was to benefit this
nation,
That Russia and Old England may travel hand in
hand,
By exchanging Furs for Flannel, and all that, -
you understand?
The visit of King Philippe was a fortunate event,
And silenced all those non-contents who were on
mischief bent;

To me it was especially most welcome at the time,
When preceded by discussions long, that might have led to crime.
So now both France and England together laugh and talk,
And as sweetly are united as two cherries on one stalk;
I regard this understanding as essential to them both,
For thus they eat our sirloins at the time we sip their broth.
I rejoice also to witness - but in this I'm not alone -
All classes of my subjects join in feelings with my own.

The House of Commons' Gentlemen,
For you have been prepared
The Ways and Means and Estimates, that soon will be declared;
Extended Trade and Commerce, and the progress made by steam,
Will add to Naval Service costs beyond what you may dream;
Besides, the ship for want of tar none ever thinks of spoiling,
And he who sails for Ichaboe must keep the "pot a-boiling."
All these concerns, and many more, require a close inspection,
And when secured, you'll find the "dibs" in aid of their protection.

My Lords and Gentlemen,
I learn, with equal satisfaction,
That Ireland now is none the worse for learning Vulgar Fraction.
The political excitement, and the dreadful agitation
That seemed to shake the very heart and centre of the nation,
Appear to have abated, and such confidence restored,
That repentance and quiessence, too, must naturally afford.

To all useful undertakings, now, the cash
has been applied,
And to every public enterprise no help has been
denied.
In the spirit which at first conceived, I've
brought in operation
The Act for more effectual and special
application
Of charitable gifts, that rank with terms
"Bequest" & "Donation".
I also now would recommend to your consideration
The policy of spreading an enlightened
education,
To dispel the present ignorance, and stop all
"Agitation".
I do not say a word about the freaks of
"Mister Daniel;"
Although he licks the blarney-stone, he's meek
as a whipp'd spaniel;
The ends of justice have been served, he now
may take his pleasure
In what he did with so much haste, repenting of
at leisure.
The report of the Commission now appointed to
inquire
Respecting law and practice of the land of every
squire
Is almost now completed, and you'll have an
invitation
Immediately communicated, after presentation.
The statutes and the laws, both in regard to
Banks and shares,
In Ireland and Scotland, will add unto your
cares.
The health of the inhabitants of large and
thriving places,
Has led to an inspection, that all may wash
their faces,
And baths established, so they now may imitate
the Graces.
It will be highly pleasing if the hints in this
report,
Should benefit my subjects of the poor and
lowly sort.

I congratulate you, also, on success in
that request,
How three years since proposed, to supply the
public chest -
Make up the great deficiency - arrest accumu-
lation
Of a debt that seemed terrific and to over-
whelm the nation.
The tax which at the moment set [sic] the wealthy
all on fire,
I am happy to observe, my Lords, will shortly
soon expire.
It will then be in your wisdom and affection
for the nation
To determine if the scheme shall be prolonged
in operation -
To make surety doubly sure, and to provide
for weaker handles,
In other words, to ease the weight from sugar,
salt, and candles.
Whatever, though, may be the plan which in
your fancy steals,
I'll thank you just to keep enough to grease
the public wheels.
So much in fact (unlike some States,) Old
England may say
Her credit's good, her assets great, and she
can pay her way, [sic]
The prospect of continual peace and general
tranquility,
Demand's strain of grateful thanks and national
humility.
The matters, then, to which I have directed
your attention,
I now commit with deference to your wisdom
and invention -
With earnest prayer that you may meet with
heavenly protection,
And Providence may smile on all that comes
beneath inspection.
To strengthen mutual confidence between myself
and people,
Which may be done without the cry (as erst) of
"State and Steeple."

Sam Sly's African Journal
17 April, 1845.

## HINTS TO A GREAT PHRENOLOGIST

(With an eye upon 'Settler's Hill Cottage' and the Frontier Times of June 29, 1843.)

by Sam Sly

'It's all very fine, but you don't lodge
here, Mr Fergusson.'
// And art thou come to 'Combe' our heads,
To see what wit is lurking there?
No doubt you'll find some empty beds,
Or but few grains of sense to spare.

'Yet are you sure the news is true?'
And can'st thou tell what lurks within?
Are brains like moles in what they do,
So throw up hillocks on the skin?

The surface may prove dial-plates;
But who shall say that each design,
By which we judge of inward states,
Marks out a corresponding line?

Since not a muscle stirs a peg,
But what our Wills bring into play,
Why do not passions chalk the leg,
As well as make the noddle pay?

But there are bumps to be displayed,
And cavities not yet defin'd;
The faculties are not pourtray'd; [sic]
And who shall cramp the human mind?

Some learned gents, who love to trace
Or probe beneath the outward shell,
Declare that they have found a space
'Twixt crown and where the senses dwell.

Then, if these things are so arrang'd,
We think the inference is plain,
And that the surface is not changed,
By any action of the brain.

But others, bitter far than Gall,
Maintain that in this Wisdom's seat,
There's no such vacuum at all,
For all is full, compact, complete.

But never having had the chance
To take a peep beneath this veil,
No thoughts that we can now advance
Will add a grain to either scale.

Phrenology is like a 'tit'
We purchased in our days of pride,
'Uncommon kind to take the bit,'
But not so well behaved to ride.

There's no dependence on the jade,
She may look steady to the eye. [sic]
But if you make her shew her trade,
Like us you'll find her 'dreadful shy'!

Now as a hobby for the sense,
Or plaything, when the wits are spent,
You may with safety spare the pence,
Yet mount not till her back is bent.

But when you've played upon this head,
And find your tricks and fancies fail,
Then take another tack instead,
And strike out knowledge from the tail.

One great advantage may attend,
The projects that we here reveal;
Whilst your's will but expose a friend,
Our's may his blemishes conceal.

Thus making it a game of chance,
By which we show our wits are bright;
When any modern schemes advance,
Why, 'heads or tails', we must be right.

Sam Sly's African Journal
13 July, 1843

AN ODD ODE TO A GREAT HYPNOLOGIST.+
by Sam Sly

"He that drinks all night and is hanged betimes in the morning, may sleep the sounder next day." - MEASURE FOR MEASURE

Oh! wondrous Sage, pray, has thou by exploring
Found out a something that can set us snoring,
Or, (to seem learned) will our senses steep
"In Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep?"

