

Letter to Robert Moffat 1, 2, [4, 5] September 1848

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[0001]

Kolobeng, 2 Sept^r 1848

My dear Father

By the recent arrival of Monye Mabole we were favoured with communications from the South and now by the arrival of Motseabona & party from the Bamangwato we have an opportunity of returning you thanks for your favours. We wrote lately by Aron and have now but little to communicate. Monye Mabole brought 15 out of the 17 hiefers - one he said had been killed by a wolf near to this & of the others he could give no account whatever. The Bakwains were of opinion that he had made away with both. I sent him for the horns of that said to be killed by a wolf - he brought a bone. of some animal or other but not being a comparative anatomist I could only look at it as a Motchuana does at the stars. I felt a little angry at first but changed in feeling when I reflected that I might have lost ten as M^r Ross did. and any harshness on my part might have had a bad effect on his & other minds & perhaps be the means of preventing their salvation. He brought one of his own & two of the principal men of the tribe here to intercede for him by means of it. I declined receiving it but deferred rewarding him till some future time. He was apparently pleased to get off. and I am sure I am pleased with your promptitude in procuring the animals for us - We are out of debt in so far as animals are concerned & have placed four of the number to our original

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stock of ten. We have never been in want of milk but our old stock is in need of an infusion of new hands, or rather teats. - this country is favourable for us in respect to cattle. If you receive any from M^r Solomon for us please send them under Paul's charge or some one else whom you have confidence in..

The trees you sent were extremely acceptable. If

you could have spared a few more they would
have ^ been equally prized. We have only two peach
trees now & no apricots. but we hope some
may come up. We have about 10 orange trees
two feet high. two olives. and a lot of this country['s]
trees which we thought of engrafting but they have
not yet budded. Am sorry some of those you budded
have had the new branches knocked off - some
of the country trees we put in the ground with[-]
out roots & it is said they will grow - We cannot
bud or engraft till next year. Do you steep your
tape in gum or what? The superb Claremont
carrots came up splendidly but a swarm of locusts
left their place a blank & we had sown all the
seed sent - Our river has dwindled down to
a dribbling rill & we fear if rain does not
come soon we shall ^ have but a poor account
to give of corn - some is withered & will be useless
When we came in August or July last year it was a large
stream so we think its present insignificance

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may be attributed to the great drought of last year
We comfort ourselves by reflecting that at Chonuane
our state would have been worse for it is dried
up & Kolobeng according to the testimony of the
antients is the only stream in the Bakwain
country which never dries up entirely
We went last week to Lōe for recreation & health
to the children - spent four days in the field &
returned invigorated - The much talked of Lōe
is a circular pit in a sandstone rock. and
at present dry. around the margin are a number
of wide footsteps carved. thus
[drawing of footprint] apparently the
work of children. The "spoor" with one exception
goes into the pit. The exception is that of Matsiën
the former of the Bechuanas. As the story goes
he returned into it while men left it but the spoor
if intended to represent any thing shews the
opposite. They the people shew the old towns of the Bangwaketse
Bamangwato & Bakwains, Mashona &c &c & all the
Eastern tribes. The tradition seems to refer to
the splitting up of the people into different tribes
from Loe as the central population. The remains
of old towns shew them to have been very large
Mokhatla's men have just been to receive
their gun. &c. The lock has been admirably done
I sometimes fail entirely in producing fire

from steel - do it over again & it does well
cannot understand the cause of failure in the
first instance Can you tell me?

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I have some horns for you - I missed the opportunity
for collecting seeds. The house engaged too much
of my attention & the man who usually does that sort
of work for me & understands what we want being
absent I held on expecting him till the season was
past. Our beads too were at a low ebb. before the
last supply arrived - I am at present collecting some
of the heads of the game for you. Leaving the skin
& under jaw entire - I think they will be interesting
at home. Cumming intends to make an exhibition
of his trophies in the Egyptian Hall London &
make his fortune by them - Will the heads be
acceptable as above.? I intend to put up a few
in our lobby if Mary will give me leave. to
ornament it for her.

Am sorry to hear M^{rs} M has been so much reduced
by her journey. Thought her made of a piece of clay
that would not wear out in a hurry. We do not
like to hear her speaking about dying Better if
she were saying Now all our children are away
let us begin a new mission or something of
that sort - Let us go forward. But you will
perhaps say. poor fellow that, all he knows
about it Wait till he feels the infirmities which
creep on our frail bodies.. The complaint
with which she is troubled will invariably if severe
require depletion. No matter where the pain
manifests itself. When more than usually
severe. Immediate recourse to bloodletting &

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2^d & other depletory measures are required - there is a tendency
to congestion & an irregular distribution of blood
& she ought to think as little about her head as possible
When the stomach is stimulated by food of an exciting
quality a considerable quantity of blood is attracted
to it & the spleen. The quantity is diminished in
the brain & other organs - purgatives have the same
effect in drawing blood to the bowels - the mind
does not act well after a full meal as both
blood & nervous energy are sent to the stomach. If
one thinks much about stomach or any other

organ too much nervous influence is transmitted to it & sometimes too much blood too. You need not be afraid to bleed if you observe fullness of system in connection with unusual pains in either head or any other part. habitual medication is not good in any case.

