

Letter to Robert Moffat 1, [4 May?] 1849

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[0001]

My Dear Father

Yours by Ratseki came to hand about a week after Mary left - the accounts came the day before her departure and being then in the hurry of packing & loading I only looked to see who was debtor & who creditor. After returning from the Wanketse I looked over the whole and as you dont claim perfection you will not be surprised though in my queries &c I dont exhibit the same virtue - 12/ are put down as sent to Mr Helmore by a man whose name nearly blotted out seems to be Mokitlan - Have you any recollection as to what this money was sent for - or if any other money was sent at [the] same time - I have a distinct recollection of having paid off the money sent by Mebaloe viz 24 dollars & writing a note to Mr Helmore to use his influence with Moyahe to furnish the hiefers Mebaloe wished. Do you know Mokitlan - If you see him will you be kind enough to ask him about it Have you any note of the 12/ perhaps Mebaloe's was sent at same time - I have no recollection of sending any money except for that of Mebaloe viz. 24 dollars.

A Khoodoo's skin 6/ we only got a portion of it. I mention this that you may try & recollect - they are of course dearer with you than they are here but surely not 12/ - The chue iron was not paid for. I have three pairs of tongs - One I took with me from Mabotsa because I had been at all the trouble of carrying bellows &c. in and I had not a single pair - The other pair are those charged in the account and the third

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a small pair I am not sure whether I got them from you or from Mabotsa - I have a distinct recollection of the first pair for they were of this shape
[drawing of a pair of tongs] & I cut the nose off in the belief that I should make a better use of them than M^r E would and they in my opinion were society's property. I have besides two very small pairs & no more. If the idea I had formed of them being society's property ~~I shall p~~ is incorrect I shall pay them - I think I left 5 or 6 pairs with him & only took what I thought least useful - Am sorry to see myself in debt again. Would like much better if it were you - If M^{rs} M has put

as much in her will for me. I make it over to you in order to get free, even if it is £100 I shall give it you for the £30. I wish you would take a peep into the document & see how much I am to get - and when we have made the arrangement I shall no longer be wishing that she may cut her stick. Mary will tell you that we shall need tea coffee & rice should you be sending to Colesberg. I mentioned glass and may add soap. But we shall not probably need anything else. except hiefers and I feel very unwilling to buy anything except what is absolutely necessary till I get out of debt- I would send for a pair of ploughs from Wilkie but for it - Extra tugs & Mirrles which things I dont know make the ploughs £4.15 each. Now if I could send £12 or perhaps £11 for one as usually made & another extra strong & a wheel ~~they~~ one if not both would surely do for this country - I remember

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the ploughs used in Scotland have no wheels but are all iron Sechele wants one- Do you think it would be will to order wheels for both or simply to try how the Scotch plough at £4.15 will do for this country - Or if of extra strength where ought the extra strength to be put - I feel at a loss on this point - My father lives near to Wilkie & purposes to get one for us Although in debt I feel strongly inclined to order one for £6 If you are sending money to England this year can you let me have so much of it, 5/ goes a good way in iron in Scotland- perhaps that on the beam so as to make the whole £5 will be enough If you are not sending we can wait another year

I never made any remarks on M^r Elliot[']s letter because I was quite ignorant of the matter. A circular sent some time before about the reduction of the sum expended on Africa with the request to hear our opinion on the subject induced me to tell them what I had seen - in Algoa Bay, &c. and I expressed the opinion that the colony was no longer a missionary field - and the sum proposed was quite enough if missionaries now in the colony would only come on to the regions which could still claim the help of missionary societies - I compared the supplies of Algoa Bay - Uitenhage - Graaf[f] Reinet Colesberg with certain villages at home, and felt quite certain those at home had not of the supply. I could not speak of other places. It is well you did what you have done

[0004]

If we are not in the black books with our own consciences

we may whistle over the grave at whoever is pleased or grumpy
the arrangement with the small rifle cannot be made. I had
written you twice & received no answer about the ivory. The
letter in which you desired me to sell it came a little too late
and I wished to get your property out of the way of the
boers. We thought then they might be wicked enough
to come[.]