+Hypnology - The art of producing sound and refreshing sleep at will, without the aid of animal magnetism, or any medicine whatever - by Doctor E. BINNS.

If so, we hail thee gladly in the land,
Where troubles hang too thick on every hand.
Agues and Fevers,
Qualms of Unbelievers,
Gouts and Rheumatics,
Head-aches and Sciatics,
Duns, Debts, and Doctors,
Lawyer's fees and Proctors,
And bills returned,
With payment spurned.
And mothers sighing for their absent fillies,
Or daughters longing for their little billies,
All tend to keep the eyes in watchful motion.
Then hast thou got a charm instead of potion,
By which all can subdue, when they think proper,
And keep down troubles with thy Patent Stopper?
Faith! 'tis a lucky hit - if there's no gammon -
We'll just write up at once to our friend
Sammon(s),
He's very restless during windy weather,
And cannot sleep at night on flock or feather.
It may appear a simple thing to ask,
But are your patients long about the task?
Is there much rubbing,
Scrubbing,
Sweating or Shampooing?
Is there much walking,
Talking,
Snuffing, smoking, chewing?
And if it seem a trifle, now you know it,
Pray, will you be so kind as just to shew it?
Consider what a civil, worthy action,
How great the merit, praise, and satisfaction.
Well, what's the figure? - we are not such
ninnies
To purchase nothing and to pay in guineas -
"A Five Pound note and mum" - that's rayther
strong,
For like the coat our nap may not be long.
If it were possible, and means are ample,
We should admire a dose, by way of sample;
For if the scheme by any chance should miss,
(Not that we would suppose it, for the world
Let all suspicion to the dogs be hurled,)
Why then you're off, and so it comes to this -
Sam's sleep not sound,
And minus - Pound,

If you'll excuse us - just by way of trial -
We'll send you by the ship a box or phial.
You can fill either, as the case may be,
But tell us where to rub - head, foot, or knee.
Direct us plain,
We'll send again.
Or write you what we dreamt, and how we dozed,
Then give our orders when the bargain's closed.
Pray, have you been to Bristol? there you'll find
The utmost skill required to close the blind.
For if you make them sleep, without a doubt
One lid will start, that Cunning may look out.
But after all, you ought to bear in mind. [sic]
When night is gone our woes are still behind.

Sam Sly's African Journal
14 March, 1844.

TO HER LADYSHIP .

Lady Fair who now preside,
And mark the course of Fashion's tide
Who guide the helm and rule the roast, [sic]
And set the modes and form the toast. [sic]
Whose look is Law, whose smile applause -
Whether in joy, or virtue's cause -
Vouchsafe to take this sheet in hand,
And whisper in such accents bland,
That being cherished with thy care
It may be noticed by the Fair. [sic]
Whose wit and sentiment combined,
May tend to aid the "march of mind;"
Improve the style - reform the age,
And give the Cape a brighter page,
Far better than the common prattle,
"They say", "I heard", and tittle tattle.
So shall the praise and thanks be thine,
And thou shalt be my Valentine.

## TO HIS EXCELLENCY.

Sir Peregrine - in whom we trace
The honours of a noble race,
Our obligations are eternal,
When once you circulate this Journal. [sic]
You'll find it but a mustard seed,
A very trifling thing indeed,
But who can tell its growth and glory
If trained in thy Conservatory?
Thy speech and countenance will tend
Its root and branches to extend
More in a week, than in a year
In cold and denser atmosphere.
At present - 'tis the child of chance
On whom the busy rarely glance.
It opens no fresh hills or mines,
Where pulse, or coal, or gold dust shines;
Nay rarely even speaks of Craft-ers,
Or finds much room for bales of Baftas [sic]
So running thus a different road,
It has to bear a greater load;
But if 'twas properly supported,
No other favours need be courted.
Then take in hand this child of mine,
And thou shalt be my Valentine.

## TO THE HONORABLE SECRETARY.

Oh! thou, who canst, as reason fancies,
Shape laws and frame our Ordinances
Can tax, and teaze [sic] us at they pleasure,
And rub it off again at leisure,
Have mercy on our marrow bones,
And listen to our sighs and groans,
For these indeed are "piping times,"
That cry aloud for pungent rhymes.
Dost know that in thy darling act
(In which appeared some depth and tact)
Thou didst not shew thyself unwilling
To cut our friendship for "a shilling?"
How canst thou think with such "a card,"
To meet with much of our regard?
But as 'tis said affection varies,
And works sometimes by contraries,
We trust like Lovers thou giv'st pain,
That thou may'st "make it up again."

Then take, oh, take away the stamp,
And ease us of this horrid cramp.
Let not this surface show the stains,
By which the tax has bled the veins,
Or as the Cape best understands,
Through which the "blisters" gall the "hands."
Give perfect freedom to "the Mine,"
And thou shalt be my Valentine.

TO EVERY-BODY.

Ye who read, and ye who write,
Ye who love the Poet's kite,
All who fly the lightsome thing
Send us paper, stick, or string.
If you wish to make it sail,
Lend it wings, or give it tail.
Shall this wealth and speculation
Sink all other recreation?
Shall both Wit and Wisdom fail,
Shall there be no "cakes and ale?"
Must those "Gunny Bags" and Stores
Shut out Hope, and close the doors?
What availeth all the guilders,
To the sharpest "'cutest" builders.
What the skillings or the stivers
To the very best contrivers,
If no further joys they reap
Than these hoardings in the heap?
Riches are not stable things,
For like kites they carry wings -
Adverse puffs will sometimes play
And whisk! the golden "pet" away.
Let us shift the scene, and find
Pleasure in the world of Mind.
Let the laugh and joke go round,
Let the depths of mirth be found,
Lend a hand to spring the mines,
And thou shalt be our Valentines.

Sam Sly's African Journal
13 February, 1845

Thoughts arising from the recent
ROBBERY AT THE POST-OFFICE, [sic]
On Friday night, the 4th instant.

by Sam Sly

Who says the Cape
Is not "ship shape,"
Or not in order for a little speculation,
Or Peculation
By way of handicraft? - Light finger'd gents.,
Not yet accustom'd to reside in tents,
Prowl through our streets,
And shew their feats
'Mongst sundry sheets,
In what a Lawyer might describe "Conveyancing."
Perhaps to imitate their betters,
As "men of letters,"
They felt dispos'd to be a little curious,
Likewise penurious,
And read the News
Without the dues
That other visitors are bound to pay when seen.

