

Read & Damsli, Paul Spencer - Funchal 26 June 1843 - June 26/13
Read at Com. of Cor. d. to Com. of Dec. 13/13.
We arrived here on the 25th instant: a pleasant breeze has
wafted us hither, & I am happy to say that my family is well.
When I last wrote to you, the case of a prisoner then lying
sick in the Hospital was mentioned. You will see from the
inclosed Note to his wife which I request may be forwarded to
her, that the time of his departure was near at hand. This
man was apparently brought by affliction to a sense of his
situation as to spiritual things. I will state a few particulars
respecting him which came within my own observation as
correctly as I can recollect them. The first time I noticed him
was in consequence of application being made to me for a Testament
for the use of him and his afflicted companions. I presented
to him one bearing the mark of the British and Foreign Bible
Society which he made his constant companion until the
hour of his death. He often read part of it to his fellow
prisoners as he sat up on his bed, and when he was not
able to do it himself others kindly did this office for him.
On various occasions he laid open his grief, deeply lamenting
that he had ever been led to forsake that religion which
had been his refuge and support in happier days, or that
in adversity he had so far forgotten the only true remedy
for human woe, as to engage in any unpropitious way with
the view of making up those heavy losses which he had
sustained in his property. My dear friend's tract upon
the Day of Adversity administered (instrumentally) much
comfort to his afflicted mind, & I trust assisted him
in obtaining correct views of the way of Salvation. "This is,
he said, the Day of Adversity, but what a mercy it
is that I am here; God does not deal with us in wrath
according to what we deserve, there is yet a Saviour to
look up to for pardon and salvation." He did not
menace against his prosecutors as many do, he seemed
to submit to the decision of the Law without complaint.

June 24/13
I was grateful for the least act of civility that was
shown him, and I am told by the Yate, that he had been
consistent in his behaviour for a long time. He sent for
me several times during his illness, and on the day preceding
his death, he took me by the hand, spoke with much
affection, was sensible of his approaching dissolution, told
those around him that he had been a great sinner
but he was not afraid to die. He attempted to say
but he was too weak, he was cheerful (altho' not in
transport) to the last moment of his recollection. according
to my imperfect views this poor man died a penitent.
& he appeared to derive his support from above. He was
a member of the Church of Scotland

Several of the Prisoners here can neither read nor write
I have supplied six or eight with spelling books; they
have teachers amongst themselves.

We have had Divine Service on board for two
Sundays past. but it is to be lamented that there are
no Chaplains appointed by Government, who would
have more time to attend to the duties of their Office, &
more leisure to administer instruction and consolation
to ignorant, afflicted prisoners, than can possibly fall
to the share of a Captain whose attention is almost
necessarily occupied in the fulfilment of other important
duties.

If I possessed sufficient influence with members
of the established Church to which I have the honor
and happiness to belong, who take delight in encouraging
missionary exertions, and also with my brethren of other
denominations, pursuing the same object in view, I should
strongly recommend to their notice a clause in
Dr. Buchanan's sermon preached before the Society. For
while I feel myself bound to express my thankful
for the kind attention which has hitherto been paid
to me and my family, by the Ship Company, Guard

June 21/1833

Prisoners &c. yet in a religious point of view, even the effects
of this kind of long continued ~~might~~ might prove very
distressing. Many of the Ship Company's Officers will for
instance care for my children, and they delight to do
them such kind offices as may please them. But then,
they are not aware, that the latitude which is given to
captains, may be attended with serious injury to the
infant mind. As they say they mean no harm; so their
sea language, as it is called, is deemed inoffensive
and in spurring men on to their duty almost necessary.
That men who have been accustomed to be called upon
in this manner, would not otherwise think their Officers
in good earnest. Hence, expressions, not proper to be named
and the most dreadful which can be conceived or
uttered from day to day & from hour to hour, pervade alas!
the whole conversation which takes place amongst this
unhappy body of men, it therefore would be very desirable
if suitable means of conveyance could be procured
by the religious world for the people they send out,
especially where there are women & children, when
they would not be exposed to such language as
they are taught to fear. While on shore the Christian can
retire with his family, and shelter them in a great measure
from the pernicious conversation of thoughtless men, but there
is very little retirement in a Ship.

I and my family have been on Snow, the prospect is
delightful! the clouds rest beautifully upon the Hills?
There is plenty of fruit to be bought, but the time of
the vintage is not yet. We expect to leave Madras
in three or four days. The people on Snow have had
a grand illumination in honor of one of the Saints
the lights from the houses which are every where scattered
on the sides of the surrounding hills had a fine effect.

June 26/13

My little pupils have had a few days holiday; I open my school again tomorrow.

The youth Richard Stockwell who was recommended to me by our Bristol's friends is happy & well.

Mr Yates is in good health, but I think he is unhappy. He comes to see me ^{almost} every Sabbath Day.

Pray remember me, with gratitude & affection, to the Rev. B Woodd, to the Committee & to our other friends. I intend to write you also from Rio Janeiro if we touch there and am Revd & Dear Sir, yours very faithfully
Mottendall

Mr. Woodd J. Pratt

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