BC 151 C6.3

direct means of communication, our letters have to go via England. In fact I feel it very much being so far separated from all my family; and appreciate of course all the more the great blessing which your dear sister's promise will be to me, and even now is, partly by her letters, and by the new ties of connection which it has established for me in South Africa. It has been a great comfort to me to hear monthly of you through Lucy, and I hope you will also help me to feel less alone in this part of the world. All you can tell me, will be most interesting to me.

I must, however, say not more at present, but refer you to our dear Lucy for further particulars, which I am sure she will be indeed very glad to give you, as this secret (which she thought herself obliged to keep for our sake even from you) has I think been rather a burden to her, of which she would gladly be relieved.

With my love, believe me,
my dear Fanny,
very affectionately yours
W. H. I. Bleek

(1)

[Fanny]

Capetown 15 June 1862

My dear Miss Lloyd,

As I do not know and rather doubt, whether our dear Jemmie has found time, by his Maid to tell you, – you will excuse, if perchance I should be the first to communicate this our sweet secret to her dearest eldest sister. You knew, indeed, that we were great friends, but she has now promised to be even more than this to me. You who so well know her, can certainly understand, what a priceless blessing this is to me. Indeed this hope has given me quite a new life; and though (as you may have heard) my state of health is not at all good, yet I trust I may look forward to some happy years still to come, in which I may expect to enjoy such happiness in a union with her, as here on earth we may reasonably expect. – Peculiar circumstances mostly arising from the immense distance by which we are totally still separated, and over which on that account we had no control, have delayed the positive certainty of a formal engagement till last March, though it is some time (I mean a few months) since we knew of each other's mutual love. During that time of suspense

suspense (which I am rather afraid, must have been not at all conducive to dear Jemmie's health), only dearest Lucy was entirely in the secret, as of course, it would have been most embarrassing for Jemmie, if (as she thought it just possible) after all, we should think it right to remain merely friends. Now, thank God, this suspense is over. But I have only by ~~one~~ of the last mails been able to tell my dear mother who (you may imagine) will be greatly surprised (though not agreably); since for prudential reasons (which you will easily guess) I had never mentioned my friendship and correspondence with Jemmie even to her. I have not yet had any answer to this my communication. But by his mail I have had a kind letter from your Uncle Marmaduke, and am glad to hear that he and Uncle Henry, who had been told, approved of Jemmie's engagement. — If our darling has not been able to tell you this time, I am sure it is, either because she was greatly engaged which some long statements which she thought it necessary to make to me, or because she believed that I wished it to be kept a secret even from you, though (as Lucy will be able to tell you) this was not the case. For, indeed, dear Jemmie has always spoken with so great love of her eldest sister that it has quite made me feel at home at once with you, and I hope, you will soon learn to consider my in the light of

of a brother, as I soon hope legitimately to be; and I trust that you will give me at least some small share of your sisterly love for our dear Jemmie. — You do not know how anxious I am to see all you face to face, and to have some chat with you; but I do not know yet whether circumstances will allow me to leave this place in order to go and fetch dear Jemmie from amongst you, as I indeed should like best to do. But at all events I hope, it will not be long before I see you. It is most likely that we shall reside at Capetown, and I need not tell you, how we shall be rejoiced to see our sisters here, even if they could only pay us a visit.

You will understand easily that for the present we must wish this engagement to remain a secret in Natal and at the Cape, at least till Jemmie has been able to tell your dear father, — and she hopes to do this by one of the next mails.

I expect by the ~~next~~ next mail to hear also of the ~~marriage~~ wedding of my own eldest sister Augusta who is at Buenos Ayres. She will be 31 years of age on the 26th inst. Of course, I do not know her chosen husband, a German from Bremen, who is there sheep-farming. Though of course South America is geographically much nearer than England, yet practically it is just double as far off, as for the want of

direct