Who knows, but on that very night
Some luckless wight,
Warm'd with Cape wine - not Love divine -
Did, in his passion -
As is the fashion -
Make protestations to his absent lass
That brought reflection with the empty glass,
So did repent:
When off he went!
With bold intent,
Without consent
Of Mr. Postman or the "Powers that be," -
To snatch his honey drops before too late, -
Did creep into the letter box at eight
And bone the folly of his heated pate,
Lest "Breach of promises" should end his fate
With a long document for lawyer's fee?

Who knows - whilst searching for the said
epistle,
Thinking he paid too dearly for his whistle -
But then the Old One put it in his head
To take the cash instead.
And soften'd down the act with that old flam,
"You may as well be hang'd for sheep as lamb?"

Who knows - since now the nights are chilly,
Still further to exhibit skill, he
(And just by way of variation
In his new, lonely occupation.) [sic]
Did thus develope [sic] organs of Secretion,
To bring Macartney's science to completion,
So took "a coat"
To hold a note,
The coppers and skillings,
The sov'reigns and shillings,
Which had that day been levied from society.
(A tax that's always answer'd with propriety?)
Or else it might be that he ow'd a grudge
To some Attorney-General or Judge,
But never gave a hint as much - or own'd it,
So mark'd his "Upper Benjamin," [sic] and "bon'd"
it;
Thinking, perhaps, the law would not defend 'em. [sic]
Or there would be no writ "Ad Inquirendum," -
Shelter'd beneath that antique term so famous,
So fancied an escape as "Ignoramus."
But what is far more likely than the rest,
He took it "cause he was not over-dressed."

And as for any reason to be given
Why he should take an odd sum, and not even,
No just conclusions can be brought to bear
That true logicians would consider fair.
Perhaps, he was not nice as to the score,
But might have swell'd the item to one more,
Had such a sum been put into the draw'r.
There's no accounting for these kind of things,
For money always had and will have wings.

Joking apart; - pray "who's to pay the piper,"
For to one pocket it may prove a griper?
Let us all hope - nor may we hope in vain,
They will not draw the postage o'er again.

---

M O R A L

This thought arises from the act,
Which to some minds may not seem funny:
Always to keep a dog that barks,
Or let the writer keep the money.
"Safe bind, safe find," should be respected.
'Twas written not to be neglected.

Sam Sly's African Journal
10 August, 1843

ODES TO LOW FOLKS.+

by Sam Sly

To the Man at the Lower Flag Staff, Cape Town

John Brand, John Brand,
I take your hand
And shake it heartily, although not present,
For all my thoughts just now are kind and
pleasant,
And as Adversity 'tis said,
Puts a strange fellow in our bed;
So in like manner it is known,
Joy makes the universe our own;
And thus Prosperity finds many friends
That Disappointment to the "old one" sends.

+No personal reflection is here intended, but merely a comparison as to altitude. The first Number of this Journal commenced with an address to the man of the higher Flag-staff, and in moments of rejoicing, an attempt is now made to compliment the lower.

Methinks I see thee on thy slip of ground,
Now walking daily thy accustom'd "round,"
Or rather pacing it from end to end
With glass uplifted to thy Mountain friend;
I ought to know thee, and 'tis not in sport
That I now pencil thee as being short.
Short is thy neck, and short thy jacket too,
And short thy speech, when not in proper cue;
But you may justly say "what's that to you?"
White was thy hat
- But now a leetle brown -
The sun has toasted that,
And rain sunk in the crown.
White are thy smalls,
And black is thy cravat,
Blue to thy jacket falls,
Whilst black comes under that.
'T would serve me right wert thou to beg the siller,
To go and purchase others from "A. Miller."

Thou hast a tube so long, thee ought to know, [sic]
How far the Moon is from the Bay below;
'Tis like the telescope, that history tells,
Brought church so near, that Pat could hear the bells,
Or if inclin'd futurity to seek,
Could show him through the middle of next week.
Thy house is good,
And made of wood,
And like the great,
Has roof of slate.
One window faces to the "Lion's Rump",
And there is water near without a pump.
A hen coop forms thy only out door seat,
Where thou canst roost, when shaded from the heat,
And where thy friends (when 'nothing's in the wind' [sic]
Can 'spin a yarn,' [sic] or some short gossip find [sic]
John Brand,
Don't stand,
But take a seat with me within thy house,
Just large enough as shelter for a mouse,

But there's a saying which is far more pat,
"There's no dimensions for to swing a cat,"[sic]
As I look round for tables, stools, and chairs,
'Twould seem thou art "concentrating affairs."
And so like thy neighbours,
To shorten thy labours,
Can sit at thy ease,
And bid creditors seize,
'Tis like what is said of the Cobbler's stall,
It does for thy Kitchen, and Parlour, and all,
Thy Office and Store, Salle-a-Manger and Study,
And no fear for carpets when seasons are muddy.
But here's a Catalogue of thy 'Effects,'
Which I now send thee with my best respects,
And trust if 'Codicils' should grace thy 'will,'
Thou'lt not forget to put me in the bill.
One form, one table, glass, and lock up seat.
(The mirror made for shaving when complete,[sic]
The table has been visited by flies,
That flocked at 'tiffen'[sic] time to share the pies,
So that it's somewhat difficult to know,
What was the colour ere they used it so.)
One portrait of Her Majesty the Queen -
One shelf, - where thrown together may be seen
Tin box, and blacking pot, and shortened pipes;
Odd papers - who knows what? - and certain types
Of S.S.J. - a Shipping List - and odds and ends,
And "bits and bobs," - the legacy of friends,
Two cages, and one inmate - a canary,
That never yet could whistle 'Paddy Carey,' -
Some coils of rope, cigar box, and a stick
'A Monkey,' that has never showed a trick.
Some 'Signals,' - and white pitcher that is broken,
But 'tis in vain, I look round for a token
Of book, or vol. - octavo, or a quarto
For reading would not satisfy the "Port O,"
Except indeed one copy of a Marryat,
That thou mayst find the number and so carry it,[sic]
Thy studies it is said are all "my eye."
Bent on the sky;
Peeping and prying,
Where the ships are lying.

