Some notes of a trip to South Africa in 1884-5.

On a drizzling wet night the 27th of October I left my quiet home in Shotts, Lanarkshire for a few months sojourn in Cape Colony, South Africa. The thought of the great distance between us made our parting a little sad. I shook hands with Father and Mother at the door and scarcely a word was spoken. Our hearts were too full to speak. John, Elizabeth, and William Smith, were accompanied one to Glasgow. The two latter returned home the same evening but John came on as fast as he could. The journey to the great metropolis was accomplished in fully 10 hours when the morning broke about 7 o'clock. We were nearing the city. That well cultivated land in good sized farms was the impression one had in passing. About 7.30 a.m. we arrived at Bruntom Station and took the luggage by cab to Fenchurch St.
Station. After getting some breakfast and a repasting wash I went to secure my ticket at Donald Currie's Office. For a few hours we walked through some of the principal streets. I had often thought Glasgow streets were crowded with all kinds of conveyances, but it is as quiet as a village in comparison with London. How accidents don't happen every five minutes was a marvel to me. About 8 p.m. we went to the ship where Duranus to sleep for the night. John somewhat sadly parted from me saying, "that he was sorry to see me going away so far alone." In it all I could commit my way to the Lord I was comforted. When I went to my cabin I found as my fellow-passenger a Maj. King from near Peterhead. He was glad and so was I to find that two Scotchmen were to be together. Our cabin would measure about 6' 6" x 9'. Two berths are on each side, and a tray and hanging glass at the upper
Chain there was none, the edge of the berth is all the seat that could be had. After joining in prayer together I went to bed. Not having slept much the night before in the train I felt tired all night through the lading of the ship went on which was somewhat disturbing. Next morning I got up just in time to see our ship, the "Havard Castle," sail from the East India docks. A good many were on the dock bidding farewell to their friends. Some were sobbing bitterly. The morning was foggy (when we got into the river), but by the time we reached Gravesend the sun shone out. Woolwich was hidden from view by the fog. I was disappointed in not seeing the great arsenal of England. The companions, servants, friends who were not going the voyage left us here; in parting the crew raised a hearty cheer for our success. A little further down the river I observed three of the old stone walls of England floating, fitted up as barracks for soldiers.
Dungeons to other places were passed as we sailed briskly down to the channel. Dover was eagerly looked for and created much interest as we passed the strongly fortified old town. Its long line of chalk cliffs stretching for on either side of the town gave it a picturesque appearance. The castle is situated far up the hill side to the right. The houses are plain & strongly built about three stories in height. About 8 o'clock the opposite coast of France could be plainly seen but not the town of Calais. About 8 o'clock we were passing Brighton. The many lights thickly studded on the shore was an imposing sight.

When rose from bed on the 30th Oct. we were sailing into Dartmouth harbour. The bend of the bay at the mouth makes it a very safe haven for ships. The hills rise in amphitheatre fashion with the principal part of the town at the north east.
Chaste villas are studded all round, really.

Among trees. The autumn tints gave the
place a grace & beauty I shall never
forget. Six of us took a little boat
didn't ashore to spend a few hours.
We took a walk up the hillside
where a splendid view of the town & bay
was had. We visited St. Saviour's Church
built 512 years ago. It is much after the
fashion of other old English Churches.

Among some relics I had no knowledge
of. A fine painting of Christ raising
the Midas son of Main hang at the
end of the chancel. One of the doors
has some very ancient & curious iron-
work representing two leopards.

After making some purchases we were
sent over to the ship by a man
with one leg. He had endless yarns to
tell. Tenbury had seen some ser-
vice. I said to him I hoped he would
be conducted as safely across the last
river as he had carried us. Civility is
the mark generally of English servants.

When I had been helped with my luggage
in London by a porter, he wished me a pleasant voyage. It would never have entered a Scot's mind to do such a thing. When I came to the ship I found a letter from Elizabeth Macinder. After writing a letter to Mr. Cunningham and Mrs. Macinder I went to bed.

31st Dec. When Rose next morning many passengers were coming on board, having travelled by train from London. Mr. Schaeff, a Dutchman from Delft joined Mr. King and me in our cabin. The ship's bell was rung for passengers to leave. Many I observed found it hard to take the last look. At 12 o'clock punctually the ship started again on her voyage. A number of small craft and a tug accompanied us to the mouth of the Dart. Then a ringing cheer was given from the tugs.