The note which puzzled the boers['] brains was written
by me. on the morning they came - that being the same morning
that we heard of the sad circumstance mentioned in my
last - I asked Sechele himself if the report of his connection
with the woman were true as the people were talking of it
he replied by saying I shall ask her and sent his uncle
to her. She refused at first to tell but at last said
that he had himself been to her twice on the occasion of this
visit of Sentuke - She sent his uncle to tell me the whole
& said he had fallen by the temptation of Satan. He could not
deny it that he had gone on that occasion and did not
wish as he was conscious of guilt to press her to tell
of any one else - the law being in that case death - Do
not give me up because of this - I shall never give up Jesus
you & I will stand before him together &c. The conclusion
to which I came immediately was he has apostatized
and if he has become our enemy I may as well leave

[0005]

2^d sheet

and try some other tribe. Mary said - Let us both go now - I answered
him by saying that the blame must not be put on Satan - He had
done it of his own free will and since he had of his own
free will forsaken the laws of Christ. Why not tell it at the time
and not continue to appear as one of his people when in his
heart he knew he was serving another. About ~~two~~ one hours
after that the Boers came and the same man was sent down
to request me to write a note to them to the effect that though
he did not come to see them he thanked them for their message
that morning. (They had sent a message in the morning before they
came about their object in coming) The man came to me
and said he is thankful for the message you sent and wishes you
to write it out for him — I wrote a few sentences in
Sitchuana similar to the above answer, and to the best
of my recollection they might be thus "You have not sinned
against me but against Jesus. You must not blame
Satan for you have broke[n] the laws of Jesus of your
own accord. And you ought to have told me when you
did so or when you concluded to obey him no longer
My heart is broken, first Isack - then you - I can
no longer be a teacher here." without opening it he
sent it to the Boers - Sechele never dreamed it was

for him - For when I asked him after reading yours
what he had done with the note I had written on the morning
the boers came he instantly replied I sent it over to them
they were on the other side of the Kolobeng - I dont

[0006]

wonder Edwards was required to make it out - My heart was
full of conflicting emotions but not of the sort he conjectured
Our connection with him is of a very different sort from
that which existed between Mosielele & us or that which
prevails there now. We have no contention or wrangling
or petting. He never attempted to justify himself in sin Nor
would he care although Isaac were in Davy Jones locker
He used to coax Isaac to read with him by giving him food
but the gentleman interfered disagreeably between Paul & him (I)
and his conduct generally has made him anything but
liked among the people — Sechele is suspended of course
from fellowship and will be so even though he should
walk with propriety till a considerable time after the woman
brings forth - - That which made me believe his professions
of sorrow were sincere was he never in the least swerved
in his conduct towards us, nor yet in his general deport-
-ment. When we thought that it was all over with us
here we thought he had apostatized completely and as such
usually do would become our enemy & fight against us. And
as we have nothing here apart from working for Jesus'
cause it would be folly to remain with our hands bound
Even now I think that a few months absence from
them occasionally will be beneficial. Hunger is very
great & all the attention is taken up in caring for the
body. School is very thin & so is the church generally
Now we have neither printing nor translating

[0007]

I could work at other things but whatever they might be it
would not be Missionary work. It would be merely passing the
time, so I begin to think if another station were in existence
on which to spend a part of the year - it might tend to
the furtherance of the gospel. Here we have tried every mode
of illustration I could think of. But though sometimes we
see symptoms which encourage I feel afraid they may
look upon the whole affair as one which will always
be carried on here whether they heed it or not. Sebitoane
a chief a little north of the Lake is called a Letibele but seems
to speak somewhat like the Bamapela - He has a large
tribe & is enlarging it still more by killing neighbouring
chieftains & occupying their places among their people - He

lifted the Bakwain cattle - not Mosilikatse .- but before surrounding the town he gave orders to his people, to spare the children of Mocoasele - Sechele's father who was then dead. Sechele had been knocked down by a molamu but not speared. When they saw him in the morning they took him to Sebitoane - Who thanked them for sparing him - Taking him with him to the Bamangwato, the then chief Kame offered to redeem Sechele with a large bag of beads he had purchased from the Malokane - Sebitoane asked Sechele if he was quite willing to go with him. If he was he would treat him as his son &c. but if not he would allow him to go. Sechele's mother was foot sore so Sechele said to him you see my mother is unable to go any farther and though you offer to treat me kindly in your country I should like to live in my own land

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Let me save my mother & return I shall consider that kindness enough. Sebitoane said very well since you dont like to come to me, take these nine head of cattle & return — He has one of Sechele's brothers with him now & often asks for Sechele and the latter feels very anxious to visit his former benefactor. When we go he sends a present to him by us. Seven men have come from the Lake inviting us to come. We may find an open door there though the Eastern door seems shut Am glad Robert seems to give himself so heartily to the cause of Christ & humanity. That[']s the thing - the day is coming and maybe near when he whom his Lord approveth ~~will~~ will have ~~the~~ approbation of the Universe - Dillydallying potbellied predikants will have no distinctive buttonholes then. You will see the paper I have penned for the Cape Town Mail - I must request you to look over it And if you think it wrong rub out - Nemo (nobody) the signature may perhaps be blotted out if you dislike it. Also the address If it may be put in without Having no acquaintance[-] ship with the editor and feeling inclined to write elsewhere which I intend still to do I thought a scrap for the Mail ought to be sent now. I thought the Advertizer but you seem to prefer the Mail - At first I thought of sending my views to Robert but after giving him a screed I came to the conclusion that a bit written with more care would suit the purpose better and the sooner it goes to the public the better for the subject will lose interest quickly. But should you think it had