Quizzing thy comrade on the Lion's Rump,
And ever squinting where thou canst not jump. [sic]
No sudden loss - no great misfortune falls
On thee - thus ever "looking out for squalls,"
No one was better qualified to keep
The wholesome maxim, "look before you leap."
But don't forget as now thy peepers roam,
Thou also has a right to 'look at home,'
To turn thy thoughts and interest within,
To feed the mind as well as make the 'Tin,'
For when alone, who cares for thee a pin?

Habit affects us all, and much I think,
That in the night thou canst not sleep a wink,
But like the Bristol folks,
(For so they run their jokes)
- All men of Punjums, Turpentine, and Lard, -
Keep one eye open as a kind of 'guard,'
Thus thinking a ship,
May give thee the slip,
Some schooner or barque,
Enter port in the dark. [sic]
Or sail again and thee be none the wiser,
Thus baulking friends as well as "Advertiser."

What are thy thoughts when seated in thy mansion,
- The limits would appear to check expansion -
Art always brooding where thy office calls,
And fancy nothing else but "wooden walls"? [sic]
By which I mean a certain British 'Toast,'
Whereby Old England now doth 'rule the roast,'
But here, perhaps, thy recollection slips,
And if it should, my meaning now is Ships.
Dost ever muse, and musing twirl thy thumbs,
And think what thou wilt do when gold-dust comes?
Perhaps thou hast whole Fleets upon the ocean,
All "Phantom Brigs," and "nodding" gives them motion.
One brings thee oil, another brings thee hides,
Another soap, and all things else besides;
But just as thou art casting up the 'tin'
Some voice bawls out, "Well, John, what ship's come in?"
And this brings Richard to himself again,
To find that all his dreaming has been vain,
And with his legs
Kick'd all his eggs.

Ten weeks I hung upon thy glass for "Susan","
And ten weeks more thou feddest me with
Hope,
But thou wert not a Prophet to be chosen,
Yet kept me from the bullet and the rope:
But hoist your signals now and tell my joys,
For I "have got my 'Lizzy' and my boys".

Sam Sly's African Journal
11 July, 1844

## A FAREWELL TO THE OLD GOVERNOR AND A WELCOME TO THE NEW.

by Sam Sly

Sir George, farewell.
We have no bell
To toll a knell,
Or ring a "muffled peal;" - perhaps these lines
May do as well.
Where virtue shines,
The notes most simple are the most sincere,
So let the Fancy do the honors here.
We cannot ring "Bob Majors" at the Cape,
For we might get the belfry in a scrape, [sic]
Saint George is rather shaky in the nape -
Accept our sorrows in another shape.
It did appear your Excellency's pleasure,
That we should not intrude upon thy leisure, [sic]
Except by name thou art to us a stranger, [sic]
Our horses were not curried in one manger.
We ne'er sat smiling in thy room of state,
Nor tasted "bit or bite" from off thy plate.
We never argued on this world's cosmogony;
In short we kept our feet from thy "mahogany."
Such etiquette all Governors are stiff in,
And so thou didst not take with us thy tiffin.
But, for one thing, our thanks shall be eternal,
Thou wert "a Constant Reader" of this Journal.
But yet there's something sorrowful in
"parting,"

And tears are then conspicuously starting.
What is it made us weep when thou wert leaving,[sic]
Was it the senses, or the nerves deceiving?
Thoughts of the morrow,
Compassion or sorrow?
Old tenderness, false gratitude, or habit,
Forced sympathy or weakness that will blab it?
For as we stood on Monday on the beach,
Waiting the moment of thy parting speech,
Grief was too visible to be mistaken,
And hearts unused to melting, then were shaken.
We saw the Jetty crowded with the curious,[sic]
In some perhaps the sorrow might be spurious.
Soldiers and sailors,
With "drunken dogs" and tailors;
And laughing Africanders,
With heads like Salamanders;
And boats with flags,
(Those coloured rags
That look so gay, and mark the "clan.")
Likewise the "Nobs"
That do the jobs
For Government, in carriages and buggies,
To let us know their berth so very snug is,[sic]
Twixt you and us - we don't care if you laugh,
There's not a poet, but we'd fill up for half,
And do it quite as well as any man.
There stood two lines of soldiers on the Jetty;
Likewise the Band that played those airs so pretty.
There stood the King
Who formed the ring,
Or kept back bold intruders from the place,
Where, never more we may behold thy face.
Sweet was the melody "God save the Queen,"
And sweet the cannons that were heard between;
But sweeter far, just as you left the shore,
"Should auld acquaintance ne'er be thought of more."
Farewell, Sir George - again we say, Farewell,
But why it is we weep, we cannot tell;
Perhaps it is our "thoughts are on the sea,"
For those far off - now if you chance to be

Upon the deck, and spy a sail,
For sake of "auld lang syne" don't fail,
To make your observation,
And mark her number, build, and destination;
Or if by lucky chance your eyes discern,
The "black-eyed Susan" written on the stern,
Speak if you can, if only just to tell, [sic]
That we are "on the look-out," and are well.
She bears a cargo now, so rich and rare,
To which there's nothing we can well compare.
Speak kindly, in your softest mildest strain,
We'll pay all charges when we meet again.
Farewell, Sir George - and Lady Napier too,
The third and last time, now we bid adieu!
We wish thee joy and peace,
Of life the longest lease,
A safe arrival amongst friends - a host,
A snow-ball pancake, and a round of toast.

Welcome, Sir Peregrine. Your humble servant.
If now our language prove not quite so fervent
As may have hailed thee in the olden times,
Some great allowance must be made for climes.
Besides, our thoughts, so long upon the rack
To satisfy old friends and send them back,
Have somewhat tamed the efforts of the muse,
And left us without words to pick and choose.
Man's made to mourn - and cannot hope to gain
The constant bleedings of a comic vein;
Sad thoughts arise
To flood his eyes,
And grief appears
To stop his ears,
And clouds float o'er his mental atmosphere
That tinge his moral landscape, far and near.
But still, we bid thee welcome now, Sir P.
And trust thy health is rallied "to a T."
The winds are gone that use to shake our bones, [sic]
And fill rheumatic souls with tears and groans.
Your Excellency doubtless will have read. [sic]
The floods will soon come tubling over head;
And then the weather proves a little shivery,
And coals must first be paid for ere delivery.