About three o'clock the shores of England could be faintly seen in a few minutes more we left both north and south of Britannia. A stiff breeze was blowing which made our vessel roll.
Considerably. By 10 p.m. many were sick. I had to retire to my cabin. The dread
Bay of Biscay dealt kindly with us comparatively. No wind was blowing but
a heavy swell from the west made the ship roll considerably. In defence
to the many too sick to attend no
service was held in the morning of
Salvator 2nd Nov. Mr. Johnston, a Mis-
ionary of the Church of England returning
to Fajausa held a Service in the evening.
I was too sick in bed to attend.
Monday 3rd Nov. As the morning broke we
were sailing up the Tagus to Lisboa and
by 7 a.m. were anchored to the north of the
city. The day was sunny and clear like
July in Scotland. Barges loaded with cargo
& coal lay along side soon the work began
and what clamouring yelling shouting the
treatment made. Benefic was the rule.
Last draw few; a tapering cowl of sugarloaf
shape was generally the headpiece.
Opposite from where we were anchored
on the left bank of the river was the Royal
Palace. It is a large oblong structure of
three stories. At the eastern end which forms the entrance two towers form the corners. Round it villas of classic architecture are built. Their domes and minarets gleaming in the sun made a fine effect. A church, somewhat after the fashion of St. John's, Edinburgh, but more elaborate gave a classic beauty to the place. A little further down the river commanding a good position is the tower of St. Vincent, a guard for the city. One of the Nautilus 60-tonners of fancy coal made short work of it. The greater part of the city, especially where the earthquake occurred lay to the east. Owing to cholera prevailing in France & Italy our ship was put in quarantine. It was a great disappointment because we expected to get fruit for the voyage. Letters having to be posted by 1 p.m. I wrote one to home. Mrs. Cunningham & Miss Sprat. About 5 p.m. we set sail from Lisbon. The passengers who had come to Lisbon being compelled to lie three days in the quarantine station.
waved us a farewell as we passed their isolated quarters on the right bank of the river. An amusing scene occurred just as we were a little way down the river. A pilot cutter was tailed on to conduct us past the quicksands prevailing at the mouth of the Zagos. A stiff breeze was blowing, bringing waves of good size from the sea. Our ship began to go too fast for the cutter to ride them. In a most fantastic way it jolted and threw upon the waves. The old pilot yelled 'Shanties for us to go slower, and seeing there was no hope he let the travelling rope go. Lieutenant with its slight dashing of spray. A great bank of sand lies at the mouth of the river with a lighthouse on it. Far away from it we saw the light gleaming on the wave.

Sickness passed away in the calm but returned again late in the evening, and until Wednesday I was unfit for anything but resting on my chair.

Wednesday 5th. Worked after breakfast the 107th Psalm: some of its verses I
Thursday 6th Nov. had not much that was eventful except a sight of two passing ships. A French screw came very near but enough to be able to tell her name.

A walk on the deck and a friendly chat made the hours between meals pass pleasantly. The reserve at first noticed began gradually to wear away soon we knew each other as if we had lived years together. In Dickenson we had a garulous Englishman very fond of wagging the Scotch. In Bowman a Jew who could strike a tune and report had it that he did it by rolling a small piece of elastic for suspense.

understood better than ever I did previously. About 12 o'clock we sighted one of the Canaries Islands, but were too far off to get a view of Tenereife. Being in the sun this day a number of games were had on deck by moonlight. Before retiring for the night I joined with a short service held by Mr. Johnston. Although not at home in the English liturgy I felt we were worshipping the same Divine Jehovah I had been wont to worship in simpler style.
On Friday 7th Nov. I had in the morning a refreshing bath; the water here was almost tepid. About 10 a.m. I got my box from the hold and had a change of clothing. Read some of Duncan Matheson's life and chatted long with Mr. Belingham on native life, at round table Hyancas. He had in his charge four young natives of the Bauinaru district who had been in England learning something of sailor life for nearly a year. Their names as I got them are Johann Hammi, Harry Tumani, Johann Manwere & Hans. I was impressed with their good behaviour & solid character. Their intelligence was not great but very creditable for their scanty privileges.

On Saturday got one lighted Cape Verde.

On a hill of considerable height a lighthouse stands & on each side gigantic trees could be seen. Several flocks of birds like starlings flew near us for a time. In this region called "the white man's grave" sharks are common but none was seen. The town of Dahar on the peninsula we were too far off.
In the evening rain fell in torrents chasing everyone below to the saloon. After it ceased a beautiful display of stars of phosphorescence was seen for about 10 ft on each side of the ship. The great darkness that prevailed made the phenomenon very grand.

Sabbath, 9th Nov. At 10.30 the ship fell calm for service in the saloon. The captain added the prayers and sermons for the day. No sermon was preached. To one accustomed to Sabbath service it was cold formal. In the evening a grand display of lightning was seen to the west. Balls of fire burst and flashed with great length north and south. Immediately after rain fell in torrents. For two days I continued to be slightly sick and without appetite. Near midnight on Tuesday 11th we crossed the equator line.

Here despotically broiling heat but the head-wind that began to blow near Cape Verde made the air cool foraying. On Monday, Wednesday a ship was seen but little else to break the monotony.

