I wished to consult the Grand Devil in any matter. I answered no, that I only wished to see his face & shake his hand, that I might put his name in the big book I was about to send to America. They now commenced their incantations slowly at first but soon with increased vehemence. After a proper time a low growl was heard under the rock. All now appeared to manifest great joy & reverence. This growl was interpreted to me as a demand of my business. I stated it as before. Whereupon another growl followed, which was a demand to know what I had brought him. I practised this jockery until I satisfied myself whence the noise proceeded & then declined further intercourse.

It has been generally supposed by the more intelligent natives that some man is concealed under the rock; but this act, or rather first seeing the rock & position of the priest I readily concluded that he himself was the Grand Devil. & further observation confirmed me in this conclusion. During the orisons or incantations I watched the muscles of his chest & abdomen & perceived ~~[illegible]~~ this action to be natural; but during the long deep growls ~~[illegible]~~ I perceived his chest slowly to contract until the noise ceased, & then the muscles acted as before. The Devil had a wonderful facility of throwing medium in sound, as one short growl formed three or four long English sentences.

Knowing the extensive celebrity of this oracle, & the implicit confidence placed in its predictions, & the high value of its fetishes. I was prepared to meet with something marvellous or imposing in the place itself, or the ceremonies of the priests. I had supposed at least that there would be some sleight of hand management or jugglery in the affair in a manner to deceive the senses. But there is no such thing. The whole place falls infinitely short of our childish boo peep or blind man's buff. And how or wherefore it should maintain such a fascinating influence over the minds of the most intelligent tribes on the sea coast to an extent of 300 hundred miles is truly astonishing. ~~[illegible]~~

~~[illegible]~~ He was as disgusted & disappointed as I was. I proposed to be much astonished at the supernatural goings on & promised his invisible majesty that his big name should go book for long America: & set about clambering the rocks in my return. The supine degree which I had undergone tempted me very strongly to shake my thick pole in the stream which came tumbling down upon me in my ascent & which is said to prove fatal to all who ~~[illegible]~~ presume to vex the grand Devil of his own special heritage. Being a little ahead of my train I made bold to pilch a few swallows, much to my delight, & the honour of one of my Kaffir Mines boys who twigged me in the act. We however quietly kill his peace until we had finished a pot of soup on our return; well knowing that where the honour of the Grand Devil was at stake, a little fetish (always at hand with these people) would probable have been dashed into my soup & its effects been attributed to the sacred water. We left Waider about 3 o'clock P.M. of Saturday & again took our course up the river. About three miles from Waider we passed the Bro Bonna Creek, the northern main boundary of our newly acquired territory: & entered the confines of the Aegapos. We down here in sight of Aspatea, a beautifully located town overhanging the western bank of the river, should we just above its surface. We gave three a salute & rounded to at their landing. I sent my head man ashore with a box of pipes & tobacco as a shake hand pledge. This would not answer, we must come on shore & stay all night. I objected still they persisted & I thought showed little more than friendly earnestness. I knew what would be the result if we went on shore. They had heard of the contract with the Grabeh people & of the splendid stashes which I had made them, and were determined to obtain the same thinseling. But neither time nor funds

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

II. Correspondence Received
A. Letter Books

2. 1834--1835

1835