A little flannel is a useful thing
To keep out coughs, and guard the leg and wing.
If you should wi$h a recipe or pill,
And none will give - the Advertiser will.
We thought it prudent just to name the seasons,
And, as above, we therein give our reasons.
We make no charges for this small advice:
Its done to recognise, and break the ice.
As friend with friend
Will snuff-box lend,
And never flinch
But take a pinch. [sic]
And so become sworn brothers in a trice.

We much regret, your Excellency will find,
Of all the marches, there's no "march of mind."
The richest are the poorest in this trade,
And yet they don't stand still, but retrograde -
They want both wit and wisdom "ready made."
A Sale's a thing no one thinks a task;
All flock like flies around a sugar cask.
Just put up Locke and Milton by the pound,
And lots of customers will then be found.
No greater trouble - could you force confession -
Compelled to read them when they take possession.
A load of things
Appointment brings.
New berths create new troubles,
And thus our labour doubles.
For so, no doubt, Sir Peregrine, you'll find
A thousand matters to disturb your mind:
Petitions and prayers,
And strange complex affairs,
With a hundred queer jobs
From odd addled brain nobs,
That expect to be heard
Without wry face or word.
If its not premature, we should like to be told
What's about to be done with the Kafirs so bold,
That set at defiance
The Holy Alliance,
And don't care a button for soldier or mutton -
Run away from the first - with the last prove a glutton.

We'll say no more now, at this first time of
meeting,
Because it is only our earliest greeting.
So we welcome thee here, then, Sir Peregrine,
truly,
And remain thy most humble, most faithful, and
duly.

Sam Sly's African Journal
4 April, 1844.

## APPENDIX D

### HINTZA

"But see! through the fast-flashing
lightning of war,
What steed to the desert flies frantic
and far?"

CAMPBELL

It happened some ten years ago -
It might be more, I scarce do know -
When predatory hordes were strong,
And scoured our border far and long,
The white man scarce might shew his face
Without his home, nor even trace
The plunderers of his well fill'd kraals,
Nor use the tenants of his stalls,
For dread of this detested host -
The bravest, he who plunder'd most;
The most renown'd future fame,
Who had in war the deadliest aim;
Who best could play the murderous part,
Who threw the surest killing dart;
Whose heart was proof to woman's tears;
Who least regarded aged years;
Who best could wing a flaming match
Into a homely roof of thatch;
But truce to similes so trite,
The <u>bloodiest</u> was the <u>bravest</u> wight.

Britain had long been told the tale;
Had heard of many a widow's wail;
Had listen'd to the orphan's cry,
And yet had stood unheeding by;
Had looked with cold indiff'rence on
The fate of many a noble son;
Till, rous'd from her lethargic sleep,
Britannia for the fray prepar'd,
And sent a warrior 'cross the deep,
Who many a field of danger shar'd;
A man of calm, discerning brow,
And worthy of the trust, I trow;

He'd fought against the haughty Gael;
He'd seen the star of vict'ry pale
Above the imperious Eagle's head,
And for Britannia oft had bled;
Had shar'd the strife of groaning Spain,
And helped to raise her head again;
A braver, or a worthier man,
Ne'er mingled in your Glory's van.

The mountain of Kaffraria loom'd
Through morning's mist; the valleys bloom'd
With Spring's young herbage, and look'd gay;
The rising sun with glittering ray
Peer'd o'er the Amatola heights,
    As Hintza, with a band of horse,
Innur'd to war and sleepless nights,
    Rode forward tribute to enforce.
Come on, ye devastating horde!
Come on, swart Chief, rebellious lord!
Tribute ye crave! Justice is thine,
    Rapacious wretch! They wait for thee;
Approach but the Colonial line,
    And hearty shall thy welcome be.

The gallant Smith for long had lain
In wait for this audacious Thane;
The camp was eager for the fray;
They long'd for retribution's day;
They long'd to have the tale to tell,
That British arms could "bear the bell;"
They long'd - but hark! a horse's tread,
At top-speed scampering over head, [sic]
And down the steep its course doth hold;
    A single horse, and ill at rest;
By heavens! thy master rides it bold! [sic]
    But mark the strugglings of his breast:
It heaves with passion's darkest swell.
    Hintza, thy steed hath serv'd thee ill;
But calm thee; let thy followers tell,
    The goal was won against thy will.
I wot in all the Corps of Guides
There's few so fast and nobly rides;
And yet thou hadst a luckless run,
And little <u>tribute</u> hast thou won.

The camp in consternation stood;
    Each trooper gazed with wond'ring eyes
Upon this Chief of regal blood,
    And long they felt the glad surprise.
A lion, rousing from his lair,
Had sprung into a willing snare,
And shrunk abash'd and in dismay,
As well the hunted rebel may,
Who holds the tenure of his life
In murder and perpetual strife.

Out spoke the gallant Smith in time:
    "Hintza, thy steed hath borne thee well;
That fleet one owns a sunnier clime,
    The rolling of his eye may tell."
(It was, in sooth, a noble horse,
And many a monarch envied worse:
A black steed with a shaggy mane,
And little brook'd he spur or rein.
The wildest of the Arab breed
Had shar'd their blood with Hintza's steed.)
    "To levy tribute was thy mind;
But, Hintza, hadst thou staid behind,
'Twere better, and thy chosen few;
For mark'st thou, I have followers too.
Now, by my sword, that frame of thine
Will dangle in a hempen line,
If for thy past nefarious deeds
    Meet reparation thou refusest.
One path to ignominy leads,
    And one to freedom - which thou choosest.
Hintza, thy herds are far and wide
Along thy native mountains' side;
From whence they came thou know'st the best;
    Hither thou'lt bring them, be it known.
Refuse! and thy proud, rebel crest
    Will do for rooks to perch upon."

The wily rebel did essay
To sue for a remoter day,
When all demands and tribute sought
In safety should be surely brought.
But mark the soldier's redd'ning brow:

"Hintza, thy choice is left thee now;
Choose as ye list, but by my word,
    That never swerv'd from honor's path, [sic]
Tempt me no more, my chary bird,
    Nor tamper with the lion's wrath!
Lead on! the mountain path is clear,
And plenty swords to guard thee here.
Our welcome at thy mountain home,
Perchance, may be but cold to some.
But forward! and if thou betray'st,
There's arms to lay thy fastness waste.
The smaller evil of the two,
Will be the safest to pursue."