Monday Evening. Sechele sends you a khoodoo's head which was killed in the town this morning. It has too much grass in it but that can easily be remedied by wetting the skin again I shall see what Motseabona can take tomorrow he seems very willing to oblige but he may not have much room. Have been to cut some pieces of tough wood today for ribs to the new waggon. After cutting up

[0006]

these we hope to build a smithy as our next engagement - After Paul comes we hope to itinerate somewhere. probably Eastward. Give him our love if still with you. We are living in the hope & belief that progress is being made. Opposition exists but not towards us It manifests itself in hatred to the gospel. Some woman or other wished the lion which bit me were here to finish me. but all are civil We cannot detect a particle of difference in the conduct of the mass of the people - towards us which is a cause for gratitude - they curse Sechele very bitterly - He says their curses are such formerly he would not have said a word to them - he would have shot them instantly - The children are returning to the schools. & the meetings are improving We have appointed two to converse with the chief in order to a report at next church meeting. We should have been glad had Paul been here for the sake of his experience in such matters - I feel my heart trembling when I think of the danger of receiving one who may not be a true believer or refusing one who is

[0007]

We need Divine direction & hope it may be granted to us He mentioned his intention of calling his youngest child Setefano in allusion to himself as wishing

to be (like him) the first follower of Jesus in this country - Mosielele tried to get one of the wives while she passed through his place on her way to her own people. When she refused he issued a new edict against going to chapel - Sechele intends to send over an entreaty to him to allow his people to attend if they wish it -

We feel surprised to hear of so many people leaving the Kuruman. We could not credit reports which came to us about so & so leaving but we now hear that these persons have actually left and they predict that many others will follow. What can be the reason.? If in your place I should feel inclined to look upon it as an indication that I ought to leave too. How hard you work for them, & every thing is supplied for them that they need in the clothing department &c. Are they not too well off? Here when I do a little gun work (& between you & me I sometimes do more harm than good to a lock) I am both thanked & paid for it. We are both looked on as benefactors - a general interest is felt in our prosperity Now you having both the means & ability to do a great deal more than we seem to be left as if your value were

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unfelt. Do come in here & let us have a tour among the Eastern tribes, and if after you have seen their numbers. friendliness & need. and contrast them with your present sphere. you can say. you ought to remain where you are. I shall be content to bear any epithet you choose to put upon me.- I am quite aware of the extent of the field you now occupy. & that the Kuruman has always since I knew it given a poor idea of its greatness but the people leaving so may render it needful for you to go through the building operations of a new station somewhere else in your district. Now would it not be well to look at other spheres before you think of anything else - You may think all this premature prejudged or something else as bad as either but I think you will not refuse me. credit for a sincere desire for your honour & usefulness. A tour will do your health good. you will get new words for translation. &c &c. I hope you may be guided by Him who cannot err

I felt glad to hear that you or rather M^{rs} M
had put a stop to the Patriot - It has of late
become excessively nauseous to me

[0009]

3^d sheet

the filthy Quack advertisements stuck at the bottom
of some of the pages create an unpleasant feeling
in my mind every time I reach them - Holloway
a Jew I believe draws thousands of pounds annually
from the public purse by falsehood & the Editors of the
Patriot for the sake of a rather higher rate of
payment admit his lies into the news part of
the paper & thereby become the vehicles by which
a portion of the religious world too is drawn
into the vortex of deception. Life is in innum-
erable cases sacrificed every year by advertizing
quacks - I have thought many times of late
of proposing another paper instead of the Patriot
We should have been glad to hear how Robert
has got on &c. but you are in the same
state of ignorance as ourselves as to his
movements You will of course let us
know when you can how he succeeds
& what the benefits he is likely to confer
in his new sphere. Also of Betsy & Jane
how they fare in England. I have no doubt
but they will be provided for when or if
it becomes known they need to be provided
for
Our soap you may remember when looking
over the account being sixpence per lb ought

[0010]

to be £1. instead of £2. Sechele was glad of his
but having given the last box for an ox. we
could only ask a better one this time as it was
dearer soap. The animal is not worth /30 but
we prefer to bear the loss of the difference to appearing
to take a profit from him. I need the glue - both
for joining & the house. The latter is unfinished
inside. I am tired of it & leave the finishing
to some other time. It is simply whitewashed
I have not good locks. Did you ever get
the brace & bits from Birmingham which I

requested you to order for me - mine went
this way. & is now held by a rein
All the country news will be commun[-]
icated by Motseabona. The Griquas are
standing to the West of this high & dry on
their way to the Lake. They can it is
reported neither go backwards nor
forwards & want for rains.

With love to M^{rs} M & Ann believe
me Affectionately yours
D Livingston

[0011]

Tuesday morning - As Motseabona cannot take
either of the boxes we let them remain - He
takes some horns for you. Three Rhinoceros or
~~four~~ one is 3 ft 1½ in in length - The
longest Mohohu I ever saw. The Khoodo
is Sechele for you. The pallalis need
the bony part to be steeped in water &
scraped in order to be pretty - You must
tell me if I send too many of these
things. I think they will be interesting
to friends at home. The chief's brother
brought a waterbuck's skin &c carefully
prepared but it was an old animal
& only one horn so I declined it

[0012]

Rev^d R Moffat
Kuruman
my my g.