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first to him it can be sent. As you will be in possession of more recent information you will be able better to judge Can you shew me the bit Robert put in about Burrman I did not furnish about the affair here - of which you have heard an improved edition. Mary will have told you some of it. When Isak ran off. I rejoiced in my inner man and almost prayed may he never return - Hesse came up & told us her mother wanted to cut her throat. I thought a little & the same thought occurred to me as to you but then again if I did not go it would not look kind to Paul so down I went & proposed as she wished to go to Hell that she should come near & put her hand in the fire for a while to try how she liked it. This made her quiet and she afterwards denied having sought a knife

I should not put in another word merely because the one used was like another word of an obscene meaning but I should feel inclined to alter foreign words if they had any approach to such. Masete I should write mast. Mareta Marita But it is a point of very little importance for only those who are lightly disposed will in reading the words of God mistake their meaning. these two words occurred to be remarked on in my presence but that was among pure heathen - happening to hear them remarked on was the reason I thought they ought to be mentioned to you but this may never happen again. My attention was called to lōpa in the same way but we have no word to substitute for lopa and it is not so like as the others - hetola to dye Mehetola is the name of the plant - I think allied to Moijo

[0010]

I shall look for a sample for you.

I have not had time to look carefully at the Pilgrim - cannot pretend I am going back in Sitchuana for many words in it I never knew and cannot get them now. they are not used here & some are used in different senses, here from what they are in the pilgrim. think you have been pretty successful in expressing the meaning - but I cant speak with critical authority, setloeñ you have at the end of one of the hym nlets instead of lotoeñ - humana humanoa as common in the East might do cuacoa or cuacua for find means to spring up as grass or an eruption on the skin. "his Jewels were not found" many other words occurred to me in reading it which I found difficulty in & which I meant to ask explanations of but have forgot them - & tloangáne e slle for instance is a puzzler to us here we cannot make it out the accents seem to shew us that your tones are different out at Kuruman from here - Moéti sepéla héta mocoéri - toegétša tsiéco - khétse are all pronounced with the simple e here. Let me know if you remember whether these words are really pronounced as I have spelled them with

the é as in clerk for I have got into the way of pronouncing them all in the Sequain way & of course if ever I come out you will hear me speak as if I were an Aberdeen area man - the Poco is very prettily done in England bopecoc the errors as well as the beauties of it # Why not revise the pilgrim & send it to England too - ? and let your time

[0011]

be occupied in what cant be done in England viz translating A little difference in the price would perhaps defray all the diff[-] -erence in the doing it yourselves & having it done by printers But this I dont know - I merely suggest what in your willingness to work may not have occurred to you. If it can be done it would to me appear the best way to do the first edition yourselves and let the rest be done in England Life is short & the work of translation is long - I send you the gospels I have of the Sesuto - and you may judge whether my idea of M^r Lennie's fountain was wrong Never did spiteful critics get such a kick on the posteriors as has been the fortune of Edwards & Inglis. And the worst of it is they can now only say as the man did who was being kicke[...][d] down stairs - "one cant help what is done behind one's back" and the only comfort even their friends can give them must be "you have yourselves alone to blame"- Very minute things are under the Divine controll and we ought to recognize his hand in all the good bestowed on us We ought to be thankful that even our sworn enemies cannot hurt a hair of our heads nor a fibril of our good name but by Divine permission

I have run on a good way before I percieved the thread of my letter was the accounts. four door locks are charged at 6/ each or /24d~~ollars~~ for the whole - We got three on a former occasion for 12/ Hope they

[0012]

dont become dearer by being kept like some kinds of wine you had better put the gun locks sent by mistake into my account & at my price. It was door locks I asked for then - I see several cases put in which I do not know - probably they are now at Kuruman & will come by Mary. We shall need corn. I have not added up your doing it twice will be enough. Sechele sends three really splendid tiger Karosses to Birmingham two to the ladies who sent the chairs not as payment but as tebogolo for their friendship to one whom they knew not - the third is for eomogolu of the smiths who made the gun - either Parker or Tipping or Lawden as a thanks offering for doing his gun so well and to ask friendship so that if he can obtain the price he may buy three double barreled rifles

10 to the ~~bob~~ not now - but when he gets the price All this entirely of his own accord

Rev^d R. Moffat
Kuruman