The Corps of Guides to saddle sprang;
With clatt'ring hoofs the mountain rang;
Hintza, upon his jet-black pride,
In seeming calmness now did ride,
And strove to counterfeit good will,
Although his eye was restless still;
He knew each bush, each winding path
They rode; he knew the flowery strath,+
Which stretch'd as far as eye could gaze;
He'd known it from his boyish days,
And oft had back'd his favorite steed [sic]
'Gainst wildebeest and dekar's speed;
And often had the tiger's cry,
    As tow'rds the mountain brow he fled,
Been silenc'd by the assegai,
Which from his sinewy arm had sped.
He knew the mettle of his horse
    Would bear him on, if he could clear
The ranks of his conducting force;
    But then he had no succour near.

When danger on our soul doth press,
    We feel it keenly, I opine;
But hope dispels its irksomeness,
    And points where freedom's sun doth shine.
Slowly the cavalcade moved on;
The light of hope on Hintza shone,

+Valley

When suddenly, with one wild bound,
He clear'd the strongly guarded ground;
Away on fury's wings he flew,
And thirty followers pursue,
And thirty bullets seek his heart;
But Hintza had a sudden start,
And nobly did that charger bear
    His freight across the flowery plain;
Nor did the rebel Chief despair
    To reach his fastnesses again.
The Corps of Guides were scatter'd wide,
And little dreamt of such a ride.
But one upon a fiery nag
Had reached the highest toppling crag,
And had upon the rebel press'd,
He saw his warlike, streaming crest,
As down the rocky steep he sprung;
Away the useless rein he flung;
An instant - and a bullet flew!
Ah, Hintza! thou hast felt it too!
The rebel dropt the guiding rein,
And grasp'd his charger by the mane;
Then with a wild, convulsive squeeze,
He fixed his terror-striken knees
Into his foaming charger's sides,
Who flew with still increasing strides.
His tail, extended, stream'd behind;
The froth was scatter'd by the wind
Upon his rider's ghastly face.
I wot it was a desperate chase.
A naked corse on charger bold,
Seated with death's mysterious hold,
With glaring eyes and fiendish grin,
With hair erect and clammy skin.
Oh God! and still he keeps his seat
Upon that fleetest of the fleet!
Away - away the scar'd one flew
The hotter, still the fleeter grew;
Nor heeds he for the snowy foam;
He seeks his rider's mountain home,
And bears his most appalling freight )
For that free mountain dwelling straight, )
Where Hintza's routed followers wait. )

They cheer'd him as he did appear,
But little knowing whom they cheer. [sic]
One look - and fast and far they fled,
Across the mountain brow they sped.
They scarce could trust their shudd'ring eyes;
    A second look - away they flew,
And trembling with a wild surprise,
    They left their home - that rebel crew.

And where is that revolting corse?
And where is Hintza's noble horse?
The margin of a stream he sought,
    His flame-devouring thirst to slake;
His writhing body over-wrought,
    Its well deserved rest doth take.
    That fatal draught
    The charger quaff'd
Hath stretch'd him by his master's side.
    A cairn of stones
    Conceals their bones.
Thus ended Hintza's deadly ride.
BAIROO

Sam Sly's African Journal
13 & 20 July, 1848.

## APPENDIX E

### THE PAARL

Lives there the man, whose soul, with passion
torn,
Looks round for peace, and finds itself
forlorn?
Or breathes there one by fierce ambition
fired
To spurn at rest, by others most desired?
If such there be, oh! place them here awhile,
Where all things wear their softest, loveliest
smile,
And they may learn from this still, tranquil
spot,
What nature teaches, and what books can not. [Sic]
Yea! both may learn that true content abides
Near the deep vale and lonely mountain-sides;
Far from the world and noisy town she flies
To flowery solitudes and open skies;
Where hills and meadows breathe a holy calm,
Peace to the restless, to the sorrowing balm;
And morn and eve alike have power to please
With sweet vicissitude of toil and ease.

Warmed at the thought, my languid spirit burns,
Towards thee, dear vale, with empty longing
turns;
Like some loved tune, some old familiar rhyme,
Floats back the memory of that happy time,
When led by chance, and wandering, fancy-blest,
I roamed thy tangled walks, a three-days' guest.
Once more I see thy mazy river flow;
Once more I feel thy cooling breezes blow;
Once more I climb thy rocks, and sink to rest
In the deep hollow of their sheltering breast;
Before my feet the murmuring brooklets sing;
The windy groves their dappled shadows fling;
And every sight to Fancy's eye endeared,
And every sound that listless Fancy cheered
Rise thick and fast, till memory's vision free
Of airy fabric, seems reality.

Do I, indeed with waking eyes behold
The village loved and visited of old?
Or are the forms that crowd the peopled air
An empty dream, a pageant false as fair?
I do not dream - known every hill and vale,
Seen at all hours, by noon and twilight pale;
Yon rocks, o'er which in varied beauty play
Morn's silvery vapours, evening's golden ray;
Yon mountain-range, half seen, half lost on
high,
A dim dark mass against the nightly sky;
All, all are here, as once I saw them stand,
Serenely beautiful and calmly grand.
Stay, lovely vision! sweet illusion, stay!
And thou, fair fancy, moralize my lay;
Give me the artist's touch, the poet's eye,
To fix each fleeting beauty ere it fly;
Purge my gross view of all that would obstruct
Its clearer vision, purge me and instruct;
Aid me to pierce through nature's outer dress,
And comprehend her hidden loveliness;
To read the ocean's signs, the stars on high,
To penetrate the depths of earth and sky;
And in each leaf and humble flower to trace
Art more than human, more than earthly grace.