In the evening of Wednesday the sky was towards
gave a concert of vocal and instrumental music in negro characters. I did not go
swimming to the heated state of the room but sat in the company of Mr. Neatham
ill with consumption. It was saddening to see him poring over novels continuously.
The Bible I only saw in his hand. Without the Holy Spirit's influence I saw how
near a man may come to the grave unalarmed.

Thursday 13th. Two children attacked with
scrofula and two with measles. Much meas-
iness lest we should be put in quarantine
at Cape Town.

Friday 14th. Rose day on board. Read some
of the life of General Gordon & Nebeniah.
Much struck with points of resemblance
in their character. Joking begins to be
very common since the passengers know
each other well. Today, two sharks
seen swimming near the ship.
Only two fins & a little bit of the
tail visible. In the afternoon sport-
lasted for two days. began
Racks & james were flat race.
fog, high leap, tortoise race, potato race
egg & spoon. About 8 o'clock one of the
engineers showed me over the
equipment room. The engines are coupled
one high pressure; the other low pressure.
The cylinders are 50" & 90" in diameter.
Piston shaft 8½", Length of stroke 5'.
Main shaft 18" in dia. Blades of screw,
150' in length. Blades of screw 20' in dia.
Revolutions 57 average per minute.
Nominal horse power 600. Pressure
80 lbs. on square inch.

An electric engine of Siemens' patent
is used for producing electricity for
lighting the ship. The refrigerator going
at a pressure of 50 lbs. in the square
inch makes ice & snow for eating
purposes. Coal used per day on an
average of 66 tons. It was a pleasure
for my lap to hear that all the
engineers were Scotch.

Saturday 15th I had a conversation with
a Mr. Riede, an Austrian religious
topics. He said he never had a Bible in his
possession. The people don't read such
holly books, only lattices have a little prayer book. Now wretches the condition of Roman Catholics under the tyranny of priests!

Today games resumed and we were treading on war, clipper race, toboggan for downhill, cock fighting, crema king of war, obstacle race. The ducking in the water & being showered on by the hose were most enjoyable for the spectators.

Sabbath 16th. Did not go to the service owing to the closeness & heat of the balloon. Was meditating on the quarantine regulations at Lisboa. We were considered unclean by the Portuguese and could not be allowed to defile their land. We saw the beauty of the city & could almost taste the fruits; but it was afar off. The day was hot & we longed for fruit to quench our thirst. Thought of an unsaved sinner's condition at last. Near the "city that hath foundations" & almost tasting the fruit but forever...
Read some missionary intelligence & an article on hymns by Dr. Bullock in Our own Fireside for May 1876. Today we were in the latitude of St. Helena.

Nov 17. I was much disturbed during the night by a pump. A great many of the passengers rose & walked about the cabin in their night dresses. Much joking & laughter went on as it lessened or increased in loudness.

Birds begin to meet us either from St. Helena or the shores of Africa. They must have travelled some hundreds of miles from the nearest land.

Tuesday 18th. Little tornado but longings oppressed by many to be at the journey's end. Finished the reading of Gordon's Life. A noble Christian man; but apparently spoiled a little by being petted. Wished for several nights to see a good sunset at sea. Clouds have generally covered his face as he touched the horizon. The first sunset that I saw in the English Channel.
was by far the finest.
Wednesday 19th Nov. Many large birds flying round the ship & small one came on board. We journeyed with us till we were near Cape Town. To-day the vessel began to roll badly. Many sick.
Upset about 8 p.m. & forced to go to bed.
Thursday 20th. Owing to the rolling the continued all night. I was quite sleepless. There was no possibility of lying at rest in bed unless the mess block were wedged against the wall of the ship. By 8 a.m. land was seen after an interval of nearly 12 days. By 10 o'clock Table Mountain could be distinctly seen. In the afternoon the ship was anchored in Table Bay overlooking Cape Town. Much suspicion prevailed last quarantine should be imposed until the Medical Officer report came back that all was right. A ringing cheer burst from the passengers when they heard that they were to get ashore immediately. A letter was sent to the ship from Mr. Russell Scotch Church.
When I went to my room I found the text Matt XI 28. Iook as a word for my journeys: "I will give you rest."

inviting me to stay with him for a few days until I had made arrangements about lodging. After parting with many friends I had made on board I got my baggage by cab to the Custom House. A rough search was made of my bags and then allowed to pass. I observed several Jews being searched thoroughly. Poor Jews! the curse is upon you yet.

Mr. W.W. Russell gave me a very hearty invitation welcome and made me feel at home during the two days I spent under their roof. On Friday and Saturday after I was much of the time was spent seeing the town. The object that strikes every stranger is Table Mountain, a majestic mass rising almost precipitously behind the town to the height of 3582 ft. It is a fitting introduction to a land of gigantic mountains & barren plains. Like a mighty sentinel it seems to keep guard defying storms & winds. As our ship lay in the bay the sun shone with splendor on its glistening brow. Soon after a cloud