Be it the hour of mid-night, when the hue
Of ether deepens to its softest blue;
How, while the lower mountain's misty height
Seems all one moving sea of silver light,
Mingling their shadows on the plain below,
Distinct and clear, the moonlit summits glow
The white sands fluctuate as with noon-tide
heat;
And lo! between them and the mountain's feet,
Broad fields, and houses sleeping in the shade,
By the thick pine-tree's sombre foliage made,
Or softly twinkling through the breezy leaves,
Where greener oak a lighter network weaves;
Issuing from thence along the winding rill,
Across the bridge, and past the rustic mill,
I take my way, and boldly front the hill.
High rides the moon, but all below is dark,
Save where the glow-worm sheds a feeble spark;

Around all silent, save at times the sound
Of frequent acorn dropping to the ground.
But look! the East is reddening into day;
Low sinks the moon, and shines with fainter
ray:
From stream and valley, thick with dewy bloom,
Soft breezes rise, all freshness, all perfume;
With fearless spring the bounding chamois pass
To browse securely on the lower grass,
The timid Grysbuck [sic] stoops to drink his fill,
'Ere glance the sun upon the darkling rill;
Seen for an instant, in an instant gone;
The playful rabbit leaps from stone to stone.
,One after one the signs of life appear,
And distant sounds are stealing on the ear;
The bird of jetty neck and golden throat
First starts the echoes with his ringing note;
Then the brown linnet warbles, and the shrill
Canary's whistle and the robin's trill
Blend with the voice of doves, that coo unseen,
In thickest fir of melancholy green.
But day advances, and moon's sultry fire
Hath hushed the music of the feathered choir;
Now the blithe cricket silent all-too-long,
Wakes into mirth, and pours a broken song;
Now from some low-roofed cave the grim baboon
Leads up his flock beneath the eye of noon;
Around his steps the frolic young-ones play,
Now follow close, now turning frisk away,
Pausing awhile to dig some juicy root,
Or strip the woodland olive of its fruit,
By slow degrees they reach the mountain's brow;
There sit and chatter in a fearless row,
And perched where never human footstep came,
Howl back defiance to the gunner's aim.

Thus while around all living creatures keep,
A cheerful vigil, or a peaceful sleep,
Stretched on the ground, beneath some shady tree
I lie, and gaze on heaven's blue vacancy;
Or trace with curious eye the crooked scrawl,
Where the slow crab and slower tortoise crawl;
Or mark the new-piled heap, the new-sunk hole,
Work of the porcupine or miner mole;

Or watch the soaring kite, the lazy flock,
And the shy lizard basking on the rock;
Or note the snake, late sleeping in the grass,
Uncoil his speckled folds and slowly pass:
From bough to bough the murmuring bees explore
Spring's early sweets and summer's waxen store;
And I with them each various blossom trace,
More eager than the honey-making race;
And not a flower that drinks the mountain-dew,
Or digs the thirsty plain, escapes my view.
Easier to count the sand upon the shore,
Than write their names or tell their numbers o'er;
Proteas brightly-glistening skirt the way,
While birds of brilliant sheen more bright than they,
Hover all day amid the sugary bowers,
And lightly suck the pure ambrosial flowers.
Geraniums too of odorous leaf are there,
With those whose blossom scents the evening air;
And many a bloom by poets yet untold.
Shy hesperanth and flaunting mari-gold;
Fair bells with snowy fringe and purple eye,
And mallow moist, and amaranthus dry;
And that self-watered plant, whose leaves at noon,
From the hot air distil a dewy boon;
Lilies beside - not such, indeed, as claim
An English birthright with their English name;
Unlike that native lily of the vale,
So sweetly scented and so pearly pale;
Or that which in our cultured walks we rear,
The rose's rival and perhaps her peer;
But mingling either's charms, the snow-white bloom,
The queenly stature, and the rose perfume.
Heaths of all sorts at every step abound,
"That proudly rise or humbly court the ground;" [sic]
Various in colour as in shape unlike,
Their's the white bell, and their's the crimson spike.
Hardly less fair along the steep hill-side
Iris calls forth her many-tinted tribe,
That the rich livery of the rainbow wear. [sic]

And all the fragrance of the Indies share.
But these I leave, for now the sun is low,
And the long shadows lengthen as I go;
From peak to peak the hues of sunset spread,
And opening flowers a sweeter incense shed;
Forth darts the beetle with his droning hum;
The wakeful owl is now no longer dumb;
The fire-fly glancing through the bushes dark,
Lights and relights her momentary spark.
Fast and more fast the evening shades descend,
And evening sounds in sweet confusion blend;
The herd-dog's bark that tells of danger near,
The bat's shrill shriek, the cricket's noisy
cheer,
And louder frog, that from the rush-girt home
Gives to his watery mate an answering boom -
Admonished thus, I homewards bend my way,
Where from yon window streams a guiding ray;
And now once more I stand upon the plain,
And now my steps the peaceful village gain.
Beloved retreat! where no rude cares molest,
But peace sits brooding on her charmed nest;
Where hope and fear to narrow bounds confined,
Neither depress nor agitate the mind,
But gentle thoughts and soft emotions wake,
Calm as the ripples on a summer lake.
Where age is cheerful, and where youth is wise,
And manhood open and without disguise;
Where every maiden acts a natural part,
Nor learns the shifting fashions of the heart;
Beloved retreat! where wrath is seldom seen,
And busy scandal never taints thy green,
Where friendship spreads a sheltering tree
and tall,
Bears buds of promise and matures them all,
Where love's sweet blossom blooms without a
thorn,
And all conspire to succour the forlorn;
While heaven approves, and angels move above
With guardian wings to shield the place they
love.

Dear smiling vale, thy peaceful charms impart
A quiet, long-untasted to my heart;
And did but fortune and my wish agree,
Here would I dwell, nor ever part from thee;

Here would I linger - but my time is past,
On thy green vineyards I must look my last;
One little hour, and left for evermore
Each sound that pleased, each sight that
charmed before,
Pleasant to others, but unheard by me,
Must the breeze waken in each leafy tree;
And rustling oaks and purling brooks combine
Their soothing notes for other ears than mine.
The river "winding at its own sweet will,"
The shady walk, the heath-empurpled hill;
The barren rock in pomp of mists arrayed [sic]
Lovely by day, by moonlight lovelier made;
The low white cottage with its terraced walk,
Where careless age and happy lovers talk;
And loftier building, whence in measured time
Comes the sweet music of the Sabbath-chime;
The graceful willows whispering o'er the pool,
The grassy playground of the village-school;
The orchard's bending store, the gardener's
bloom,
Where rose and myrtle breathe a mixed perfume,
And oleanders, prodigally gay,
Wave their bright blossoms by the dusty way;
All these were thine, and thou, sweet vale,
had'st power
With some new charm to vary every hour:
But now from these, from all that won the
heart,
Or pleased the eye, so fate ordains, I part;
Yet pause a moment, with reverted view
And lingering steps, to breathe a last adieu.

Beautiful spot! may all in future years
Be but the shadow of what now appears;
O'er thy green hills may no Sirocco fling,
The scorching influence of his fiery wing;
No blight consume, no locusts pour their tide
Of swarming myriads o'er thy vineyard's pride;
But every season may thy fields unfold
A new luxuriance, fairer than of old;
And white-robed peace and plenty's open hand

Scatter their blessings on the smiling land.
Full be the stream that through thy valley
flows,
And gay thy hedges with the white wild-rose;
Bright may the moon her course above thee run,
Sweet rise the east, sweet sink the westering
sun;
Still may each cottage seem a home of love,
Each field a garden, and each street a grove;
Still may the mountain's close-encircling arms
Shield thee from summer-heat and winter's
loud alarms.

Cape of Good Hope Literary Magazine, Vol. II. No.6
1 April, 1848.

## GREEN POINT

Stars in the sky, - eve's shadow on the hill, -
And, save the voice of ocean, all is still!
The light leaves scarcely with a tremor play,
And dewy blossoms droop along the spray.
But the white surge comes bounding to the shore,
And the cliff answers to its angry roar.
For, where the Cape of Storms heaves high its
steep;
The clear South Easter foams along the deep, -
Whirls the wild spray in gusts of driving snow,
And sweeps with its salt shower the reeling
prow.
While round each winding bay and jutting rock
The glassy swell rolls with its thunder shock, -
Or, deepening, vast and sullen, heaves away
To the lone isles beneath descending day.
Here - vaulting like a giant steed, - his mane
Tossed in white splendour back along the plain;
Of the streaked sea, - it booms against the feet
Of the rude granite in a snowy sheet;
While the tall vessel idly spreads the sail
That listless flaps to chide the lingering gale, -
And the hull rolls, with slow and heavy sweep,
Heav'd on the bosom of the panting deep.
In their primaval silence, through the skies
Shoot forth the clustering stars with wakening
eyes.
In Evening's bosom glowing, Hesper's rays
Streak the dim ocean with a flutt'ring blaze -

Whose misty spire shoots playfully on high,
Where the wave mingles with the dark'ning sky.
Now, like an angel banner on the deep,
The star, broad blazing, lingers till it steep
Its gather'd folds of radiance where the West
Reflects the unpeopled heaven on the breast
Of dimmer seas, which mourn their glory gone,
The lifeless splendours of an empty throne.
Well mightst thou, - star of beauteous glory! be
To darker hearted men a deity.
But yet bursts forth the flash of Sirius wildly; [sic]
And the still Centaur's radiance beaming mildly.-
And Thou - of equal splendour - Nameless One
Whose reddening glory, to our sires unknown, -
Dawns in the secret of a boundless home
The youngest mystery of heaven! hast come
To wondering eyes. What tidings are in thee,
Spoke from the depths of dread infinity?
Was it for judgment that thy fires awoke
When round fair systems glowing whirlwinds broke:
And awful Justice, in red vengeance hurl'd
Into thy fire-struck waste a peopled world?
Was it a power of Love? that clearer skies
Ruled by a brighter sun, should meet the eyes
Of higher forms of being, in the bowers
Which deck the face of fairer words than ours?
Where wast thou? Brightest one! in the old time
When Europe woke, and claim'd the hope sublime
That other lands might be, in the lone waste
Of ocean, whose chill mystery embraced
Her narrow bound of shore, and found - no track
Of death - no waste of fire - no black
And withering region of eternal storms -
No dim and deathlike end of space, where forms
Of cold and ghastly desolation lead
To the drear mansions of the shadowy dead; -
But the glad sea spread wide its azure plain,
And gave the laughing sky its hues again,
As beauty's youthful glance, in years gone by,
Smiled to her image in a sister's eye.
What the weak radiance of thy glory, when -
Fresh to the watchful eyes of hardy men -
Awoke our sky's bright honors, [sic] of which thou
Wert but a dim, faint ray? and when the brow

Of the steep cliff, in mural majesty
Rose up with gloomy grandeur from the sea,
And, sweeping on, in savage rudeness, led
To the last peak, against whose rugged head
Reel'd on the polar storm, - while deep
below
The swell, proud heaving with its crest of
snow,
And fierce, wild shout, told in its angry mood
How jealous Ocean loved his solitude?
Changes have grown with thee. Here, where I
stand,
The dark-brow'd children of a sunny land
In bright day basking, - like the startled
snake,
Shrank in wild wonder, till amid the brake
Glowed the still terror of each widening eye, -
As first the white-sail'd bark swept proudly
by.
No more they cluster round the weeping rill,
No more their wild cry echoes from the hill.
All traceless as that wild cry's vanish'd
tone,
Forgotten is their life, - their graves are
gone.
And what shall be thy destiny to come?
Shall fresher floods burst from the awful home
Where dwells the strength of thy far spreading
flame, -
And, circling with light's giant speed,
proclaim -
Onward and onward still from sun to sun -
As spreads the sharp note of the signal gun,
Over the echoes of the earth, - proclaim
The mighty presence of the Awful Name?
He smiles - thou beamest like a seraph's eye, -
He frowns - thy bright rays perish in the sky.
We love thee as thou art, - we love to see
Thy golden rays in night's obscurity
Mingling with heaven's wide sheets of starry
gleam
Rent with festoons of darkness. Thy bright
beam
Glimmers below, as the dim shadows trace

Where busy men, of many a clime and race,
Have raised their homes, half hidden in the brake
Of the dark pine trees, whose brown shadows take
The sting of fierce wrath from the glowing sun,
Tempering his rays to mercy. Till alone,
As the eye sweeps along the dusky shore,
Gleams dim the house of prayer, and clustering o'er
The sea's wide verge, the silent dwellings stand,
Where late, with small feet printing the deep sand,
And small hands clapping in their youthful glee,
And eyes that scanned the wonders of the sea,
And busy lips, that questioned eagerly -
Full many a lov'd one wandered, and the look
Of fond affection watch'd them, and forsook
That gaze of deep'ning pleasure, but to watch
The road's long sultry line, and earliest catch
The glittering of the wheel which brings <u>him</u> near,
From life's harsh scenes of conflict, gain, or fear,
Whom looks of tenderness and words of love
Have welcomed to his home. But now, above -
Around - below, - as from this mountain crest
I gaze into the dusky shadows, - rest, -
Silence, - soft dewy hours, - and night's dun pall,
Have cast their veil of peace upon them all.
Till Morn restore her thirsty glories back
And mightier Day resume his fiery track.

ANONYMOUS

<u>The Cape Town Mail</u>
20 March, 1847

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